Buckinghamshire New University Access and Participation Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

1. Introduction and Strategic Aim

Since our founding as a School of Science and Art in High Wycombe in 1891, our mission has been to transform lives by widening access and participation. A large proportion of our learners return to education later in life (80% are mature students compared to a sector average of 29%), are from global ethnic majority communities (18% are black compared to the sector average of 11%), and areas of disadvantage (22% were eligible for free school meals compared to a sector average of 19%). Providing an education that works for all, regardless of background or circumstance, is our priority. We pride ourselves on ensuring our students reach their full potential through our employment-focused and skills-based education opportunities.

	IMD Q1&2	FSM	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Mature	ABCS Q1&2
BNU	60%	22%	61%	12%	18%	5%	80%	26%
Sector	44%	19%	66%	15%	11%	6%	29%	22%

2022-23 Access BNU Registered (APP Dashboard)

Buckinghamshire is notable for a substantial socio-economic divide. It combines relatively low levels of deprivation as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and is the 7th least deprived out of 151 Local Authorities nationwide. However, within urban areas such as our campus locations in High Wycombe and Aylesbury there are high levels of multiple disadvantage, with 64% of BNU students in IMDQ1 & Q2 compared to a sector average of 44%. Food poverty and unaffordable housing are significant issues within the region and High Wycombe was identified as the worst area for food insecurity in 2021 with research indicating that 30% of people were struggling to access food. BNU is committed to supporting students with the cost-of-living crisis. Initiatives such as BNU's The Big Deal provides free enrichment activities to all our students – from cookery and language classes to singing lessons, theatre trips and skills workshops. Our caring, inclusive and supportive approach was recognised by winning the 2023 Whatuni Award for the university's work in this area and the 2024 University of the Year for Student Support (*Daily Mail*).

Most of our taught students are from England with 27% from the local region and a further 34% from the Greater London area. Within the region, many learners come from areas of high deprivation in High Wycombe, Aylesbury and Slough, with 65% of our registered full-time undergraduate students from the 40% most deprived areas in England.

BNU's National Student Survey (NSS) sector-leading performances reflect our commitment to supporting students with their education. Our Students' Union was ranked number one in the UK in 2023 and 2nd in 2024, and this reflects the close working and strategic relationship the university enjoys. The university has seen a dramatic rise in the NSS during the last 5 years (from 101st in 2019 to 15th in 2022 in the UK, and BNU was ranked 4th for student positivity in 2023). BNU was ranked the number one ranked university in England for student satisfaction in 2023 and the number one University in the UK for assessment and feedback for full-time first-degree students (NSS). BNU remains in the top 20 for student positivity in 2024.

BNU's vision outlined in its Thrive 28 strategy commits to creating:

- a vibrant, inclusive community that inspires learning, develops potential, widens participation and ambitiously transforms lives.
- an education that is flexible, inclusive, enquiry-based, employer-informed, and designed around the needs

of all our students.
- a university that reaches out to all our communities, cementing our position as Buckinghamshire's University, and building on our civic engagement within the county, London and the South-East.

BNU's approach to equality of opportunity and our institutional 5-year plan is set out in our Equality Strategy 2023-2028, with 3 overarching priorities that frame our approach to access and participation:

- Involve and empower our community.
- Take action to tackle inequalities.
- Build a university community where people can be themselves.

These overarching priorities enshrine our commitment to, amongst others, identify ways to amplify unheard student voices; enhance inclusion literacy within our own and wider community; uphold our Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showmen and Boater (GTRSB) into HE pledge; take steps to decolonise our curriculum; support a culture of belonging; and celebrate inclusion.

Students and courses

Buckinghamshire New University (BNU) is a medium-sized University of 18,700 registered undergraduate students and 900 degree apprentices. Students study at one of three main campuses in High Wycombe, Aylesbury and Uxbridge. Satellite bases exist at Pinewood Studios and Missenden Abbey and the university delivers programmes in a range of modes. BNU delivers a broad portfolio of academic programmes including undergraduate programmes with Foundation Years, Foundation Degrees, 'top-ups' to Honours degrees and degree apprenticeships. BNU has also been a leader of establishing Higher Technical Qualifications in partnership with employers and has a broad postgraduate programme portfolio in areas such as healthcare, nursing, social work, cyber-security, psychology and creative advertising. Our primary focus is on vocational education, delivered by our nine Schools: Arts, Design and Performance; Aviation and Security; Business and Law; Creative and Digital Industries, Engineering and the Built Environment; Health and Social Care Professions, Human and Social Sciences; Nursing and Midwifery; Missenden Abbey International Hotel and Hospitality School. As part of its mission, BNU's provision extends to numerous external partner colleges who deliver the BNU curriculum. The University is governed by the Council and University Senate. The University is led by the University Executive Team and the University Management Group.

We are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion across our academic schools. Our efforts include decolonising the curriculum. Recent examples include integrating world cinema in film studies, featuring global artists in music production and business, and incorporating diverse cultural events in events management. We also address global majority hair types in the BA (Hons) Hair and Make-up course and replace Western dance styles with diverse ones in the BA (Hons) Dance programme, enriching our students' educational experience.

To support our students, we hold fortnightly Course Leader Team meetings to identify at-risk students and provide tailored support, including one-to-one tutorials for Business Management, Marketing, and Cyber Security students, with a focus on disabled and neuro-diverse students. We enhance teaching staff diversity through our inclusive recruitment policy and by engaging with industry role models for disadvantaged groups. We've employed inclusive education principles in our curriculum including inviting alumni to industry panels to enrich the learning experience.

We've built increasing flexibility provision such as distance learning for the Animation programmes, and a blended learning BSc (Hons) Computer Science programme. We also foster a supportive community through BNU's Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Programme. Our Disability and Inclusion team work closely with academic schools to review students with non-standard reasonable adjustment plans, ensuring effective and inclusive teaching practices, including with employment partners and placement providers to support students with additional needs in health subjects. To further support students, we have integrated measures into our curriculum and student support services, such as sessions with the Student Learning Achievement team to support those students with lower prior attainment and establishing a University-wide minimum standard for module materials on BlackBoard.

Our curriculum refresh has embedded inclusive practices in our teaching. Modules focusing on social and environmental EDI, have received praise and excellent feedback. Our academic schools are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion through various initiatives such as setting University-wide standards for module materials on the Virtual Learning Environment that ensure all students, regardless of background, will be better informed and supported with their learning. Our academic schools include new professors to lead inclusive research and knowledge exchange in areas such as reducing health and education inequalities. We offer dissertation writing workshops in creative subjects such as Acting to support students with additional needs and hold monthly retention meetings to identify and assist at-risk students.

We provide one-to-one career planning, employability support, and portfolio reviews, alongside guest lectures and masterclasses with diverse industry professionals and alumni. Alumni mentoring, especially in subjects such as Sports Therapy and Creative Advertising, connects students with high-profile industry contacts and employment opportunities. Third-year students gain practical experience through work placements, such as in the University gym for Dance students and various opportunities for Interior and Spatial Design students. Practice learning placements in subjects related to health care professions and sports therapy represent significant components of students' programmes that enhance graduate prospects. Collaborative projects across courses foster student belonging and mirror real-world practices, while external commissions and prizes offer additional growth opportunities.

We continue to focus on improving degree outcomes for Black students and enhancing progression for students with BTEC entry qualifications. For example, in hospitality and tourism, students are matched with a hospitality industry mentor, reviewed biannually to ensure satisfaction. These efforts aim to create a more equitable and successful academic journey for all students. Our Peer Assisted Learning Scheme (led by the Retention and Engagement Team) involves matched mentors for Level 4 and Foundation Year students.

Our ambitions

In this Plan, we have set an ambitious agenda for improvement and development across the institution, with modifications to curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment; improvements to student support; and a universal approach to employability through our placements programme. We have also set an ambitious agenda to support our franchise partner institutions, to ensure that identified gaps are closed.

Through these measures, we aim to progress closing the identified gaps in on-course outcomes for target students, in the context of also improving student outcomes overall. While we have not set specific targets in some areas (see Annex A), we also aim to address any additional gap areas that are present, or which may emerge over time. We commit to thorough monitoring of all target groups in respect of access, continuation, completion, attainment and progression measures, and to making appropriate responses to any emerging challenges or opportunities.

2. Risks to Equality of Opportunity

In order to understand where risks to equality of opportunity may be present at Buckinghamshire New University, we completed an assessment of performance (see Annex A), which explores enrolment, continuation, completion, degree outcomes (achievement of a First or 2:1 award) and progression to employment or post-graduate study for our students over the last 6 years. We have used the Office for Students (OfS) Access and Participation dataset as our primary data source, supplemented with internal data and other external datasets and evidence where appropriate. We have considered information and data from our student body as well as the OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR).

We have identified four key risk areas that we wish to prioritise in the Plan. We have considered which risks are likely to be most relevant to our student body and which we can reasonably seek to mitigate, making a positive impact at an institutional level and contributing positively to sector performance. Our intervention strategies seek to address the risks we have identified as a priority for us.

2.1.1 Risk Area 1 – There is a risk that a lack of access to pre-enrolment information advice and guidance; a lack of access to a range of appropriate support; mental health and wellbeing; and cost pressures, may be affecting continuation outcomes for learners of Black and Asian ethnicities and students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds (IMD Q1).

We have determined the following indicators of risk that suggest the risks noted above may be occurring.

- There is a 4-year aggregate (2018-19 to 2021-22) 5.6pp gap in continuation rates between Black students and their white peers.
    - The 2-year aggregate, this gap widens to 6.6pp.
    - In comparison, the sector continuation gap for Black students (4-year aggregate) is 5.5pp.

- There is a 4-year aggregate (2018-19 to 2021-22) 6.3pp gap in continuation rates between Asian students and their white peers.
    - The 2-year aggregate, this gap widens to 8.8pp.
    - In comparison, the sector continuation gap for Asian students is 0.6pp.

- There is a 4-year aggregate (2018-19 to 2021-22) 4.8pp gap in continuation rates between the most and least disadvantaged students (IMD Quintile 1 and IMD Quintile 5, respectively).
    - The 2-year aggregate, this gap widens slightly to 5.6pp.
    - In comparison, the sector continuation gap for IMD Quintile 1 students is worse, at 8.5pp

2.1.2 Risk Area 2 – There is a risk that a lack of access to a range of appropriate support; mental health and wellbeing; and cost pressures, may be affecting completion outcomes for students with target characteristics.

We have determined the following indicators of risk that suggest the risks noted above may be occurring.

- There is a 4-year aggregate (2015-16 to 2018-19) 9.3pp gap in completion rates between the most and least disadvantaged students (IMD Quintile 1and 2 (aggregate) and IMD Quintile 5, respectively).
    - The 2-year aggregate, this gap widens slightly to 10.7pp.
    - Comparably, the sector completion gap for IMD Quintile 1 and 2 students is 9.4pp.

- There is a 4-year aggregate (2015-16 to 2018-19) 8.8pp gap in completion rates between Asian students and their white peers.
    - The 2-year aggregate, this gap widens to 10.3pp.
    - In comparison, the sector completion gap for Asian students is 1.4pp.

2.1.3 Risk Area 3 – There is a risk that a lack of access to a range of academic support; mental health and wellbeing; and cost pressures, may be affecting the attainment outcomes (achievement of a First or 2:1 degree award) for students with target characteristics.

We have determined the following indicators of risk that suggest the risks noted above may be occurring.

- There is a 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) 29.4pp gap in attainment rates between the most and least disadvantaged students (IMD Quintile 1 and IMD Quintile 5, respectively).
    - The 2-year aggregate, this gap widens to 32pp.
    - In comparison, the sector attainment gap for IMD Quintile 1 students is 17pp.

- There is a 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) 8.4pp gap in attainment rates between Black students and their white peers.
    - The 2-year aggregate, this gap widens to 11.8pp.
    - In comparison, the sector attainment gap for Black students is 20.2pp.

- There is a 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) 17.3pp gap in attainment rates between Asian students and their white peers.
  - The 2-year aggregate, this gap widens slightly to 18.2pp.
  - In comparison, the sector attainment gap for Asian students is 8.5pp.

- There is a 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) 17.3pp gap in attainment rates between mature (21 years and over) and young students.
  - The 2-year aggregate, this gap widens slightly to 18.3pp.
  - In comparison, the sector attainment gap for mature students is 9.9pp.

2.2.1 Links to the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register

Risk 1: Knowledge and Skills

This Risk relates to access to opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills required for successful entry and participation in higher education, including discipline expertise and knowledge, skills and proficiencies and practice. We consider this Risk relevant in the context of our students' on-course success across the whole lifecycle.

Our review of the literature indicates that applicants from our target groups often have fewer opportunities to develop the necessary skills and knowledge for higher education. BNU longitudinal data on entry tariff and module pass rate show that pre-university attainment correlates positively, and almost linearly, with module failure rate at BNU (see Annex A). Our BTEC students, in particular, are at a higher risk regarding attainment (achieving a good degree: 1st or 2.1). Our finding suggests a need to support in a targeted way students with lower entry tariffs who often intersect with the higher deprivation IMD Quintiles 1and 2. Our staff consultations on the new APP flagged a need for more support for low tariff students with transitioning into their BNU studies and building effective academic skills via a pre-enrolment orientation and induction programme. Such programmes can affect positively First Year the development of social capital and academic skills, attainment, module pass rate, and continuation, especially for disadvantaged and underrepresented students, including those who are first-in-the-family in higher education.

Risk 2: Information and Guidance

This Risk relates to access to information and guidance about higher education, including higher education choices, study modes, expectations, and access pathways, as well as linked information about careers and employability. We consider this Risk relevant in the context of our students' successful transition-in, first year of study and their continuation.

Our student demographic, especially those enrolling outside the traditional September intake, includes mature learners, disadvantaged learners and learners enrolling with non-traditional entry qualifications. These groups often lack awareness of academic expectations, essential skills like referencing, and potential career paths related to their field of study. This may be the result of a disrupted study or a return to study, where the availability of information, advice and guidance has been limited. During the consultations on the development of our new APP, BNU students and Students' Union representatives remarked on insufficient information about our courses. Effective information, advice, and guidance for students prior to enrolment and a focus on attainment raising are instrumental for progression to and success in higher education. Our proposal of offering school-specific inductions and a pre-enrolment programme to help students develop academic skills were seen as positive measures to help overcome some of these barriers to access, continuation and attainment. See more in Annex A.

Risk 6: Insufficient Academic support

This Risk relates to insufficient Academic Support which is personalised and timely. Consideration of the presence of this Risk has influenced our prioritisation of the developments required for inclusive and compassionate curriculum approaches, teaching and learning, and assessment design.

Students from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds in higher education make most of our student body. Many live locally and commute to and from the BNU campuses, work in term time, and have care responsibilities or some type of disability. They present a complex spectrum of academic (Risk 6) and personal (Risks 7 and 8) needs.

In consultations, a lack of flexibility in the teaching timetable, insufficient choice of assessment, irregular provision of reasonable adjustments to disabled learners, and digital poverty were cited among the structural challenges our students face. These challenges are known to impact commuter, in-work, and mature students, disabled learners, and those from low-income families, e.g., IMD Quintile 1 and 2 students[1,2]. Teaching and resourcing of learning and learning support is another challenging area. This includes issues like instances of high staff turnover which negatively affects consistency of academic support; the expectation of students to engage in more independent learning as part of condensing the teaching timetable; provision of personal tutoring; and finding, attending, and being assessed on placements. The literature reports adverse effects of these challenges on all our target groups[3,4,5,21].

We note, and have responded in this Plan to, results from our 2024 National Student Survey (NSS) show that:
- Students from POLAR Quintiles 1 and 2 are more likely to struggle for academic support.
- Global Majority students at BNU have unmet academic support needs
- BNU students with non-traditional, e.g., BTEC, qualifications experience structural and learning resource-related challenges. See more in Annex A.

Risk 7: Insufficient Personal support; Risk 8: Mental Health

Insufficient Personal Support and instances of mental health are also considered risks in our context, particularly with increasing pressures on students regarding costs; mental health and wellbeing; and the institutional capacity and flexibility for support as student needs change.

These challenges affect also our students' sense of belonging, which is itself a significant factor and predictor, particularly for disadvantaged and underrepresented student groups. Belonging featured in our consultations with staff and students who linked it to student continuation, attainment, and completion outcomes, which institutional data appear to support. In our analysis of performance in assessment, differentiated by IMD Quintile and Ethnicity, in ten modules with the lowest Pass rates across BNU, students from our target groups are clearly at a greater risk regarding on-course outcomes, which aligns with the flag on belonging and emphasises the intentions for targeted academic needs assessment, on-going induction, and scaffolded learning support we have articulated in this APP.

Providing the right personal support alongside supporting our students academically has been of particular importance to the student and staff contributors in our consultations. Long waiting times, particularly for support with mental health and wellbeing, and cultural issues with declaring and seeking support with mental health and disability, are some of the emerging challenges faced by students. Institutional data on the use of our support provision, differentiated by risk indicators like IMD Quintile, Ethnicity, Disability, and Age, indicate that our target student groups often seek, engage with, and receive support less often and below their proportion in our student population. We have responded to this challenge in this Plan, through an emphasis on assessing student needs early and targeting support with them pro-actively.

Consultations with students also revealed differences in the perception of how student feedback is collected and shared, particularly in terms of how widely feedback and response to student feedback is shared. Students

[1] Policar, L., T. Crawford & V. Alligood. 2017. Accessibility Benefits of E-Learning for Students with Disabilities. Disabled World. www.disabled-world.com/disability/education/postsecondary/e-learning.php

[2] TASO. 2023. Summary report: What works to reduce equality gaps for disabled students. https://taso.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/TASO-report-what-works-to-reduce-equality-gaps-for-disabled-students.pdf

[3] Thomas, L. 2012. Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: a summary of findings and recommendations from the What Works? Student Retention & Success programme Summary Report. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-Summary-report.pdf

[4] Parker, H., A. Hughes, C. Marsh, S. Ahmed, J. Cannon, E. Taylor-Steeds, L. Jones & N. Page. 2017. Understanding the different challenges facing students in transitioning to university particularly with a focus on ethnicity. New Directions in the Teaching of Physical Sciences, Volume 12 (1). https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1231896.pdf

[5] OfS. 2021. Improving opportunity and choice for mature students. Insight. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/improving-opportunity-and-choice-for-mature-students/

commented that feedback system sometimes rely on the perceived approachability of the student representative, highlighting a potential gap in the feedback loop for students not engaged with this channel. As a result, these students may not only feel a reduced sense of belonging but may also miss out on valuable guidance and signposting that could support their continuation, progression, and attainment.

Students suggested that the timeliness and accessibility of support for those with a disability was an area that may require improvement, in part through raising staff awareness of basic accessibility infrastructure and by providing enhanced EDI training. Students expressed that these measures would help raise awareness of the specific challenges some students encounter in higher education, promoting a student centred and accessibility-focused approach within the institution. Insights from our discussions also highlighted the critical role of the Students' Union in support provision. The Students' Union collaborates with the university to host free to attend activities aimed at fostering a sense of belonging among various student communities, such as minority ethnic groups. Research from the Students' Union indicates that their events have higher engagement rates than the sector average, particularly among students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Furthermore, students who participate in these events demonstrate higher attendance and better continuation, completion and attainment rates compared to those who do not. However, students and Students' Union staff also noted that opportunities to foster a sense of belonging and inclusivity in academic settings are more limited, largely due to the continued reliance on online learning.

Risk 9: Ongoing impact of Coronavirus

The ongoing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic will persist throughout the lifetime of this Plan. Risks to equality of opportunity in accessing higher education, succeeding within it, and progressing to favourable graduate outcomes, which disproportionately affect underrepresented and disadvantaged students, are not yet fully realised or understood. Some of the legacies from the Coronavirus pandemic like lower attendance on campus by staff and students have contributed to the perceptions, motivation, belonging, and academic outcomes of our students.

We will remain vigilant in monitoring this context, and these challenges are addressed, including student support being effective and responsive to evolving needs. Understanding the experiences of students will be facilitated through our increased efforts in evaluation and research, as outlined in our Evaluation Strategy and supported in our collaborative efforts in evaluation and research (see Section 7).

Risk 10: Cost pressures

Cost pressures affect student ability to complete courses and obtain a good grade. The latest, 2024 Student Academic Experience Survey by Advance HE and HEPI[6] reported that 56% of students nationally are in paid employment and work significantly more hours a week than in 2023. The 8.2hrs per student per week in paid employment is 10 hrs short to earn enough to plug the gap between the maximum Government maintenance support and estimated minimum income thresholds to cover the cost of living in the four Home Nations[7].

Student consultations revealed that cost pressures continue as a major concern, especially for those with childcare responsibilities or who had to forgo full-time employment to attend university; and suggesting that the affordability of accommodation is a significant motivator to enrol at the institution over others. The Students' Union and Student Consultants also noted that accommodation-related issues can significantly impact students' continuation, progression, and ability to commit to placements. BNU offers variety of financial support and significant discounted and free resources and provision to students. The majority, or two thirds of the support we allocated in 2023-24 was spent on rent, bills and food, which illustrates the scale of financial disadvantage of our students, as a significant and ongoing concern. In consultations, students pointed out that these measures mainly benefit September intake and do not significantly impact the affordability of their studies. The most valuable financial support was consistently identified as being provided by the Students' Union. Their initiatives, such as offering free meals, employment opportunities, and the Big Deal, were cited as essential for supporting students' affordability needs and in promoting continuation and completion.

[6] Student Academic Experience Survey 2024. Advance HE. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/10746

[7] Freeman, J. 2024. A minimum income standard for students. Oxford: HEPI and London: TechnologyOne. www.hepi.ac.uk/2024/05/09/a-minimum-income-standard-for-students

We have more work to do on refining how we target financial support. Our staff and student consultations on the new APP revealed that our students may not be sufficiently aware of the support on offer and how to get it and need more support with accessing and purchasing, digital devices for study, including any independent study and catching up they need to do using online learning resources like recordings of taught sessions.

Our consultations also revealed that the rising cost of living poses challenges to students' ability to complete their courses and achieve good grades. Many students feel that attendance at BNU is not closely monitored, leading them to prioritise work over attending lectures to meet financial demands. The suggestion of introducing more flexible timetables, allowing students to better balance their studies and employment, was considered a useful intervention activity to address these challenges. Students and Students' Union staff involved in developing the Plan expressed support for continuing financial aid at BNU for target demographics. They noted that while financial assistance is beneficial, it needs to be tailored to the evolving needs and preferences of the demographics it serves throughout the lifespan of the Access and Participation Plan to ensure maximum impact. This may include offering provisions for digital literacy and access to updated resources like new e-books, which may help address student concerns surrounding the limited access to free study materials such as library books.

3. Objectives

From the assessment of performance (Annex A) and consideration of Risks (above, and Annex B), we have identified the following objectives that are our priorities under this Plan:

Target Reference (Annex C, Table 5d)	Objectives
PTS_1	To support continuation for Black students, aiming to eliminate the gap in continuation between these students and their white peers by 2032-33.
PTS_2	To support continuation for Asian students, aiming to eliminate the gap in continuation between these students and their white peers by 2032-33.
PTS_3	To support continuation for students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintile 1), aiming to eliminate the gap in continuation between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2032-33.
PTS_4	To support completion for students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 and 2), aiming to eliminate the gap in completion between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1 and Q2, aggregate) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2034-35.
PTS_5	To support completion for Asian students, aiming to eliminate the gap in completion between these students and their white peers, by 2034-35.
PTS_6	To support attainment (achievement of a First or 2:1 degree award) for students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintile 1), achieving a reduction in the gap in attainment between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), aiming to halve the gap by 2032-33.
PTS_7	To support attainment (achievement of a First or 2:1 degree award) for Black students, aiming to eliminate the gap between this group and their white peers by 2033-34.
PTS_8	To support attainment (achievement of a First or 2:1 degree award) for Asian students, aiming to halve the gap between this group and their white peers by 2032-33.
PTS_9	To support attainment (achievement of a First or 2:1 degree award) for mature (21 years and over) students, achieving a reduction in the gap in attainment between mature and young students, aiming to halve the gap by 2032-33.

4. Intervention Strategies

We have developed strategies to address risks to equality of opportunity and achieve our objectives. These outline activities to mitigate risks and meet objectives and targets; identify who will design, deliver, and evaluate the activities, along with an estimated cost; include an evaluation plan; and, are based on evidence from sector best practices and local insights from students.

We are dedicated to sharing the evaluation findings. Publication plans are indicative and will expand as dissemination opportunities arise. Relevant evaluation outcomes will inform ongoing practice improvements.

4.1 Intervention Strategy 1 – Preparation, Induction and Transitions Programme

This strategy focuses on academic support and building student's sense of belonging, mattering, and fit at the critical stages of induction and transition; with induction and transition conceptualised throughout study, rather than just at entry point. We have therefore adopted a multi-year / level approach, providing a scaffold for successful transition and facilitated asynchronous learning. This Strategy also provides opportunities for students to connect with their peers and staff members via their academic study as well as through social events, building their support communities and sense of belonging.

4.1.1 Objectives and Targets

To support continuation, completion and attainment outcomes for:

- Black students, aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between these students and their white peers by 2032-33; and eliminate the gap in **attainment** between this group and their white peers by 2033-34.
- Asian students, aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between these students and their white peers by 2032-33; eliminate the gap in **completion** between these students and their white peers, by 2034-35; and halve the gap in **attainment** between this group and their white peers by 2032-33.
- Students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintile 1), aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2032-33; and halve the gap in **attainment** by 2032-33.
- Students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 and 2), aiming to eliminate the gap in **completion** between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1 and Q2, aggregate) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2034-35.
- Mature (21 years and over) students, achieving a reduction in the gap in **attainment** between mature and young students, aiming to halve the gap by 2032-33.

Targets: PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4, PTS_5, PTS_6, PTS_7, PTS_8, PTS_9 – see Annex C, Table 5d.

4.1.2 Risks to Equality of Opportunity

The following risks from the National Equality of Opportunity Risk Register are relevant: Risk 2, Information and Guidance; Risk 6, Insufficient Personal Support; Risk 7, Insufficient Academic Support; Risk 8, Mental Health.

4.1.3 Evaluation

Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. We do not propose to evaluate the strategy as a whole but have set out evaluation against each of the activities. The strategy will commence from September 2025, with publication and sharing of findings as per the publication plan below.

4.1.4 Publication Plan

Format of Findings	When findings will be shared
We will produce an annual summary progress and review report, which will: • Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities in this Strategy based on the achievement of intended outcomes. • Capture learning and insights that inform practice improvements and any appropriate changes and developments. • Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website / SEER website.	Progress 'highlights' will be shared annually
We will produce an 'Evaluation To Date' or an 'End of Project' Report (whichever is relevant) capturing all evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website and the SEER website, and via channels mentioned below where appropriate.	4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2028) and/or at the conclusion of projects.
We will also contribute at conferences and through workshops and events hosted by networks such as, FACE, AMOSSHE, AGCAS, AdvanceHE, UniConnect (Study Higher), GuildHE, UUK, SEER.	At a minimum every 2 years, starting from 2025-26.
We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO.	As they arise, anticipated contributions at minimum every 2 years.

4.1.5 Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

We have conducted a literature review that reflects current research, good practice, and trends reflective of the OfS guidance in the areas of flexibility and inclusivity of higher education.

Our review of literature on pre-entry academic support, post-entry scaffolding of learning, and approaches to supporting student transition and belonging in higher education includes specific referencing of OfS and TASO publications, as well as broader and more recent published research on the topics. The quality of pre-entry information and advice on higher education is a contributing factor in the lower success rates of disadvantaged and underrepresented student groups, e.g., Global Majority students, and Black students in particular, but also first-in-the-family students, care experienced students, and students with disability (Bolton & Lewis, 2023). Providing good and timely information and advice on the available choice of programmes and subjects, the application process, support funding in place, etc., has a positive pre-enrolment effect on the access and preparation for HE study of disadvantaged students (TASO, 2023). So does support like assisting students with their applications (Oreopoulos & Ford, 2019), emphasising attainment raising rather than aspiration raising (Harrison & Waller, 2018), and mentoring and role-modelling by experienced older individuals with relevant industry experience or university student ambassadors (Robinson & Salvestrini, 2020; Sanders et al., 2018).

During transition to HE studies, a student's aspirations, motivation, self-belief, and academic achievement all correlate strongly with the student's sense of belonging to a learning community (Tinto, 1997; 2003). Belonging intersects with confidence and self-efficacy (Freeman et al., 2014). Insufficient support during the first year at university and throughout HE studies impacts negatively on the continuation and attainment of disadvantaged student groups (Thomas, 2012) based on ethnicity (Parker et al., 2017), age (OfS, 2021), first-in-the-family (Coombs, 2022), and disability (TASO, 2023). Providing support during application, pre-enrolment, and through a structured induction have a known positive effect on student continuation and attainment in the first year (Gorrard, 2006). Orientation and induction programmes can also boost the development of peer capital and self-advocacy skills by students who are first-in-the-family and/or socio-economically disadvantaged (Beard et al., 2023).

Ongoing academic support can be provided further and more effectively through developing and embedding a scaffold for guided learning that covers both in-class and independent learning. Models for scaffolding teaching and learning like flipped classroom (Advance HE, 2020) and just-in-time-teaching (Killi & Morrison, 2015) help wrap guided independent learning activities around in-class learning, flex delivery of timetabled teaching via a hybrid model, and provide continuous feedback on in- and out-of-class learning. These models can be very effective for enhancing engagement with learning, raising student confidence and attainment, and increasing student satisfaction (UWL, 2019). See Annex B for further information and references.

Student Consultation
In consultations on this Plan, students noted the success of pre-entry support, suggesting that some students rely greatly on this support as they enter university. Students provided the example of students entering with BTEC qualifications, and the significant differences between BTEC and university curricula and assessment, noting that as very few exams on BTEC compared to uni with exams. BTEC students need more support to navigate and transition for this. Student consultations pointed to expectations about reaching out and self-directed learning as opposed to BTEC teachers 'hounding' you for assignments; that there is less pressure on the BTEC route with exams and that students aren't prepared for this when they get to HE.

Students explained some of the challenges being faced at this critical time, including lack of understanding of expectations and trouble navigating the multitudes of information, on top of moving away from home; or on top of other responsibilities such as family, caring and work. They suggested needing more role models and support, which have been reflected in this Plan. Students noted that the activities discussed for inclusion in this Strategy made them feel that the university cared and that they mattered, which they believed would have onflow effect on outcomes. Notably, students welcomed the proposals to provide opportunities for social connections to be made in the classroom, and around study, through groupwork and teambuilding in the curriculum. Students noted that they felt this activity would support positive and manageable transitions and is inclusive. They highlighted that these activities would allow students to find friendships and communities around their study and noted that this would be extended to academic staff through the staff role model scheme. They noted that these opportunities would 'make student's lives easier and comfortable, knowing that there's someone else like them'.

Students also noted that ensuring early diagnostic for learning difference as critical. They commented that students should be supported to understand whether they need these support measures, and to understand the importance of coming forward in first year, rather than waiting. Students encouraged making this process as frictionless as possible.

The scaffolded, annual transitions programme has been included following student feedback that such support is needed throughout study. Students noted that, while some academic induction is currently done each year, it could be improved and made more consistent and doesn't currently include enough on reflections on previous assessments and learning, which would be useful for students in progressing their study and achievement. Students noted that specific development plans and a roadmap would be great and would help students to achieve through successful navigation and understanding of expectations of each year and level of study, and increased awareness of potential barriers and how to overcome them. As such, students concluded that annual academic induction and transition is even more important in second and third years, as this is when students really knuckle down. Students also suggested that this could incorporate a more celebratory approach to progression through each year, and that being recognised as such by the university will help with motivation, wellbeing and sense of mattering and belonging.

Intervention Strategy 1: Preparation, Induction and Transitions Programme

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation **Standards of evidence denoted as (T1), (T2), (T3).**	Cross Intervention
Academic-linked pre-entry support, preparation and expectations A range of support and preparatory activity is provided pre-entry and during onboarding. Some activities are available to and benefit all students as part of a whole community approach; others focus target groups under this Plan and more broadly under the equality of opportunity agenda. Activities include: • Pre-entry HE advice and guidance, for example with course and accommodation application process (i.e. filling in applications, writing personal statements, interview/portfolio prep and applying for accommodation). Targeted at disadvantaged students, care-leaver and estranged students. • Provision of learning difference diagnostic where appropriate and subsequent support action planning (where required). • Welcome week and induction, including School-specific information, welcomes and Induction programmes incorporating academic and social activities; IT, finance and library surgeries; student success induction and SU activities. • Catch-up conference and Late Starter support, including digital resources and introductions to key academic and support roles. • Pre-entry preparation activities focused on applicants, offer holders, and/or accepted entrants, primarily targeted at BTEC route, IMD and BAME students. ○ This might include academic skills, expectations of study, time management but also social activities and the expectations of HE study.	Staff time (academic, support, admin). Costs of learning diagnostic. Resources and materials.	**Intermediate Outcomes** • Increased knowledge and awareness about HE and expectations of study. • Improved sense of belonging in HE. • Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. • Improved confidence and preparation for HE life and learning. • Learning difference assessments complete and relevant support plan in place. • Improved mental health and wellbeing, linked to sense of belonging, fit and social integration. **Outcomes** • Improved continuation rates. • Improved completion and attainment across first year for target groups.	**Process Evaluation** • Data Analysis: Number and % of students with target characteristics: receiving advice, accessing a learning diagnostic, attending events. (T1) • Some post-activity polls gathering student experience and perceptions. (T2) **Impact Evaluation** • Data Analysis: on-course engagement monitoring. (T2) • Data Analysis: continuation rates by target groups; and by students with early learning difference diagnostic / support plan in place. (T2) • Data Analysis: module/ assessment outcomes in first year by target groups. T2	IS2

Building community and belonging A range of activity with a focus on building community and student's sense of belonging, mattering and fit. Activity includes: • Fresher's Fortnight, facilitated by the SU providing students with the opportunity to form social connections and community groups. • Group learning activities incorporated into Week 1 of academic year to encourage a sense of belonging in new students, within an academic context. • Identification of staff champions with lived experience who can act as positive role models to target students. Staff introduce themselves at induction or pre-induction (e.g. during enrolment), acting as someone who students can approach and gain support from, for any issues they face in their university journey. • Buddy programme for student connections and support, facilitated by Retention and Engagement Team. We will conduct a literature review on student sense of belonging and wellbeing and links between the two, to be disseminated across BNU, to support this work improvements to practice.	Staff time (support, admin, SU, academic). Resources and materials. Food for events.	**Intermediate outcomes:** • Improved connections and engagement between students, and between staff and students, particularly amongst diverse groups. • Increased student sense of belonging. • Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. • Improved confidence and preparation for HE life and learning. • Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing. **Outcomes** • Increased continuation rates for target students.	**Process Evaluation** • Output analysis: number of staff champions, by target characteristics (T1) • Poll gathering student reflections on experiences with activities and perceptions about belonging, community and fit. (T2) **Impact evaluation** • Survey and/or focus groups to understand the effectiveness of activities promoting increases in sense of belonging and emotional and mental wellbeing (T1, T2). • Interviews /case study development around staff champions model. • Data analysis: continuation rates by target groups (T2).	
Scaffolded On-course Annual Transitions Programme This activity focuses on implementing an institutional approach that will embed scaffolded learning and development and support with academic skills in all years of academic study on our courses. Our curriculum scaffold model fits with our broader agenda for flexible curriculum and will work alongside considerations of the teaching timetable. The model may combine: • Creation of student journey 'roadmap' to support continuation, participation and success at key points of transition, decision-making and progression, where barriers may present.	Staff time (academic, support staff and admin)	**Intermediate outcomes** • Increased knowledge and awareness about HE and expectations of study. • Improved sense of belonging in HE. • Improved self-perceptions about	**Process Evaluation** • Data Analysis: Number of Schools implementing the curriculum. (T1) **Impact Evaluation** • Data Analysis: on-course engagement monitoring. (T2)	IS2 IS3

o Consultation with target students o Likely support and interventions designed accordingly • Annual personal development planning/learning needs analysis (including assessment through an educational gain lens using a student confidence measure) • Academic induction in every year of study, focusing on the most common needs areas at the level of study. Including debriefings on previous assessments. • Year-through scaffold that guides learning outside of the timetabled teaching. • Access to the personal tutor schedule and support. • The Calling Project, which provides a mechanism for checking in and offering advice and assistance to students in Level 4 after term one and before returning to studies in January, as part of a pro-active approach to supporting success. Students are asked about their experience and encouraged to raise any concerns or areas for support. Exploration of expansion to Foundation and other Years. The scaffold, based in blended learning, will guide our students' independent learning as preparation for and consolidation on their timetabled teaching, will provide continuous feedback and review of learning needs through various tasks. It will deliver deliberative preparation for assessment through tasks that simulate assessment. This scaffold aims to support students with transitioning into HE as well as transitions between years and developing the right skills for success in their academic study (targeting continuation), preparing for assessment (targeting attainment), and flexibility for learning (targeting completion).		academic abilities and confidence. • Improved confidence and preparation for HE life and learning. **Outcomes** • Improved continuation rates for target students. • Improved attainment and completion rates for target students.	• Student and staff surveys and focus groups exploring outcomes. (T2) • Data Analysis: continuation rates by target groups. (T2) • Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree outcome) by target students (T2). • Data Analysis: completion rates by target groups. (T2) • Data Analysis: attainment rates by target groups. (T2)	

4.1.6 Cost

The total approximate cost of this Intervention Strategy, over the four years of this Plan, is £1,835,000

4.2 Intervention Strategy 2 – Intentional Curriculum, Teaching, Learning & Assessment, and Monitoring

This strategy focuses on improvements to curriculum, teaching and learning as a critical site of opportunity to enhance target student outcomes. We have included activities responding to five key areas of concern: flexibility, inclusivity, embedding support, embedding employability, and extra 1-2-1 academic support. We have included a range of mechanisms to enhance flexibility in our curriculum, to provide students with choice and preferences in relation to study and assessment opportunities. Improvements to flexibility in our curriculum also recognise and respond to the barriers that are more likely to be present for our target students. In curriculum, we have recognised the need to enhance inclusivity and provide a mechanism for regular review, as well as strengthen student involvement, input and co-creation. An enhanced programme of Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) training complements and consolidates these provisions. Embedded support measures provide for compassion in our curriculum, teaching and learning, ensuring it is responsive to student needs and that students can be holistically supported through their curriculum. To this end, as well as a range of in-house support measures, we have included new collaborations with *The Brilliant Club* and the *Learning and Work Institute*, to provide targeted support to specific groups. Embedding employability is also considered critical in our academic development. We have set a three-pillar approach, which includes academic-led activity; collaboration with the careers team; and a new strategic approach under a new Head of Graduate Outcomes role. Finally, development of our Personal Tutoring programme will provide students with improved 1-2-1 support in the academic context. This strategy is underpinned by overarching institutional development in data collection, collation, monitoring and reporting, which will increasingly feed into planning and improvements.

4.2.1 Objectives and Targets

To support continuation, completion, attainment and progression outcomes for:

- Black students, aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between these students and their white peers by 2032-33; and eliminate the gap in **attainment** between this group and their white peers by 2033-34.
- Asian students, aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between these students and their white peers by 2032-33; eliminate the gap in **completion** between these students and their white peers, by 2034-35; and halve the gap in **attainment** between this group and their white peers by 2032-33.
- Students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintile 1), aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2032-33; and halve the gap in **attainment** by 2032-33.
- Students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 and 2), aiming to eliminate the gap in **completion** between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1 and Q2, aggregate) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2034-35.
- Mature (21 years and over) students, achieving a reduction in the gap in **attainment** between mature and young students, aiming to halve the gap by 2032-33.

Targets: PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4, PTS_5, PTS_6, PTS_7, PTS_8, PTS_9 – see Annex C, Table 5d.

4.2.2 Risks to Equality of Opportunity

The following risks from the National Equality of Opportunity Risk Register are relevant: Risk 6, Insufficient Academic Support; Risk 7, Insufficient Personal Support; Risk 8, Mental Health; and Risk 10, Cost Pressures.

4.2.3 Evaluation

Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. We envisage being able to evaluate the strategy as a whole, by exploring the evaluation components of each activity together. We have set out evaluation against

each of the activities. The strategy will commence from September 2025, with publication and sharing of findings as per the publication plan below.

4.2.4 Publication Plan

Format of Findings	When findings will be shared
We will produce an annual summary progress and review report, which will: • Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities in this Strategy based on the achievement of intended outcomes. • Capture learning and insights that inform practice improvements and any appropriate changes and developments. • Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website / SEER website.	Progress 'highlights' will be shared annually
We will produce an 'Evaluation To Date' or an 'End of Project' Report (whichever is relevant) capturing all evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website and the SEER website, and via channels mentioned below where appropriate.	4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2028) and/or at the conclusion of projects.
We will also contribute at conferences and through workshops and events hosted by networks such as, FACE, AMOSSHE, AGCAS, AdvanceHE, UniConnect (Study Higher), GuildHE, UUK, SEER.	At a minimum every 2 years, starting from 2025-26.
We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO.	As they arise, anticipated contributions at minimum every 2 years.

4.2.5 Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

Our literature review on flexible and inclusive models and approaches to teaching and learning in higher education indicates the significance of flexibility and inclusivity for students' on-course success.

Lack of flexibility in the learning provision and teaching timetable can be detrimental to the retention and attainment of, e.g., mature and commuter students, students who must work in term time to manage financially, and students with care responsibilities. Flexible learning, for example via online taught modules, can accommodate better students with disability by removing physical barriers to learning on campus (Policar et al., 2017), providing longer to complete assessments (Verdinelli & Kutner, 2016), and rendering the students with more control over the scheduling, pacing, and navigation of their learning (Jalovcic, 2017). Lack of inclusivity in the curriculum, in terms of representation and role-modelling, is one of the likely predictors of retention and attainment gaps for Global Majority students, care experienced students, first-in-the-family students, and lower socio-economic class ('working-class') students more broadly (Arshad-Snyder, 2017; Hall et al, 2021). Lack of accessibility, physical and digital, of learning space and resources, and any associated reasonable adjustments that aim to mitigate it, can impact negatively on students with disability (TASO, 2023). The most effective teaching approaches to delivering flexibility, inclusivity, and compassion in curricular, co-curricular, and career development contexts appear to include active learning (Safari et al., 2020; Martinez-Rodrigo et al., 2017; Song et al., 2017) and blended learning (Yen at al., 2018; Grønlien et al., 2021). See Annex B for further information and references.

Student consultation

In consultations, students contributed to and were particularly welcoming of the activities in this strategy, noting that curriculum development that addresses the needs of students, and can help identify and address potential

barriers or biases, is critical for success. Student contributions stressed that diversifying the curriculum addresses issues of cultural relevance and representation that can affect student engagement and success.

Students were positive about flexible provision, noting that these options will help those who struggle with traditional assessments (particularly those with disability or from a coursework-based educational background) and a flexible, more condensed timetable can help balance other commitments with studies. Students commented that assessments should align with career paths courses prepare students for, which is a consideration for design. Students noted that teaching to different strengths, utilising teamwork and focusing on open communication between staff and students are student-focused and holistic approaches that will build student confidence and sense of belonging and positive learning experience, and potentially offer transferable skills (i.e. teamwork).

Students welcomed the inclusion of enrichment modules, noting that they help students and especially students from disadvantaged background to gain more exposure to variety of subjects, and insight into other areas can impact employability and career goals.

Student suggestions around enhancing student input and the provision of EDI training were positive additions, and will help staff understand how to make BNU more inclusive and help staff understand how best to approach students. By covering a range of areas from mental health to career development and from teaching methods to community building, it helps give the student the best chance of attainment and progression regardless of their background.

In relation to embedded employability, students noted that collaboration between careers and academics may enhance opportunities and awareness of opportunities for internships, as well as helping students see direct relevance of their studies to future careers. Enhanced preparation for placements can be particularly beneficial for students who may lack professional networks or experience, helping to level the playing field. In this, students highlighted that preparation for placements is key and suggested that students access placements for a day the week before they start to help settle anxiousness.

Intervention Strategy 2: Intentional Curriculum, Teaching, Learning & Assessment, and Monitoring

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation **Standards of evidence denoted as (T1), (T2), (T3).**	Cross Intervention
Flexible curriculum and pedagogy Development of our teaching, learning and assessment approaches, focusing on intentional design that considers challenges more likely to occur for target students, addressing these through changes to: • Timetabling • Flexibility in study • Provision of employability in the curriculum/ enrichment modules, providing students the chance to explore diverse subjects and topics outside their main degree programme, to broaden their horizons and delve into areas of personal interest. These support the development of BNU's four Graduate Attributes, aligning with the careers and employability agenda. • Assessment flexibility, choice and alignment.	Staff time (academic and admin)	**Intermediate Outcomes** • Improved student motivation and engagement in learning. • Improved student mental health and wellbeing. • Improved student self-perceptions about academic abilities, confidence and belonging. **Outcomes** • Improved continuation rates for target students. • Improved completion and attainment rates for target students.	**Process Evaluation** • Output analysis: Number of courses with flexible provision for study, assessment and mode. (T1) • Review of teaching and learning, timetabling, assessment intensity, and other modifications to practices. (T1) **Impact Evaluation** • Enhanced module evaluation questionnaires, exploring student experiences and feedback. (T2) • Data Analysis: continuation rates for target students. (T2) • Data Analysis: completion and attainment rates for target students. (T2)	IS4

Inclusive Curriculum Review and Design	Staff time (academic). Trainer.	Outcomes	Process Evaluation	IS1
Our approach to inclusive learning, teaching and assessment practices is a Hallmark of BNU's Curriculum 23. With a focus on being inclusive and accessible, our revised validation processes embed evidence of inclusive design as a condition of programme approval – including, for example, evidence of decolonisation of resources, flexible assessment and designing out barriers to learning. Adopting an Equality Impact Assessment approach to curriculum development, review and monitoring, the curriculum is developed and annually reviewed using an equality perspective that covers key considerations for target groups under this Plan, as well as protected characteristics under the Equality Act. This includes the involvement of students in curriculum design to co-create and collaborate on elements of courses, helping to address some of the areas of concern faced by at-risk target groups. Activities in this area include: • The launch and delivery of Student Success and Support Group in 2024/25 in the School of Business and Law. • Development and dissemination of a Co-creation Research Strategy across the institution, ensuring student voices are heard, valued, and celebrated through collaborative research; and providing opportunities for students to enhance their skills. • Creating opportunities for flexible and negotiated assessments to meet the needs of all our learners through revisions to the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy, and validation and approval processes. • Development of principles of student co-creation and staff-student partnership for implementation through inclusive curriculum design practices. Develop and implement an enhanced and tailored programme of EDI training and development for staff. • Ongoing EDI training for staff in key areas (e.g. ethnicity awarding gap, inclusive design).		• EDI training delivered; staff attendance • Inclusivity impact assessments completed for curriculum areas. • Improved student motivation and engagement in learning. • Improved student mental health and wellbeing. • Improved student self-perceptions about academic abilities, confidence and belonging. • Improved relationships and engagement between staff and students. • (Tutors) Improved understanding of student experiences and challenges affecting student outcomes; and in-curricula strategies for effective support. • (Tutors) Improved confidence in understanding and addressing EDI areas	• Output analysis: Number of staff attending EDI training (T1). • Number of courses with student co-created elements. (T1) • Annual Course Review in respect of EDI/ inclusivity. (T1) **Impact Evaluation** • Enhanced module evaluation questionnaires, exploring student experiences and feedback. (T2) • (Tutors): Evaluation of EDI training and reporting on confidence and practice improvements. Via Survey/ focus group. (T2) • Data Analysis: continuation rates for target students. (T2) • Data Analysis: completion and attainment rates for target students. (T2)	

• Staff training on other key aspects for target groups, such as belonging and mattering; key challenges for target groups and intersectional disadvantage (annual).		and supporting students **Outcomes** • Improved continuation rates. • Improved completion and attainment rates for target students.		
Embedding support to enhance success A range of activities to embed support measures as part of the curriculum, which is prefaced on improving understanding of: • Where students come from, their broader contexts and likely challenges, with measures focused on preparation and intentional and compassionate design. • Meeting students where they are – experiences (of HE, etc), skills and knowledge, contexts during study, with measures for relevant and targeted embedded support and intentional design. • Students' ambitions and career aspirations, with measures focused on embedded career and employability development, including for placements. Various activity ensures curriculum is responsive to likely needs, and students are holistically supported via study. Closer collaborative working between academics, student support services and careers services underpins this activity. Embedding support into the curriculum may include: • Curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment review through a support lens. • Incorporation of mental health and wellbeing resources, support and activities in curriculum across various schools. • Teaching to different strengths. • Group work and collaborative projects to build community. • Fostering an environment of open communication between students and teachers.	Staff time (academic, support, coaches). The Brilliant Club costs.	**Intermediate outcomes** • Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes. • Improved sense of belonging in HE. • Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. • Improved student mental health and wellbeing. • Improved module assessment scores. **Outcomes** • Improved continuation rates for target students. • Improved attainment and completion rates for target students.	**Process Evaluation** • Data Analysis: Number and % of students engaging with coaches and % with target characteristics (T1). • Annual Course Review in respect of EDI/ inclusivity. (T1) **Impact Evaluation** • Survey or polls exploring perceptions and confidence in respect of outcomes (T2). • 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, polls exploring perceptions and confidence in respect of outcomes (T2). • Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups (T2).	IS1 IS2

• Encouraging participation in extracurricular activities to enhance social integration and support networks around study. • Building a process and roadmap for signposting and pro-active referrals to support services. • Communication of the value of a range of support. • Investment in Academic Coaches, providing academic support, guidance and feedback to enhance student outcomes. This will include 1-2-1 and small group support, guidance and feedback to students on their academic work; monitoring student performance data to understand the needs of learners across the University; contributing to the creation of documentation, resources and guides to support students to enhance their academic performance; working with colleagues to identify curriculum development opportunities designed to improve student engagement, retention, progression, and attainment. • Collaboration with *The Brilliant Club* to deliver support to targeted IMD Q1 and 2 groups of students to improve outcomes. • Collaboration with the *Learning and Work Institute* to provide academic and personal support to adult carers. • Tailored Re-engagement Plans - a new initiative in line with the updated Attendance Monitoring Policy. Students who have been flagged as part of this policy will have re-engagement plans available to them. Re-engagement plans will also tie in with the Support to Study Process. These are tailored to the student journey and support requirements with the aim of reintroducing students to their studies and supporting them to succeed. • Conducting research to improve understanding of student's needs, for example for BTEC learners an audit of pre-enrolment BTEC courses to better understand how to bridge learning at HE; research into the concept of 'constructive withdrawal' experienced by male Asian students; research into school-level support needs for specific groups; and exploration of continuation and attainment for students of the Global Majority.			• Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree outcome) by target students (T2).	
Responsive to industry with embedded careers and employability development	Staff time (academic,	**Intermediate outcomes**	**Process Evaluation**	IS1 IS2

Concentrated activity to strengthen embedding employability into curriculum is a key activity in this Plan. We identify three areas of work: 1. Academic-led and employer-engaged activity: Including industry engagement and advisory boards and embedded career development initiatives in curriculum. Industry Advisory Boards allow Schools to work in partnership with business and social communities to ensure they remain aligned strategically with national, professional and sector priorities, especially relating to employability. The Boards also help the School and University maximise local, regional and national economic and social benefit. Direct benefits to students flow in the form of placements, experiences and (where available) funding opportunities. 2. The careers team will continue to work closely with academic schools, including provision and development of enrichment and professional development modules within the subject area. Workshops include business culture, professional insights, presentation skills, interview workshops, and assessment centres. 3. A new Head of Graduate Outcomes role will work closely with curriculum, academics and industry to strategically strengthen employability in curriculum. The Head of Graduate Outcomes will lead the design and delivery of our comprehensive employability strategy and develop an operating model that empowers our graduates to achieve their career aspirations. They will drive efforts to bridge the gap between education and employment, ensuring that our graduates are not only well prepared academically but are also equipped with the 'real-world' skills, networks, and resources essential for career success. They will develop approaches to employability that will deliver sector-leading graduate outcomes and ensure that employability is embedded in the curriculum and articulated through the University's approach to learning, teaching and assessment. Blend of new and developing existing activity.	careers, Head of Graduate Outcomes). Employer contributions.	• Increased relevance of curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment regarding industry requirements. • Increased knowledge and capacity relating to career and employability skills. • Increased professional networks and contacts. • Increased knowledge and understanding of the labour market, professional standards and competencies. • Improved self-perceptions about career and employability capacities, readiness and confidence. • Improved motivation and engagement in learning. **Outcomes** • Improved attainment rates for target students. • Improved progression rates for target students.	• Data Analysis: Number of courses with industry advisory panels, placements and other integrated employability elements, by type. (T1) • Annual course review in respect of employability components (T1) **Impact Evaluation** • Surveys and/or 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore impact of employability aspects of curriculum and understand their experiences. (T2) • Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups. (T2) • Data Analysis: attainment by target students. (T2) • Data analysis: progression into employment and into highly skilled employment or post-graduate study pathways for target students. (T2)	

Personal Tutor Programme	Personal Tutor time	Intermediate outcomes	Process Evaluation	
BNU's approach to Personal Tutoring is an essential part of the student experience and designed to support student academic success. BNU will enhance its approach to personal tutoring. With a dedicated tutor for each student and planned termly meeting, Personal Tutors support the academic development and wellbeing of students, providing guidance, and where appropriate, signposting relevant support services. Existing activity, ongoing improvements.		• Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes. • Improved motivation and engagement in learning. • Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities, confidence and belonging. • Improved module / assessment grades. • (Tutors) Improved knowledge and confidence in range of support for students. • (Tutors) Improved understanding of student experiences and challenges affecting student outcomes; and strategies for effective support. **Outcomes** • Improved continuation rates for target students. • Improved completion and attainment rates for target students.	• Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils engaging with PT and % with target characteristics (T1). • Output analysis: Number of sessions run (T1) • Post-PT polls gathering student experience /perceptions (T2). • Annual end-of-year Staff Survey exploring whether content was appropriate and effective, and to explore challenges. (T1) **Impact Evaluation** • Baseline and annual student survey exploring perceptions/confidence in respect of academic skills, industry knowledge and personal support/ experience. (T2) • 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore key themes from polls and surveys. (T2) • Annual end-of-year Staff Survey exploring confidence in providing student support and	

		• (Tutors) Improved confidence and career development.	career development outcomes. (T2) • Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups. (T2) • Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree outcome) by target students. (T2) *If possible:* Comparative analysis of outcomes (continuation, completion, attainment) between students who have engaged with PT and those who have not. (T2 to T3)	
Enhancing data use: Institution-wide plan setting data usage and monitoring across the student journey BNU has an effective data insights environment (Tableau) which is used for continuous monitoring of student success. This is designed to provide a proactive and responsive process to inform student support and intervention. These include module performance dashboards, student achievement reports, attendance reports and the ability to conduct monitoring for achievement for intersectionality. This has also been extended to BNU partners to strengthen quality monitoring. BNU also employs other data insights through a system of predictive analytics (Civitas Illume) which tracks levels of student engagement (e.g., absence, interaction with the Virtual Learning Environment) that provides targeted interventions for student support. This is led by the University's Retention and Engagement Team that facilitates insights into patterns of engagement with academic staff and student services.		**Intermediate outcomes** • Improved interim indicators and metrics on student outcomes, highlighting differential patterns in respect of student characteristics. • Improved academic and leadership understanding of progress and possible barriers. **Outcomes** • Improved continuation rates for target students.	The monitoring processes described provide our monitoring and evaluation for this activity.	

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Through the process of annual programme monitoring and review, BNU utilises module data performance through Tableau - including average module marks and comparative module performance - to understand the needs of our learners and refresh teaching and assessment practices. This data-driven approach to curriculum development and enhancement supports our new quality assurance processes which are aligned with the Conditions of Registration. This fosters ongoing utilisation of data to turn annual self-reflection and review into enhancement that supports a high-quality academic experience. Over the course of this Plan, we will undertake further work to develop monitoring schedules and practice in line with access and participation metrics. Existing activity, developed.		• Improved completion and attainment rates for target students. • (Institution) improved understanding of student progress and key challenge areas for redress.

4.2.6 Cost

The total approximate cost of this Intervention Strategy, over the four years of this Plan, is £5,482,000

4.3 Intervention Strategy 3 – Enhancing Targeted Student Support

This strategy focuses on enhancing and targeting our student support mechanisms. While we already provide a range of support, we have identified development areas to prioritise under this Plan, in line with our performance targets and target groups. We have provided a model of enhanced student support, comprising a new Student Hub, acting as a 'one-stop-shop' for student enquiries and support. Given our cohorts of BNU taught who declare disabilities, and with increasing instances of mental health concerns, we have included a range of disability support and additional advice and support offered through our Student Union, as a critical resource noted by students in consultations on this Plan. In a continued response to student's reporting of financial concerns, we have included our financial support, which is a comprehensive and generous package designed to provide students with a range of support to address cost-of living and financial crisis. Targeted support in the form of mentoring has also been provided in key areas, including specific opportunity for the institution to enhance connection with and learning from students, in our reverse mentoring programme between students (mentors) and senior leaders (mentees).

4.3.1 Objectives and Targets

To support continuation, completion, attainment and progression outcomes for:

- Black students, aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between these students and their white peers by 2032-33; and eliminate the gap in **attainment** between this group and their white peers by 2033-34.
- Asian students, aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between these students and their white peers by 2032-33; eliminate the gap in **completion** between these students and their white peers, by 2034-35; and halve the gap in **attainment** between this group and their white peers by 2032-33.
- Students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintile 1), aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2032-33; and halve the gap in **attainment** by 2032-33.
- Students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 and 2), aiming to eliminate the gap in **completion** between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1 and Q2, aggregate) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2034-35.
- Mature (21 years and over) students, achieving a reduction in the gap in **attainment** between mature and young students, aiming to halve the gap by 2032-33.

Targets: PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4, PTS_5, PTS_6, PTS_7, PTS_8, PTS_9 – see Annex C, Table 5d.

4.3.2 Risks to Equality of Opportunity

The following risks from the National Equality of Opportunity Risk Register are relevant: 6, Insufficient Personal Support; Risk 7, Insufficient Academic Support; Risk 8, Mental Health; and Risk 10, Cost Pressures.

4.3.3 Evaluation

Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. We do not propose to evaluate the strategy as a whole but have set out evaluation against each of the activities. The strategy will commence from September 2025, with publication and sharing of findings as per the publication plan below.

4.3.4 Publication Plan

Format of Findings	When findings will be shared
We will produce an annual summary progress and review report, which will:	Progress 'highlights' will be shared annually

• Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities in this Strategy based on the achievement of intended outcomes. • Capture learning and insights that inform practice improvements and any appropriate changes and developments. • Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website / SEER website.	
We will produce an 'Evaluation To Date' or an 'End of Project' Report (whichever is relevant) capturing all evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website and the SEER website, and via channels mentioned below where appropriate.	4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2028) and/or at the conclusion of projects.
We will also contribute at conferences and through workshops and events hosted by networks such as, FACE, AMOSSHE, AGCAS, AdvanceHE, UniConnect (Study Higher), GuildHE, UUK, SEER.	At a minimum every 2 years, starting from 2025-26.
We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO.	As they arise, anticipated contributions at minimum every 2 years.

4.3.5 Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

Our review of the literature around student support revisits the theme of belonging, because sense of belonging to the HE institution appears to determine continuation (Thomas, 2012) and success (Meehan & Howells, 2019) for many disadvantaged student groups.

Belonging to the course, subject, and institution shapes student transition into higher education (Hurtado et al., 2007), engagement with coursework (Wlison et al., 2015), self-efficacy (Freeman et al., 2011), satisfaction (Zumbrunn et al., 2014), and continuation, completion, and attainment (Peddler et al., 2022; Ahn & Davis, 2023). Awareness of available support and how to obtain it are crucial for student success (Thomas, 2020), and especially for the success of disadvantaged students who are at higher risk of dropping out in their first year or before they complete their course (Mi Young Ahn et al., 2023). Awareness and accessing financial support and support with mental health and wellbeing have the greatest impact (Wavehill, 2022; OfS, 2023).

Effective approaches to providing targeted and timely support involve embedding it into curricula (Wavehill, 2022), engaging students in reflection through personal development planning (Hunt et al., 2017) and enhancing student confidence in seeking the support (Wavehill, 2020). Peer learning and support, via peer-tutoring schemes (e.g., peer-assisted learning, or PAL) and peer-mentoring schemes, enhance institutional support provision by increasing student belonging (Drysdale et al., 2021), academic self-efficacy (Andreanoff, 2016), self-esteem (Collings et al., 2014), wellbeing (happiness, locus of control) and life satisfaction (Drysdale et al., 2021; Andreanoff, 2016), retention and attainment (; Chester et al., 2013; Duah et al., 2014; Collings et al., 2014). See Annex B for further information and references.

Student Consultation

Students discussed the various support provided by BNU extensively, demonstrating the need and priority of this area. In relation to this Plan, students noted that free counselling is a positive and proactive activity that can support student mental health, although there is currently a long waiting list. Other issues include stigma surrounding mental health (i.e. From global majority backgrounds/men) which can impact self-referral, which needs to be considered. The 'one-stop-shop' was formulated to address some of these concerns. Students confirmed that financial aid, in terms of cash awards and the Big Deal, are critically important, and they applauded BNU for its significant investments.

Intervention Strategy 3: Enhancing Targeted Student Support

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation **Standards of evidence denoted as (T1), (T2), (T3).**	Cross Intervention
Mental health and wellbeing support Provision of support, wellbeing and counselling services. Our support service is multi-faceted, and includes: **Student Hub** • New Student Hub is being launched, in partnership with Registry to facilitate one central team to deal with all student queries – as a 'one-stop shop'. • This will provide first point of contact for student queries and aims to resolve all queries within the first contact or signpost/book appointment with the relevant service. • Services include, for example: o Letter and Reference requests o Change of address o ID cards o Financial information o Wellbeing support o International advice o Academic support **Disability and Inclusion service** Activity through this service is responsive and considered in terms of what we understand about our target student needs. It includes: • Screening for specific learning difficulties, mental health problems and autism • Disabled learner screening, diagnostic and support • Reasonable adjustment recommendations for teaching and exams	Staff time (all support services). Training. TogetherALL subscription	**Intermediate outcomes** • Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. • Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing. • Increased assessments for a range of diagnoses. • Student needs are supported. • Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes. • Improved motivation and engagement in learning. • Improved module / assessment grades. **Outcomes** • Improved continuation rates for target students.	**Process Evaluation** • Data Analysis: Number and % of students with target characteristics receiving support (T1). • Data analysis: Analysis of referrals vs. self-sign up, by student. characteristics. (T1). • Some post-activity polls gathering student experience and perceptions (T2). **Impact Evaluation** • 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore student experiences and outcomes in respect of support activities (T2). • Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups (T2). • Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree	

• Non-Medical Helper (NMH) support such as mentoring and specialist study skills support. • 1-2-1 advice and support from an allocated Disability Advisor • 1-2-1 advice and support from a Mental Health Advisor • Training and advice for staff to help them better support students with disabilities • Crisis support, triage and signposting to external services • Mental Health First Aiders Rota (23 trained) • Sexual Violence Advisors • Serious Case Review for complex cases • Suicide prevention training and information • TogetherALL platform and reviewing of information to make it relevant for students **Students Union Advice Centre** The Student Union offer impartial support and guidance to support student wellbeing, in a range of areas including accommodation, course or money related topics, legal matters and personal issues. Development and improvement of existing activity.		• Improved completion and attainment rates for target students.	outcome) by target students. (T2)	

Financial Support and the Big Deal
Our package of financial support provides a range of essential resource to students to mitigate poverty and address the cost-of-living crisis. BNU offer a range of bursaries and financial support, including:
 	
• Bursaries
  o Thrive Bursary (targeted at low income and IMD Q1-2 students)
  o Care Leaver Bursary
  o Estranged Student Bursary
  o Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman and Boater (GTRSB) Bursary
  o Refugee scholarship
	Financial support monies.
	
	Staff admin time.
		Intermediate outcomes
		• Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to financial security.
		• Student's basic and financial needs are supported.
		• Students able to participate in various access, academic and social facets of university life. (positively impacting sense of belonging).
			Process Evaluation
			• Data Analysis: Number and % of students receiving bursaries and other financial support (T1), analysed by student characteristics.
			• Output Analysis: Total spend on bursaries and other financial support, including by student characteristics. (T1)
			• Poll gathering bursary and financial support experience and	

• The 'Big Deal', providing students with a range of completely free services and access to, for example, societies, recreation, certified training courses, and the 'Big Meal Deal' providing a range of free food at breakfast and dinner times.
 	
• Other resource, emergency and hardship funds:
  ○ BNU Learning Resource Fund
  ○ BNU Financial Aid – Emergency Fund
  ○ BNU Financial Aid – Hardship Fund
  ○ DSA Laptop Assistance
  ○ Laptop Loan Scheme
 	
As part of enhancing general financial literacy, we also provide workshops and sessions on financial and budgeting advice and guidance. Promoted particularly to those accessing hardship funding.
 	
Enhancements to existing provision.
		• Job/ income pressure is decreased.
		
		Outcomes
		• Increased continuation and completion rates for target students.
		• Increased attainment rates for target students.
			perceptions (students and staff) of the process / allocation. (T2)
			
			Impact Evaluation
			• As per relevant parts of the OfS *Evaluating the Impact of Financial Support* toolkit, every two years.	

Targeted mentoring
A range of targeted mentoring opportunities are offered to support students with academic, personal and professional development, as well as to promote belonging and mattering through student-staff mentor relationships. These include:
• Care leaver students can be allocated a one-to-one pastoral mentor while at BNU. Students can apply for a mentor (BNU alumni/professional). Mentoring runs between November-May, where 5 face-to-face or online sessions take place.
• Foundation Year students are provided with Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) mentoring, and Module Mentoring to Level Four Students is targeted to need, in the schools of:
  ○ Business and Law
  ○ Human and Social Sciences
  ○ Creative and Digital Industries
• Reverse Mentoring, targeting Global Majority Ethnicity and Disabled student/staff members. Reverse Mentoring provides an opportunity for students to mentor members of the University Executive Team (UET). Aims to give target groups the opportunity to offer advice,
	Staff time (mentors, leadership). PAL mentors. Resources.	**Intermediate outcomes**
		• Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes.
		• Improved motivation and engagement in learning.
		• Improved self-perceptions about confidence and belonging.
		• **(Mentors)** Improved understanding of student experiences and challenges affecting student outcomes; issues relating to inclusion and race; and
			Process Evaluation
			• Data Analysis: Number and % of students with target characteristics engaging with mentoring (T1).
			• Data Analysis: Number of senior leaders engaging with mentoring (T1).
			• Some post-mentoring polls gathering staff and student experience /perceptions (T2).
			
			Impact Evaluation
			• Mentor and mentee Surveys exploring	

guidance and strategies to barriers they experience. This is a structured mentoring programme with clear expectations for students with protected characteristics to mentor Senior Management. Includes: o BEN stories and webinars with more information and buy in o Application pack for students and staff o Guidelines for mentor and mentees, including meeting record documents o Promotion and Marketing information to be created and distributed across the university. The Executive Team gain insight into marginalised groups' lived experience, to support meaningful changes. Specifically mentioned are accommodation strategy, university governance and compliance matters, impact and lived experiences. Enhancements to existing provision.		strategies for effective student support. **Outcomes** • Improved continuation rates for target students. • Improved completion and attainment rates for target students. • **(Mentors)** Improved confidence in decision-making in relation to strategies to improve student experience, support, and outcomes. • **(Mentors)** Student insights are reflected in institutional policy, governance, development, and planning.	experiences and outcomes (T2). • Student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore experiences and perceptions of mentoring programme and outcomes (T2). • Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups (T2). • Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree outcome) by target students (T2).	

4.3.6 Cost

The total approximate cost of this Intervention Strategy, over the four years of this Plan, is £9,926,000 (including financial support provision).

4.4 Intervention Strategy 4 – Authentic Employability Development through Universal Placements

This strategy concentrates on our new strategy for universal placements, with the aim of enhancing student's on-course success, experience and ultimately progression. Enhancing our pre-enrolment and annual employability diagnostic to better understand student's career and employability context, skills, experience and ambitions, is also included in this Strategy as a key monitoring tool informing the provision of proactive support opportunities. Our whole-institution approach to placements and support is a significant investment in career and employability outcomes, recognising the significant impact this work can also have in continuation, attainment, and completion.

4.4.1 Objectives and Targets

To support completion and attainment outcomes for:

- Black students, aiming to eliminate the gap in **attainment** between this group and their white peers by 2033-34.
- Asian students, aiming to eliminate the gap in **completion** between these students and their white peers, by 2034-35; and halve the gap in **attainment** between this group and their white peers by 2032-33.
- Students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintile 1), aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2032-33; and halve the gap in **attainment** by 2032-33.
- Students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 and 2), aiming to eliminate the gap in **completion** between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1 and Q2, aggregate) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2034-35.
- Mature (21 years and over) students, achieving a reduction in the gap in **attainment** between mature and young students, aiming to halve the gap by 2032-33.

Targets: PTS_3, PTS_4, PTS_5, PTS_6, PTS_7, PTS_8, PTS_9 – see Annex C, Table 5d.

4.4.2 Risks to Equality of Opportunity

The following risks from the National Equality of Opportunity Risk Register are relevant: Risk 7, Insufficient Academic Support; Risk 10, Cost pressures.

4.4.3 Evaluation

Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. We have set out evaluation against each of the activities. The strategy will commence from September 2025, with publication and sharing of findings as per the publication plan below.

4.4.4 Publication Plan

Format of Findings	When findings will be shared
We will produce an annual summary progress and review report, which will: - Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities in this Strategy based on the achievement of intended outcomes.	Progress 'highlights' will be shared annually

• Capture learning and insights that inform practice improvements and any appropriate changes and developments. • Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website / SEER website.	
We will produce an 'Evaluation To Date' or an 'End of Project' Report (whichever is relevant) capturing all evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website and the SEER website, and via channels mentioned below where appropriate.	4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2028) and/or at the conclusion of projects.
We will also contribute at conferences and through workshops and events hosted by networks such as, FACE, AMOSSHE, AGCAS, AdvanceHE, UniConnect (Study Higher), GuildHE, UUK, SEER.	At a minimum every 2 years, starting from 2025-26.
We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO.	As they arise, anticipated contributions at minimum every 2 years.

4.4.5 Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

We have conducted a literature review on effects of work experience on student progression outcomes that indicates a strong link between, e.g., placements, and success at securing a graduate job (TASO, 2024).

Enabling development of employability skills through embedding opportunities for authentic work experience into curricula has proven impactful for student progression (Moore et al., 2013; Percy & Emms, 2020; Scott and Willson, 2021). The degree of 'authenticity' of the work placement appears to associate positively with outcomes (Atfield et al., 2021). Adequate support, preparation for, and integration of placements into the course contributed to the success of the placement. In fact, taking part in work experience embedded into the course, regardless of the type of the work, suffices in delivering employability gains to students (Jackson, 2024).

Disadvantaged student groups tend to have lower progression outcomes (Concina, 2022) and lower social capital and support networks for navigating the job market (Burke et al., 2020; Bathmaker, 2021; McCafferty, 2022). They are likely to benefit the most from opportunities for work experience in the form of placements, embedded into the curriculum (Roland et al., 2023).

Student Consultation

Students strongly welcomed the implementation of expanded placements across courses, highlighting that they would greatly benefit from these experiences, as they offer a chance to experience the 'real world' work environment and ease the transition from academia. Students acknowledged that practical experience gained through placements enhances employability by allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings, as well as providing valuable insights into chosen industries and help build professional networks.

Intervention Strategy 4: Authentic Employability Development through Universal Placements

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation Standards of evidence denoted as (T1), (T2), (T3).	Cross Intervention
Whole-Institution Approach to Placements & Support BNU have committed to embedding placement opportunities in all courses. The Curriculum 23 (C23) Blueprint included an Employability Pillar, committing to placements for all programmes, with the aim of providing students with experiential learning opportunities to enable them to develop a range of personal, professional and employability knowledge, skills and behaviours which contribute to their potential as future graduate employees. They also serve to support the University mission as a community-engaged civic university, actively contributing to economic growth and cultural life in the region. An important priority under this Plan will be to enhance the employability of BNU students and this work will be developed and led by the CPH who will create a centralised model for on-boarding, embedding and providing placement opportunities specifically targeted at enhancing the graduate outcomes for disadvantaged and under-represented student groups. This work will support on-course success and outcomes, as well as progression. The CPH will have targeted interventions for students in terms of placement preparation, expectations and prior cultural capital to identify suitable placements which will support and implement reasonable adjustments whilst supporting the students to access their placement programme requirements. Academic Schools have different models for the delivery of their placements, that is, they may be set days a week, block placements or year-long placements. Placements may be simulated to ensure access in areas of limited		**Intermediate outcomes** • All students access placements as part of their BNU experience. • Increased relevance of curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment in respect of industry requirements. • Increased knowledge and capacity relating to career and employability skills. • Increased level of professional networks and contacts. • Increased knowledge and understanding of the labour market, professional standards and competencies. • Improved self-perceptions about career and employability capacities, readiness and confidence.	**Process Evaluation** • Data Analysis: Number of courses with placements, by type. (T1) **Impact Evaluation** • Surveys and/or 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore impact of placements and understand their experiences. (T2) • Interviews with academic staff, careers/placement team and employers to understand impact and experiences. (T2) • Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups. (T2) • Data Analysis: attainment by target students. (T2) • Data analysis: progression into employment and into	IS2

capacity / availability. The placement learning outcomes will vary as some programmes will be validated with professional placements, Employer led projects, Internships and Work-Based learning. The Careers and Placement Hub (CPH) will provide strategic leadership of careers and placement, with the aim of enhancing the employability and graduate outcomes of BNU students. The CPH aims to provide careers support and quality placement learning experiences where learners are supported to achieve their placement/ work-based learning within a quality assured and safe learning environment. The CPH will contribute to lead the development of an employer engagement strategy which will inform placement expansion, onboarding and evaluating of placement providers in the local and private sector. This strategy will also inform future employment opportunities for students.		• Improved motivation and engagement in learning. **Outcomes** • Improved completion and attainment rates for target students. • Improved progression rates for target students.	highly skilled employment or post-graduate study pathways for target students. (T2)

4.4.6 Cost
The total approximate cost of this Intervention Strategy, over the four years of this Plan, is £980,000.

4.5 Intervention Strategy 5 – Partner support and development strategy

This strategy focuses on continued and developed close working with university partners to improve on-course success targets within the APP. This is underpinned by improvement planning strategies using evidence informed principles designed to bring about sustainable and lasting improvement. Partners will receive ongoing support and development in self-evaluation and improvement planning aligned with the university's refreshed approaches to quality. This is aligned to the OfS' Conditions of Registration. Partners will be supported in the implementation of migration to BNU's new institutional curriculum transformation (Curriculum 23) from 2025. Furthermore, BNU will support partners with detailed data insights through its Tableau environment about student outcomes and evidence-based approaches to improving equality of opportunity. Shared professional development opportunities will be provided including annual staff summits, postgraduate training in academic practice to support staff, and short courses on teaching and supporting learners in higher education. Maximising the synergies and innovations for enhancement between the provider and partners will be achieved through strong collaboration and governance arrangements. BNU will support partners with engagement with key external stakeholders such as TASO, SEER, the Brilliant Club and Uni Connect and regularly review student support (e.g., financial support).

4.5.1 Objectives and Targets

To support continuation, completion, attainment and progression outcomes for:

- Black students, aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between these students and their white peers by 2032-33; and eliminate the gap in **attainment** between this group and their white peers by 2033-34.
- Asian students, aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between these students and their white peers by 2032-33; eliminate the gap in **completion** between these students and their white peers, by 2034-35; and halve the gap in **attainment** between this group and their white peers by 2032-33.
- Students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintile 1), aiming to eliminate the gap in **continuation** between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2032-33; and halve the gap in **attainment** by 2032-33.
- Students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 and 2), aiming to eliminate the gap in **completion** between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1 and Q2, aggregate) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2034-35.
- Mature (21 years and over) students, achieving a reduction in the gap in **attainment** between mature and young students, aiming to halve the gap by 2032-33.

Targets: PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4, PTS_5, PTS_6, PTS_7, PTS_8, PTS_9 – see Annex C, Table 5d.

4.5.2 Risks to Equality of Opportunity

The following risks from the National Equality of Opportunity Risk Register are relevant: Risk 2, Information and Guidance; Risk 6, Insufficient Personal Support; Risk 7, Insufficient Academic Support; Risk 8, Mental Health; and Risk 10, Cost Pressures.

4.5.3 Evaluation

Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. We will look at the evaluation and analysis holistically and have set out evaluation against each of the activities. The strategy will commence from September 2025, with publication and sharing of findings as per the publication plan below.

4.5.4 Publication Plan

Format of Findings	When findings will be shared
We will produce an annual summary progress and review report, which will: • Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities in this Strategy based on the achievement of intended outcomes. • Capture learning and insights that inform practice improvements and any appropriate changes and developments. • Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website / SEER website.	Progress 'highlights' will be shared annually
We will produce an 'Evaluation To Date' or an 'End of Project' Report (whichever is relevant) capturing all evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website and the SEER website, and via channels mentioned below where appropriate.	4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2028) and/or at the conclusion of projects.
We will also contribute at conferences and through workshops and events hosted by networks such as, FACE, AMOSSHE, AGCAS, AdvanceHE, UniConnect (Study Higher), GuildHE, UUK, SEER.	At a minimum every 2 years, starting from 2025-26.
We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO.	As they arise, anticipated contributions at minimum every 2 years.

4.5.5 Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

We have conducted a literature review that reflects current research, good practice, and trends reflective of the OfS guidance in the areas of flexibility and inclusivity of higher education.

Our literature review on managing franchise partnerships effectively revealed common challenges in maintaining comparable student outcomes between the parent higher education provider and its franchised partners (Braisby et al., 2024).

Effective approaches for closing performance and outcome gaps include seeking closer strategic and regulatory alignment across the partnerships and introducing an Ofsted style of quality inspections and data sharing.

Shared professional development, exchange of good practice, and innovation with staff across partnerships is a key ingredient to raising the quality of teaching and support practices, reaching parity of student experience, and achieving equitable student outcomes (EPI, 2021). See Annex B for further information and references.

Intervention Strategy 5: Partner support and development strategy

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation Standards of evidence denoted as (T1), (T2), (T3).	Cross Intervention
Quality and improvement planning Delivery of training on self-evaluation and improvement planning using a new quality approach underpinned by Ofsted evaluation principles and aligned to the OfS conditions of registration. Training will be led by a former Senior HMI Ofsted and senior BNU staff.	Formal training Academic & partner staff time	**Intermediate Outcomes** • Training delivered • Increased awareness, understanding and application of improvement planning and quality approach **Outcomes** • Quality and Improvement Plans established with Partners	**Process Evaluation** • Number of plans in place. (T1) **Impact Evaluation** • Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups at partner. (T2) • Data Analysis: attainment by target students at partner. (T2)	IS2
Prioritised Improvement Planning to accelerate improvements in differential outcomes. This is a formal system of rapid improvement planning underpinned by project management methodology designed to bring about sustainable change.	Formal training Staff time & Resources	**Outcomes** • Application of improvement planning and quality approach	**Process Evaluation** • Number of plans in place (T1) **Impact Evaluation** • Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups at partner. (T2) • Data Analysis: attainment by target students at partner. (T2)	IS2
Training and Professional Development Sustained support and collaboration for professional development between BNU and partners. This includes attending BNU's Staff Summit, opportunities for academic staff to attend the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice and the Teaching and Supporting learning in Higher Education short course. Other support includes Keep in touch events and partner conferences, hosted by BNU. Also	Staff time and resources	**Intermediate Outcomes** • Training delivered • Increased awareness, understanding and application of support services and available resources. **Outcomes**	**Process Evaluation** • Data analysis: Partner attendance at training and events (T1) • Polls capturing feedback and input. (T1) **Impact Evaluation** • Partner staff roundtables / focus groups exploring progress.	IS1 IS2 IS3 IS4

includes a range of training and development offered by services, for example training for partner college career support staff in delivery and resources provided from BNU in relation to careers support.		• Increased awareness, confidence and capability amongst partner staff in a range of BNU areas.	• Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups at partner. (T2) • Data Analysis: attainment by target students at partner. (T2)	
Strengthening partnerships for collaboration and support Shared networks to improve equality of opportunity for student success for all learners including SEER, TASO, the Brilliant Club and Uniconnect. Building shared collaboration for research, scholarship and evaluation through internal and external collaborations, again such as SEER and TASO to improve capacity building and expertise to improve equality of opportunity for success.	Staff time	**Intermediate Outcomes** • Introductions to relevant collaborators. **Outcomes** • Relevant partnerships established.	**Process Evaluation** • Number and type of collaborations / partnerships established. (T1) **Impact Evaluation** • Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups at partner. (T2) • Data Analysis: attainment by target students at partner. (T2)	IS1 IS2 IS3 IS4
Integrated data insights Partners will be supported with accessing BNU's Tableau data environment for responsive monitoring of academic performance and improvement interventions.	Data system investment Staff time	**Intermediate outcomes** • Improved interim indicators and metrics on student outcomes, highlighting differential patterns in respect of student characteristics. • Improved academic and leadership understanding of progress and possible barriers. **Outcomes** • Improved continuation rates for target students. • Improved completion and attainment rates for target students. • (Institution) improved understanding of student progress	The monitoring processes through Tableau provide our monitoring and evaluation for this activity.	

		and key challenge areas for redress.		
Tailored Access and Participation Improvement Plans Building from and incorporating relevant activities in Intervention Strategies 1-4 in this Plan, create a bespoke Access and Participation Improvement Plan for key (larger) franchise partners, in areas where performance show indicators of risk for target groups. Leverage BNU taught capacities to support the delivery of the Plans.	Staff time. Resources. Training.	As per relevant parts of Intervention Strategies 1-4 for individual Access and Participation Improvement Plans	As per relevant parts of Intervention Strategies 1-4 for individual Access and Participation Improvement Plans	IS1 IS2 IS3 IS4

4.5.6 Cost

The total approximate cost of this Intervention Strategy, over the four years of this Plan, is £4,446,000.

5. Whole Provider Approach

We are committed to equality of opportunity and to ensuring successful and equitable outcomes for students who have been identified as more likely to experience inequality of opportunity. We take a whole provider approach (WPA) to access and participation, which we have considered under this Plan using the emerging research on the WPA, led by Professor Liz Thomas[2]. We have evaluated our current WPA context and identified areas where we can go further. We have therefore structured this section against the key domains in the research and evaluation tool that are considered as part of an effective whole provider approach.

5.1 Our institutional journey

BNU has a strong track record of embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in its culture and practice. Through the development of a new Access and Participation Plan, there has been an opportunity to engage with the whole institution in an even deeper way and to ensure that there is a strong ambition and commitment to championing all student interests. This whole provider approach has confirmed that improving equality of opportunity for on-course success should have renewed emphasis to support all learners. Strategies and interventions point to a student success maturity model where is a greater collective understanding of the student journey and its transition points. Our institutional journey through the development of this APP has already accelerated commitment and achievement in several areas including the approval of in-year retrieval of assessments at all levels, the implementation of regular retention panels to monitor students at-risk, the implementation of a revised approach to quality underpinned by self-evaluation and improvement and the development of new external collaborations such as the Brilliant Club, the Learning and Work Institute, TASO and SEER. In particular, the co-creation of this APP with students and the Students' Union has strengthened our insights into the experiences of all learners to bring about sustainable change.

5.2 Our institutional and senior leadership commitment

Commitment to access and participation is explicit in our institutional strategy, 'Thrive 28', which sets a key theme for Inclusivity, committing to, '[working]… to embed inclusivity throughout our organisation, ensuring that all feel they fully belong to and can participate in the BNU community.'

The senior leadership of the University is fully committed to ensuring that inclusivity deeply informs our whole provider approach to access and participation and to ensuring the plan is successfully implemented. The Vice-Chancellor played a key role in the creation of the national GTRSBintoHE pledge scheme, served on the Universities UK advisory groups for its work on 'Closing the Gap – three years on' and 'Tackling racial harassment in higher education' and as EDI Champion on the Guild HE Executive Board convened Guild HE's EDI network. The Deputy Vice Chancellor chairs the Study Higher Board and the PVC Education is a Board member ensuring senior management engagement in strategic partnerships. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee is chaired by the DVC and our Equality Strategy is embedded across the institution. This included the launch of an Inclusive Research and Knowledge Exchange Policy. In our intervention strategies in this Plan, we have made significant and whole-institution commitments to strengthen our practice and progress our targets, via whole-scale improvements to curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment, and, for example, placements. We have also invested in our evaluation and research capabilities by joining the Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER) service.

Senior leaders have a range of experience and understanding of access and participation, with deep appreciation of how this intersects with our university mission, and the specific challenges for students. This is apparent in, for example, our significant investment in a range of financial support for students and the investments being made in whole-provider improvements to inclusive and flexible curriculum, and placements. University Executive Team (UET) members are directly involved in access and participation. Our commitment to reverse mentoring with students from diverse backgrounds highlights our commitment to continuous learning and improvement. Impact Equality statements are in place for all policies, with highly effective HR Director leadership on inclusive recruitment policy and practice (e.g., interview questions shared in advance, no desirable criteria), and cross-institution training on EDI for staff and students. We are working towards achieving the Race Equality Charter. There is strong Student Union consultation on policies and practice, and strong representation on all committees.

The strategic oversight of this plan is the responsibility of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) who is a member of the University Executive Team. The PVC Education and the Director of Learning Enhancement and Academic Practice is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this Plan, monitoring under-represented groups in our student population, ensuring commitments are delivered, and embedding access and participation across the institution. The APP is formally approved and signed off by the Chair of Council.

As part of the monitoring and reporting process we have a Teaching and Learning Committee, EDI Committee, and Senate, which in turn reports to the Council. Council will receive periodic reports on progress of APP targets and are made aware of any regulatory changes. The Teaching and Learning Committee will monitor the progress of the APP. Membership of the Committee includes PVC Education, Director of Learning Enhancement and Academic Practice, Students' Union senior staff, APVC Student Experience and Director of Student Success, and academic representatives. The committee oversees the implementation, monitoring, review, and evaluation of the APP, advise on research, and make reports and recommendations to Senate, including highlighting risk and making any necessary changes to the APP. A sub-group of this committee (APP Oversight Group) will provide operational oversight of the APP chaired by the Director of Learning Enhancement and Academic Practice and if the group finds that progress towards objectives set out in the APP is not being achieved or insufficient progress, it may provide recommendations to the Teaching and Learning Committee and Executive Team.

An increasing alignment will be made between the work of the EDI Committee (chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor) and the Teaching and Learning Committee. Both committees include Students' Union representation, and these forums are pivotal to championing equality of opportunity for success. Performance is also monitored through several embedded processes across the university such as intersectionality reporting on module and programme performance, applications and acceptances data. An alignment between reporting on Teaching Excellence and Access and Participation will occur through these formal reporting channels so that a whole provider approach is maintained. Finally, we will strengthen our external engagement with relevant organisations to continually engage in professional development. The University is engaged with Transforming Access and Student Outcomes (TASO), Study Higher (Uni Connect), SEER Management, and the Forum for Access and Continuing Education (FACE) and this helps equip our people with evidence-based approaches to improving equality of opportunity.

5.3 Our WPA student experience: Working across the student lifecycle and experience for all students

Our approach to access and participation spans works across the whole lifecycle. Our commitments and priorities in access and participation remain key considerations in the design and development of broader institutional activity. Our organisational structure and role expectations support and enable the embedding widening access and student success. Access and Participation is not confined to a role or an organisational area, but is embedded across all departments, and across the whole student journey, from recruitment and admissions to graduation and the support of graduate outcomes. For example:

- Marketing, recruitment and outreach activities and processes are informed by and support access goals and targets. This is evidenced in our excellent performance in access and the diversity of our student body. Our Student Recruitment and Outreach team conduct a range of activity promoting our study opportunities to potential students, building relationships with target schools and colleges, and engaging with the local community. Some of our key outreach activities which align with our access and participation goals include:
  - o Our Study Higher partnership, targeting students from areas of low progression to higher education to provide advice and guidance about education opportunities. Our partners include Oxford Brookes, Reading, and Oxford universities.
  - o Attainment raising, skills development, and mentoring projects. In particular, we work with Cloudy Group, a charity upskilling young people for the digital workplace, on a computing project for Year 10-13 students. This project supports students with digital marketing, app development, business, and presenting skills through a team project to deliver a real-world app for the local council. We have also worked with a local primary school to renew their library offering to ensure their students can access a range of texts to support their learning.

- o Medic Mentor project, working with the local community to source free support for people who aim to study medical courses but lack access to support.
- o Outreach delivered to target schools, colleges, and the University Technical College (Aylesbury) including activities such as personal statement workshops, student finance Q&A sessions, and subject-specific campus visits.
- o A range of open days, recruitment fairs, campus visits, and provision of information, advice and guidance for our target schools and colleges.
- o Current work to improve progression partnerships with target colleges, which will include contextual offers for students progressing from these college

- Admissions, welcome, induction activity recognises the challenges faced by students from different target groups in accessing and transitioning to higher education. Activities are targeted to provide relevant support and early response to the challenges most likely faced by students. To support admission, we use contextual information where possible. BNU's contextual admissions policies are among the most flexible, with possible adjustments ranging from eight to 48 UCAS tariff points (equivalent to one to six A-level grades). We provide accessible recruitment practices, including use of interviews and personal approaches.

- Academic design of curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment, and learning, enhancement and academic practice are geared towards inclusivity and compassionate design. As detailed in Intervention Strategy 2 in this Plan, our academic activity includes consideration of flexibility, inclusion and student-centred design, acknowledging the challenges faced by our student body. Mandatory training in EDI and inclusive teaching, and training in unconscious bias, support our academics to implement these principles. This work is being further strengthened under this Plan.

- Student and wellbeing services run tailored support for target students, with a heavy focus on supporting student mental health and wellbeing, and disabled students. Further development of support, responding to student feedback and challenges, have been included in this Plan (Intervention Strategy 3). The Inter-Faith Chaplaincy Service also provides a community for BNU students and staff where spiritual and faith beliefs are supported, celebrated, and promoted, and diversity is celebrated. The Multi-Faith Chaplaincy offers care and support for all students and employees, often at times of personal distress, loneliness, difficulties, bereavement, and/or spiritual need, when they are most vulnerable and in need of someone to talk to. They operate an open-door policy, providing flexible and timely access.

- We offer a range of advice and services to support our students' career development. Our key career advice and support offer includes careers fundamentals workshops to outline CV writing and interview skills, alongside online and face-to-face appointments with Career Success Advisors. Our advisors can support students with workshops covering key topics such as assessment centres, presentation skills, and psychometric testing. Virtual support is available through our MyBNUFutures platform, where informational videos and podcasts can be found. We also use the Handshake Career Centre platform, where students can browse and apply for jobs, placements and internships, as well as register for careers events and access other careers resources. We are partnering with EmployAbility, a leading inclusion charity who work to improve the inclusivity of the workplace, support students finding work and enable some scholarships and internship programmes with large employers. Staff will be able to attend training events run by EmployAbility to ensure we can signpost the charity and their services when necessary. For students with neurodivergence, mental health conditions, and other disabilities, a free personalised support package will be available through EmployAbility to help students understand any employment-related adjustments they may benefit from. The Students' Union complements our careers activity through their annual STRIVE Festival, which provides employer showcase and networking opportunities to students. Their activities include bespoke careers workshops, wellbeing sessions, and career talks led by professionals.

- Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, particularly those provided by the Student's Union (SU), consider the challenges and interests of students from different backgrounds, responding to identified need and regular feedback and input from students and representatives. For example, the SU run the Leadership Academy, supporting students with leadership and professional skills to underpin employability attributes

and empower students to successfully find employment. Such activity also supports academic achievement, particularly in the area of group and presentation work.

5.4 Institutional strategies and policy that prioritise and facilitate widening access and student success

Achieving an integrated and coherent approach to access and participation and alignment with broader priorities, policy, strategy and practice is critical to facilitating a whole institution model as well as promoting outcomes. Our institutional commitment to access and participation means that such alignments have been a part of existing practices across a range of areas, as follows.

- Our **Strategic Plan 'Thrive 28'**, sets our commitment to inclusivity as a key theme, with a commitment to embedding inclusivity across the organisation. Strategic priorities, aligned to this Plan, include commitments to student health and wellbeing; improving student outcomes for all facilitated by enhancements to learning analytics; and focusing on retention and belonging. Inclusivity is an explicit priority, committing to ensuring a focus on supporting all students to succeed, targeting disadvantaged and marginalised groups. Student voice and involvement is also highlighted, in line with the provisions for student consultation and involvement in this Plan. The Strategy also sets out provisions for supporting student mental health and wellbeing, and adopting the whole university approach set out in Student Minds' University Mental Health Charter and Universities UK's StepChange: Mentally Healthy Universities. This is couples with a commitment to training across staff and student peer networks. Finally, as a key part of this Plan (Intervention Strategy 5), we have aligned with Thrive 28's mission to ensure arrangements with our partners (franchise providers) achieve strategic alignment and excellent student outcomes, with target groups under this Plan a key priority.

- Our **Admissions Policy** outlines our commitment to providing a high-quality application experience which is fair and transparent. We provide alternative access routes and flexible learning paths to promote widening participation, and ensure all students with the potential to succeed, regardless of their background, are encouraged to apply to study with us. We utilise contextual data to understand applicants' background and experience, such as their home postcode and care status, to support our decision-making processes. We also provide a dedicated team for applicants with disabilities and additional support needs, to ensure they can access the support, advice and guidance they need to make their application.

- Our **Inclusive Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy** is centred on the strategic aims of actively promoting diversity, ensuring equitable access to research opportunities, and cultivating an environment where all voices are heard, valued and respected. This involves key activities such as creating specific support and training for colleagues from under-represented groups, enacting our inclusive recruitment policy, and involving students and graduates in research and data collection opportunities. These commitments to inclusivity in our research environment highlight our intention to champion inclusivity and diversity across all areas of the university, for colleagues, students, and the wider community.

- Our **Equality Strategy** demonstrates our work in creating and maintaining an inclusive environment for all, based on principles of celebrating diversity and promoting equality of opportunity. We showcase clear priorities to involve and empower our community, take action to tackle inequalities, and build a university community where people can be themselves. Some key objectives which show our whole provider dedication to access, participation, and inclusivity include objectives to:
  - Make continuous progress against our Access and Participation Plan for students.
  - Uphold our commitment to achieve the Race Equality Charter and decolonise our curriculum.
  - Develop an insights dashboard to support and drive action.
  - Review and address disparity of experience for our students.
  - Support a culture of belonging.
  - Celebrate inclusion and the impact of our work.
  - Collaborate with the Students' Union to tackle inequality.

- Our **Careers and Employability Policy** supports our mission to ensure that all students are well-equipped to achieve in their chosen careers. Our services include mentoring, tailored careers information, advice and guidance, and paid work opportunities for students. We consider different student needs for engaging with our services, ensuring accessibility for all students, alongside ongoing training for colleagues to better

understand the needs of students with disabilities in accessing work related learning and employment. We also promote postgraduate scholarships, and support teams with recruitment activities for prospective students from diverse backgrounds.

- Our **Academic Staff Charter and Career Pathway** sets out expectations for academic staff to contribute to an inclusive and interdisciplinary research culture, an inclusive teaching and learning culture and to engage in leadership and academic citizenship that delivers impact on reducing awarding gaps.
- Our **Personal Tutoring Policy** outlines how personal tutoring makes a significant contribution to the retention and success of our students. All students are allocated a personal tutor, who will also act as a gateway to any specialist support a student may require. Personal tutors are expected to support students' academic development and wellbeing throughout their student experience, contributing to continuation, participation, and positive outcomes.
- Our **Respect, Fairness and Inclusion Policy** is a guide intended to support the creation and maintenance of a safe inclusive place where everyone can thrive. The policy is underpinned by key institutional values, including being Responsible, Inclusive, and Empowering. We uphold the responsibility of ensuring all areas of our provision are inclusive, including recruitment, curriculum, events, and facilities. We expect colleagues to encourage, champion, and role model inclusive behaviour and values, and to undertake EDI training.
- Our **Student Representation Policy** shows the value we place on ensuring that student representation is present across the university. We collaborate with the Students' Union to maintain student involvement in policy making, including across our various policies related to access, participation, and inclusivity.
- Our **Transgender Policy** reaffirms our commitments to maintaining a safe and inclusive university environment, particularly for students and colleagues who are transgender. Our policy references how we manage changing records, maintaining privacy and confidentiality, and ensuring certifications and transcripts are provided under correct names and identities.
- Our **Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submission** highlights our commitments to deliver excellence across key domains of student voice and experience, academic experience and assessment, practice-informed education, research-informed education, and learning resources, all contributing to our student outcomes. We believe in making our vocationally focused style of education accessible to those on non-traditional pathways, aligned with our historic mission of widening participation. Our core activities shared in the TEF include our assessment variety designed to support learners from diverse educational backgrounds, financial support schemes, and one-to-one library support training directed towards care leavers, those from low-income backgrounds, and other target groups.

5.5 Our use of data and evidence

BNU have continuous quality monitoring processes in place with standing agenda items for academic School leads to visit a range of data. While we have established practices in terms of monitoring, we are committed to strengthening our data and monitoring in this Plan. We are therefore on a journey to strengthening our evaluation approaches, where data relating to access and participation outcomes will be a key focus. As such, our ambitions over this Plan are to:

- Develop and implement more formal and regular data and monitoring schedules and analytics that relate to access and participation outcomes.
- Ensure such analyses and findings are widely used across the institution and inform strategic decisions.
- Develop our data capture, processing and analysis capability.
- Ensure staff resource and training and development in relation to evaluation, data analysis and monitoring.
- Develop and implement dissemination and communications plans for findings.

Over time, we will develop a much clearer, data informed picture of our student outcomes, underpinned by an evidence base for practice. Access to a range of resources from SEER will significantly expedite this process, and we are looking forward to being part of a network that offers collaborative opportunities in evaluation and research which allows for benchmarking and collective analyses.

6. Student Consultation

BNU is committed to ensuring students have a strong and influential voice and input in the workings of the institution. We have a comprehensive student representation and input processes, which include an established Student Union and a Student Representative System.

Once enrolled at Buckinghamshire New University, students are automatically a member of Bucks Students' Union. Student reps are elected by their peers to give student feedback in both University meetings and informal settings. Roles include School Officers and Executive Officers.

All university committees include student officers as part of the university's commitment to constructive partnership. For example, student union representatives are members of Senate, EDI Committee, Teaching and Learning Committee, and Council. Executive Team members such as the PVC Education and the APVC Student Experience meet frequently with senior SU staff and sabbatical officers. The Student Experience Forum was formed in 2023, and this committee will also play a key role in monitoring our commitments to APP. This Forum includes wide SU membership, representation of academic and service directorates and reports to the Student Experience Committee. Our commitment is to continually work towards co-creation through student voice mechanisms to maximise student involvement in equality of opportunity.

The University places very strong emphasis on student voice for all learners. We strive to ensure that we close feedback loops, employ rigorous action planning and are responsive to students' needs. In the academic domain, module evaluations occur at the end of each module at every level, and mid-term surveys (twice per year) provide critical insights in anonymous surveys for academic and professional service teams. Programme Committees provide an opportunity for staff and students to discuss the management of courses in programmes and the content, delivery and assessment of modules and are held twice a year. Regular reports are provided to Student Experience Committee and Senate. Recent examples of acting on student feedback include implementing a 'One Stop Shop' approach to student enquiries; approval of 32 new laptops for loan to students to help students who have less access to digital technology; and to extend borrowing times to support students.

In the broader student support and experience domain, the Directorate for Student Success (DfSS) delivers accessible, inclusive and student-focused support services where every student is recognised for their strengths and supported to achieve their potential and flourish. Central to the work of the Directorate is the student voice where different mechanisms are utilised to listen to concerns, interests and needs. The mechanisms include:

- Self-service feedback portal – the feedback portal is available at the Student Hub and provides real time data on the experience of students. Information from the portals is reviewed in the weekly DfSS Management meetings and action plans are updated accordingly.
- Evaluation forms – the DFSS services sent out annual surveys to all students who have accessed their services. The survey results are used to inform the service action plans and improve service delivery.
- The Inter-Faith Chaplaincy Service has created a community for BNU students and staff where spiritual and faith beliefs are supported, celebrated and promoted. Inter-Faith Chaplaincy contributes to individual growth but also embeds the BNU values and celebrates the diversity of our community.
- The Student Hub is the central point of contact for all student queries and provides a safe, confidential space where students are welcomed and encouraged to openly share their concerns, queries and feedback without fear of judgment.
- The Disability and Inclusion team actively champion the voice of students, empowering them to access their learning by ensuring that reasonable adjustments are implemented and monitored.

The DfSS works collaboratively with the Students' Union and other departments and Schools across the university to empower students to have a voice and to ensure that this is incorporated within the delivery of services. For example, students in halls of accommodation can experience periods of missing home and loneliness and after hearing this feedback, the Accommodation team introduced Game Nights where they provided activities to promote interactions between students living within their flats so that they could get to know each other and support one another.

In 2023/2024, the University trained 17 Wellbeing Champions. The Wellbeing Champions comprised of learners from a range of programmes across the university in 2nd and 3rd year. The role was reserved for learners who had an identified role within the University and we actively recruited Senior Residents (learners who are employed to offer practical and pastoral support in the Halls of Residence) and Learner Ambassadors (Learners who employed by the Marketing, Learner Recruitment and Communications team). The Senior Residents were essential in meeting our project aim of supporting learners in halls of accommodation. The Learner Ambassadors were involved in supporting open days and fresher weeks where there would be engagement with learners who were new to university and could support with transition to university life.

Our students are central to the monitoring and progress of our Access and Participation Plan. Students were consulted in the development and drafting of this Plan. As well as running sessions to enable students to feed into the Plan via structured and supported focus groups and engagement with the Student Union, we employed two APP Student Consultants to work alongside and be supported by the staff team leading the development of the Plan. These students were also key members of our APP Task and Finish Group, overseeing and inputting on the various stages of drafting and decision-making. They were representative of disadvantaged, disabled and global majority target groups.

As part of consultations key items students noted, that have been considered and incorporated, are:
- Students' academic backgrounds and their awareness of BNU prior to applying or enrolling.
- Study flexibility and responding to student needs.
- How feedback is collected and communicated to students.
- The reasons students choose to apply and enrol in courses at BNU, including those related to cost.
- Variations in the availability of learning resources, extracurricular opportunities, career support, and academic support, such as Personal Tutors, across different Schools, courses, campuses, and intakes.
- Student experiences with giving and receiving feedback, including the role of student representatives.
- Access to and the benefits of in-curriculum academic support, tutoring and coaching.
- The importance of employability, particularly placements and related support.
- Ensuring that students with disabilities can access the support they need.
- Differences in students' sense of community, both socially and academically.
- The rising cost of living, which is a major concern for students who feel they require additional support.
- Opportunities for socialising in academic and social settings.
- Activities organised by the Students' Union.

Student input and considerations have also been reflected and explicitly noted throughout the Plan.

6.1 Strengthening our student consultation and collaboration

As part of our continuous commitment to inclusive education, we are implementing a pilot programme in autumn 2024 for reverse mentoring, pairing marginalised students with members of the university executive team to explore and examine aspects of university life that can be improved and developed to support underrepresented students at BNU. This is a key activity in this Plan. The programme will lead to co-developing projects and making changes that benefit the current and future student experience. The programme is funded and students are remunerated for their time. In 2025-2026, the programme will be scaled across the university so that Heads of Schools and Directors can take part in reverse mentoring. This is part of BNU's commitment to inclusive leadership and inclusive education, recognising that equality of opportunity starts from the most senior leaders.

In 2024-2025, we will develop an EDI roundtable, appointing student advisors to support the development of teaching, learning, curriculum and the student experience at BNU. Student advisors will also support the development of coaching, mentoring and outreach with local schools, aimed at engaging with marginalised students less likely to pursue Higher Education. We are also collaborating with local secondary schools for our first mainstream and HE conference addressing inclusive leadership and widening participation in HE, bringing teachers, academics and staff from across the sector together to address access, participation and attainment gaps too: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/inclusive-leadership-in-education-conference-tickets-948768049777

7. Evaluation of the Plan

7.1 Strategic Context for Evaluation

Evaluation and research are part of our 'whole institution' approach to access and participation. Our academic, professional and leadership teams contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of targets, intervention strategies and activities in this plan through supporting and inputting on the range of evaluation measures. Our data team have skills in ensuring data capture is appropriate for the required monitoring and evaluation outputs, including designing new reports and processes to capture, collate and extract data for various evaluation and research questions. We also draw on the skills of staff responsible for the delivery of the Activities in this Plan, and our student representatives, to effectively incorporate evaluation.

In our assessment of our current context for evaluation, using the OfS evaluation self-assessment tool, we are 'emerging' across all areas. We have some foundations in place, but need to develop our practices, including embedding evaluation into activity design and delivery and ensuring feedback cycles into improving practice. Therefore, as we continue to build our cross-institution capacities for effective evaluation and the application of findings to improve practice, staff and student representatives will be supported with relevant training in Theory of Change and evaluation methods, provided through our SEER membership. Students are important in this work, and we will work in partnership with students on the design and implementation of evaluation and research, particularly where this pertains to current students. SEER provides us with additional and specialist evaluation and research expertise to deliver our commitments in these areas. We will actively participate in this network, which provides us with opportunities to be part of collaborative research and evaluation projects and learn and share practice with other members and external stakeholders. SEER host an annual Symposium and regular workshops, roundtables and 'learning lunches' throughout the year, as well as providing us with opportunities to showcase our practice and insights. We will also engage with TASO and other relevant organisations in calls for evidence, conferences, events, and training.

7.2 Activity design

As detailed in the Strategic Measures section of this Plan, evaluation has been established at the start. We have built effective evaluation practice into our Strategies by establishing a range of evaluation attached to the individual activities that contribute towards the overall objective of each Strategy. We can therefore build up an understanding of which activities are 'working' and which are not. We have taken a Theory of Change approach to the development of our Intervention Strategies, identifying clear intended outcomes (intermediate and end) and a supporting evidence base that has informed our activity development and challenged assumptions. We will continue to review, develop and strengthen our Theories of Change (ToC), adding to our evidence base as our evaluation findings emerge and developing enhanced activity-level ToCs where required.

7.3 Evaluation design

We have collaborated with SEER and drawn from OfS and TASO toolkits and guidance on effective evaluation approaches. We have considered how the outcomes of activities can be evaluated credibly. Employing mixed method approaches is particularly important, as we will need to rely on qualitative data to support our understanding, or fill gaps, in quantitative data. We will triangulate findings where possible and seek to deepen our insights through qualitative methods. Given the developmental stage of our evaluation practice, the majority of our evaluations are type 1 (narrative), and type 2 (empirical enquiry) of the OfS 'Standards of Evidence'. We have however noted that we will explore and consider where type 3 evaluation could be implemented in future. Our evaluation approach has also considered the context and scale of the activities and, as we have proposed working with strategic partners in our Intervention Strategies, we wish to note that some flexibility and development may be required as our collaborations take shape, allowing for input, support and advice from partners.

Our evaluation approach, data collection and analysis have been formulated on the intended outcomes and objectives of our activities. Where appropriate and possible, we will consider and employ validated scales to our evaluation practices. We have also considered evaluation that spans (a) process and (b) impact, to provide a comprehensive understanding of how our activities are working. We will explore further research projects in relation to our activities and our ambition to better understand the experiences and challenges of target students and issues

of equality of opportunity. For example, consultation with students as part of the development of this Plan supports the identification of risks relating to insufficient to personalised academic and non-academic support; however, we consider that there is further research that would add insight to this area.

7.4 Implementing our Evaluation Plan

We will collaborate internally across our team and with our strategic partners to deliver our evaluation plan. Our evaluation process will comply with institutional policies and complies with all legal requirements relating to data protection, following ethical, safeguarding, legal and risk considerations.

As noted above, we are members of the Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER) service, with whom we will work in partnership to deliver our evaluation plan. A Data Sharing Agreement has also been established. SEER provides us with opportunities to collaborate on various evaluation and research items, including for example the evaluation of the impact of financial support, using the OfS toolkit. The design of our evaluation has also been heavily informed by intended and projected standardised outcomes being adopted by SEER across its membership base, which not only increases efficiencies but provides opportunities to increase the sample size and evaluation, helping to mitigate the issue of small datasets where these occur. SEER incorporate and draw on TASO guidance on best practices for evaluations. As a practice network, we are also able to participate in peer review of practice and evaluation and share practice and findings. We are also well-placed to respond with agility to interim findings and emerging data. We can be responsive in flexing our activity accordingly to help to keep us on track to achieve our objectives and targets, and continuously improve our practice.

7.5 Learning from and Disseminating Findings

We are committed to sharing our learning and findings internally, with our partners, within our close networks and with the broader sector, to develop a stronger and increased volume of evidence about what works and what can be improved. We are pleased to help to grow the evidence base for equality of opportunity in higher education and we will submit evaluation outputs to OfS' repository of evidence as appropriate. In Section 4, we have set out our publishing plan, which includes publishing findings on interim and longer-term outcomes through a range of channels. In developing the format of our communications, we will consider creative and visual methods, and different audiences/purposes. We will ensure that our findings are open access.

We are a member of FACE, AMOSSHE, AGCAS, AdvanceHE, UniConnect (Study Higher), GuildHE, UUK, at which we can share and present findings. It is anticipated that we will actively contribute to conferences, network events and publications. Where appropriate we will draw on existing networks to collaborate and engage with similar organisations. Our Professoriate is a forum for the Professors and Associate Professors of BNU to influence and contribute to the advancement of strategies and policies, including an inaugural lecture series covering a variety of subjects focused on the University's leading research. In 2024, BNU employed five new professors to lead inclusive research and knowledge exchange strategy. Internally, developing a community of practice (staff and students) regarding access and participation will help to facilitate improvements to sharing of findings from evaluation, and subsequent improvements to practice. Shared practice across the institution allows for review and feedback on evaluation findings and reports, and discussion regarding the improvements that could be made. More broadly, evaluation findings related to access and participation work will inform other agendas and practice, such as programme review and revalidation, communications and recruitment strategies and community engagement. We will publish the findings of our evaluation activities on our website and with sector bodies as appropriate. Further details about how we will evaluate our intervention strategies is included in Section 4.

8. Provision of Information to Students

The University is committed to ensuring that students have access to and receive all the relevant information to support them during every stage of their applicant journey. We provide detailed information about our courses and entry requirements alongside financial and wellbeing support on our website, through our personalised email communications and in person. We also signpost to this content via a number of social media platforms. The messaging is updated throughout the recruitment cycle to ensure we are reaching out to our audience in a relevant and timely manner, topics covered include student support, fees and finance, scholarships and bursaries as well as

course information, campus life and facilities, the Big Deal and the Students' Union, key awards and student successes.

BNU aims to reduce barriers to higher education, enabling all who we can to succeed—and making a real difference to the lives of people from all backgrounds. We do this through a variety of mediums creating a personalised approach to develop an individualised package of information and support for transition into HE. Information for prospective students is available in various accessible formats both digitally and hard copy. This includes the BNU website, UCAS and partner profiles, printed resources and face to face interactions. We also respond to requests for additional accessible formats that may be required. We have developed our website in accordance with the **World Wide Web Consortium's Web Accessibility Initiative (W3CWAI)** standards and the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) and the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

It is our goal that as many people as possible can access the BNU website. We are committed to making sure that people with disabilities are not disadvantaged and that our digital accessibility exceeds the sector Benchmark of 82.9. (BNU 89.6). Ensuring accessibility includes using readable fonts, sufficient contrast, and descriptive headings. We provide alternative formats, such as providing both text and audio versions are available on request, or using visual aids like charts and diagrams, accommodates diverse needs and preferences, making the information comprehensible and usable for a wider audience. We offer a series of engaging in-person and blended activities throughout the year, including campus-based tours and workshops; course tasters; virtual CV and UCAS support; mock interviews and portfolio reviews. The team also provided parental support and teacher CPD sessions. These events provide relevant information and guidance on BNU access and study.

Information on admissions, entry requirements and financial support also features prominently at our BNU Open Days that happen throughout the year. Trained specialist staff are available to answer questions about the whole applicant journey and offer tailored and individual advice and guidance. This includes detailed information on applying for available bursaries and eligibility criteria. BNU offers special on campus taster days collaborating with course academics. Information is shared through presentations and workshops ensuring all prospective students feel equipped to make informed choices. The University actively seeks to recruit Student Ambassadors who attended its target schools and colleges to provide relatable role models to the school pupils with whom it works. We send out a series of general and subject-led communications and e-newsletters to applicants and enquiries throughout the year. Using our Student CRM platform, we can refine our audience to group types and tailor the content accordingly.

We focus on providing advice and guidance to help applicants make an informed decision. We adopt a targeted approach with all our communications, clearly signposting to relevant information on our website where students can find out more about their chosen course, entry requirements, fee information and support.

8.1 Financial support

We understand that financial concerns are at the forefront of applicant's and student's minds and in the current economic climate, financial considerations are crucial for many students, but particularly those from target groups in this Plan. We provide information about the financial support options available on our website, and in information to applicants and offer-holders. These information are repeated in induction and enrolment activities.

Detailed information on Student Finance England, including eligibility criteria, application processes, and deadlines are available on our website with links to the Student Loan Company website.

Our financial support offer, including bursaries, is provided below.

Financial Support Offer – BNU Taught students only

Financial Support Scheme	Purpose	Criteria for Eligibility	Number of Awards	Level of Support	Level of Support in Subsequent Years of Study
Thrive Bursary	To provide students with financial support	UK student in receipt of full funding which includes both tuition fee and maintenance loan and meet one of the below. • Have a combined household income of less than £25,000 (Checked by your Student finance Maintenance loan above £9,500 [Outside of London], £12,500 [Inside London] or £8,000 [Living at Home] excluding any grants); or • Live in a low participation postcode POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2); or • Live in high deprivation area (Index of Multiple Deprivation 40% most deprived).	577	£500	Annual
Care Leavers Bursary	To provide targeted support for care leavers and mentoring	UK student in receipt of full funding which includes both tuition fee and maintenance loan **as well as the below.** • You must be aged 25 or younger • You must be a UK student • You must provide evidence from your Local Authority of your Care Leaver status • You need to select BNU as your unconditional firm offer • You will need to disclose your status on your UCAS form or after enrolment. • You must be studying an undergraduate degree or a degree with foundation year full-time or part time at one of our main campuses • UCAS and Student Finance define a care leaver as "If you have been in the care of, or have been given accommodation by, your local authority (LA) for a period	19	£1,100	Annual

		of at least 13 weeks ending after you turn 16". [Find out more information about additional funding for full-time students]().			
Estranged Student Bursary	To provide targeted support for estranged students	UK student in receipt of full funding which includes both tuition fee and maintenance loan **as well as the below.** • You must be aged 25 or younger • You must be a UK student • You must be estranged from your parents or guardians for a minimum of 3 years. • You need to select BNU as your unconditional firm offer • You must meet the eligibility criteria of Student Finance England or an equivalent funding body as an estranged student • You must be studying an undergraduate degree or a degree with foundation year full-time at one of our main campuses	15	£1,100	Annual
Gypsy Roma Traveller Showman and Boatman Bursary	To provide targeted support for GRTSB students	UK student in receipt of full funding which includes both tuition fee and maintenance loan **as well as the below.** • You will need to disclose your ethnicity of GTRSB on your UCAS form or after enrolment • You need to select Bucks as your unconditional firm offer • You must be studying an undergraduate degree or a degree with foundation year full-time at one of our main campuses	1	£1,100	Annual
BNU Refugee Scholarship	To provide targeted support for students with refugee status	1. Provide Evidence of your Biometric Residence Permit (BPR Card) and [Share Code]() showing [your immigration status]() as either a Group 1, Group 2, Humanitarian Protection, Leave to remain or Stateless Leave. 2. Be ineligible to access funding from the Student Loan	1	Variable	Annual

		3. Not already hold an undergraduate or postgraduate qualification. 4. You have a conditional or unconditional offer from Buckinghamshire New University. 5. You must be getting enrolled onto a full-time undergraduate or foundation course in one of our campuses High Wycombe, Uxbridge or Aylesbury campuses.			
Asylum seeker scholarship	To provide targeted support for students seeking asylum.	• Application Registration Card (ARC) or Letter from Home Office confirming your Asylum Seeker status (under-1951 UN Convention) • Be ineligible to access funding from the Student Loan Company due to your immigration status. • Not already hold an undergraduate or postgraduate qualification. • You have a conditional or unconditional offer from Buckinghamshire New University. • You must be getting enrolled onto a full-time undergraduate, postgraduate or foundation course in one of our campuses High Wycombe, Uxbridge or Aylesbury campuses.		Variable	
BNU Learning Resource Fund	To support all new students with learning resources support	• UK/Home student. • You must be studying on a full-time undergraduate course. • This will be offered to all new first year students during the September 2023 and February 2024 enrolment period.	1629	£150	On enrolment
BNU Financial Aid Fund (Hardship Fund)	To support students encountering financial hardship	**Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students:** • Must be a Home/UK or E.U student (in receipt of Student Finance tuition fee Funding)	141	Variable	1 application per year

		• Studying Full-time or Part-Time, Distance Learning or Sandwich courses (Part-time students must be studying the equivalent of 50 percent of a full-time course) • Must not be a debtor to the University and must be up to date with their tuition fee payment plan. • Been approved for student finance or equivalent funding body for their current academic year of study. • Must be able to demonstrate that they have made adequate provision to fund their Tuition Fees and living costs. **Suspended, Interrupted, and Dormant Students** • Suspended, Interrupted, and Dormant students can apply but awards are capped at £500 maximum per academic year and will need to meet the relevant Home or E.U criteria outlined. • If you are unable to attend your course for health or caring reasons or some other unavoidable circumstance, you can apply for help. You must provide evidence from your Faculty and your General Practitioner (G.P.) to support your claim.			
BNU Financial Aid Fund (Special Emergency Funds)	To support students facing emergency and unexpected hardship	Students must provide evidence demonstrating a need for short-term financial assistance. **Criteria:** • To Apply you must be a Home/UK or E.U student (in receipt of Student Finance Tuition Fee Funding) and complete the linked application below providing a brief outline of your circumstances and completing all mandatory fields.	525	£200	1 application per year

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		E.U Students will need to upload a copy of their tuition fee funding confirmation from Student finance along with their supporting evidence.			
DSA Laptop Assistance	To provide targeted resource support for students with a registered disability	• Be enrolled at Bucks New University have applied for DSAs and have been assessed as requiring a computer on the grounds of your disability • Have received a letter from Student Finance England (SFE) confirming that they have approved your DSAs • Be receiving a full maintenance loan from SFE • Please note that you will need to purchase the equipment **before** making a claim.	45	£150	One-off

Financial Support Offer – BNU Partner students
Our partners also offer a range of financial support, as follows:

Partner Institution	Financial Support Scheme	Criteria for Eligibility	Level of Support	Frequency of award
Dancebox Studios & Theatre Works	Learning support / SEN bursary	• Students with diagnosed disability or statemented additional needs	£150	One off
David Game College	Student Success Bursary (SSB)	• This bursary is for students from low-income families or areas of high deprivation.	£750 for new undergraduate students for each year of full-time studies.	Per annum
	Veterans Support Bursary (VSB)	• For new undergraduate students who have left the armed forces within the last five years	£750 for new undergraduate students for each year of full-time studies.	Per annum
	Care Leavers Scholarship (CLS)	• Home status undergraduate students who are joining the College having spent some time in local authority care.	Consists of a 20% fee waiver for each year of full-time study and a £1,000 per	Per annum

			year bursary to help towards general living costs and expenses.	
	Refugee Support Bursary (RSB)	• For new undergraduate students who have Refugee status in the UK	£750 for new undergraduate students for each year of full-time studies.	Per annum
Mont Rose College	Hardship Fund	• Household income of £30,000 or less. Assessed on needs basis. The priority will be given to students having exceptional circumstances coming from local authority care (care leavers), estranged from their families, carers with responsibility for caring for others, mature students with children and single parents, students with disabilities in receipt of Income support or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or New Style ESA or Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Universal Credit in place of Income Support or ESA and meeting the eligibility criteria.	**Hardship Fund**. Eligible students will receive £700-£4000 per academic year. **Emergency Fund**. Eligible students will receive £500-£3000 per academic year. **Traveling Fund.** Eligible students will receive travelling support of £150-£250 per term.	Hardship Fund & Emergency Fund-Annual; Traveling Fund-Per term.
Oxford Business College	Hardship Fund	• This is available to students experiencing financial difficulties. We have a designated budget for this fund, which we use to support students in need. • Students apply for the Hardship Fund by completing the Hardship Fund Eligibility Assessment Form. We assess their financial situation, including household income, and decide the level of support required based on their individual circumstances.	The amount of financial support provided ranges from £150 to £1,500, depending on the student's needs and eligibility, as determined by our assessment processes. Total funding available is £185,500	The Hardship Fund is allocated on an annual basis, with each student eligible to apply once per academic year.
Regent College	Hardship fund	• To provide financial support to students who are suffering financial hardship. In order to qualify students must: Be a home (UK) student studying FT or PT on a programme at Levels 4-6	Up to £1,000 for full-time students per award Funds for Part-time based on number of credits.	1 application per annum

		Have already been awarded a full student load and received their first instalment Not be repeating a year of study Not have already received an award from the Hardship Fund in their current year of study, or funds from the Covid Hardship Fund (2020/2021) Be suffering from financial hardship that stated after they started their course		
	Emergency loan	• To provide financial support to students who are suffering short-term financial hardship. Specifically, this is to support students who have applied for a student loan but are yet to receive their first instalment. In order to qualify students must: Be a home (UK) student studying FT or PT on a programme at Levels 4-6 Have already been awarded a full student load but not yet received their first instalment Not be repeating a year of study Be suffering from financial hardship that stated after they started their course	£500 loan (to be repaid to the College)	One-off
London School of Science & Technology	DSA Assessment Support	• Students with declared disability who require a diagnostic assessment, following an internal initial assessment by Wellbeing Team.	50% of the cost of assessment.	One-off

Appendices

9. Annex A

9.1 Performance assessment

We have conducted a thorough performance assessment based on the latest OfS APP data release (2024) which covers up to the 2022-23 monitoring year. We have supplemented this with internal data where relevant and possible, to provide additional insights particularly where datasets are small. From this analysis, we have determined our key Indicators of Risk, which we have explored further using supplementary information, data and evidence from internal and local sources; and, from the wider sector and sector bodies (e.g. UCAS).

We considered performance across all APP measures, at each stage of the lifecycle:

- Access – enrolment
- Continuation – continuing students measured at 1 year and 15 days post initial enrolment
- Completion – students completing their course, up to 6 years after beginning their studies
- Attainment – achievement of a First or 2:1 degree outcome
- Progression – progression into highly skilled employment or further post-graduate study

This assessment presents the identified indicators of risk areas from our full analysis.

9.1.1 Analysis process

1. The first layer of analysis explores the OfS APP dataset, identifying the Indicators of Risk for further consideration.
2. Across all stages and measures, we applied a second layer of analysis that splits the overall BNU data into BNU Taught and. BNU Franchised (all partners) components.
3. Within BNU Taught, we considered school-level data.
4. Analyses of BNU's Apprenticeships performance has also been included.
5. Supplementary data (internal and external) and questions were then added to further understand the context for each indicator of risk, and the possible occurrence of risks to equality of opportunity.
6. We have excluded from the written analysis below any measures within the areas of the lifecycle where BNU gaps are positive, or no data exist:
   - in Access – positive gaps for IMD Quintiles 1&2 students and Mature students vs. their comparators; near parity in enrolment rates between Global Majority and White students.
   - in Completion – positive gap for Disabled students vs. their comparator.
   - in Attainment – positive gap for Disabled students vs. their comparator; no data for ABCS.
   - In Progression – positive gaps for TUNDRA Quintile 1, Black students, Asian students (taught provision), Disabled students, and Mature students vs. their comparators.
7. We have not included Care leaver/Care experienced student data, which we do not currently hold. We are undertaking the development of systems and approaches to collecting and monitoring such data across the lifecycle.

9.1.2 Summary of indicators of risk and target areas

The following table highlights all the indicators of risk we have identified from the full initial data analysis.

Summary of Indicators of Risk and Priorities

Metric /Student Group	IMD (2019)	TUNDRA	Ethnicity	Disabled	Mature learners (21 & over)	ABCS	FSM-eligible learners
Access		Gap is present, but comparable to sector. Small BNU Taught Quintile 1 cohorts. Recommend monitoring.		Gap is present, mostly in BNU Franchised. Recommend monitoring.		Gap is present, but smaller than the sector. Small Quintile 1 cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	Gap is present, but smaller than the sector. Small FSM eligible cohorts. Recommend monitoring.
Continuation	**Target PTS_1 (IMD Quintile 1)**	Very small gap, much smaller than the sector gap. Recommend monitoring.	**Target PTS_2 (Black Students)** **Target PTS_3 (Asian students)**	Small gap present. Recommend monitoring.	Very small gap, much smaller than the sector gap. Recommend monitoring.	Gap is present, but smaller than the sector. Small Quintile 1 and 5 cohorts (BNU Taught). Recommend monitoring.	Gap is present. Small FSM eligible cohorts (BNU Taught). Recommend monitoring.
Completion	**Target PTS_4 (IMD Quintile 1)**	Very small gap, much smaller than the sector gap. Recommend monitoring.	**Target PTS_5 (Asian students)**		Small gap present. Recommend monitoring.	Gap is present, but smaller than the sector. Small Quintile 5 cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	Gap is present. Small FSM eligible cohorts. Recommend monitoring.
Attainment	**Target PTS_6 (IMD Quintiles 1)**	Gap is present. Very small Quintile 1 cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	**Priority PTS_7 (Black students)** **Priority PTS_8 (Asian students)**		**Priority PTS_9**		Gap is present. Very small FSM eligible cohorts, making analysis difficult.
Progression	Gap is present. Very small Quintile 1 cohorts,		4-yr gap is present, but latest and internal data shows a			Gap is present, but smaller than the sector. Small Quintile1 & 5 cohorts.	Gap is present. Very small FSM eligible cohorts,

	making analysis difficult.		closing of the gap. Monitor.			Recommend monitoring.	making analysis difficult.

9.1.3 Priority Target Areas

We have determined that the following priority areas will be of concern under our APP, with associated targets and milestones.

- Continuation of students from IMD 2019 Quintile 1 (the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds).
- Continuation of Black students.
- Continuation of Asian students.
- Completion of students from IMD 2019 Quintile 1 (the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds).
- Completion of Asian students.
- Attainment of students from IMD 2019 Quintile 1 (the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds).
- Attainment of Black students.
- Attainment of Asian students.
- Attainment of Mature students.

9.2 Analysis - Access

Overall, our entrant profile shows some very positive trends:

- Students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds, IMD Quintile 1, make up 30.8% of our Full-time enrolments (60%, including IMD Quintile 2 enrolments, at 29.2%). In comparison, students from the least disadvantaged Quintile 5 are enrolled at a rate of 8.8%. In our Apprenticeship provision, enrolment of IMD Quintile 1 apprentices, at 29.5% on average, is also the enrolment of IMD Quintile 5 apprentices, at 28.2%.
- Black and Asian students enrol at the rate of 18.1% and 11.8%, respectively. Overall, Global Majority students make up 40% of our average annual enrolment, which is above the sector rate. We enrol also more Black and Asian apprentices, and Global Majority apprentices overall, compared to the sector average. Our enrolment rates of Black and Asian apprentices are respectively 17% (vs. 5.2% in the sector) and 11.3% (vs. 7.5% in the sector).
- Mature students enrol with us at a rate that is 2.8 times above the sector rate and make up nearly 80% of our overall annual enrolment. In our Apprenticeship provision, the rate of enrolment of Mature apprentices is also higher than the sector average, at 82.7% vs. 73.7%, respectively.

Further Access related indicators of risk we have considered follow below.

9.2.1 TUNDRA (Low Participation Neighbourhoods)

BNU performs comparably to the sector in the 4-year aggregate based on our enrolment of students from TUNDRA Quintile 1, which covers areas of the lowest participation in higher education, and students from TUNDRA Quintile 5, which covers areas of the highest participation.

Our enrolment rate of TUNDRA Quintile 1 students is 10.8% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23) and 11.3% for 2022-23, the latest year of Access data (Fig.1a). The sector rate of TUNDRA Quintile 1 enrolment is 12.2% (4-year aggregate).

Our gap in enrolment between TUNDRA Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students is 18.1pp, that is, we enrol more Quintile 5 students in the 4-year aggregate. The gap narrows to 16.7pp in the 2-year aggregate (Fig.1b). For comparison, the sector gaps are 18.0pp in the 4-year aggregate and 17.6pp in the 2-year aggregate.

Fig.1a Enrolment rates of students from the different TUNDRA Quintiles at BNU.

Access indicator values for: TUNDRA quintile

Key
■ Quintile 1 (least participation)
■ Quintile 2
■ Quintile 3
■ Quintile 4
■ Quintile 5 (most participation)

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (least participation)	9.8%	10.4%	9.4%	10.6%	12.4%	11.3%	10.8%	11.8%
Quintile 2	16.6%	14.7%	15.4%	17.1%	14.1%	14.6%	15.5%	14.4%
Quintile 3	20.6%	19.4%	24.3%	19.3%	21.6%	21.5%	21.6%	21.5%
Quintile 4	23.7%	24.9%	23.0%	22.9%	24.3%	23.1%	23.2%	23.7%
Quintile 5 (most participation)	29.4%	30.6%	27.9%	30.0%	27.7%	29.4%	28.9%	28.6%

Fig.1b Enrolment gaps between TUNDRA Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students at BNU.

Access gap: TUNDRA quintile – Quintile 5 compared with 1

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	19.7pp	20.3pp	18.5pp	19.3pp	15.2pp	18.1pp	18.1pp	16.7pp

Change in gap from 2021-22 to 2022-23: 2.8pp

Our Apprenticeship provision has similar enrolment rates and gap for TUNDRA Quintiles 1 vs. Quintile 5.
We note that our Taught provision in particular has small Quintile 1 cohorts, c.120-170 students per annum, which makes comparisons for our full-time students less reliable.
We have not, therefore, set a priority target for the TUNDRA measure of risk, but will continue to monitor our performance.

9.2.2 Disabled Students
Looking at the average annual cohort of BNU entrants, disabled students enrol at a lower rate to the sector in the 4-year aggregate, at 5.8% vs. the 17.4% sector rate (Fig.2a).

Fig.2a Enrolment rates for students with and without reported disability at BNU.

Access indicator values for: Disability

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Disability reported	9.0%	8.1%	6.7%	4.9%	6.2%	5.4%	5.8%	5.8%
No disability reported	91.0%	91.9%	93.3%	95.1%	93.8%	94.6%	94.2%	94.2%

Key
- Disability reported
- No disability reported
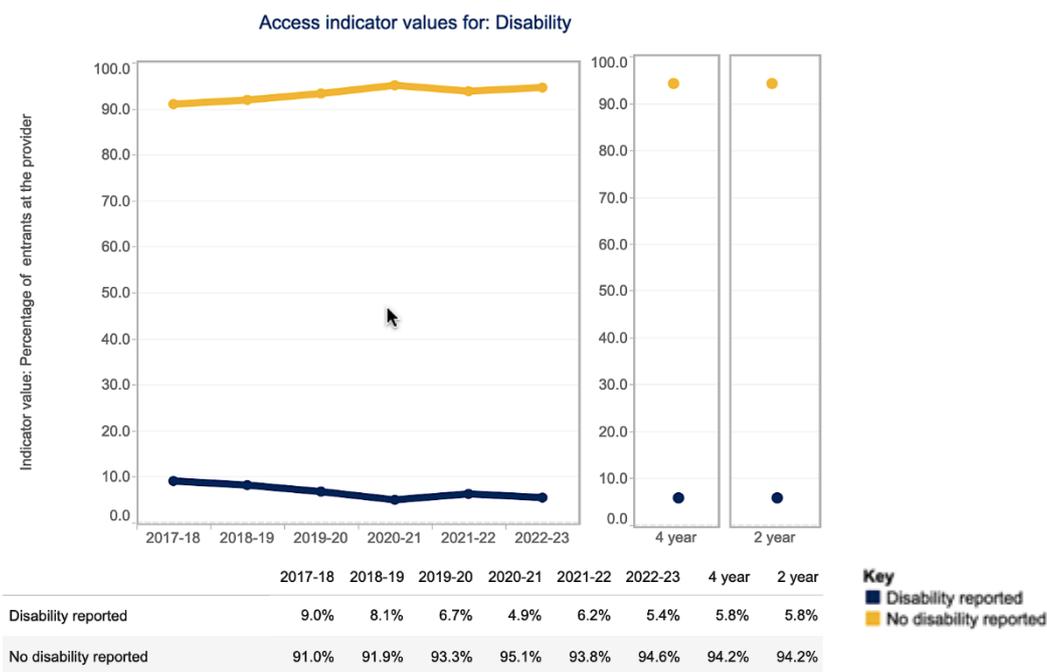
Disaggregating our data by Taught and Franchised provision reveal however that our Taught provision (students enrolled in BNU based courses, as opposed to in franchised courses with our partner institutions) has significantly better enrolment rates: 20.9% in the 4-year aggregate, and 22.5% in the 2-year aggregate, both of which are above the respective sector rates (Fig.2b).

Fig.2b Enrolment rates of students with and without reported disability in BNU Taught provision.
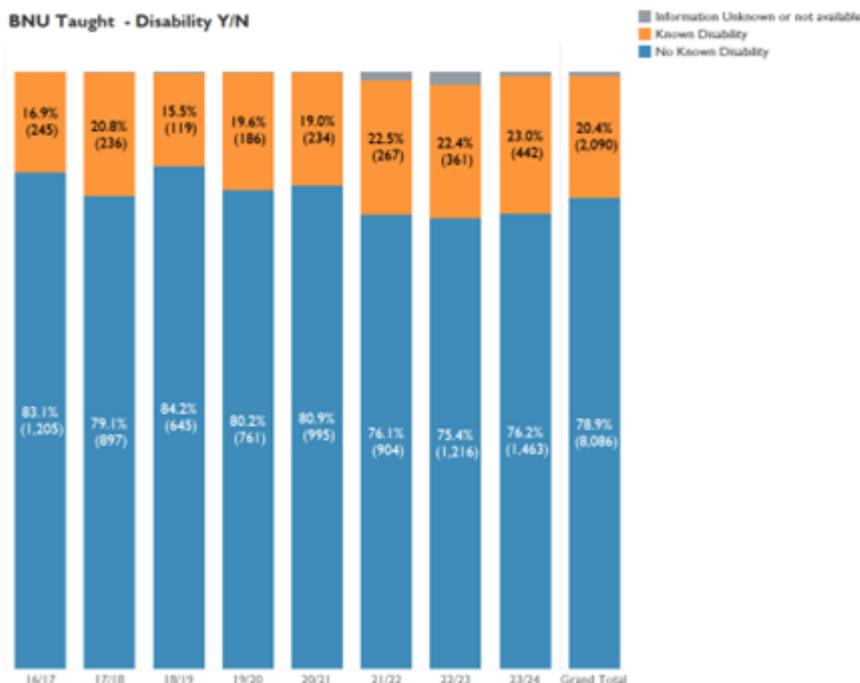
At school level within our Taught provision, the highest enrolments rates of disabled students are in the School of Art, Design, and Performance and the School of the Creative and Digital Industries: 31.4% and 25.6%, respectively, in the 4-year aggregate. The School of Business and Law has the lowest rate, 10.7%.

Our Franchised provision, on the other hand, has significantly lower enrolment rates of disabled students: 5% in the 4-year aggregate and 4.7% in the 2-year aggregate (Fig.2c). As a point of caution, the Franchised cohorts of disabled students are small, c.125-184 per annum, below the BNU Taught cohorts.

Fig.2c Enrolment rates of students with and without reported disability in BNU Franchised provision.
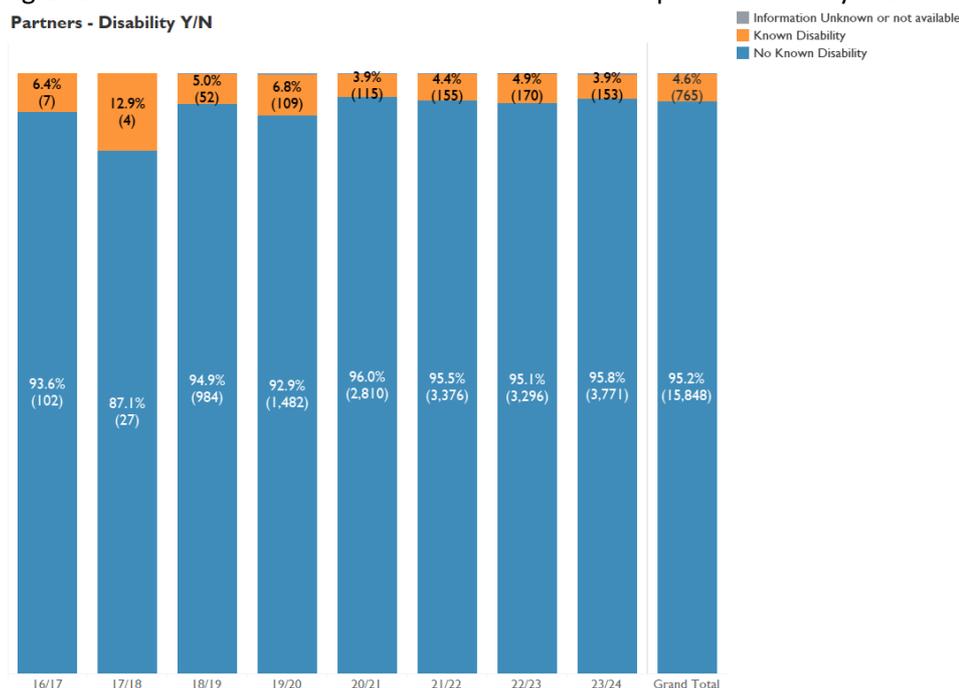
Our Apprenticeship provision enrols disabled students at a comparable rate to the sector, 10.6% vs.12.8%, respectively (4-year aggregate).

Analysis of the data disaggregated by type of disability is difficult because the cohorts are small, with fewer than 25 students per annum in anyone particular type of disability.

Overall, our data by disability type show lower enrolment rates than in the sector (Fig.2d). This, however, appears mostly due to the Franchised provision, as our Taught provision has comparable to the sector enrolment rates, as below:

- 5.9% (5.7% in the sector) enrolment rate of students with cognitive and learning difficulties.
- 4.2% (4.9% in the sector) enrolment rate of students with mental health conditions.
- 1.5% (2.3% in the sector) enrolment rate of students with sensory, medical, or physical impairments.
- 1.2% (1.1% in the sector) enrolment rate of students with social or communication impairments.

The enrolment rates in the Franchised provision are below 1% across most of the types of disability.

Our Apprenticeship offer enrols comparable numbers of students with various disabilities, except students with mental health conditions (0.6% at BNU vs. 1.7% in the sector).

9.2.3 ABCS

The new ABCS (Associations between characteristics of students) measure considers multiple student characteristics including ethnicity, free school meal (FSM) eligibility, gender, income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI) index of multiple deprivation (IMD) and TUNDRA. It is a quintile measure, with ABCS Quintile 1 representing the most disadvantaged.

BNU enrols an average of 8.5% of students from ABC Quintile 1 in the latest 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23), which is higher than the sector rate of 7.4% (Fig.3a).

The enrolment gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students at BNU is smaller than the sector average, at 20.2pp vs. 27.2pp, respectively (4-year aggregate) (Fig.3b).

The rate of ABCS Quintile 1 enrolments in our Apprenticeship provision, 6%, is comparable to the sector rate, 7%, in the 4-year aggregate, although our enrolment gap with Quintile 5 apprentices is wider than the sector gap, at 21.7pp vs. 16.5pp, respectively.

Fig.3a Enrolment rates by ABCS Quintile at BNU.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1	9.6%	9.2%	8.7%	10.0%	7.6%	6.6%	8.5%	7.0%
Quintile 2	20.4%	17.2%	20.3%	20.1%	12.6%	13.1%	17.4%	12.9%
Quintile 3	22.3%	24.7%	22.6%	22.4%	21.0%	18.7%	21.5%	19.8%
Quintile 4	24.5%	24.5%	23.3%	21.4%	26.0%	26.8%	23.8%	26.4%
Quintile 5	23.2%	24.3%	25.0%	26.1%	32.8%	34.9%	28.8%	33.9%

Key
Quintile 1
Quintile 2
Quintile 3
Quintile 4
Quintile 5
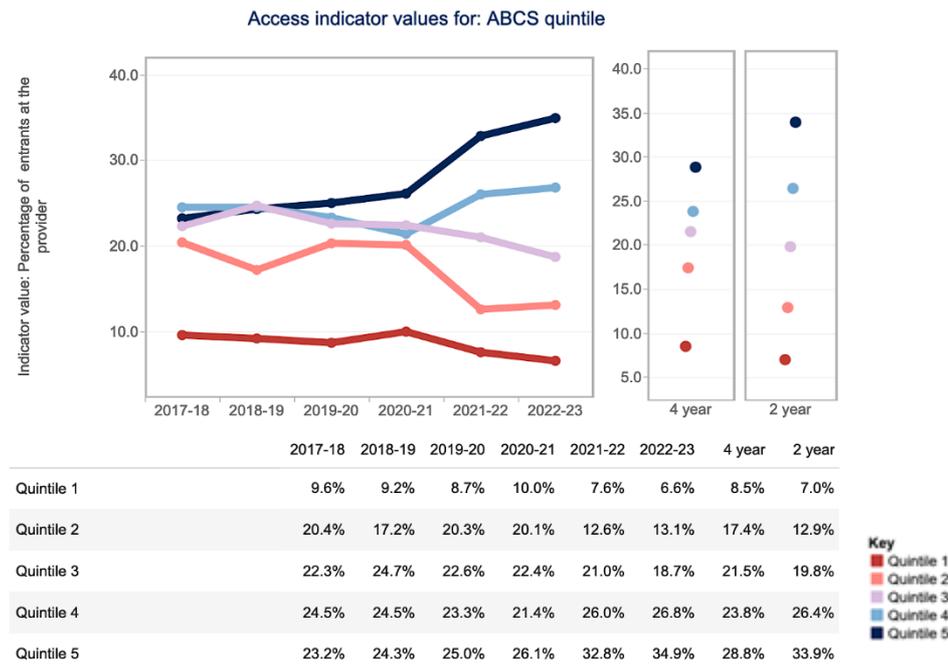
Fig.3b Enrolment gaps between ABCS Quintile 1 and 5 students at BNU.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	13.6pp	15.1pp	16.2pp	16.1pp	25.2pp	28.3pp	20.2pp	26.9pp

Change in gap from 2021-22 to 2022-23: 3.1pp
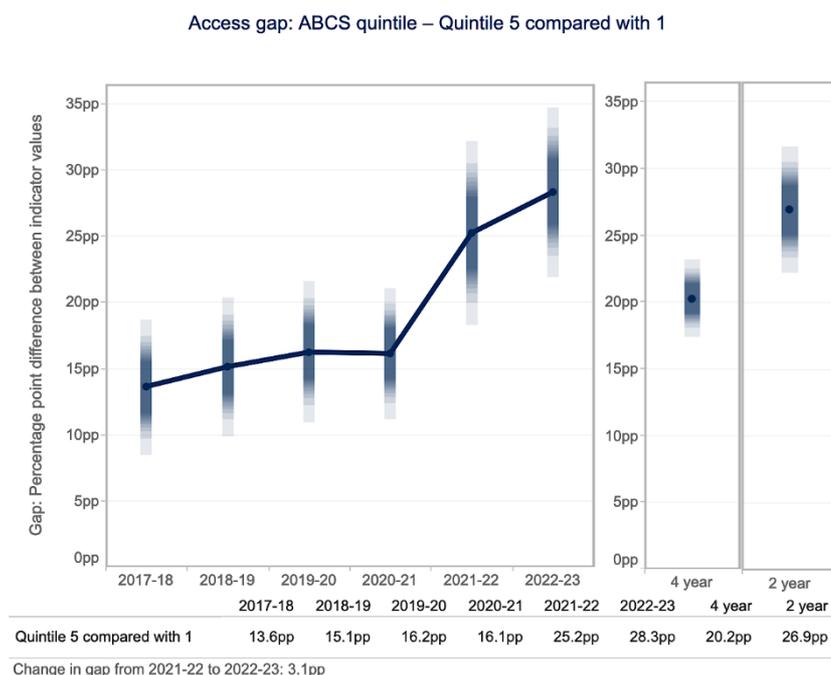
Based on our overall performance against the sector, the newness of the ABCS measure, and our small cohorts of Quintile 1 students, c.47-120 per annum, we have not set a priority target for Access in this measure. We will continue to monitor closely our data.

9.2.4 Students Eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4

This measure explores access rates for students who have been eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4.

BNU compares favourably to the sector in the enrolment of FSM-eligible learners, at 21.9% vs. 18.8%, respectively, in the 4-year aggregate (Fig.4).

Fig.4 Enrolment rates for FMS-eligible and non-FSM-eligible students at BNU.

Access indicator values for: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4)

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Eligible	20.8%	21.4%	21.4%	21.7%	23.3%	21.8%	21.9%	22.5%
Not eligible	79.2%	78.6%	78.6%	78.3%	76.7%	78.2%	78.1%	77.5%

Key
■ Eligible
■ Not eligible
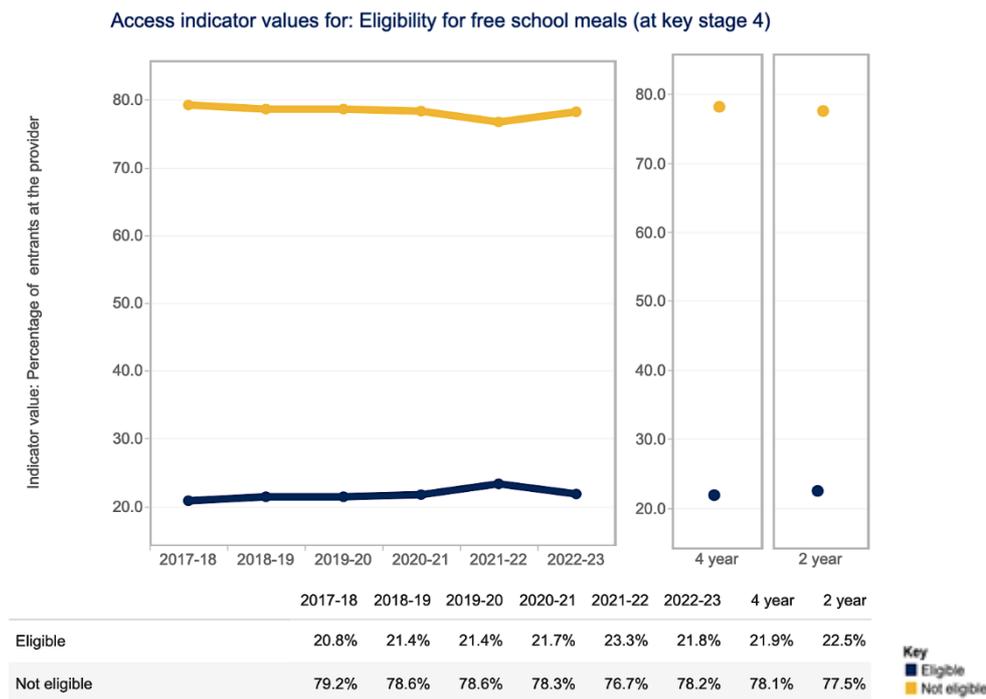
There are not enough 4-year aggregate data on enrolment of FSM eligible learners into our Apprenticeship provision. In the 2-year aggregate, our enrolment is only slightly below the sector average, at 7.3% vs. 9.4%, respectively.

Given the newness of the FSM measure, our small cohorts of FSM-eligible learners, c.139-153 per annum in our Taught provision, and our comparable performance to the sector, we have not set a priority target for Access in the measure. We will continue to monitor our FSM enrolment data and take measures in the event of significant negative trends.

9.3 Analysis - Continuation

This section provides our performance on student continuation against the key risk indicators.

Continuation is measured as the proportion of enrolled students continuing into a second year of higher education study 1 year and 15 days post-enrolment or completing study and leaving with a higher education qualification.

Overall, BNU students continue into their second year of study at a rate of 81.9% in the 4-year aggregate (2018-19 to 2021-22). The sector average rate of continuation in the same period is 89.3%. Overall continuation rate in 2021-22, the latest year of continuation data, is 77.6% at BNU, which has declined since 2016-17.

9.3.1 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

BNU continuation of students from IMD Quintile 1 (the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds) averaged 80.3% vs. 85.1% for our IMD Quintile 5 students in the 4-year aggregate (Fig.5a). The sector continuation rate of IMD Quintile 1 learners is 86.0%.

Fig.5a Continuation rates by IMD Quintile at BNU.

Continuation indicator values for: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019)

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (most deprived)	87.9%	75.4%	82.3%	82.7%	80.4%	77.3%	80.3%	78.7%
Quintile 2	87.5%	74.8%	82.4%	84.6%	81.1%	76.2%	81.0%	78.8%
Quintile 3	90.8%	82.8%	84.3%	84.2%	82.1%	78.1%	82.1%	80.3%
Quintile 4	93.1%	87.2%	84.2%	87.5%	85.4%	81.1%	84.9%	83.6%
Quintile 5 (least deprived)	86.7%	85.2%	85.7%	85.9%	86.5%	81.2%	85.1%	84.3%

Key
Quintile 1 (most deprived)
Quintile 2
Quintile 3
Quintile 4
Quintile 5 (least deprived)

Disaggregated data between BNU Taught and Franchised provisions shows that our Taught continuation rate for IMD Quintile 1 is comparable to the Quintile 5 rate: 84.8% vs. 85.1% in the 4-year aggregate. The BNU Franchised provision has a lower IMD Quintile 1 continuation rate, at 78.3%.

The continuation gap between IMD Quintiles 1 and Quintile 5 in the 4-year aggregate is 4.8pp (Fig.5b), which is about half of the size of the sector gap of 8.5pp.

The 4-year aggregate BNU Taught gap is even lower, at 2.5pp, whereas the BNU Franchised gap is 5.7pp. Internal data on continuation from Foundation Year (L0) to Year 1 (L4) in our courses with an integrated Foundation Year show that our Foundation Year students from IMD Quintile 1 have a continuation rate of 82% and a continuation gap with IMD Quintile 5 students of 2.2pp in a 4-year aggregate (Fig.5c).

IMD Quintile 1 continuation in our Apprenticeship provision is higher than in the sector, at 87.6% vs. 86.9%, respectively. The continuation gap with IMD Quintile 5 apprentices is comparable to the sector gap: 3.2pp vs. 2.8pp, respectively.

Fig.5b Continuation gaps between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students at BNU.

Continuation gap: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) – Quintile 5 compared with 1

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	-1.2pp	9.8pp	3.4pp	3.2pp	6.1pp	3.9pp	4.8pp	5.6pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -2.2pp
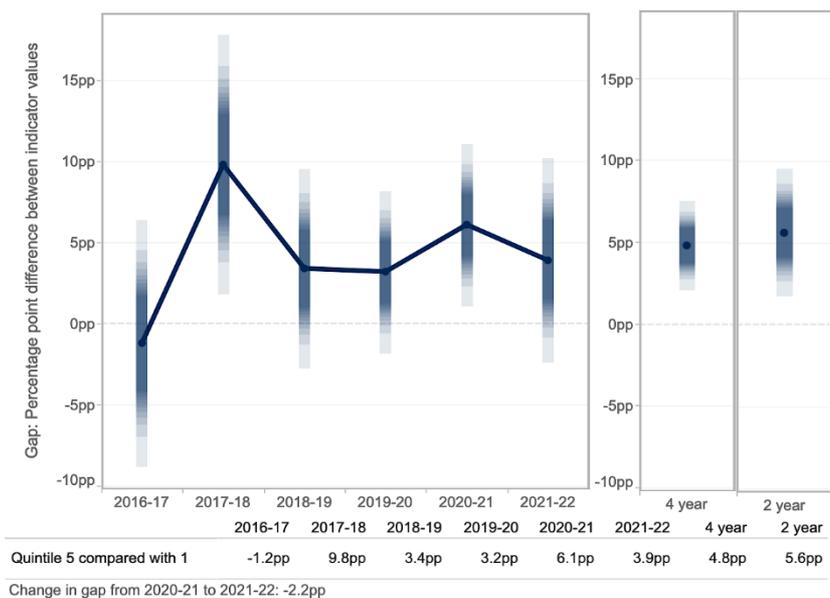
Fig.5c Continuation rates per IMD Quintile for the Foundation Year at BNU.
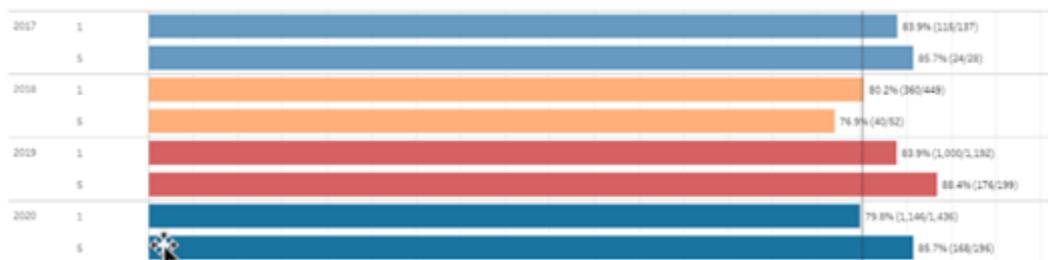
Given our large intake of IMD Quintile 1 students (annual enrolment rate of 30.8% in the 4-year aggregate) and their existing continuation gaps with our Quintile 5 students, we have set a Success priority target for Continuation in the IMD measure.

9.3.2 TUNDRA (Low Participation Neighbourhoods)

BNU continuation by TUNDRA Quintile (rates shown in Fig.6a) has a very small 4-year aggregate gap of 0.2pp between Quintile 1 students, from areas of the lowest participation, and Quintile 5 students, from areas with highest participation in higher education (Fig.6b). The sector gap in the 4-year aggregate is 3.5pp.

Fig.6a Continuation rates for the TUNDRA Quintiles at BNU.

Continuation indicator values for: TUNDRA quintile

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (least participation)	87.2%	84.8%	85.7%	83.3%	82.5%	75.2%	81.9%	79.4%
Quintile 2	87.0%	87.1%	84.3%	88.2%	80.9%	77.9%	83.1%	79.8%
Quintile 3	91.5%	87.5%	83.0%	84.9%	85.2%	83.0%	84.2%	84.3%
Quintile 4	87.9%	81.7%	82.4%	82.7%	83.6%	78.6%	82.1%	81.6%
Quintile 5 (most participation)	87.0%	86.1%	83.3%	84.2%	80.6%	79.4%	82.0%	80.2%

Key
- Quintile 1 (least participation)
- Quintile 2
- Quintile 3
- Quintile 4
- Quintile 5 (most participation)

Fig.6b Continuation gaps between TUNDRA Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students at BNU.

Continuation gap: TUNDRA quintile – Quintile 5 compared with 1

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	-0.2pp	1.3pp	-2.4pp	0.8pp	-1.8pp	4.2pp	0.2pp	0.8pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 6.1pp

There are insufficient data on continuation by TUNDRA Quintile for our Apprenticeship provision.

Based on this performance, we have not set a priority target for Continuation in the TUNDRA measure. We will continue to monitor our data and take measures if significant negative trends occur.

9.3.3 Students from Global Majority

Black and Asian BNU student continuation rates are respectively 78.8% and 78.1%, compared to 84.4% for their comparator group of White students (Fig.7a).

Fig.7a Continuation rates by Ethnicity at BNU.

Continuation indicator values for: Ethnicity

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Asian	90.3%	68.7%	81.5%	81.5%	73.9%	74.8%	78.1%	74.3%
Black	91.7%	85.4%	82.9%	80.2%	79.4%	73.6%	78.8%	76.5%
Mixed	88.6%	80.4%	78.6%	82.7%	73.9%	75.0%	77.1%	74.4%
Other	78.4%	82.1%	82.9%	82.6%	74.2%	74.8%	76.5%	74.7%
White	88.6%	83.3%	84.3%	87.1%	85.5%	80.1%	84.4%	83.1%

Key
- Asian
- Black
- Mixed
- Other
- White
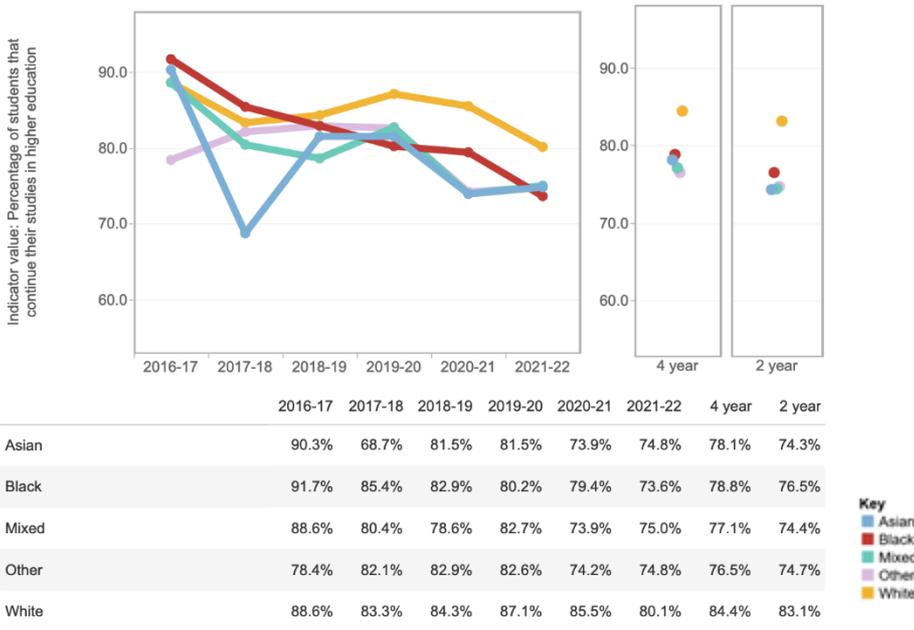
The 4-year aggregate gap in continuation for our Black students is 5.6pp, matching the sector gap of 5.5pp. In the 2-year aggregate, the BNU gap increases to 6.7pp, whereas the sector gap, 5.6pp, changes little. (Fig.7b).

Fig.7b Continuation gaps between Black and White students at BNU.

Continuation gap: Ethnicity – White compared with black

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
White compared with black	-3.1pp	-2.1pp	1.4pp	6.9pp	6.1pp	6.5pp	5.6pp	6.7pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 0.5pp
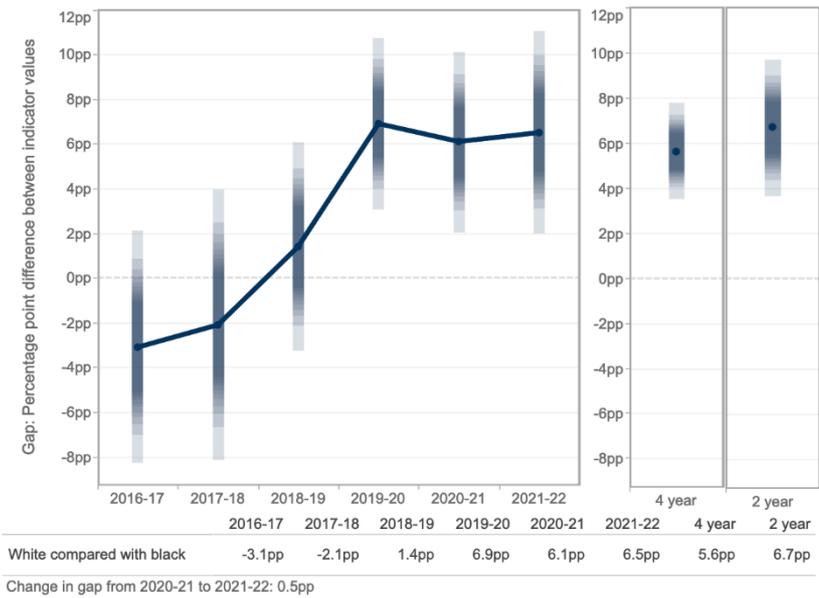
The 4-year aggregate gap in continuation for our Asian students is 6.3pp, compared to a much smaller sector gap of 0.6pp. In the 2-year aggregate, our gap increases to 8.9pp, whereas the sector gap, 0.7pp, remains largely unchanged (Fig.7c).

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Fig.7c Continuation gaps between Asian and White students at BNU.

Continuation gap: Ethnicity – White compared with Asian

| White compared with Asian | -1.7pp | 14.6pp | 2.8pp | 5.6pp | 11.6pp | 5.3pp | 6.3pp | 8.9pp |

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -6.3pp
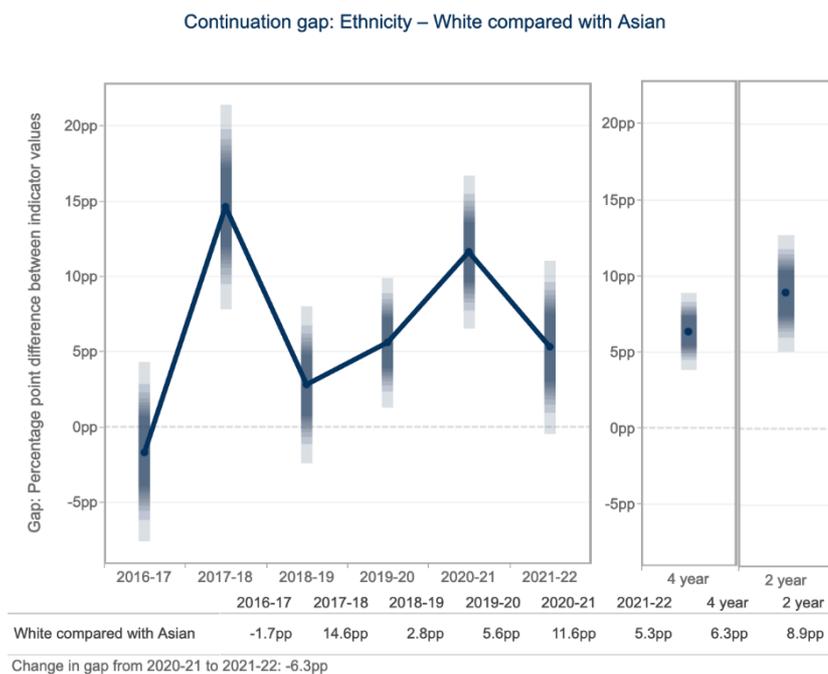
Disaggregating our data by provision types reveals 4-year aggregate continuation rates of Black and Asian students in our Taught provision of 86.5% and 84.3%, respectively. The resulting continuation gaps with White students are small, 0.5pp for Black students and 2.7pp for Asian students. In contrast, our Franchised provision has significantly bigger continuation gaps in the 4-year aggregate: 6.5pp for Black students and 11.8pp for Asian students.

Internal data on continuation from Foundation Year (L0) to Year 1 (L4) in our integrated Foundation Year courses shows that continuation rates of Black and Asian students in our Foundation Year courses averaged 76.7% and 77.6%, respectively, in the 4-year aggregate, compared to 84.2% for White students (Fig.7d). The resulting gaps are 7.5pp for Black students and 6.6pp for Asian students.

Fig.7d BNU ethnicity continuation rates in the Foundation Year.
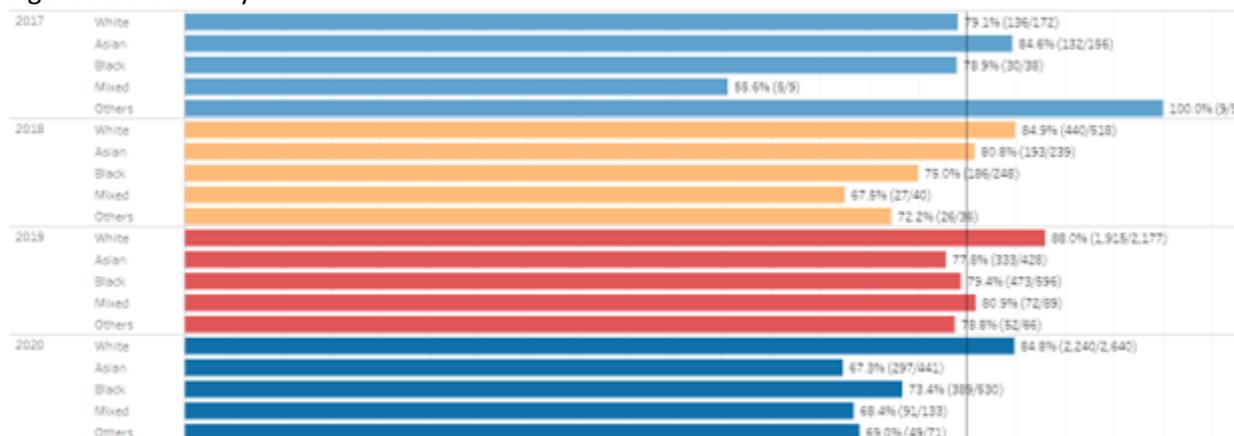
For our Apprenticeships provision, Black and Asian continuation gaps in the 4-year aggregate are respectively 4pp and 3.9pp. For comparison, the sector gaps for Black and Asian students in apprenticeships nationally are 0.9pp and -3.1pp sector.

We have therefore set Success priority targets for Continuation in the Ethnicity measure, for Black and Asian students.

9.3.4 Disabled Students

BNU disabled students have a continuation rate of 79.8% in the 4-year aggregate (Fig.8a). The sector rate is 88.8%.

In 2021-22, the latest year of continuation data, the BNU rate drops to 74.4%.

Our gap in continuation between disabled and non-disabled students in the 4-year aggregate is small, 2.2pp (Fig.8b). The sector gap is 0.5pp.

Fig.8a Continuation rates for BNU students with and without reported disability.

Continuation indicator values for: Disability

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Disability reported	91.1%	84.0%	86.1%	81.5%	77.7%	74.4%	79.8%	76.0%
No disability reported	88.9%	80.1%	83.1%	84.7%	82.5%	77.8%	82.0%	80.3%

Key
■ Disability reported
■ No disability reported
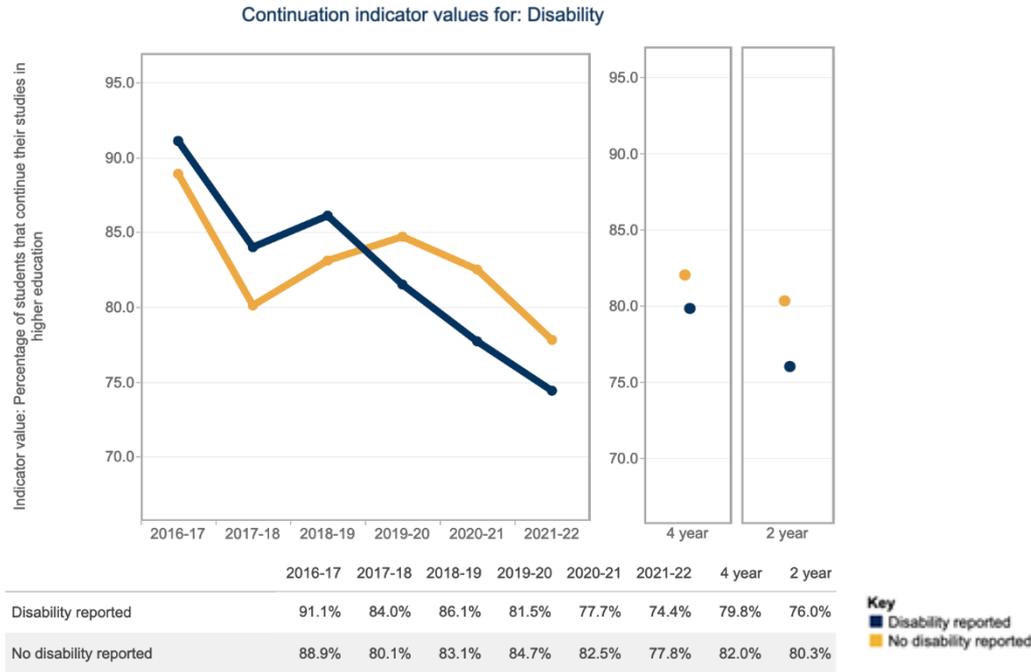
Fig.8b Continuation gaps between students with and without reported disability at BNU.

Continuation gap: Disability – No disability reported compared with disability reported

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
No disability reported compared with disability repo..	-2.3pp	-3.9pp	-2.9pp	3.2pp	4.8pp	3.4pp	2.2pp	4.4pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -1.4pp
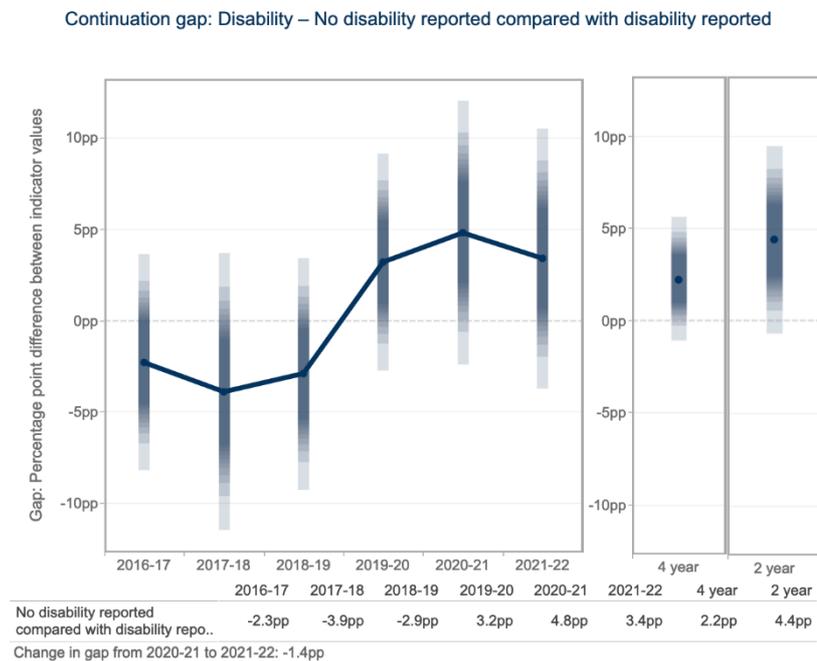
Disaggregating our data between Taught and Franchised provisions shows 4-year aggregate gaps of 2pp in our Taught provision and 0.5pp in the Franchised provision. However, in the 2-year aggregate the Taught gap changes only slightly, to 2.5pp, whereas the Franchised gap widens to 5.5pp. In 2021-22 alone, BNU Taught gap between disabled students and students without declared disability is 5pp vs. 7pp in the Franchised provision.

Internal data on the continuation from Foundation Year (L0) to Year 1 (L4) in our courses with an integrated Foundation Year show that disabled students (75% continuation rate) have a 6.9pp gap with non-disabled students (81.9% continuation rate) (Fig.8c).

Fig.8c Rates of continuation from the Foundation Year for BNU students with and without reported disability.
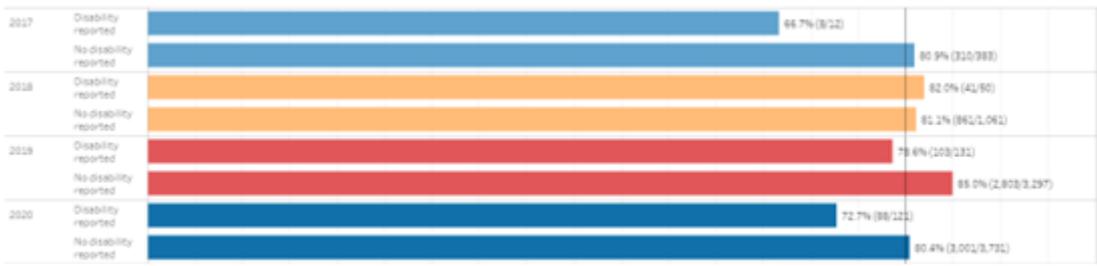
The gap in our Apprenticeship provision is smaller, 1.5pp in the 4-year aggregate (1.3pp in the 2-year aggregate), which compares favourably to sector where the 4-year aggregate gap is 2.4pp (2.2pp in the 2-year aggregate).

Disaggregating our continuation data by disability type (Fig.8d) shows:

> A positive 4-year aggregate gap with non-disabled students for our students with cognitive or learning difficulties (-3.2pp vs. -1.7pp in the sector).
> Small 4-year aggregate gaps for our students with social or communication impairments (0.7pp vs. 1.8pp in the sector) and multiple impairments (1.9pp vs. 0.7pp in the sector).
> Larger 4-year aggregate gaps for our students with sensory, medical, or physical impairments (4.8pp vs. 0.8pp in the sector) and mental health conditions (7.4pp vs. 2.6pp in the sector).

Fig.8d Continuation rates by type of disability at BNU.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Cognitive or learning difficulties	89.9%	87.5%	89.4%	87.0%	81.0%	82.6%	85.2%	81.8%
Mental health condition	[DPH]	74.1%	77.1%	75.2%	73.5%	73.6%	74.7%	73.6%
Multiple impairments	[low]	[low]	87.4%	85.7%	77.9%	72.6%	80.1%	75.1%
No disability reported	88.9%	80.1%	83.1%	84.7%	82.5%	77.8%	82.0%	80.3%
Sensory, medical or physical impairment	[DPH]	76.1%	82.9%	79.8%	77.6%	69.5%	77.2%	73.1%
Social or communication impairment	[low]	[low]	[low]	84.0%	[low]	[low]	81.4%	[low]

The volatility of our continuation gaps by type of disability is due to our small cohorts across the Taught and Franchised provisions, where annual cohorts by disability type range from c.10 students to c.120 students per annum.

We note also that Foundation Year (Level 0) students with mental health conditions in our courses with integrated Foundation average 83.2% continuation rate in the 4-year aggregate and have a positive continuation gap of -1.3pp with their non-disabled peers (Fig.8e).

Fig.8e Foundation Year continuation rates of students with and without reported mental health condition at BNU.
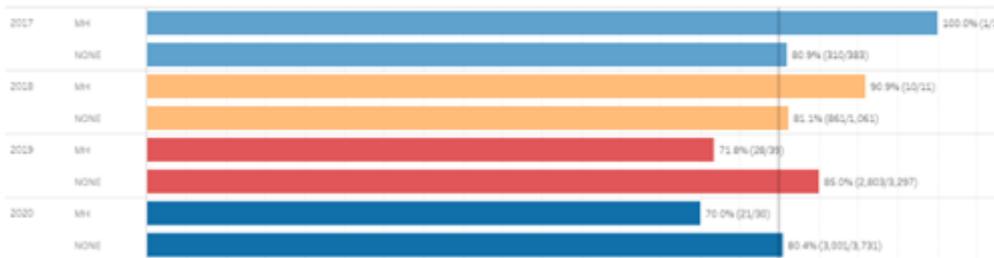
Because our overall continuation gap is small and given the data volatility, we have not set a priority target for Continuation in the Disability measure, and will instead continue to monitor our data.

9.3.5 Mature Students (21 years and over)

Our mature learners (21 years and over) have a comparable to the sector 4-year aggregate continuation rate (81.7% vs. 82.8%) (Fig.9a) and a smaller than the sector continuation gap with young learners (<21 years old) (0.9pp vs. 9pp) (Fig.9b). The BNU gap increases slightly, to 1.4pp, in the 2-year aggregate, but remains much smaller than the 2-year aggregate sector gap of 9.6pp.

Fig.9a Continuation rates for mature and young students at BNU.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Mature (21 and over)	91.3%	75.3%	83.4%	84.5%	82.2%	77.4%	81.7%	79.8%
Young (under 21)	88.0%	85.3%	83.4%	84.4%	82.7%	78.7%	82.6%	81.2%
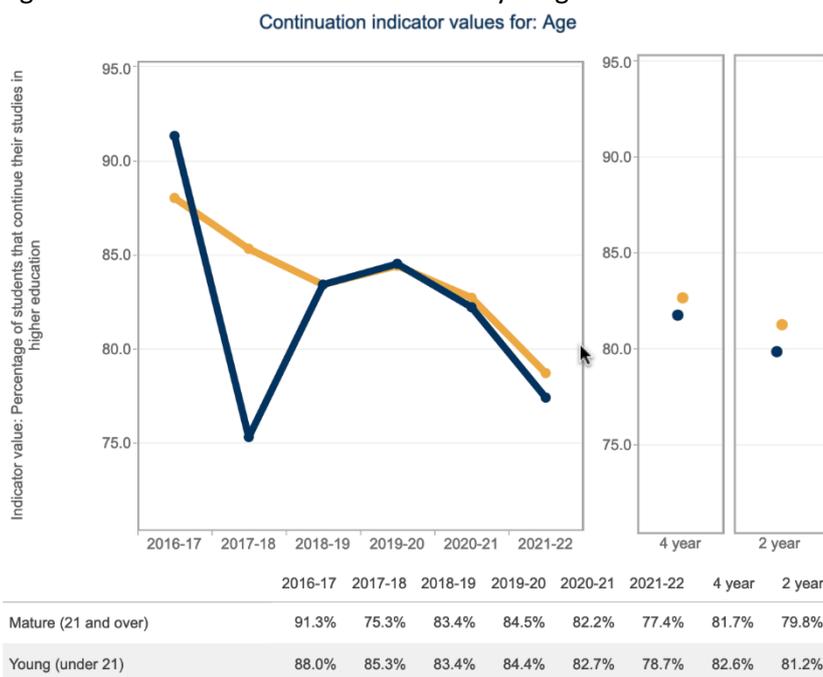
Fig.9b Continuation gaps between mature and young students at BNU.

Continuation gap: Age – Young (under 21) compared with mature (21 and over)
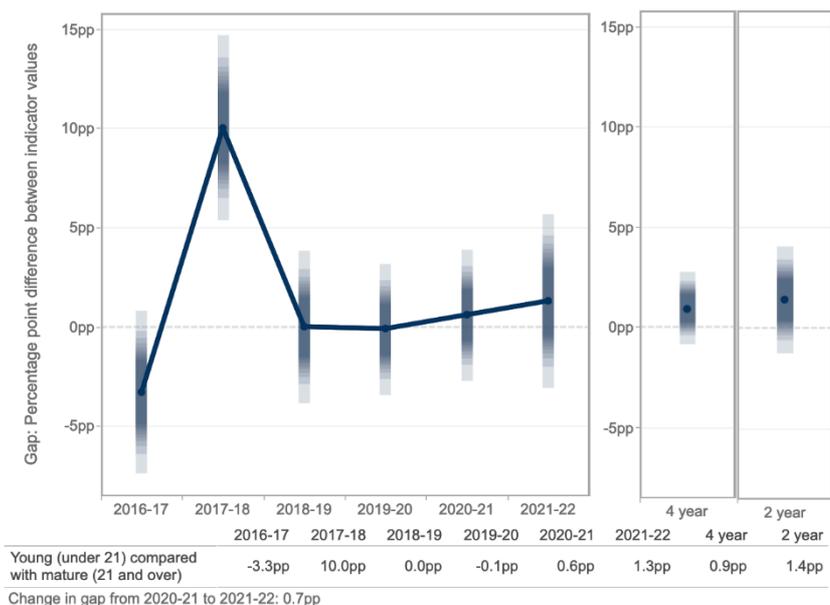
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Young (under 21) compared with mature (21 and over)	-3.3pp	10.0pp	0.0pp	-0.1pp	0.6pp	1.3pp	0.9pp	1.4pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 0.7pp

Internal data on continuation from Foundation Year (L0) to Year 1 (L4) in our courses with an integrated Foundation Year show that Foundation Year mature learners average 82.7% continuation, and have a positive, -8.6pp continuation gap with young learners in a 4-year aggregate (Fig.9c).

Fig.9c Rates of continuation from the Foundation Year for mature and young students at BNU.
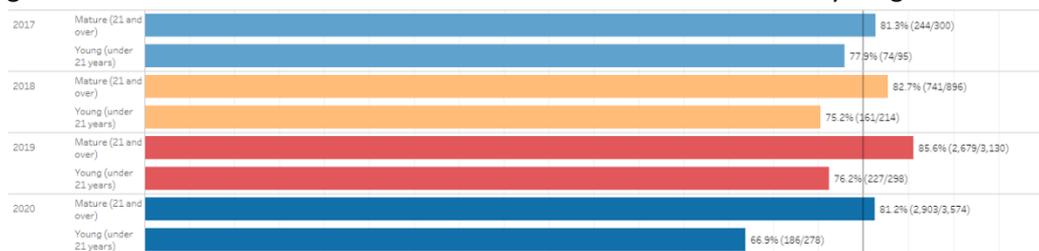
In Apprenticeship provision, mature learner continuation in the 4-year aggregate is comparable to the sector (88.4% vs. 86.8%) and the gap with young apprentices is smaller than the sector gap (3.3pp vs. 5.5pp).

Given the data, we have not set a priority target for Continuation in this measure and will continue to monitor future trends.

9.3.6 ABCS

The BNU 4-year aggregate continuation rate of 78.2% (Fig.10a) for students from the most disadvantaged socio-demographic intersections (ABCS Quintile 1) is comparable to the sector rate of 80.8%. The continuation gap with students from the least disadvantaged ABCS Quintile 5 at BNU, 7.3pp, is half the size of the sector gap in the 4-year aggregate, 14.1pp (Fig.10b).

Fig.10a Continuation rates for the ABCS Quintile students at BNU.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1	88.6%	68.5%	82.8%	77.7%	77.9%	75.7%	78.2%	76.8%
Quintile 2	89.2%	82.3%	81.7%	84.8%	82.1%	77.4%	81.4%	79.7%
Quintile 3	90.1%	81.4%	83.9%	88.9%	83.8%	77.8%	83.5%	81.1%
Quintile 4	89.9%	85.5%	84.8%	88.7%	85.1%	81.5%	85.3%	83.6%
Quintile 5	87.0%	86.0%	87.1%	88.1%	85.2%	79.5%	85.5%	83.1%

Key
- Quintile 1
- Quintile 2
- Quintile 3
- Quintile 4
- Quintile 5

Fig.10b Continuation gaps between ABCS Quintile 1 and 5 students at BNU.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	-1.5pp	17.6pp	4.4pp	10.4pp	7.3pp	3.8pp	7.3pp	6.2pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -3.5pp

Our Apprenticeship provision has better continuation rate for ABCS Quintile 1 apprentices compared to the sector (90.4% vs. 85.8%), and the gap with Quintile 5 apprentices is three times smaller than the sector gap (2.5pp vs. 7.2pp).

Given our performance, the newness of the ABCS measure, and the fact we have set priority targets for IMD and Ethnicity – two major components of ABCS, we have not set an ABCS specific priority target and will continue to monitor our data trends.

9.3.7 Students Eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4

FSM-eligible students at BNU have lower continuation rate than the sector average (77.9% vs. 87.3%) and a slightly wider continuation gap with their non-FSM-eligible peers compared to the sector gap (6.6pp vs. 5.2pp) (Figs. 11a and 11b).

Fig.11a Continuation rates for FSM-eligible and non-FSM eligible students at BNU.

Continuation indicator values for: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4)

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Eligible		84.7%	85.8%	79.1%	80.6%	73.8%	79.0%	77.9%	75.8%
Not eligible		89.3%	85.4%	85.3%	86.8%	83.8%	80.5%	84.5%	82.6%

Key
■ Eligible
■ Not eligible
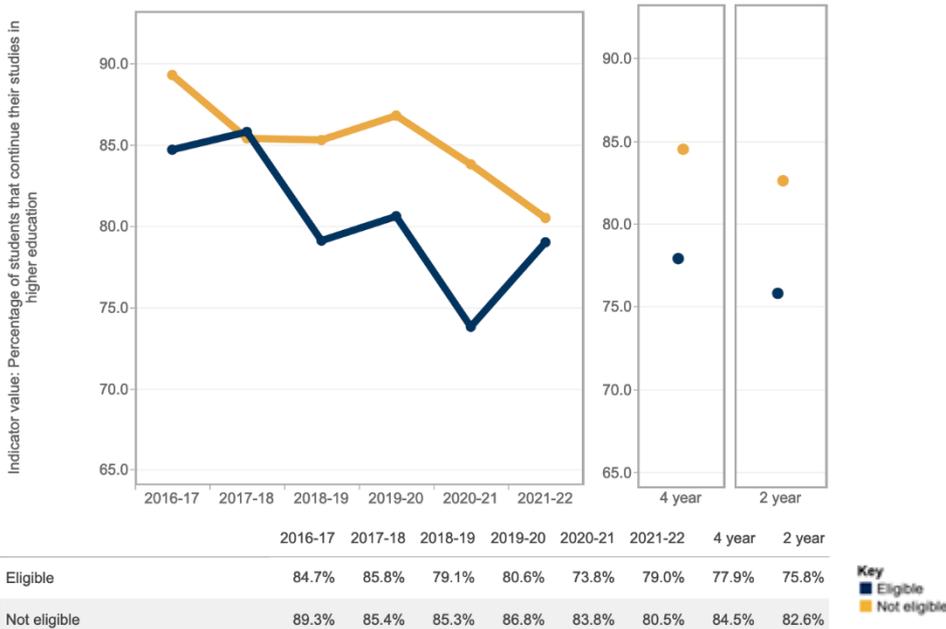
Fig.11b Continuation gaps between FSM-eligible and non-FSM-eligible students at BNU.

Continuation gap: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4) – Not eligible compared with eligible

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Not eligible compared with eligible	4.6pp	-0.4pp	6.2pp	6.2pp	10.0pp	1.5pp	6.6pp	6.9pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -8.5pp
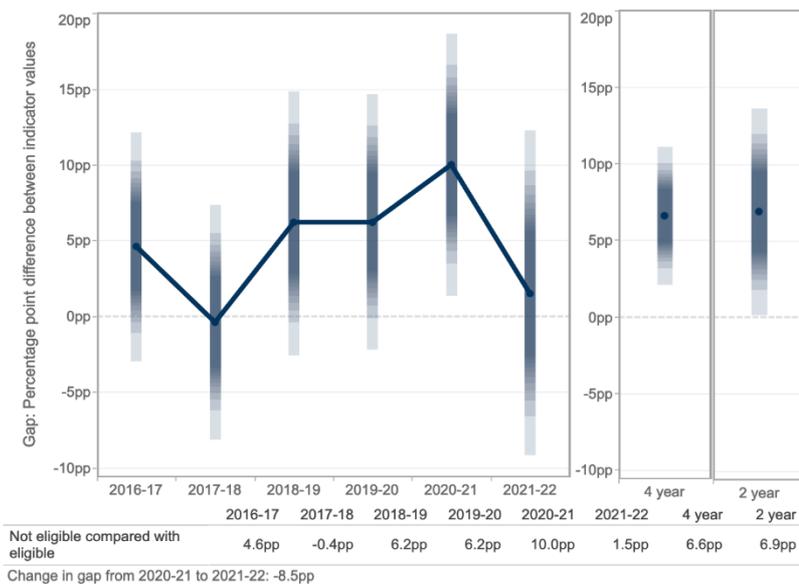
There are no data on continuation for our FSM-eligible apprentices.

Given the comparable performance to the sector and the overlap of our FSM eligible cohorts with our IMD Quintile 1 and ABCS Quintile 1 cohorts, we have not set an FSM specific priority target for Continuation. We are addressing socio-economic disadvantage in this risk area as part of our priority targeting of IMD Quintile 1 students who are the bigger cohort.

9.4 Analysis - Completion

This section provides our performance in student completion for the OfS key risk indicators and target groups. Completion is measured by as the proportion of students completing their course within 6-years from enrolment.

Overall, BNU students have completion rate of 78.2% in the 4-year aggregate (2015-16 to 2018-19). The sector average rate in the same period is 87.5%. In 2018-19, the latest year of completion data, our completion rate was 73.7%, the lowest since 2013-14.

9.4.1 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

Our 4-year aggregate completion rate of IMD Quintile 1 students is 71.7% (Fig.12a).

Fig.12a Continuation rates per IMD Quintile at BNU.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (most deprived)	80.2%	73.1%	81.3%	77.6%	72.7%	67.0%	71.7%	68.7%
Quintile 2	83.4%	80.2%	79.8%	82.3%	72.1%	71.8%	75.3%	71.9%
Quintile 3	84.3%	83.7%	81.6%	85.2%	78.2%	75.0%	79.4%	76.3%
Quintile 4	85.5%	83.6%	85.1%	86.2%	82.1%	80.8%	83.3%	81.4%
Quintile 5 (least deprived)	87.9%	86.9%	85.7%	83.4%	80.6%	81.5%	82.8%	81.0%

Key
■ Quintile 1 (most deprived)
■ Quintile 2
■ Quintile 3
■ Quintile 4
■ Quintile 5 (least deprived)
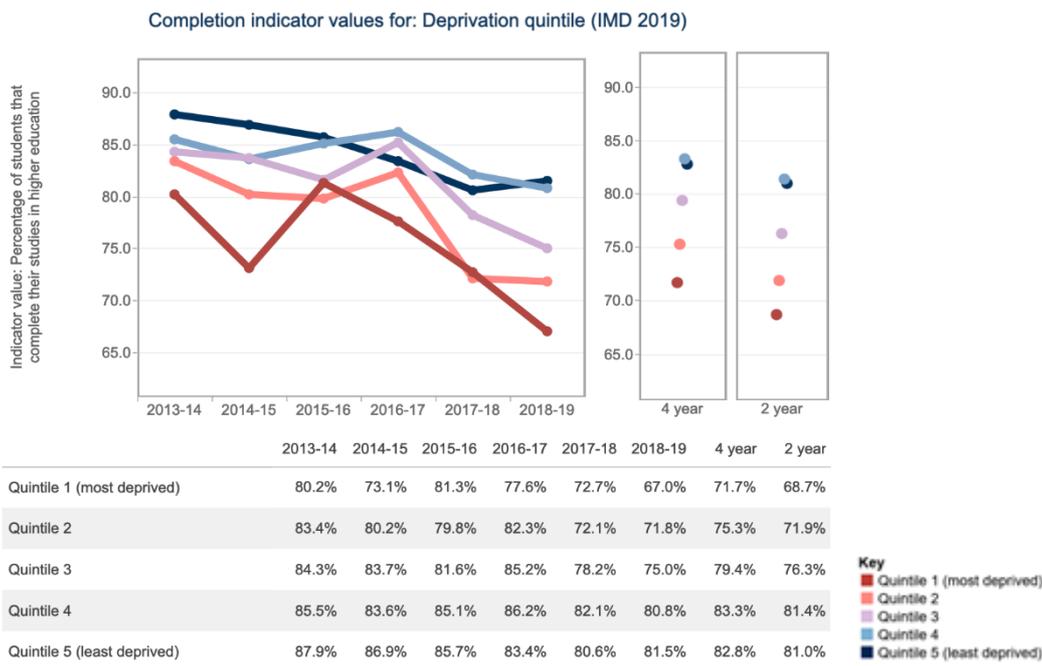
The gap in completion between our IMD Quintile 1 and IMD Quintile 5 students is 9.3pp in the 4-year aggregate (Fig.12b), almost exactly the sector gap of 9.4pp.

Disaggregating our data by Taught and Franchised provision reveals that Quintile 1 Taught students have completion rate of 81% and a much smaller gap, 3.3pp, with their Quintile 5 peers. For the Franchised provision, the rate and gap are 72.5% and 13.5pp.

The gaps in both provisions decrease in the 2-year aggregate: 0.5pp for BNU Taught and 10.5pp for BNU Franchised. The respective sector gap is 9.4pp.

In 2018-19, the latest year of completion data, the IMD Quintile 1 completion rate was 67% (83% in Taught and 65% in Franchised), and the gap with Quintile 5 was 12.1pp (a positive, -1.0pp in Taught, and 14.0pp in Franchised). The respective sector gap was 9.3pp.

Fig.12b Continuation gaps between IMD Quintile 1 and 5 students at BNU.

Completion gap: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) – Quintile 5 compared with 1

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	7.8pp	13.8pp	4.4pp	5.8pp	7.9pp	14.5pp	11.0pp	12.4pp

Change in gap from 2017-18 to 2018-19: 6.7pp
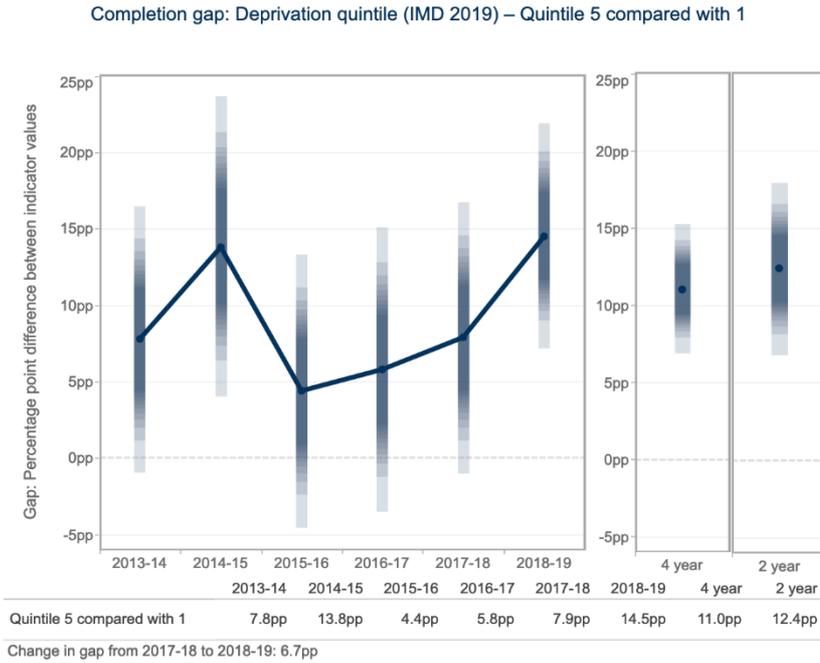
IMD Quintile 1 completion rate in our Apprenticeship provision is higher than the sector average rate (76.2% vs. 73.8%) in the 4-year aggregate, but the completion gap with Quintile 5 apprentices is wider (9.1pp vs. 5.1pp).

Given the gaps in all three of our provisions and the large proportion of IMD Quintile 1 students in our student population, we have set a Success priority target for Completion.

9.4.2 TUNDRA (Low Participation Neighbourhoods)

BNU completion rate of TUNDRA Quintile 1 students (Fig.13a) falls below the sector in both the 4-year aggregate, 79.1% vs. 86.5%, and the 2-year aggregate, 73.9% vs. 86.5%. In 2018-19, our Quintile 1 completion rate drops to 73%.

Fig.13a Completion rates for the TUNDRA Quintile students at BNU.

Completion indicator values for: TUNDRA quintile

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (least participation)	90.6%	80.1%	85.2%	82.6%	74.8%	73.0%	79.1%	73.9%
Quintile 2	86.3%	85.6%	78.8%	82.0%	84.7%	77.3%	80.9%	81.3%
Quintile 3	85.5%	85.0%	82.0%	84.7%	82.0%	79.7%	82.2%	81.0%
Quintile 4	86.8%	81.8%	79.9%	79.9%	76.4%	72.6%	77.3%	74.4%
Quintile 5 (most participation)	84.6%	83.6%	80.9%	82.6%	77.3%	77.6%	79.6%	77.4%

Key
- Quintile 1 (least participation)
- Quintile 2
- Quintile 3
- Quintile 4
- Quintile 5 (most participation)

Our 4-year aggregate completion gap between TUNDRA Quintiles 1 and 5 (Fig.13b) is 12.5 times smaller than the sector gap: 0.4pp vs. 5pp.

In the 2-year aggregate, our gap increases to 3.6pp, but remains below the sector gap of 5pp.

Fig.13b Completion gaps between TUNDRA Quintile 1 and 5 students at BNU.

Completion gap: TUNDRA quintile – Quintile 5 compared with 1

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	-6.0pp	3.5pp	-4.4pp	0.0pp	2.5pp	4.6pp	0.4pp	3.6pp

Change in gap from 2017-18 to 2018-19: 2.2pp
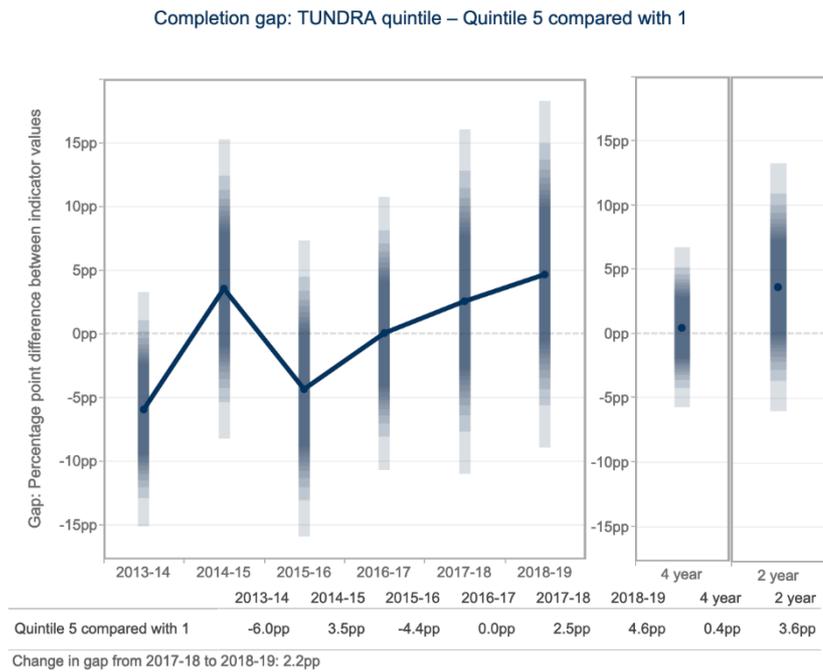
There are no TUNDRA Quintile 1 data on completion for our Apprenticeship provision.

Given our overall performance in this measure, we have not set a Success priority target for Completion in this measure. We will continue to monitor our completion data for students who join us from areas with the least representation in higher education.

9.4.3 Students from Global Majority

Black and Asian students at BNU have lower completion rates than their White peers in the 4-year aggregate: 77.7% and 71.8%, respectively, vs. 80.5% (Fig.14a).

Fig.14a Completion rates by Ethnicity at BNU.

Completion indicator values for: Ethnicity

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
Asian	86.0%	79.2%	77.9%	83.8%	68.5%	66.6%	71.8%	67.4%
Black	83.0%	78.1%	83.3%	85.4%	80.8%	70.5%	77.7%	73.9%
Mixed	69.9%	76.1%	77.7%	74.1%	69.3%	74.8%	74.1%	72.6%
Other	[low]	75.7%	80.0%	73.0%	75.0%	66.2%	72.0%	69.3%
White	86.3%	84.3%	84.5%	83.8%	78.6%	77.1%	80.5%	77.7%

Key
Asian
Black
Mixed
Other
White
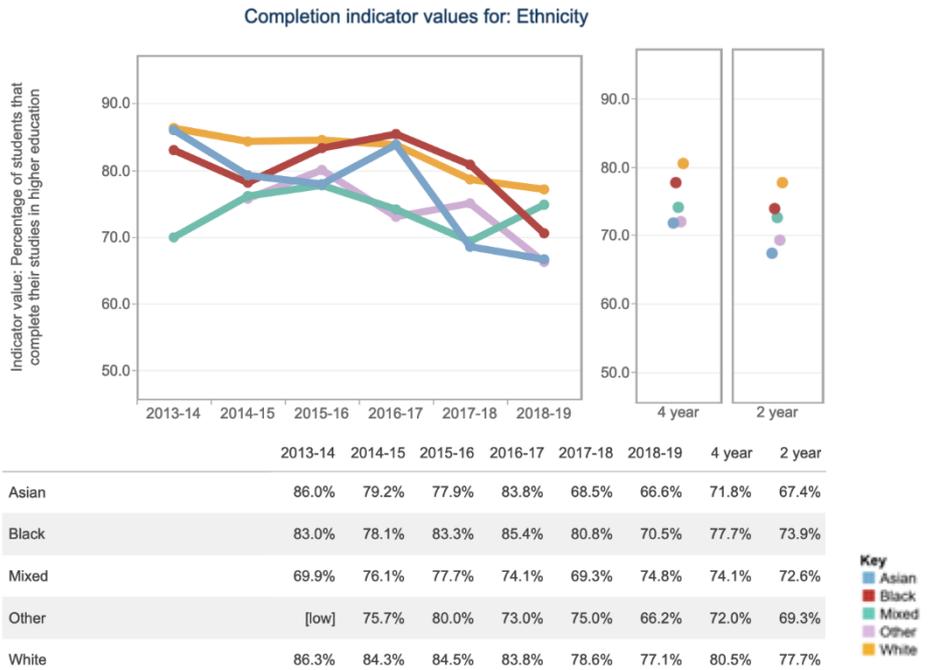
Our Black completion gap is small, 2.9pp in the 4-year aggregate (7.7pp in the sector) (Fig.14b).

Fig.14b Completion gaps between Black and White students at BNU.

Completion gap: Ethnicity – White compared with black

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
White compared with black	3.3pp	6.2pp	1.2pp	-1.6pp	-2.3pp	6.6pp	2.9pp	3.9pp

Change in gap from 2017-18 to 2018-19: 8.8pp
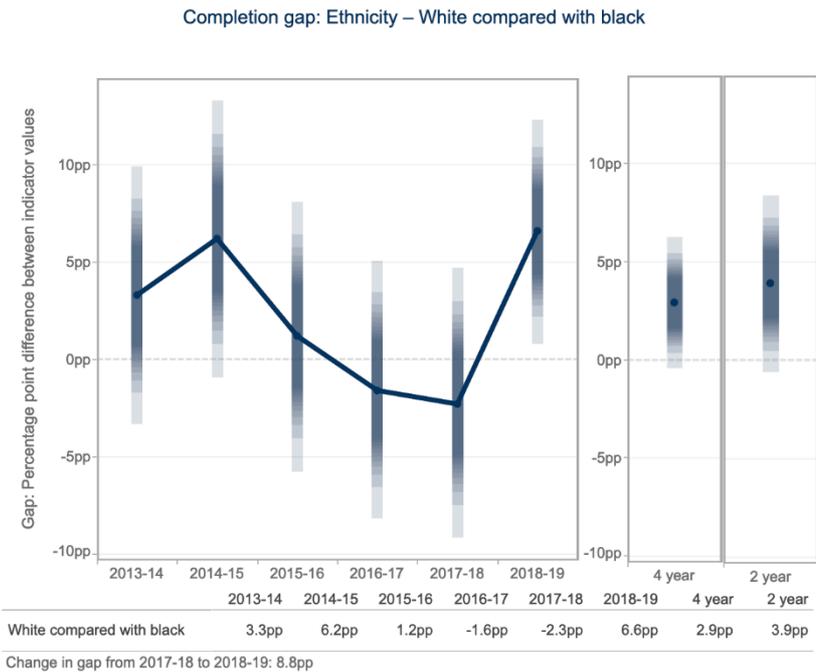
Our Franchised provision contributes the most to the Black completion gap at BNU, with a 4-year aggregate gap of 15.2pp (vs. 0.0pp for our Taught provision), a 2-year aggregate gap of 10.0pp (vs. 1.5pp for our Taught provision), and a 2018-19 gap of 4.0pp (vs. a positive, -2.0pp, for our Taught provision).

Our Asian completion gap is much larger, 8.8pp in the 4-year aggregate (vs. 1.4pp in the sector), and increases to 18.2pp in the 2-year aggregate (9.4pp in the sector), and 10.4pp in 2018-19 (0.4pp in the sector) (Fig.14c).

Fig.14c Completion gaps between Asian and White students at BNU.

Completion gap: Ethnicity – White compared with Asian

White compared with Asian	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
	0.3pp	5.1pp	6.6pp	0.0pp	10.1pp	10.4pp	8.8pp	10.3pp

Change in gap from 2017-18 to 2018-19: 0.3pp
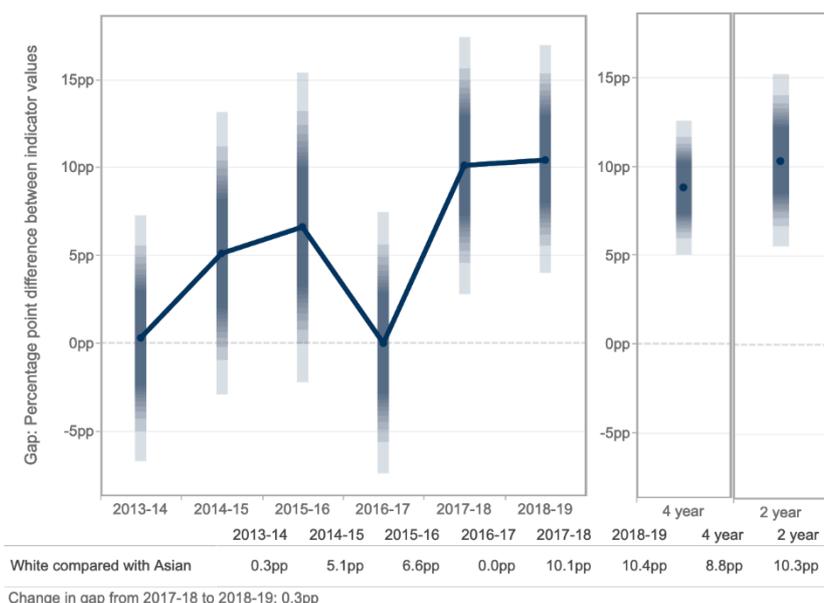
Our Franchised provision is again the main contributor, with a 4-year aggregate gap of 4.2pp (3.8pp in our Taught provision), a 2-year aggregate gap of 26.0pp (vs. 18pp in our Taught provision), and a 2018-19 gap of 16.0pp (vs. 1pp. in our Taught provision). Our Taught provision gaps in completion for Asian students may be due to a small number of our academic schools: the School of Business and Law, the School of Creative and Digital Industries, and the School of Human and Social Sciences.

In our Apprenticeships provision, Black and Asian completion gaps are wider than the sector gaps in the 4-year aggregate, but relatively small (4pp vs. 0.9p; 3.9pp vs. -3.1pp).

Given our small Black completion gap, we are opting for continued monitoring of the data with a view to taking action if significant negative trends occur.

Our Asian completion gap requires immediate action across provisions, so we have set a Success priority target for Completion and Asian students.

9.4.4 Mature Students (21 years and over)
Our mature learners have completion rate of 76.5% in the 4-year aggregate (vs. 80% in the sector) (Fig.15a), and a completion gap with young learners of 3.2pp (vs. 10pp in the sector) (Fig.15b).

Fig.15a Completion rates for mature and young students at BNU.

Completion indicator values for: Age

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
Mature (21 and over)	81.3%	79.3%	85.9%	85.4%	73.9%	72.3%	76.5%	72.8%
Young (under 21)	86.1%	83.2%	81.1%	82.4%	79.0%	76.2%	79.7%	77.6%

Key
- ■ Mature (21 and over)
- ■ Young (under 21)
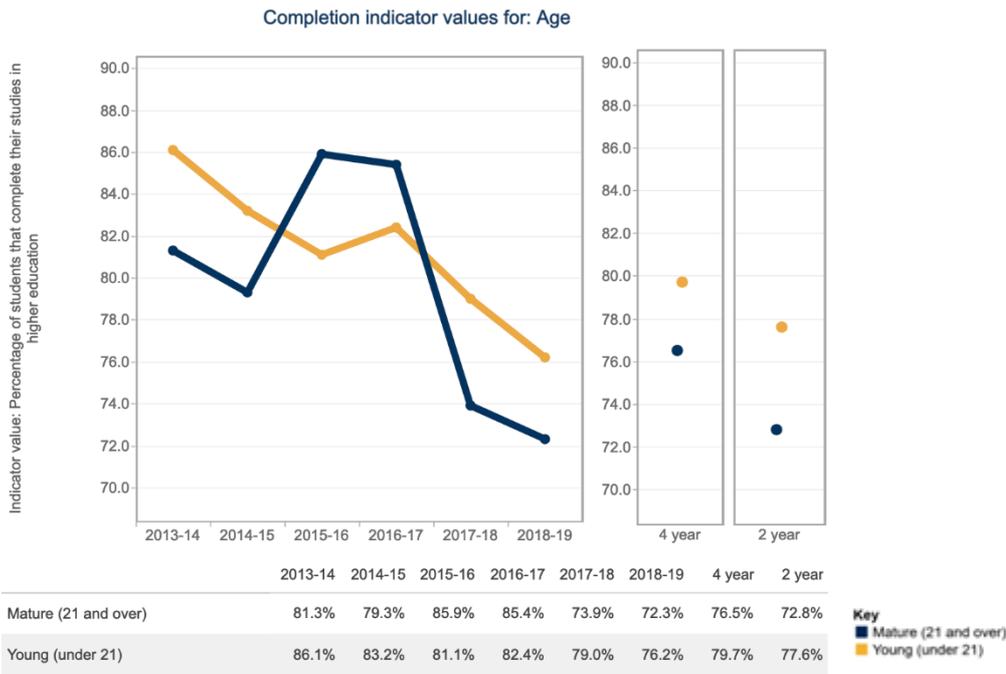
Fig.15b Completion gaps between mature and young students at BNU.

Completion gap: Age – Young (under 21) compared with mature (21 and over)

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
Young (under 21) compared with mature (21 and over)	4.8pp	3.9pp	-4.8pp	-3.0pp	5.1pp	3.9pp	3.2pp	4.8pp

Change in gap from 2017-18 to 2018-19: -1.1pp
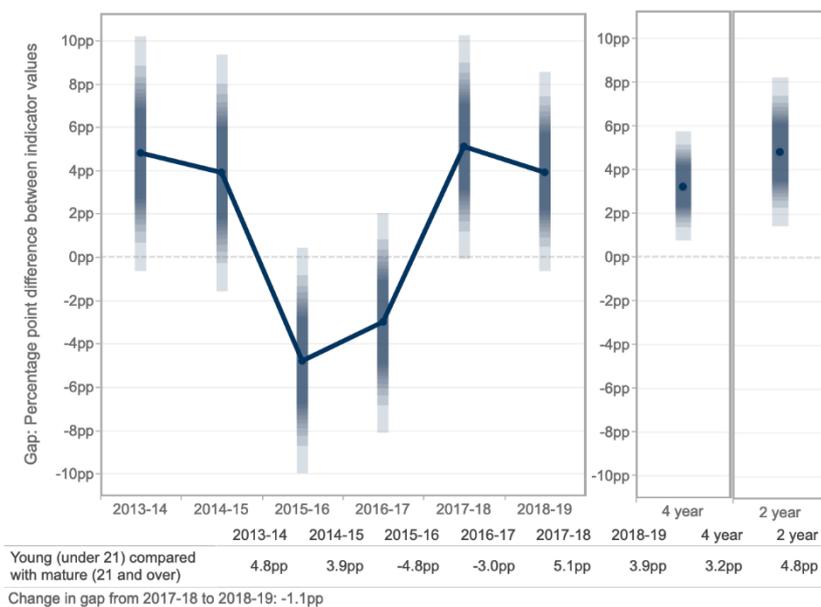
Our rate reduces to 72.8% in the 2-year aggregate, and 72.3% in 2018-19.

The gap fluctuates between 4.8pp in the 2-year aggregate and 3.9pp in 2018-19 and is primarily due to our Franchised provision (9.7pp in the 4-year aggregate, 9pp in the 2-year aggregate, 11pp in 2018-19). Our Taught provision has positive gaps all across (-3pp in the 4-year aggregate; -0.8pp in the 2-year aggregate; -2pp in 2018-19).

There are not enough data on the completion of mature and young learners in our Apprenticeships provision.

Our comparatively small completion gap, which is positive in our Taught provision, suggests no urgent need for a priority target. We will continue to monitor completion of our mature students and will support our franchise partners towards reaching completion rates and gaps similar to our Taught provision.

9.4.5 ABCS

Our data for this measure show a lower 4-year aggregate completion rate, 66.6%, for our most disadvantaged students (ABCS Quintile 1) compared to 87.2% for their better off peers from ABCS Quintile 5 (Fig.16a). The sector completion rate for ABCS Quintile 1 is 72.8%.

Fig.16a Completion rates by ABCS Quintile at BNU.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1	69.7%	65.6%	73.0%	74.5%	65.9%	62.9%	66.6%	63.9%
Quintile 2	83.6%	81.0%	86.2%	82.9%	73.9%	74.3%	77.9%	74.1%
Quintile 3	89.2%	85.0%	83.6%	86.7%	81.5%	82.3%	83.5%	81.9%
Quintile 4	86.3%	87.1%	81.8%	84.4%	85.3%	81.4%	83.3%	83.4%
Quintile 5	91.0%	92.3%	87.6%	87.3%	86.0%	87.6%	87.2%	86.8%

Key
■ Quintile 1
■ Quintile 2
■ Quintile 3
■ Quintile 4
■ Quintile 5
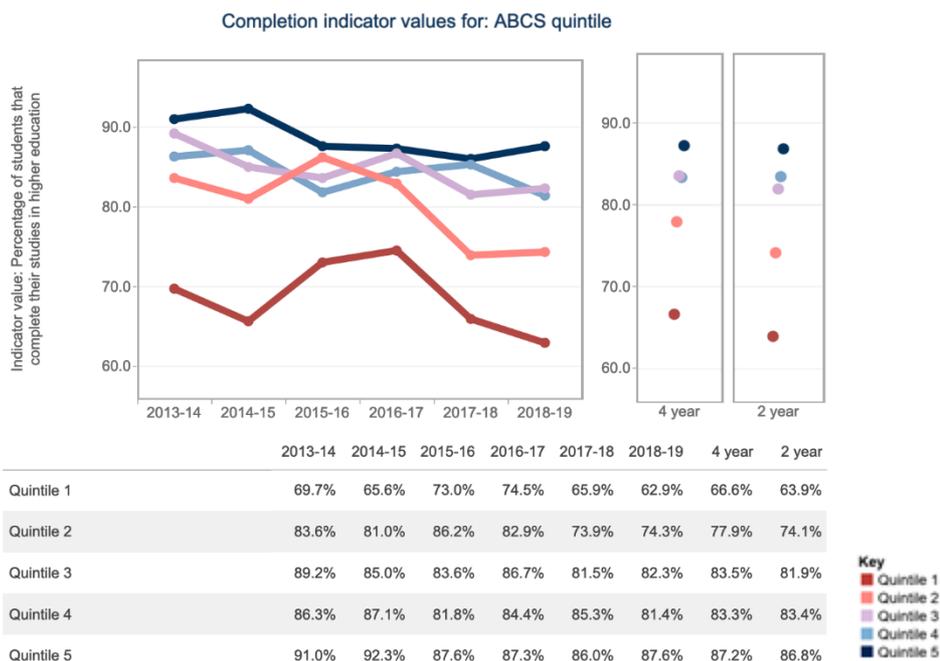
Our 4-year aggregate gap in completion between Quintiles 1 and 5 is 20.5pp (Fig.16b) (22.8pp in the 2-year aggregate), which is lower than the sector gap of 23.2pp (23.2pp in the 2-year aggregate).

Fig.16b Completion gaps between ABCS Quintile 1 and 5 students at BNU.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	21.3pp	26.7pp	14.6pp	12.9pp	20.1pp	24.7pp	20.5pp	22.8pp

Change in gap from 2017-18 to 2018-19: 4.6pp
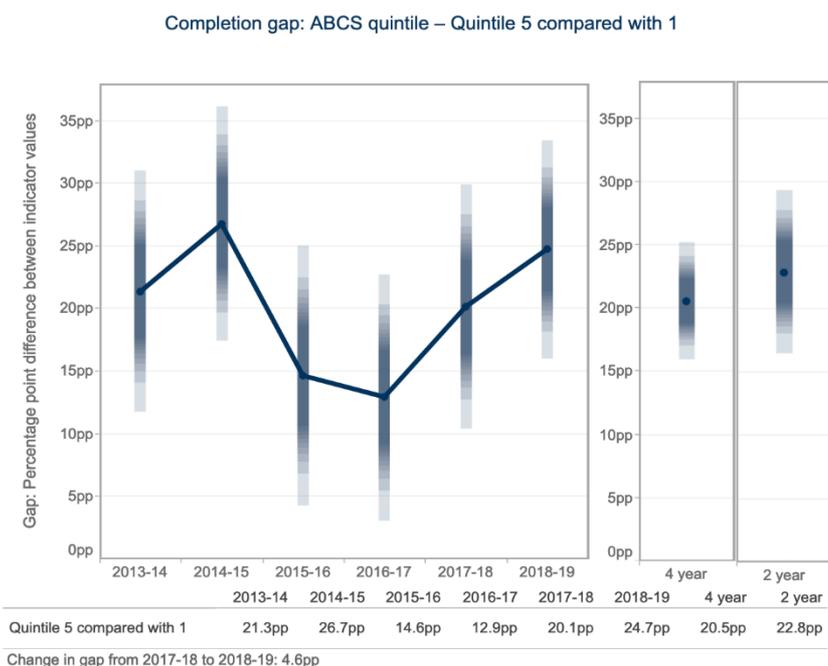
Our overall ABCS Quintile 5 cohorts are small, c.179-221 students per annum, and even smaller in our Taught provision (c.106-180 students per annum).

We have already set priority targets for Completion in the IMD and Ethnicity measures, which are major components of ABCS. We have not therefore added a target in ABCS, but will continue to monitor the data.

9.4.6 Students Eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4

Our FSM eligible students complete their studies at a rate of 73.5% (4-year aggregate) vs. 82.0% for their non-FSM eligible peers, and the 83.1% sector rate for FSM-eligible students (Fig.17a).

Fig.17a Completion rates for FSM-eligible and non-FSM-eligible students at BNU.

Completion indicator values for: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4)

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
Eligible	80.5%	77.9%	74.3%	76.5%	74.3%	68.4%	73.5%	71.4%
Not eligible	89.1%	85.6%	83.5%	84.0%	80.8%	79.3%	82.0%	80.1%

Key
■ Eligible
■ Not eligible
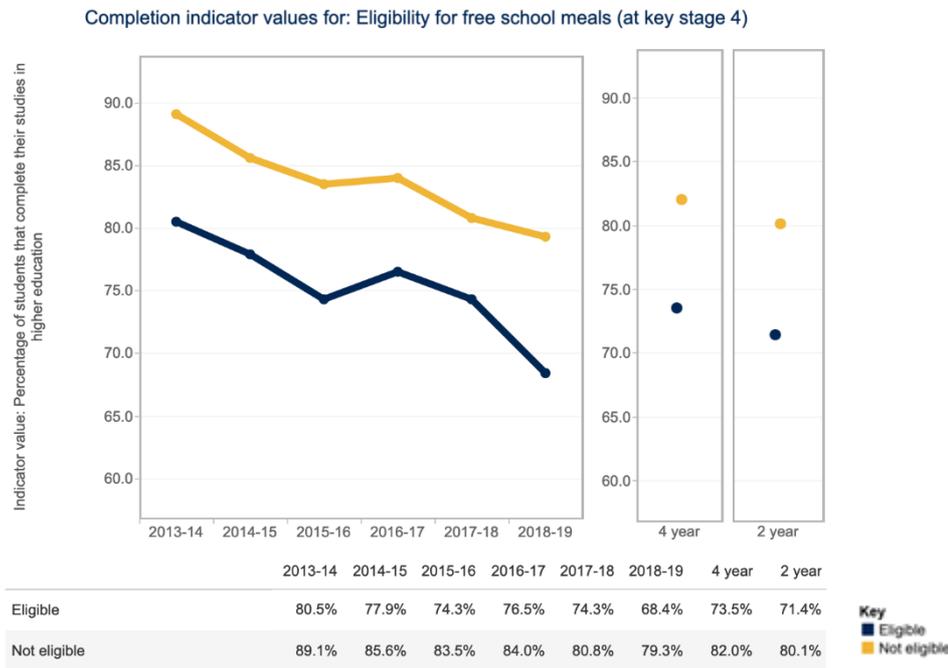
Our rate decreases to 71.4% in the 2-year aggregate, and to 68.4% in 2018-19.

The gap in completion between our FSM-eligible and non-FSM eligible students is 8.5pp in the 4-year aggregate (8.7pp in the 2-year aggregate), which is close to the 7.8pp sector gap (8pp in the 2-year aggregate) (Fig.17b).

Fig.17b Completion gaps between FSM-eligible and non-FSM-eligible students at BNU.

Completion gap: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4) – Not eligible compared with eligible

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	4 year	2 year
Not eligible compared with eligible	8.6pp	7.7pp	9.2pp	7.4pp	6.5pp	10.9pp	8.5pp	8.7pp

Change in gap from 2017-18 to 2018-19: 4.4pp
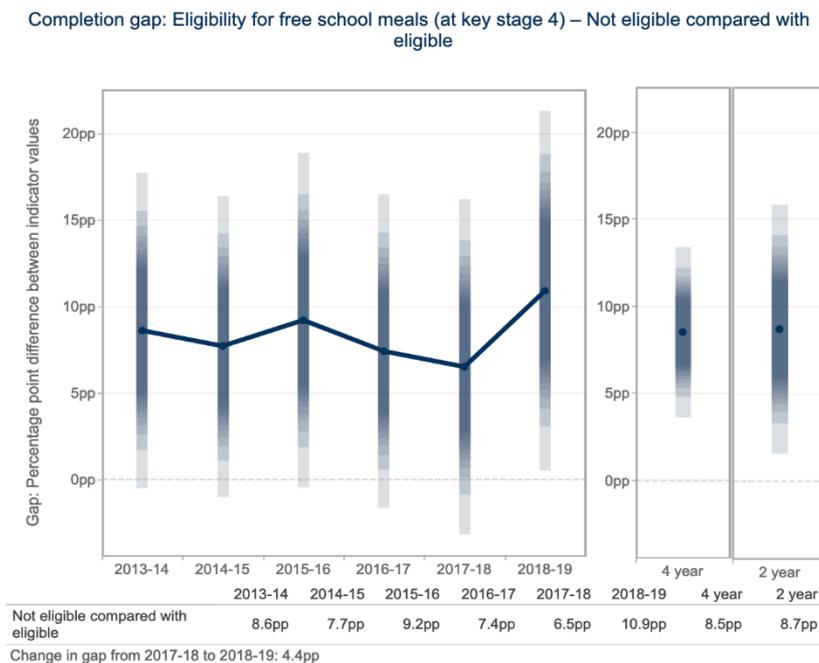
Our FSM eligible student cohorts are small, c. 230-260 students per annum across all provisions over the 4-year aggregate, and c. 150-200 students per annum in our Taught provision specifically.

Given the small data and that we have already set priority targets for Completion in relation to the IMD measure of disadvantage, which likely covers our FSM eligible students, we have not set an FSM specific target. We will continue to monitor our data and take action if significant changes occur.

9.5 Analysis - Attainment

This section provides our performance with respect to the attainment of our students from key target groups. Attainment is measured as the proportion of students who achieve a 'good degree', i.e., a First (1st) or a 2:1 degree outcome.

Overall, attainment of BNU students averages 55.9% in the 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23), which is lower than the sector rate of 80.5%.

In 2022-23, the latest year of attainment data, our rate of awarding a good degree was 53.8%, and this has declined since 2017-18.

9.5.1 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

Our IMD Quintile 1 students have lower attainment rate, 42.1%, than their Quintile 5 peers in the 4-year aggregate (71.5%) (Fig.18a).

In the 2-year aggregate, IMD Quintile 1 attainment drops to 38.8% (vs. 70.8% for Quintile 5), and in 2022-23, the latest year of attainment data, it drops further still, to 29.4%.

The respective 4- and 2-year aggregate sector attainment rates are 70.3% and 67.4%.

Fig.18a Attainment rates per IMD Quintile at BNU.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (most deprived)	56.9%	45.1%	48.9%	46.5%	39.5%	38.4%	42.1%	38.8%
Quintile 2	56.8%	54.0%	56.0%	47.3%	50.1%	47.8%	49.9%	48.7%
Quintile 3	63.0%	58.2%	60.5%	51.3%	56.2%	57.7%	56.5%	57.0%
Quintile 4	56.5%	62.8%	68.2%	64.9%	64.2%	67.1%	66.0%	65.7%
Quintile 5 (least deprived)	68.4%	61.5%	74.3%	70.3%	70.9%	70.7%	71.5%	70.8%

Key
- Quintile 1 (most deprived)
- Quintile 2
- Quintile 3
- Quintile 4
- Quintile 5 (least deprived)
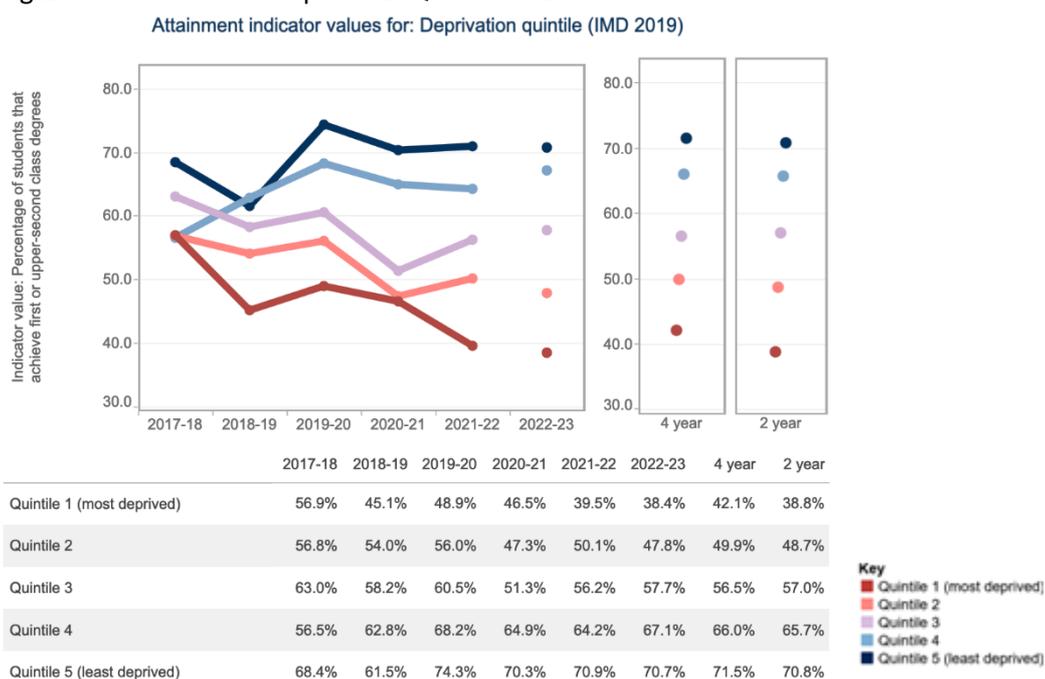
The resulting attainment gaps between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students (Fig.18b) are:

29.4pp in the 4-year aggregate.
32pp in the 2-year aggregate.
32.3pp in 2022-23.

For comparison, the sector gaps are 17pp (4-year aggregate) and 18.1pp (2-year aggregate).

Fig.18b Attainment gaps between IMD Quintile 1 and 5 students at BNU.

Attainment gap: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) – Quintile 5 compared with 1

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	11.6pp	16.4pp	25.4pp	23.8pp	31.4pp	32.3pp	29.4pp	32.0pp

Change in gap from 2021-22 to 2022-23: 0.9pp
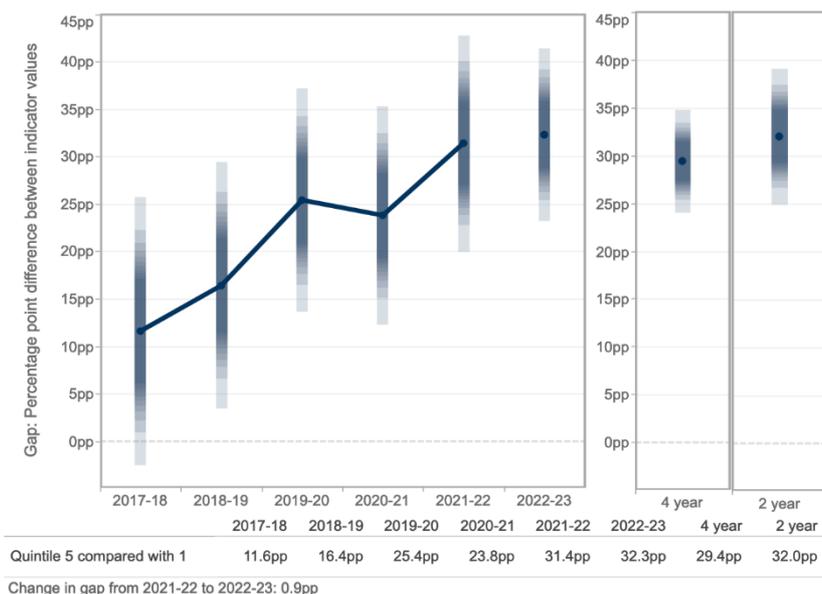
Disaggregating our full-time attainment data between the Taught and Franchised provisions shows that:

> Our Taught provision has attainment gaps of 12.5pp in the 4-year aggregate, 17pp in the 2-year aggregate, and 19pp in 2022-23.
> The attainment gaps in our Franchised provision are much bigger: 33pp in the 4-year aggregate, 31.5pp in the 2-year aggregate, and 38pp in 2022-23.

Notably, our Quintile 1 and 5 cohorts in each of the provisions are small. In the Taught provision, the total number of students over the 4-year aggregate is <60 for IMD Quintile 1, and <50 for IMD Quintile 5. In the Franchised provision, the student numbers are <130 and <30, respectively.

Looking at the gaps in our Taught provision specifically, our internal data suggest that they sit in a small number of academic schools: Business and Law, Creative and Digital Industries, Aviation and Security, Art, Design and Performance, Health and Social Care Professions, Human and Social Sciences.

Our Apprenticeship provision has a much higher IMD Quintile attainment rate in the 4-year aggregate, 90.3% (88% in the 2-year aggregate). Our rate is higher than the average sector rates of 82.1% in the 4-year aggregate and 80.4% in the 2-year aggregate.

The gaps in attainment, 0.4pp in the 4-year aggregate and 0.9pp in the 2-year aggregate, are also much smaller than the sector gaps: 8.1pp and 8.9pp, respectively.

Based on our performance in the Taught and Franchised provisions, and our larger proportion of IMD Quintile 1 students in our student population, we have set a Success priority target for Attainment in the IMD measure.

9.5.2 TUNDRA (Low Participation Neighbourhoods)

The attainment rate of our students from TUNDRA Quintile 1 averages 61.3% in the 4-year aggregate (57.7% in the 2-year aggregate) (Fig.19a).

This is close to the 66.8% attainment rate (64.9% in the 2-year aggregate) of Quintile 5 students, but lower than the Quintile 1 sector rate of 78.1% (75.4% in the 2-year aggregate).

Fig.19a Attainment rates per TUNDRA Quintile at BNU.

Attainment indicator values for: TUNDRA quintile

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (least participation)	59.0%	62.6%	68.4%	62.0%	50.0%	64.4%	61.3%	57.7%
Quintile 2	63.9%	59.5%	65.6%	65.5%	57.9%	75.7%	66.5%	67.3%
Quintile 3	65.2%	65.7%	65.3%	63.0%	68.9%	73.7%	67.8%	71.2%
Quintile 4	60.3%	62.3%	71.2%	65.4%	62.4%	70.8%	67.5%	66.7%
Quintile 5 (most participation)	60.2%	59.8%	68.1%	69.7%	64.4%	65.4%	66.8%	64.9%

Key
■ Quintile 1 (least participation)
■ Quintile 2
■ Quintile 3
■ Quintile 4
■ Quintile 5 (most participation)

The 4-year aggregate attainment gap, 5.5pp, between our Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students is smaller than the corresponding sector gap of 6.1pp (Fig.19b). Our gap widens to 7.3pp in the 2-year aggregate (the sector gap is 6.4pp. in that period).

Fig.19b Attainment gaps between TUNDRA Quintile 1 and 5 students at BNU.

Attainment gap: TUNDRA quintile – Quintile 5 compared with 1

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	1.2pp	-2.8pp	-0.2pp	7.7pp	14.4pp	1.1pp	5.5pp	7.3pp

Change in gap from 2021-22 to 2022-23: -13.3pp
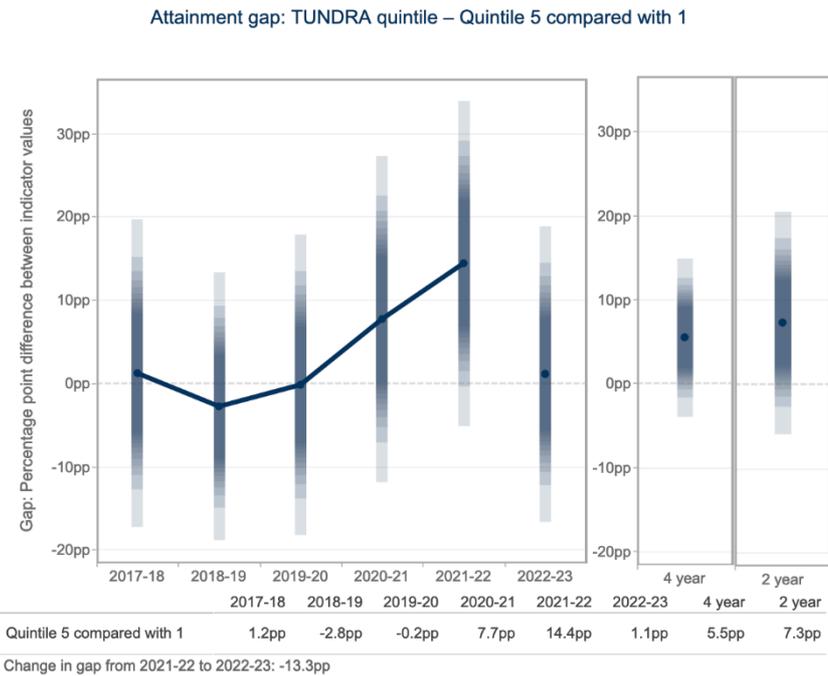
Our TUNDRA Quintile 1 student cohorts are very small, c. 12-17 students per annum over the 4-year aggregate, which reduces the reliability of the comparisons.

With our very small data in mind, we have not set a priority target for Attainment in the TUNDRA measure, and will instead continue to monitor our performance.

9.5.3 Students from Global Majority

Attainment by ethnicity is an area of concerns in higher education nationally.

BNU attainment rates for Black students are 53.2% in the 4-year aggregate, 49.4% in the 2-year aggregate, and 41.5% in 2022-23, the latest year of attainment data (Fig.20a). For comparison, the sector attainment rates are, respectively, 64%, 60.9%, and 58.7%. in the 2-year aggregate).

BNU attainment rates for Asian students are 44.3% in the 4-year aggregate, 42.9% in the 2-year aggregate, and 44.1% in 2022-23 (Fig.20a). The respective sector rates are 75.7%, 72.8%, and 70.8%.

Fig.20a Attainment by Ethnicity at BNU.

Attainment indicator values for: Ethnicity

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Asian	53.2%	49.7%	55.1%	39.5%	41.4%	44.1%	44.3%	42.9%
Black	54.9%	52.5%	54.2%	60.0%	59.4%	41.5%	53.2%	49.4%
Mixed	51.7%	46.3%	64.9%	55.9%	54.4%	63.0%	59.6%	59.4%
Other	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	34.6%	45.1%	43.1%	41.6%
White	64.1%	61.1%	66.4%	58.5%	63.9%	59.5%	61.6%	61.1%

Key
- Asian
- Black
- Mixed
- Other
- White
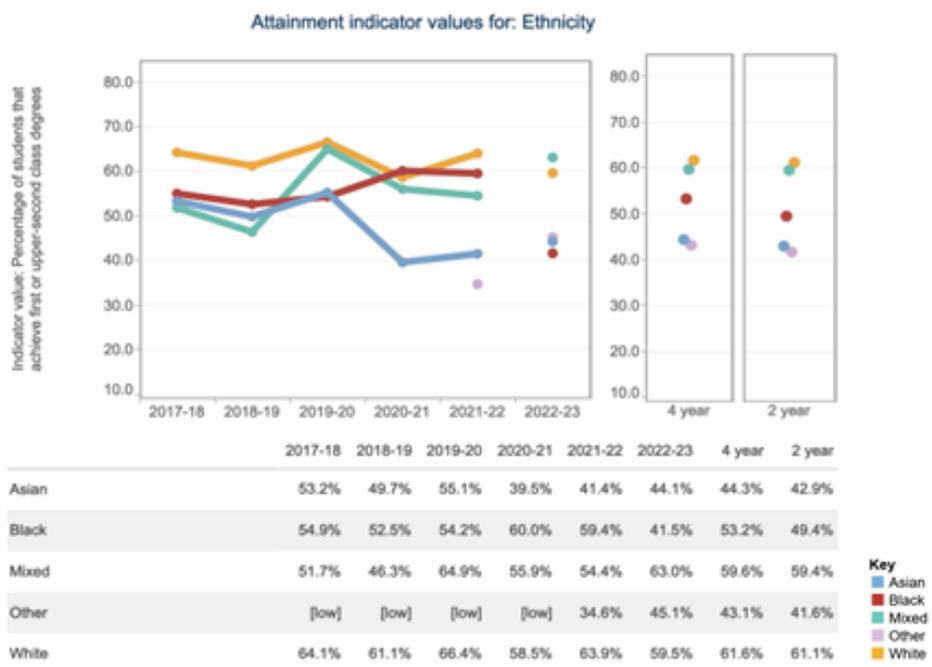
The resulting attainment gaps (Fig.20b) between Black and White students at BNU are:

>8.4pp in the 4-year aggregate (vs. 20.2pp in the sector).
>11.8pp in the 2-year aggregate (vs. 21.3pp in the sector).
>18.0pp in 2022-23 (vs. 22.4pp in the sector).

The respective attainment gaps (Fig.20c) between Asian and White students at BNU are:

>17.3pp in the 4-year aggregate (vs. 8.5pp in the sector).
>18.2pp in the 2-year aggregate (vs. 9.4pp in the sector).
>15.4pp in 2022-23 (vs. 10.3pp in the sector).

Fig.20b Attainment gaps between Black and White students at BNU.

Attainment gap: Ethnicity – White compared with black

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
White compared with black	9.3pp	8.6pp	12.3pp	-1.5pp	4.5pp	18.0pp	8.4pp	11.8pp

Change in gap from 2021-22 to 2022-23: 13.5pp
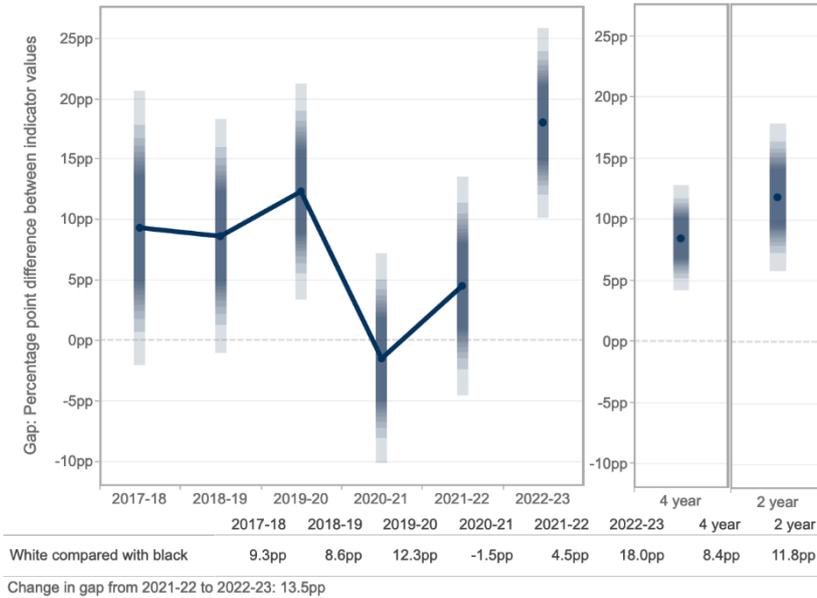
Fig.20c Attainment gaps between Asian and White students at BNU.

Attainment gap: Ethnicity – White compared with Asian

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
White compared with Asian	10.9pp	11.4pp	11.3pp	19.0pp	22.5pp	15.4pp	17.3pp	18.2pp

Change in gap from 2021-22 to 2022-23: -7.1pp
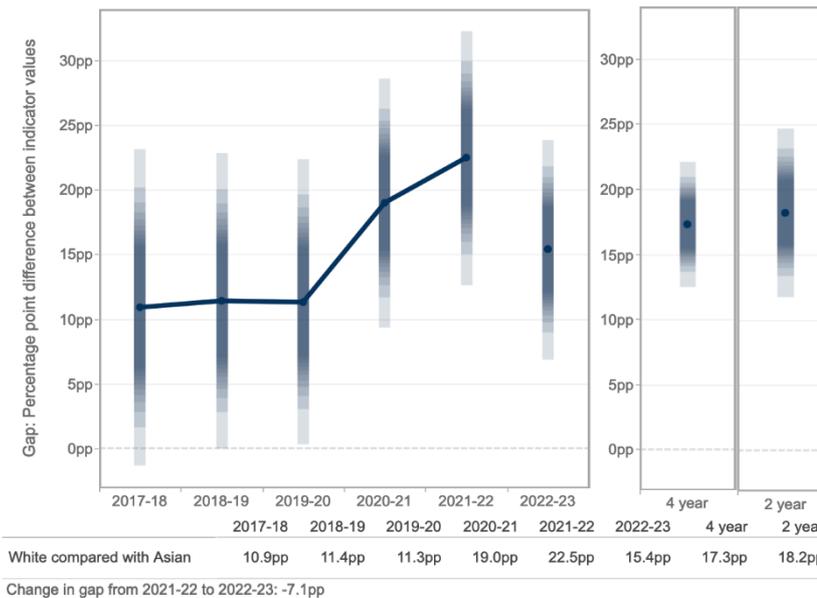
The Black and Asian attainment gaps in our Taught provision are, respectively, 3.2pp and 14.2pp in the 4-year aggregate, 3.0pp and 18.0pp in the 2-year aggregate, and 10pp and 23pp in 2022-23.

The Black and Asian attainment gaps in our Franchised provision are, respectively, 21.7pp and 25.5pp in the 4-year aggregate, 10.0pp and 26.0pp in the 2-year aggregate, and 14.0pp and 27.0pp in the 2022-23.

Once again, our Franchised provision is the main contributor to the size of gaps, particularly for Black students.

Our Apprenticeships provision has performed better, with positive gaps for Asian apprentices (-7.3pp in the 4-year aggregate, and -7.7pp in the 2-year aggregate). The gaps for Black apprentices are negative, but small (1.7pp in the 4-year aggregate, and 2.6pp in the 2-year aggregate). Our apprenticeship gaps are significantly smaller or inverse to the sector gaps of 15.2pp for Black apprentices and 3.8pp for Asian apprentices in the 4-year aggregate.

Based on our performance, including across the Taught vs. Franchised split, and the fact that Black and Asian students make a significant proportion of our annual enrolments, we have set a Success target for Attainment in the Ethnicity measure.

9.5.4 Mature Students (21 years and over)

In 2022-23, the latest year of attainment data, our mature learner attainment rate of 46.5% was the lowest in the 6-year period since 2017-18, whereas the attainment rate of our young learners improved to 69.8% - their highest in the same period.

Fig.21a Attainment rates for mature and young students at BNU.

Attainment indicator values for: Age

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Mature (21 and over)	58.3%	49.8%	55.1%	47.8%	50.4%	46.5%	49.2%	47.9%
Young (under 21)	61.4%	61.8%	67.6%	65.6%	62.5%	69.8%	66.5%	66.3%

Key
■ Mature (21 and over)
■ Young (under 21)
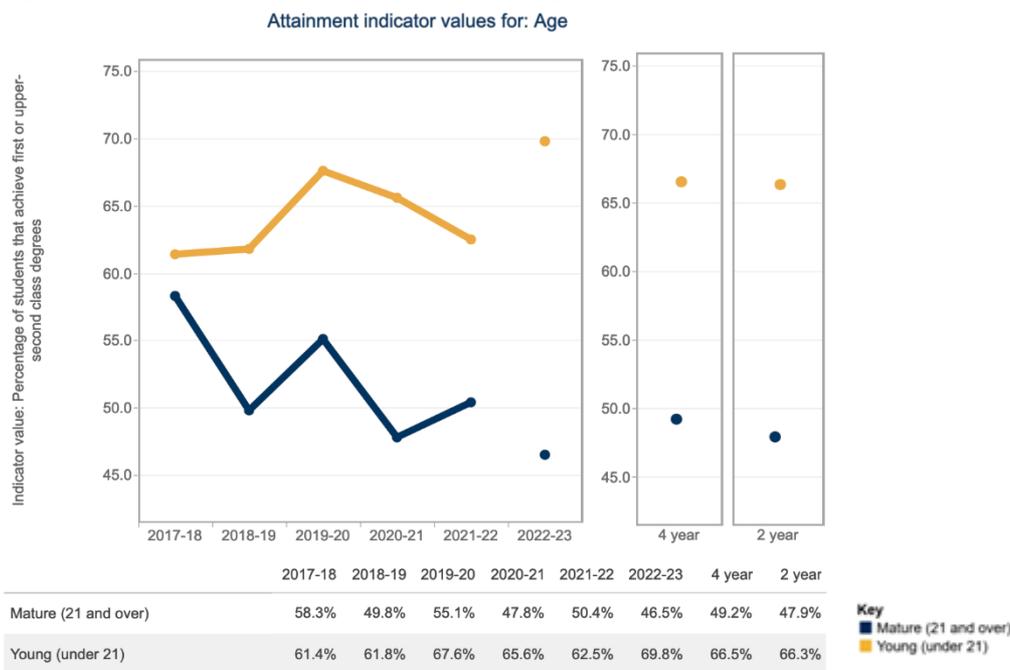
Our mature learner attainment gaps range from 17.3pp in the 4-year aggregate and 18.3pp in the 2-year aggregate to a high of 23.4pp in 2022-23 (Fig.21b).

The sector gaps in the 4- and 2-year aggregate gaps are, respectively, 9.9pp and 9.2pp.

Fig.21b Attainment gaps between mature and young students at BNU.

Attainment gap: Age – Young (under 21) compared with mature (21 and over)

Young (under 21) compared with mature (21 and over)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
	3.1pp	12.0pp	12.5pp	17.8pp	12.1pp	23.4pp	17.3pp	18.3pp

Change in gap from 2021-22 to 2022-23: 11.3pp
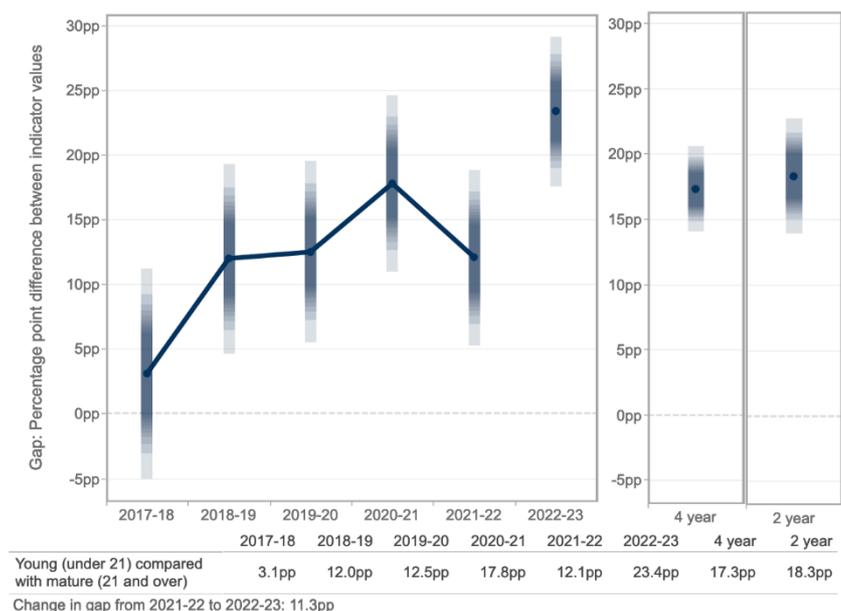
Disaggregating our data between the Taught and Franchised provisions reveals that the size and sign of our gaps is due entirely to our Franchised provision: 32.8pp in the 4-year aggregate (vs. -0.8pp in the Taught provision), 30pp in the 2-year aggregate (vs. -2.8pp in the Taught provision), and 26.3pp in 2022-23 (vs. -4.6pp in the Taught provision).

Given our performance, we have set a Success priority target for Attainment of Mature learners.

9.5.5 Students Eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4

Our students who had been FSM eligible attain a good degree at a lower rate to their comparator – students who hadn't been FSM eligible (54.4% vs. 68.7% in the 4-year aggregate) (Fig.22a). By comparison, the sector average rate of attainment for FMS eligible students, at 72.2%, has been higher.

The gap in attainment between FSM eligible and non-FSM eligible students at BNU is not much higher than the sector gap (14.4pp vs. 11.3pp in the 4-year aggregate, and 14pp vs. 12.2pp in the 2-year aggregate).

Fig.22a Attainment rates for FSM-eligible and non-FSM-eligible students at BNU.

Attainment indicator values for: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4)

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Eligible	52.7%	48.3%	54.0%	55.1%	50.4%	58.2%	54.4%	54.1%
Not eligible	64.5%	65.0%	70.6%	68.1%	65.1%	70.9%	68.7%	68.1%

Key
■ Eligible
■ Not eligible

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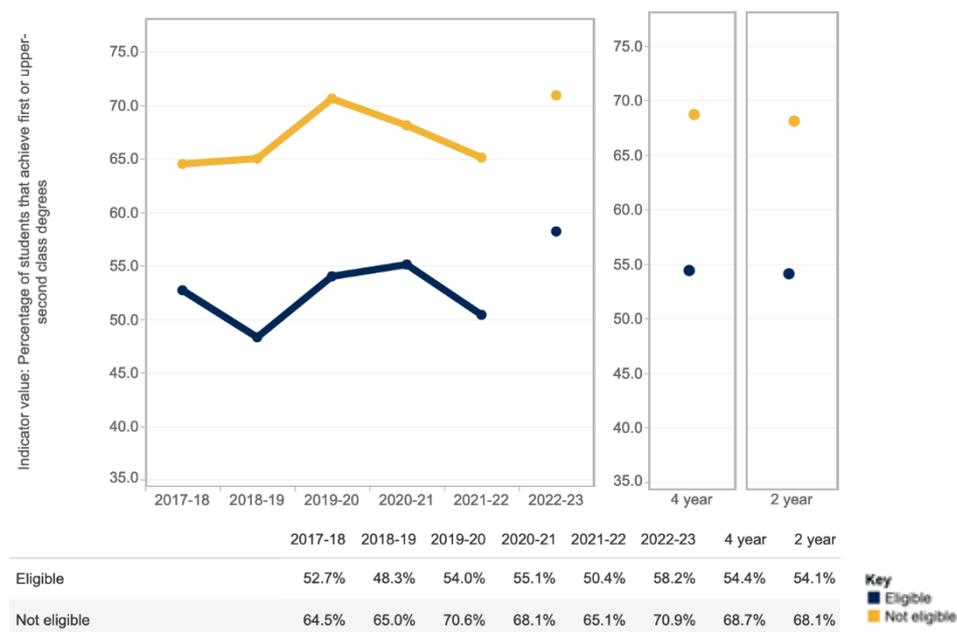
Fig.22b Attainment gaps between FSM-eligible and non-FSM-eligible students at BNU.

Attainment gap: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4) – Not eligible compared with eligible

Not eligible compared with eligible	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
	11.8pp	16.7pp	16.6pp	13.0pp	14.7pp	12.8pp	14.4pp	14.0pp

Change in gap from 2021-22 to 2022-23: -1.9pp
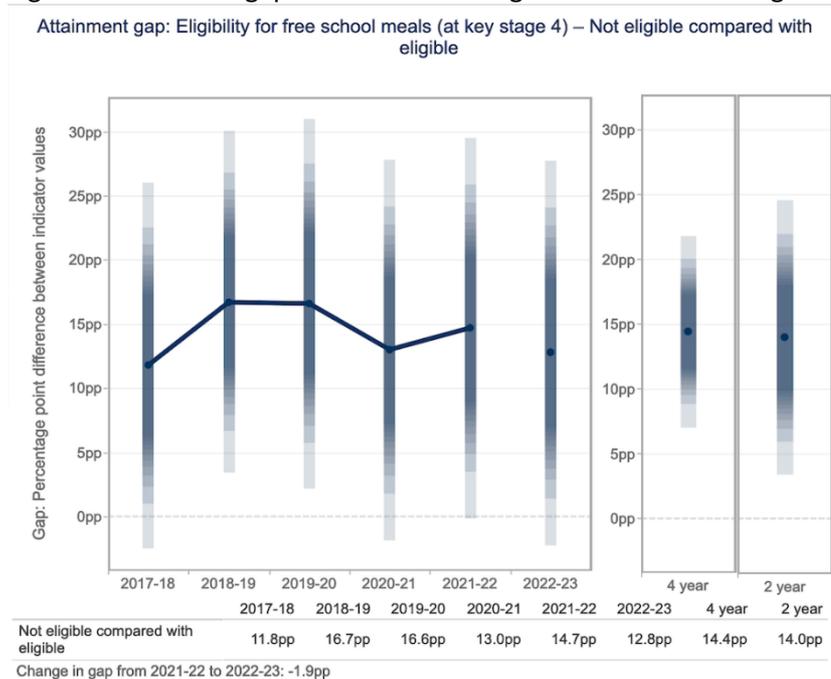
Given that our FSM eligible student numbers for attainment have been very small, <40 per annum, and that this target group is likely to be covered within our IMD Quintile 1 cohort for which we have already set an attainment related target, we have not set a target specifically for this measure. We will continue to monitor closely our FSM related data in the future.

9.6 Analysis - Progression

This section provides our performance in relation to the progression of our students from the OfS key target groups. Progression is measured in terms of graduate destinations into the labour market or elsewhere that include being employed in a highly skilled professional or managerial job, or undertaking further study, or another positive outcome.

At BNU, the average progression rate in the 4-year aggregate (2018-19 to 2021-22) has been 68.8%, which lags, but not by much, the sector rate of 72.4%. Our progression rates have been on an upward trajectory since 2018-19, reaching 69.5% in 2021-22, which is the latest year of progression data.

9.6.1 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

Our students from IMD Quintile 1 average a progression rate of 61.1% in the 4-year aggregate, compared to 72% rate for their comparator group (Quintile 5 students) and a sector average rate of 66.4% (Fig.23a).

The rate slows to 58.1% in the 2-year aggregate, and 56.1% in 2021-22, the lowest since 2017-18. Conversely, the sector rates increase, e.g., to 67.4% in the 2-year aggregate, and 69.5% in 2020-21.

Fig.23a Progression by IMD Quintile at BNU.

Indicator values for progression into professional or managerial employment, further study or other positive outcomes: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019)

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (most deprived)	69.8%	63.0%	65.7%	60.4%	56.1%	61.1%	58.1%
Quintile 2	72.7%	70.3%	69.3%	64.1%	69.1%	68.2%	66.8%
Quintile 3	71.3%	68.5%	70.8%	67.1%	67.7%	68.4%	67.4%
Quintile 4	72.8%	69.0%	64.8%	79.1%	77.9%	72.8%	78.5%
Quintile 5 (least deprived)	73.9%	62.3%	75.5%	76.3%	74.5%	72.0%	75.4%

Key
- Quintile 1 (most deprived)
- Quintile 2
- Quintile 3
- Quintile 4
- Quintile 5 (least deprived)
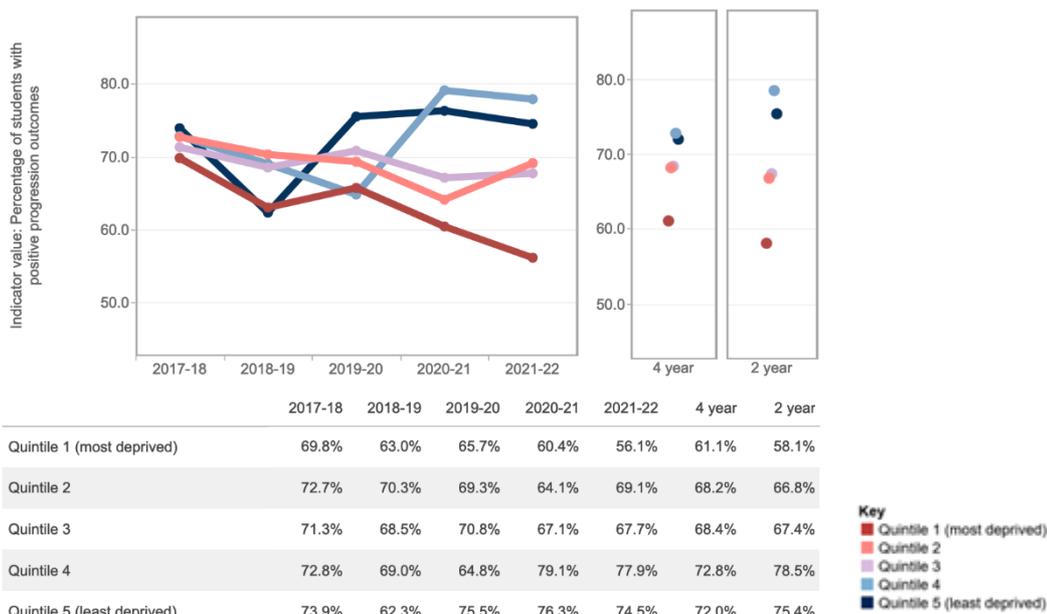
The gap in progression between IMD Quintile 1 and 5 students at BNU has been increasing, in conjunction with the decreasing progression rates of IMQ Quintile 1 compared to Quintile 5. The gap is 10.8pp in the 4-year aggregate, 17.3pp in the 2-year aggregate, and 18.4pp in 2021-22 (Fig.23b).

The increase of our progression gap coincides the Covid-19 pandemic, when conditions on the labour market may have become unfavourable for our blend of graduates, the majority of whom are IMD Quintiles 1 and 2 and mature students, with a large proportion of Global Majority students.

For comparison, the sector progression gaps between IMD Quintile 1 and 5 are 10.2pp in the 4-year aggregate, 10.5pp in the 2-year aggregate, and 10.0pp in 2021-22.

We note that our IMD Quintile 1 and 5 cohorts are small, c. 57 - 75 IMD Quintile 1 students and c. 149 -178 IMD Quintile 5 students per annum in the 4-year aggregate. Combining our Quintile 1 and 2 cohorts does not increase the cohort numbers beyond 200 students per year.

Fig.23b Progression gaps between IMD Quintile 1 and 5 students at BNU.

Progression gap: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) – Quintile 5 compared with 1

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	4.2pp	-0.6pp	9.8pp	15.9pp	18.4pp	10.8pp	17.3pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 2.5pp
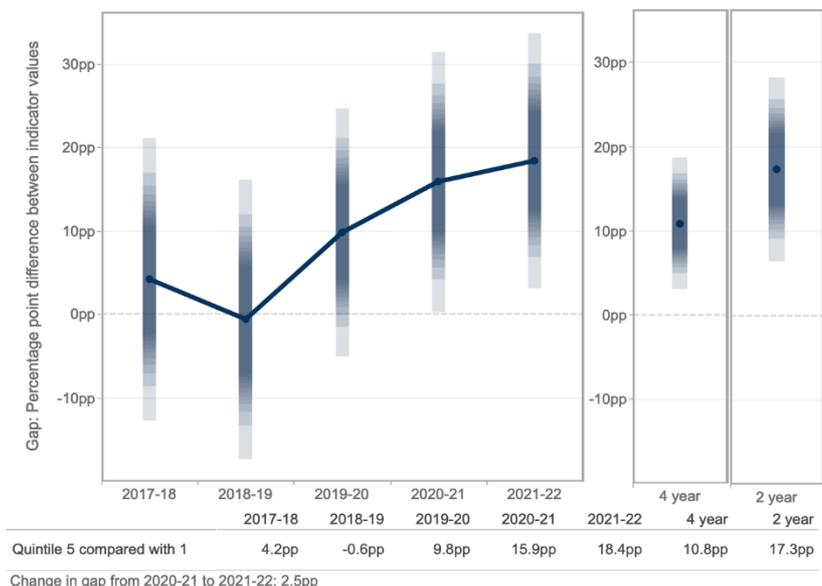
We have no data for IMD Quintile 1 progression in our Apprenticeship provision.

Given our small data, we have not set a Progression priority target at this time but will continue to monitor performance in the future.

9.6.2 Students from Global Majority

BNU Black and Asian student progression rates vary considerably (Fig.24a).

Our Black graduates have a higher 4-year aggregate rate than the White comparator group, 71.7% vs. 69.0%, that evens out in the 2-year aggregate (71.2% vs. 71.6%) and 2021-22, the latest year of progression data (71.8% vs. 71.5%).

Our Asian graduates have a lower 4-year aggregate rate than their White peers, 62.2% vs. 69.0%. The rate difference widens in the 2-year aggregate (59.1% vs.71.6%) and 2021-22 (60.4% vs. 71.5%).

Fig.24a Progression rates by Ethnicity at BNU.

Indicator values for progression into professional or managerial employment, further study or other positive outcomes: Ethnicity

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Asian	61.8%	61.1%	71.4%	57.8%	60.4%	62.2%	59.1%
Black	75.7%	72.8%	71.9%	70.6%	71.8%	71.7%	71.2%
Mixed	69.6%	76.3%	77.9%	73.3%	74.5%	75.3%	74.0%
Other	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	65.0%	61.4%
White	73.6%	65.7%	67.0%	71.8%	71.5%	69.0%	71.6%

Key
- Asian
- Black
- Mixed
- Other
- White
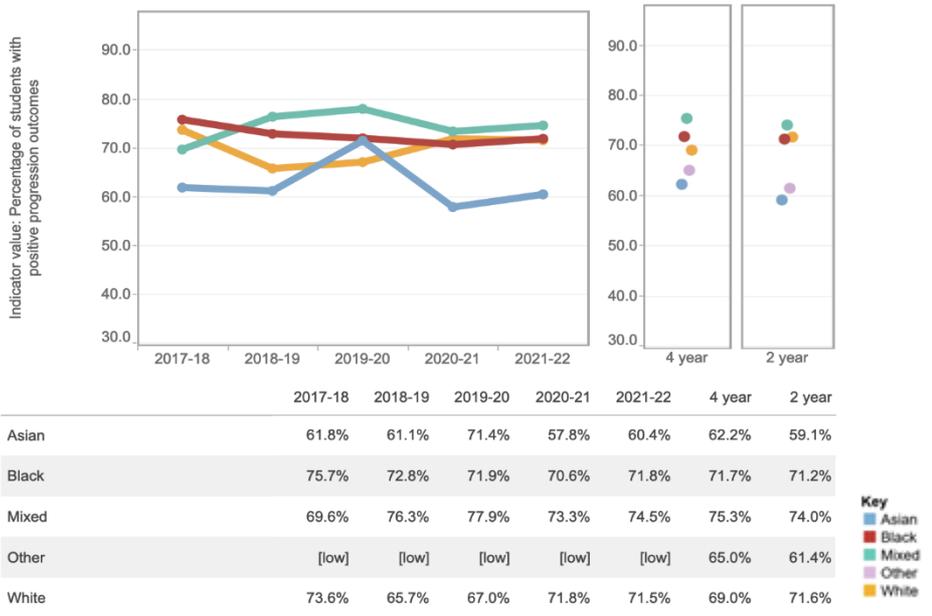
Our Black graduates have a positive progression gap with their White counterpart in the 4-year aggregate, -2.7pp, that goes negative, 0.5pp in the 2-year aggregate, and reverses back to positive, -0.3pp, in 2021-22 (Fig.24b). For comparison, the sector gaps are respectively 3.9pp, 3.5pp, and 3.3pp.

Fig.24b Progression gaps between Black and White graduates at BNU.

Progression gap: Ethnicity – White compared with black

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
White compared with black	-2.0pp	-7.1pp	-4.9pp	1.2pp	-0.3pp	-2.7pp	0.5pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -1.6pp
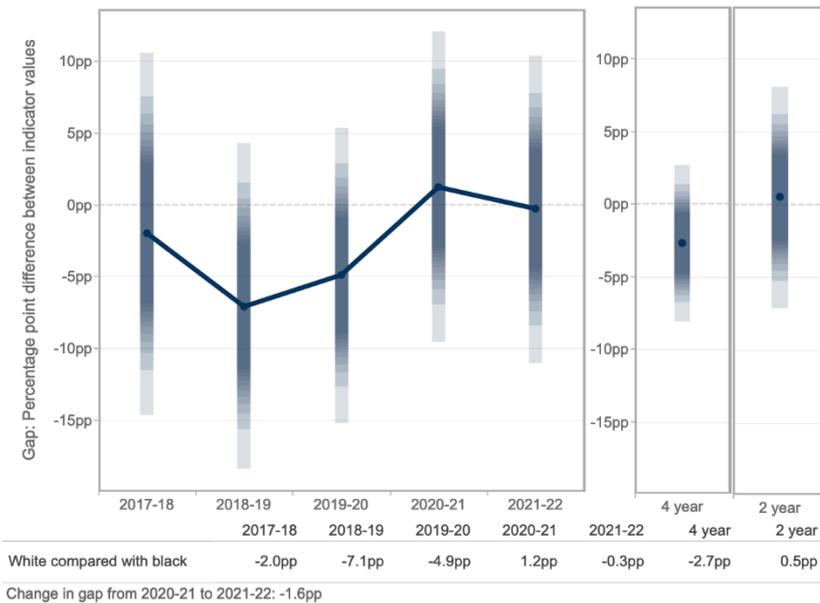
Conversely, our Asian graduates have a 6.9pp 4-year aggregate progression gap with White graduates (Fig.24c), increasing to 12.6pp in the 2-year aggregate, and 11.1pp in 2021-22. For comparison, the sector gaps are respectively 3.2pp, 2.7pp, and 2.5pp.

Fig.24c Progression gaps between Asian and White students at BNU.

Progression gap: Ethnicity – White compared with Asian

White compared with Asian	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
	11.8pp	4.6pp	-4.4pp	14.1pp	11.1pp	6.9pp	12.6pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -3.0pp
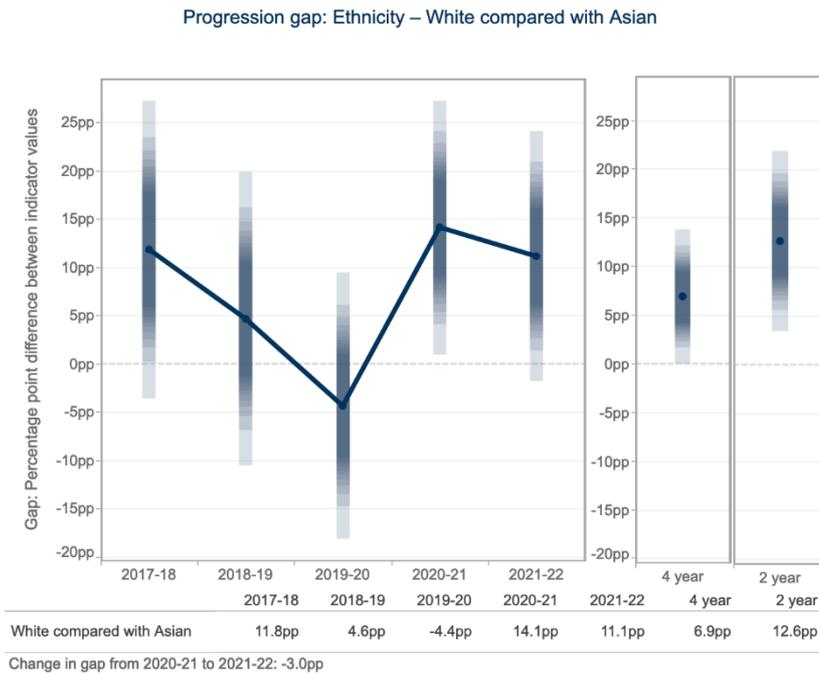
Disaggregating our full-time undergraduate progression between Taught and Franchised provisions shows that the Asian progression gap sits entirely in our Franchised provision.

In the Franchised provision, the Asian progression gap is 23.8pp (4-year aggregate), 27.0pp (2-year aggregate), and 31.0pp (2020-21). For comparison, the BNU Taught progression gaps are -0.25pp (4-year aggregate), -8.0pp (2-year aggregate), and -8.0pp (2020-21).

Fig's 24d and 24e display, for illustration purposes only, internal BNU data on progression by Ethnicity in our Taught and Franchised provisions. All rates and gaps discussed above for these provisions were calculated based on our individualised OfS data return.

Fig.24d Progression outcomes (internal data) by Ethnicity in the BNU Taught Provision.

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Fig.24f Progression outcomes (internal data) by Ethnicity in the BNU Franchised Provision.

Graduate Positive Outcome by Demographic
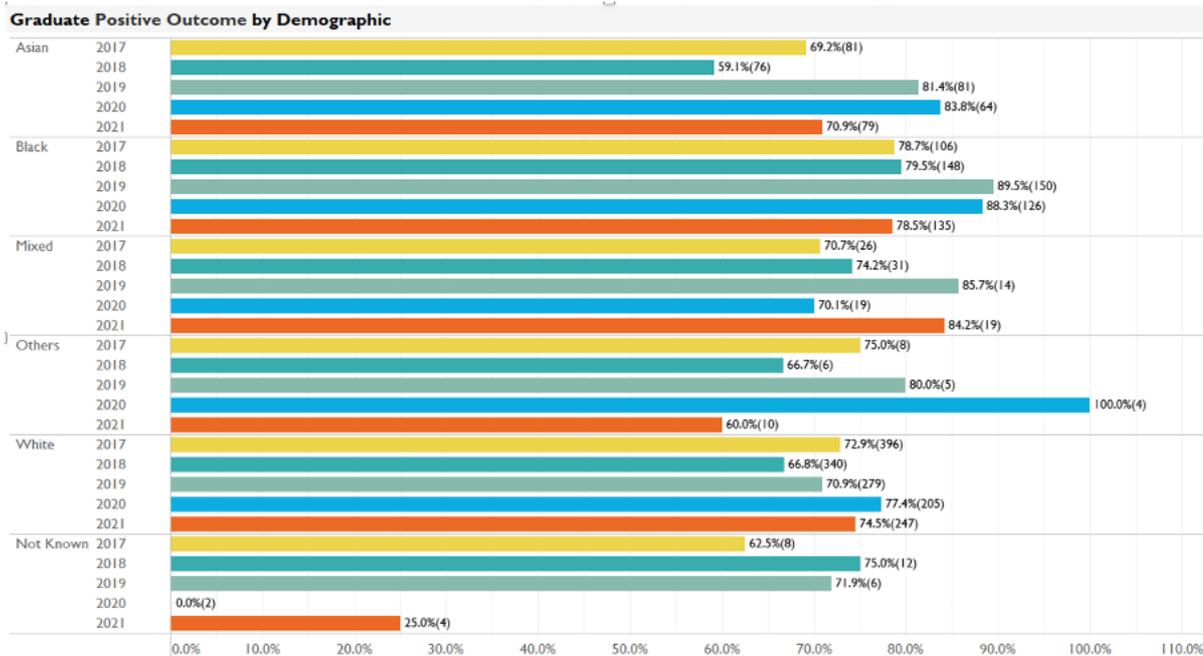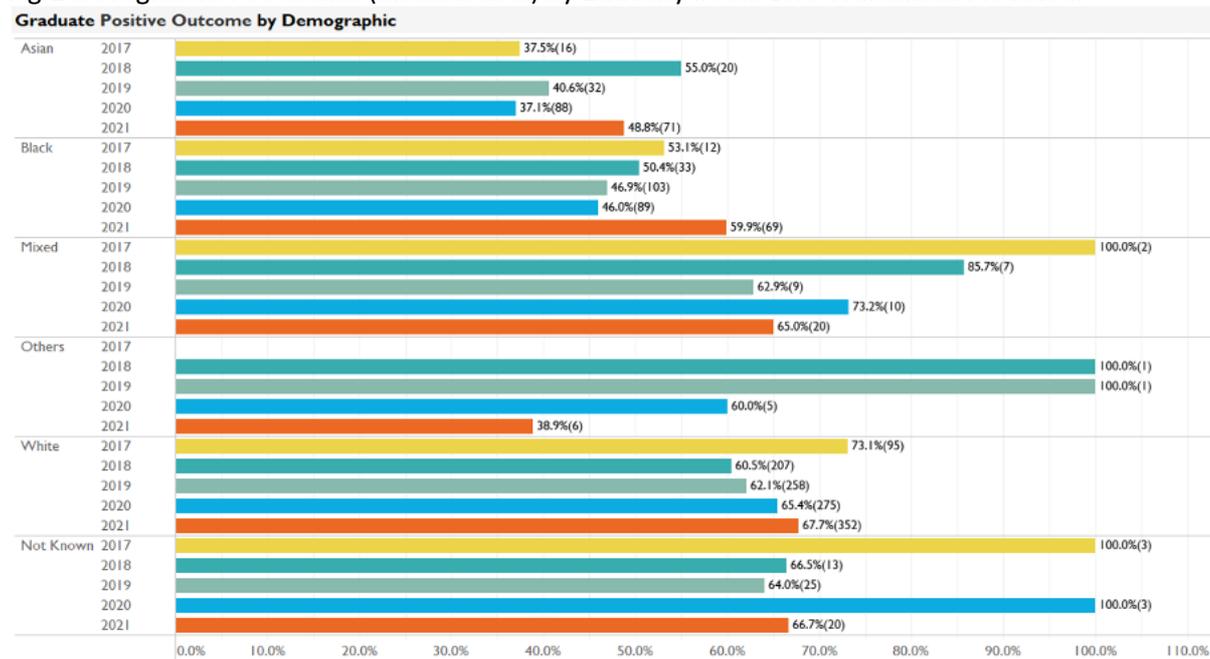
Ethnicity	Year	Value
Asian	2017	37.5%(16)
Asian	2018	55.0%(20)
Asian	2019	40.6%(32)
Asian	2020	37.1%(88)
Asian	2021	48.8%(71)
Black	2017	53.1%(12)
Black	2018	50.4%(33)
Black	2019	46.9%(103)
Black	2020	46.0%(89)
Black	2021	59.9%(69)
Mixed	2017	100.0%(2)
Mixed	2018	85.7%(7)
Mixed	2019	62.9%(9)
Mixed	2020	73.2%(10)
Mixed	2021	65.0%(20)
Others	2017	
Others	2018	100.0%(1)
Others	2019	100.0%(1)
Others	2020	60.0%(5)
Others	2021	38.9%(6)
White	2017	73.1%(95)
White	2018	60.5%(207)
White	2019	62.1%(258)
White	2020	65.4%(275)
White	2021	67.7%(352)
Not Known	2017	100.0%(3)
Not Known	2018	66.5%(13)
Not Known	2019	64.0%(25)
Not Known	2020	100.0%(3)
Not Known	2021	66.7%(20)

We note also that our Asian graduate cohorts are small, totalling over the 4-year aggregate c.335 students in the Taught provision and c.143 graduates in the Franchised provision.

In our Apprenticeships provision, progression is similar for Black and Asian apprentices.

Black apprentices have gaps of 8.8pp in the 4-year aggregate (vs. -0.5pp in the sector) and 9pp in the 2-year aggregate (vs. -0.3pp in the sector).

The gaps for Asian apprentices are 5.9pp in 4-year aggregate (vs. -2.2pp in the sector) and 7.7pp in the 2-year aggregate (vs. 1.5pp in the sector).

We acknowledge the existing progression gaps but note also that many of our Success related activities focus on employability and career readiness and that the gaps in our Franchised provision come an institution with which we no longer have a partnership arrangement. Our progression gaps should therefore close in the next data cycle as the data lag shifts forward.

For these reasons, we have not set up a priority target in Progression for the Ethnicity measure. Instead, we will monitor our data and take appropriate action when necessary.

9.6.3 ABCS

Our progression rate for Quintile 1 (the most disadvantaged students across the intersections of economic, geographical, ethnic, and other disadvantage) lags the sector rate in the 4-year aggregate by about 10% (52.7% vs. 62.1%) (Fig.25a).

Fig.25a Progression rates by ABCS Quintile at BNU.

Indicator values for progression into professional or managerial employment, further study or other positive outcomes: ABCS quintile

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1	50.7%	47.6%	53.5%	50.9%	56.6%	52.7%	54.0%
Quintile 2	64.0%	56.7%	68.6%	69.0%	66.0%	65.2%	67.4%
Quintile 3	72.5%	63.1%	66.3%	74.5%	77.0%	70.3%	75.7%
Quintile 4	77.6%	72.9%	71.0%	74.2%	70.3%	72.0%	72.1%
Quintile 5	84.5%	84.5%	82.1%	76.1%	80.0%	81.1%	78.1%

Key
Quintile 1
Quintile 2
Quintile 3
Quintile 4
Quintile 5
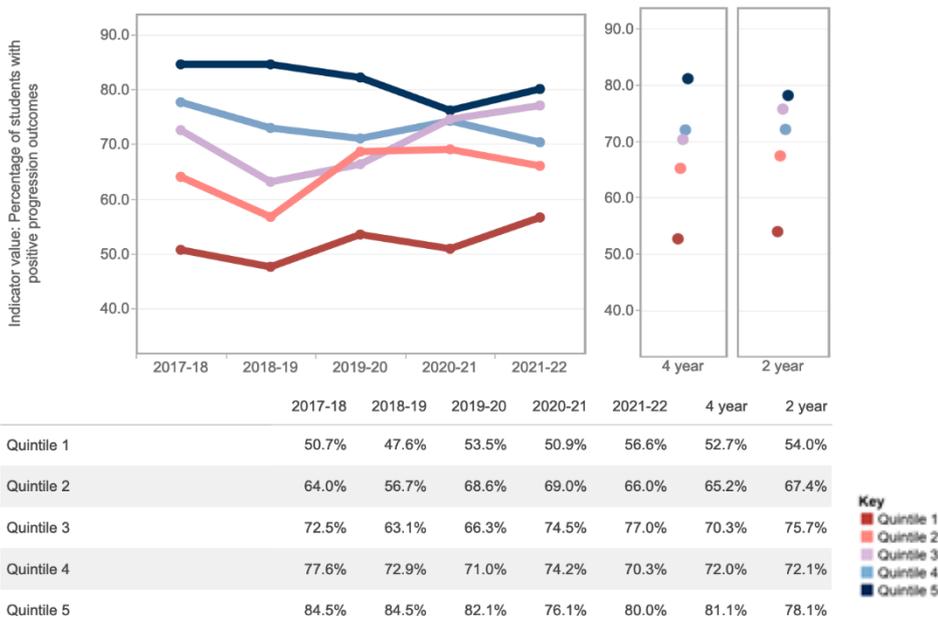
The progression gap between our students from ABCS Quintiles 1 (most disadvantaged) and 5 (least disadvantaged) is 28.4pp in the 4-year aggregate. This is bigger than the 19.9pp sector gap in that aggregate.

Fig.25b Progression gaps between ABCS Quintile 1 and 5 students at BNU.

Progression gap: ABCS quintile – Quintile 5 compared with 1

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	33.8pp	36.9pp	28.6pp	25.2pp	23.4pp	28.4pp	24.1pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -1.7pp

However, our ABCS related data are very small: <100 students per annum in Quintile 1, and <140 students per annum in Quintile 5, which makes the analysis difficult, and the comparisons unreliable.
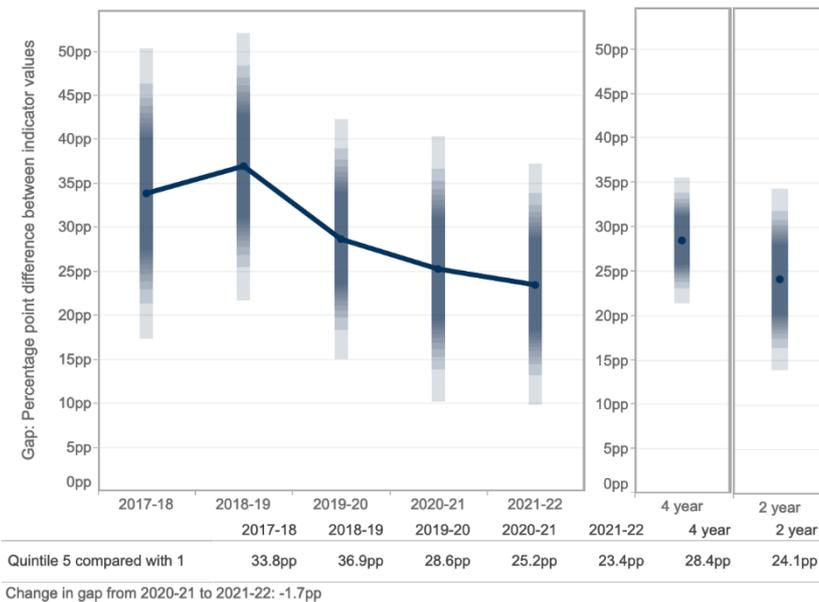
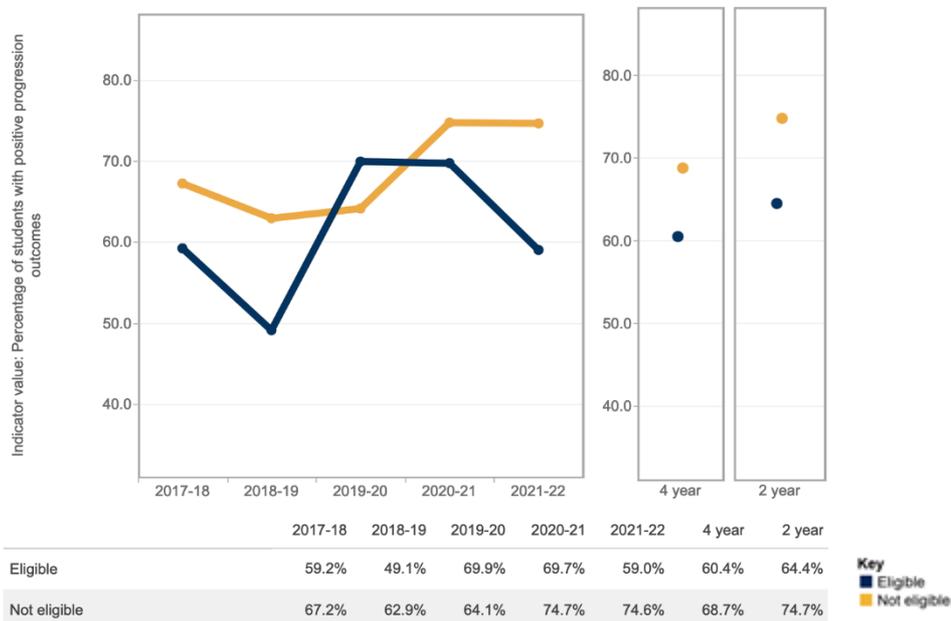We have no Quintile 1 data from our Apprenticeships provision.

Given that, we have not set a priority target within Progression for this measure but will continue to monitor our data in the future.

9.6.4 Students Eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4

Our FSM-eligible graduates have averaged a lower rate of progression compared to the sector: 54.4% vs. 72.2% in the 4-year aggregate, and 54.1% vs. 68.9% in the 2-year aggregate (Fig.26a for the BNU rates data).

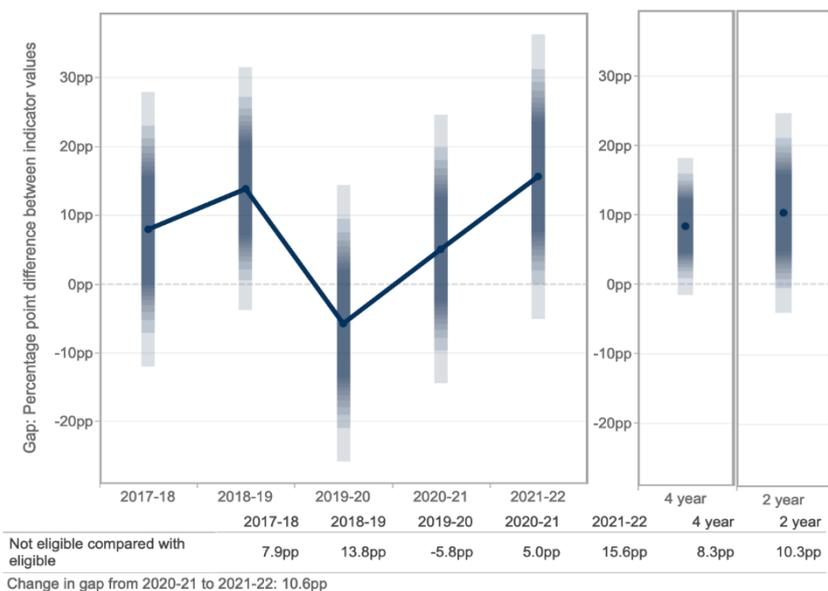Fig.26a Progression rates for FSM-eligible and non-FSM-eligible students at BNU.

Indicator values for progression into professional or managerial employment, further study or other positive outcomes: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4)

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Eligible	59.2%	49.1%	69.9%	69.7%	59.0%	60.4%	64.4%
Not eligible	67.2%	62.9%	64.1%	74.7%	74.6%	68.7%	74.7%

Key
- ■ Eligible
- ■ Not eligible

The gaps in progression with the non-FSM-eligible BNU graduates, however, are not significantly larger than the sector gaps: 14.4pp vs. 11.3pp in the 4-year aggregate, and 14pp vs. 12.2pp in the 2-year aggregate (Fig.26b for the BNU gaps data).

Fig.26b Progression gaps between FSM-eligible and non-FSM-eligible students at BNU.

Progression gap: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4) – Not eligible compared with eligible

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Not eligible compared with eligible	7.9pp	13.8pp	-5.8pp	5.0pp	15.6pp	8.3pp	10.3pp

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 10.6pp

Our FSM-eligible cohorts are very small, at <70graduates per annum in the 4-year aggregate, which makes any analysis difficult.

We have therefore not set a priority target within Progression for this measure and will continue to monitor our institutional data and build our data sets.

9.7 Summary of Target Areas

We have used the initial performance assessment above and the emerging indicators of risk (i.e. measures where our performance is weak) to signpost to the priority areas for further investigation and/or including as target areas in the new Access and Participation Plan (APP).

In summary, these areas are:

9.7.1 Access

We have proposed no targets in this area.

9.7.2 Continuation

IMD Quintile 1 and 2 students compared to IMD Quintile 5 students.
Black and Asian students compared to White students.

9.7.3 Completion

IMD Quintile 1 and 2 students compared to IMD Quintile 5 students.

Asian students compared to White students.

9.7.4 Attainment

IMD Quintile 1 and 2 students compared to IMD Quintile 5 students.
Black and Asian students compared to White students.
Mature learners (>21 years old) compared to young learners (<21 years old).

9.7.5 Progression

We have proposed no targets in this area.

9.7.6 Areas for Continued Monitoring

The priority areas for continued monitoring are:

TUNDRA Quintile 1 student enrolment, continuation, completion, and attainment rates and gaps with Quintile 5 students.
Black and Asian student progression gaps in, respectively, our apprenticeship provision, and in our franchised and apprenticeship provisions.
Disabled student enrolment, particularly into our franchised provision, and continuation.
Mature learner continuation and completion rates and gaps with young learners.
ABCS Quintile 1 student enrolment, continuation, completion, and progression rates and gaps with Quintile 5 students.
Free School Meal eligible student enrolment, continuation, completion, attainment, and progression rates and gaps with students who have not been eligible.

9.8 Risks to Equality of Opportunity

We have considered the identified indicators of risk against the national Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR). This highlights 12 risks that are of national concern, and which are more likely to affect students with particular characteristics.

9.8.1 Access (Pre-enrolment)

The first five Risks on the EORR (Knowledge and Skills; Information and Guidance; Perceptions of Higher Education; Application Success Rates; Limited Choice of Course Type and Delivery Mode) relate to the Access (pre-enrolment) area of the student lifecycle.

All of them impact nationally on learners from our main target groups: IMD Quintiles 1 and 2, Global Majority (Black and Asian), and mature students.

We have been very successful at attracting and enrolling such students, as we discussed earlier in this Annex. At BNU, the student body comprises more than 60% IMD Quintiles 1 and 2 students, 40% Global Majority students, and 80% Mature students, all of which are significantly above the national average.

We appear to lag the sector in recruiting, e.g., disabled learners (5.8% at BNU vs. 17.4% in the sector over the 4-year aggregate), Asian learners (11.8% BNU vs. 15.4% in the sector over the 4-year aggregate), and IMD Quintile 1 learners in our Apprenticeships provision (10.3% vs. 17.3% in the sector over the 4-year aggregate). However, as emphasised previously, our BNU Taught provision (the BNU-based courses) enrols, for example, disabled learners at more than 20% of the total, which is above the national average, and so our under-enrolment usually sits with the BNU Franchised provision.

We therefore do not consider the five Access Risks to be significant for our outreach, admissions, and enrolment.

Risks 1 and 2 may however impact on the on-course outcomes of students from our target groups and in the measures for which we have set priority targets. These Risks relate to understanding of and preparation for study in higher education and may therefore affect a student's entry tariff to university and confidence in their ability to succeed in and their sense of belonging to higher education, all of which can affect their on-course attainment and retention.

The following summarises our context in relation to these risks and considerations of whether they are occurring and why. Further information can also be found in the main Access and Participation Plan, and in Annex B.

Risks 1 and 2 – Knowledge and skills & information and guidance

These two risks relate to the context of our students' first year of study and their continuation from it.

Disadvantaged and underrepresented students in higher education tend to have lower prior attainment, starting from GCSEs and including taking fewer of them, which affects future options for higher study[1,2,3]. Only a third of disadvantaged students get the required GCSEs to progress onto higher education[4].

Some of the possible reasons include:

> Family attitudes towards higher education, including misconceptions about its value and expectations about what learners should do after finishing school.
> Lack of knowledge about higher education and practical support with choosing an appropriate subject, course, and provider[5].
> Lack of confidence in the ability to achieve the required entry and a sense of belonging

Our review of the literature indicates that applicants from our target groups often have fewer opportunities to develop the necessary skills and knowledge for higher education.
Longitudinal data on entry tariff and module pass rate show, unsurprisingly, that pre-university attainment correlates positively, and almost linearly, with module failure rate at BNU (Fig.27a).

Fig.27a Entry tariff predicts module failure rate in the first year of BNU study.

ACADEMIC YEAR

ENTRY TARIFF	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	Grand Total
Null	67.6% (622)	35.7% (580) 64.3% (1,045)	59.4% (186) 40.6% (127)	62.5% (327) 37.5% (196)	50.7% (1,715) 49.3% (1,666)
<40	50.5% (100) 49.5% (98)	51.7% (76) 48.3% (71)	53.6% (118) 46.4% (102)	69.9% (86) 30.1% (37)	55.2% (380) 44.8% (308)
40-87	66.8% (129) 33.2% (64)	60.5% (95) 39.5% (62)	58.8% (147) 41.2% (103)	72.5% (129)	64.3% (500) 35.7% (278)
88-112	60.5% (23) 39.5% (15)	50.0% (15) 50.0% (15)	43.3% (13) 56.7% (17)	96.2% (25)	61.3% (76) 38.7% (48)
>112	85.7% (18) 80%	100.0% (19) 80%	55.6% (15) 44.4% 80%	71.4% (5) 28 80%(2)	77.0% (57) 80%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100% 0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100% 0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100% 0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100% 0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

% of Total   % of Total   % of Total   % of Total   % of Total

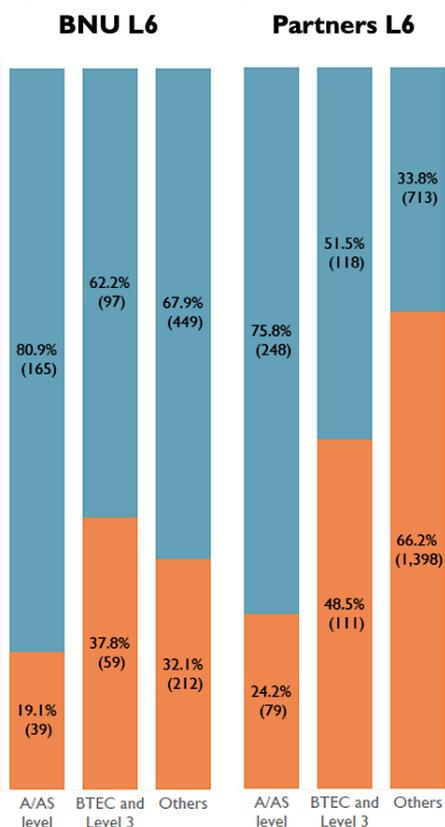PERCENTAGE PASS (GREEN) VS. FAIL (ORANGE)

The rightmost column in Fig.27a summarises data from the last four academic years and indicates a significant divide in the likelihood of failing modules early into higher education study between students entering with no or low tariff (averaging 47.1% failure rate) and those who enter BNU medium to high tariff (averaging 37.2% failure rate). Lower tariff students often have non-traditional entry qualifications, e.g., BTEC.

The risk of module failure is even smaller for students entering with very high tariffs (23%).

Our BTEC students, in particular, are at a higher risk regarding attainment (achieving a good degree: 1st or 2.1) (Fig.27b). They have an 18.7pp attainment gap with the students who joins us with other entry qualifications (that gap is larger in our franchise partners).

Fig.27b Attainment gap between our students with BTEC Level 3 and students with A/AS level entry qualification

BNU L6   **Partners L6**

BNU L6:
- A/AS level: 80.9% (165) / 19.1% (39)
- BTEC and Level 3: 62.2% (97) / 37.8% (59)
- Others: 67.9% (449) / 32.1% (212)

Partners L6:
- A/AS level: 75.8% (248) / 24.2% (79)
- BTEC and Level 3: 51.5% (118) / 48.5% (111)
- Others: 33.8% (713) / 66.2% (1,398)

Our finding suggests need to support in a targeted way students with lower entry tariffs who often intersect with the higher deprivation IMD Quintiles 1and 2 that make 60% of our enrolments (Fig.27c). The failure risk by IMD Quintile is not as linear as in our tariff data, yet clearly the more disadvantaged the IMD Quintile, the higher the failure rate.

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Fig.27c Relationship between IMD Quintile and risk of failing a module in the first year of BNU study.

PERCENTAGE PASS (GREEN) VS. FAIL (ORANGE)
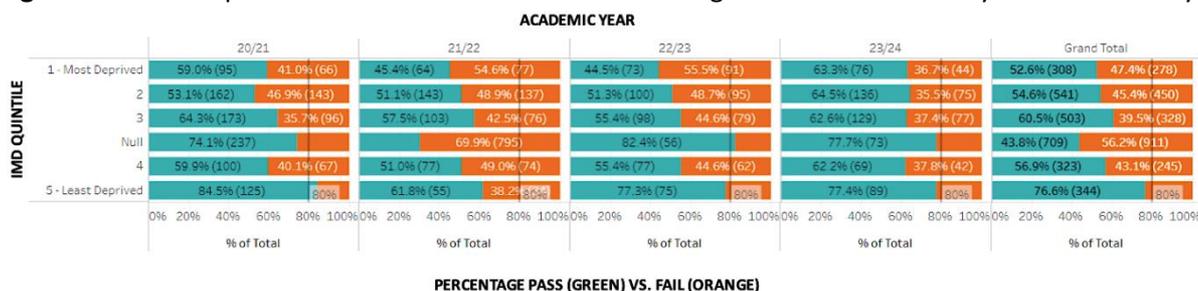
During the consultations on the development of our new APP, BNU students and Student Union representatives remarked, for example, on insufficient information about our courses. Effective information, advice, and guidance for students prior to enrolment and a focus on attainment raising are instrumental for progression to and success in higher education[6,7].

Embedding effective advice and guidance about study at BNU into pre-application and enrolment support could help avoid mismatching students to courses and misaligning student expectations with the BNU journey, thereby reducing risks to student engagement, sense of belonging, and persistence.

Our staff consultations on the new APP flagged a need for more support for low tariff students with transitioning into their BNU studies and building effective academic skills via a pre-enrolment orientation and induction programme like the UEL's Kickstarter and Orientation' programme[8], the University of Essex' 'Essex Preparation Programme'[9], and the St Mary's University, Twickenham's 'Get Set for Success' programme[10].

Such programmes can affect positively First Year the development of social capital and academic skills, attainment (albeit in a small way, c.1% uplift), module pass rate, and continuation, especially for disadvantaged and underrepresented students, including those who are first-in-the-family in higher education[11,12,13].

BNU has a good story to tell about our first-in-the-family students and module pass rates (Fig.27d), which demonstrates effective targeting of support in our context.

Fig.27d First-in-the-family students at BNU outperform their potentially HE savvier peers at passing modules.

PERCENTAGE PASS (GREEN) VS. FAIL (ORANGE)
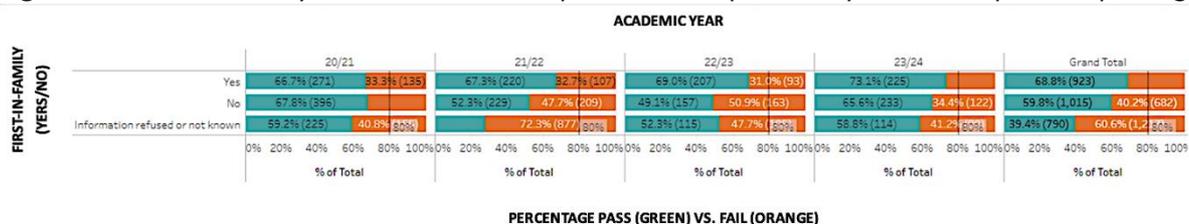
Annex B details further evidence on the effects and effective use of pre-entry and enrolment needs assessment and support to boost belonging, inclusion, and student success.

9.8.2 On-course (Student success)

The following Risks on the EORR relate to the on-course areas where we have set priority targets in this APP following consultations with our students and staff.

All six risks are likely to have a significant impact on the on-course outcomes of our target groups of disadvantaged students (measured by IMD, disabled students, mature students, and students from the Global Majority) in relation to continuation, completion, and attainment.

The following summarises our context in relation to the risks, and our considerations of whether they are occurring and why. Further information can also be found in the main Access and Participation Plan, and in Annex B.R

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Risks 6, 7, 8, and 9 – Insufficient academic support, insufficient personal support, mental health, and ongoing impact of coronavirus

Students from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds in higher education make most of our student body. Many live locally and commute to and from the BNU campuses, work in term time, and have care responsibilities or some type of disability. They present a complex spectrum of academic (Risk 6) and personal (Risks 7 and 8) needs. Some of the legacies from the Coronavirus pandemic like lower attendance on campus by staff and students have contributed to the perceptions, motivation, belonging, and academic outcomes of our students (Risk 9).

We introduced in 2022 a new delivery model for education at BNU, Curriculum'23, which emphasises and promotes accessibility, inclusivity, active and digitally enabled (blended) learning, and flexibility, all of which reflect our students' academic needs and concerns. The model drew on evidence-based strategies to supporting the retention and attainment of students from disadvantaged backgrounds[14] including:

- Active learning, including problem-based learning, experiential learning[15,16,17], and research-based learning[18].
- Blended learning[19,20].
- Developing inclusive and accessible learning resources[21].

In preparation of our new APP, we conducted also a series of student and staff fact finding consultations to explore access and participation barriers to our target student groups and any existing good practice in overcoming them at BNU. The consultations illuminated various structural, and practice- and resource-related challenges related to the implementation of Curriculum'23 and the institutional agenda for equitable and inclusive education.

Not enough flexibility in the teaching timetable, insufficient choice of assessment, irregular provision of reasonable adjustments to disabled learners, and digital poverty were cited among the structural challenges our students face. These challenges are known to impact commuter, in-work, and mature students, disabled learners, and those from low-income families, e.g., IMD Quintile 1 and 2 students[22,23].

Teaching and resourcing of learning and learning support is another challenging area that includes issues like the high staff turnover which negatively affects consistency of academic support, the expectation of students to engage in more independent learning as part of condensing the teaching timetable, the provision of personal tutoring, and the finding, attending, and being assessed on placements. The literature reports adverse effects of these challenges on all our target groups[24,25,26,21].

Limited library stock that requires students to purchase a significant number of texts and the access to devices for blended learning (laptop provision) are some of the resource driven challenges uncovered by our consultations.

Our 2024 NSS results provide quantitative evidence of these structural (the 'Organisation and Management' NSS questions) and resource-related (the 'Learning Resources' NSS questions) challenges, differentiated by economic disadvantage (POLAR Quintiles 1 and 2, and non-A Level Entry Tariff, as a proxy of disadvantage), underrepresentation in higher education (TUNDRA Quintile 1), ethnicity (Global Majority students), disability (Disabled students), and age (Mature students).

Fig.28a BNU students from POLAR Quintiles 1 and 2 are more likely to struggle for academic support and learning resources.

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources
POLAR	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	84.6%	68.5%	84.4%
	1	80.6%	68.6%	78.3%
	2	84.9%	72.3%	85.8%
	3	84.0%	69.8%	86.7%
	4	85.9%	68.4%	87.2%
	5	83.0%	66.1%	82.3%
	Not UK domiciled	90.6%	65.1%	79.1%

Fig.28b BNU students with non-traditional, e.g., BTEC, qualifications experience structural and learning resource-related challenges.

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources
Highest Qualification on Entry	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	84.6%	68.5%	84.4%
	A levels or equivalent	83.8%	66.9%	82.6%
	HE	86.2%	70.7%	89.0%
	Other/Not known	85.2%	72.0%	83.2%

Fig.28c BNU students from areas of higher underrepresentation in higher education (TUNDRA Quintiles) are more likely to be affected by structural and resource challenges, and to need more personalised academic support.

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources
Tracking underrepresentation by area (TUNDRA)	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	84.6%	68.5%	84.4%
	1	81.4%	72.1%	70.4%
	2	84.1%	73.2%	85.0%
	3	84.9%	68.3%	82.9%
	4	87.5%	68.1%	82.8%
	5	86.2%	67.0%	81.4%
	Not England domiciled	83.9%	68.1%	86.0%

Fig.28d Global Majority students at BNU have unmet academic support needs and experience challenges related to flexible learning and access to resources.

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources
Ethnicity-five way split	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	84.6%	68.5%	84.4%
	Asian	87.8%	74.7%	87.8%
	Black	85.5%	75.3%	89.4%
	Mixed	79.6%	62.9%	81.6%
	Other	81.3%	65.6%	71.7%
	White	83.2%	64.2%	82.6%
	Not UK domiciled	90.6%	65.1%	79.1%
	Not known	76.2%	72.7%	67.9%

Fig.28e BNU students with a declared disability are more likely to need personalised academic support and to experience learning resource related challenges.

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources
Disability	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	84.6%	68.5%	84.4%
	Disability reported	82.8%	68.7%	79.9%
	No disability reported	85.0%	68.4%	85.4%

Fig.28f BNU mature students are on average more likely to need personalised academic support and to experience structural challenges during their studies.

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources
Age	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	84.6%	68.5%	84.4%
	21 to 25 years on entry	81.6%	60.1%	84.5%
	26 to 30 years on entry	79.5%	63.4%	85.7%
	31 years and over on entry	85.1%	74.6%	88.4%
	Under 21 years on entry	86.6%	68.4%	81.0%

These challenges affect also our students' sense of belonging, which is itself a significant factor and predictor, particularly for disadvantaged and underrepresented student groups, of:

> ability to manage transition[27],
> grades[27],
> engagement with coursework[28],
> self-efficacy[29],
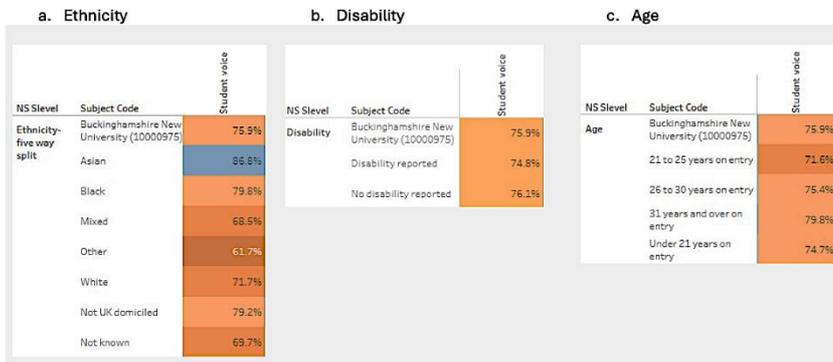> satisfaction with the student experience[30].

Lack of confidence, a sense of agency, voice, and representation in, e.g., the curriculum, staff, and peers, are some of the determinants of the sense of belonging in higher education.

Our 2024 NSS results clearly point to need for more representation and engagement of student voice.

Fig.29a Student voice and representation experiences at BNU, differentiated by POLAR, entry tariff (as a proxy of disadvantage), and TUNDRA.

a. POLAR Quintiles

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Student voice
POLAR	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	75.9%
	1	73.0%
	2	81.8%
	3	74.2%
	4	77.0%
	5	73.6%
	Not UK domiciled	79.2%

b. Entry Tariff

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Student voice
Highest Qualification on Entry	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	75.9%
	A levels or equivalent	74.7%
	HE	78.3%
	Other/Not known	76.8%

c. TUNDRA Quintiles

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Student voice
Tracking underrepresentation by area (TUNDRA)	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	75.9%
	1	79.0%
	2	76.1%
	3	72.6%
	4	77.8%
	5	71.1%
	Not England domiciled	76.6%

Fig.29b Student voice and representation experiences at BNU, differentiated by Ethnicity, Disability, and Age.

a. Ethnicity

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Student voice
Ethnicity-five way split	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	75.9%
	Asian	86.8%
	Black	79.8%
	Mixed	68.5%
	Other	61.7%
	White	71.7%
	Not UK domiciled	79.2%
	Not known	69.7%

b. Disability

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Student voice
Disability	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	75.9%
	Disability reported	74.8%
	No disability reported	76.1%

c. Age

NS Slevel	Subject Code	Student voice
Age	Buckinghamshire New University (10000975)	75.9%
	21 to 25 years on entry	71.6%
	26 to 30 years on entry	75.4%
	31 years and over on entry	79.8%
	Under 21 years on entry	74.7%

Belonging did feature in our consultations with staff and students who linked it to student continuation, attainment, and completion outcomes, which institutional data appear to support.

We analysed student performance in assessment, differentiated by IMD Quintile and Ethnicity, in ten modules with the lowest Pass rates across BNU, using module Pass rates as a proxy indicator of continuation, completion, and attainment (Fig.30a-b). Students from our target groups are clearly at a greater risk regarding on-course outcomes, which aligns with the flag on belonging and emphasises the intentions for targeted academic needs assessment, on-going induction, and scaffolded learning support we have articulated in this APP.

Fig.30a IMD Quintile 1 students fall behind their Quintile 5 peers by ten percentage points in their module marks.
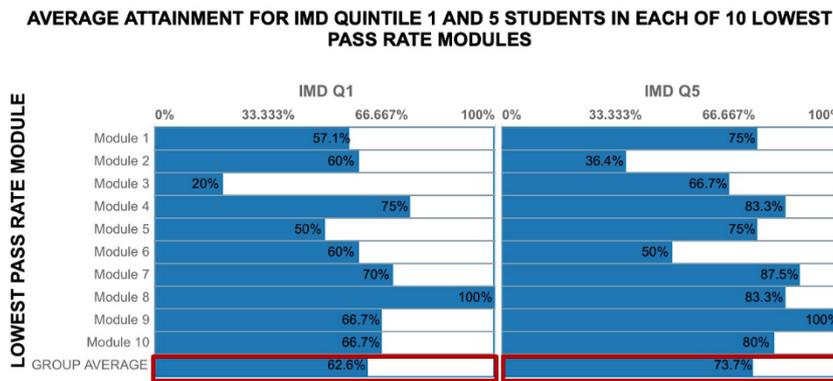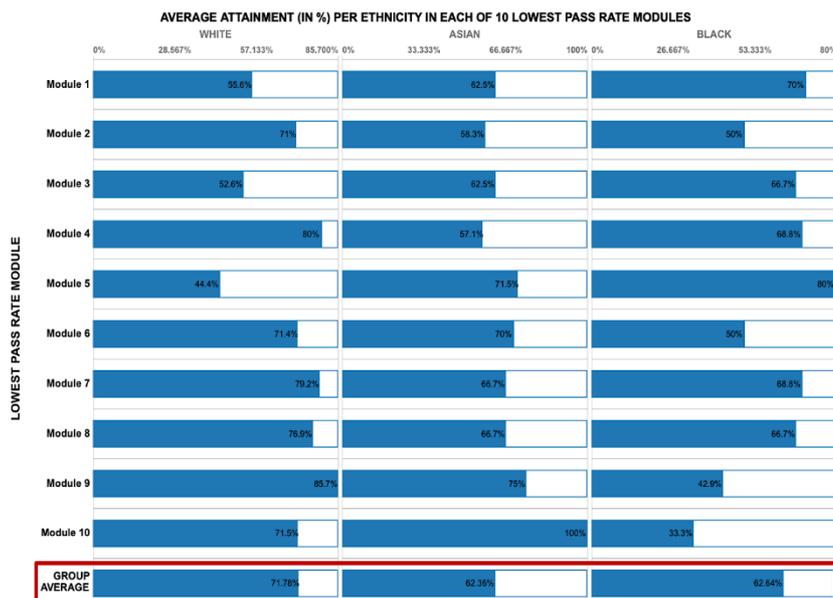

AVERAGE ATTAINMENT FOR IMD QUINTILE 1 AND 5 STUDENTS IN EACH OF 10 LOWEST PASS RATE MODULES

Fig.30b Global Majority (Asian and Black) students fall behind their White peers by nine percentage points in their module marks.

AVERAGE ATTAINMENT (IN %) PER ETHNICITY IN EACH OF 10 LOWEST PASS RATE MODULES

Providing the right personal support (Risks 7 and 8) alongside supporting our students academically has been of particular importance to the student and staff contributors in our consultations. Long waiting times, particularly for support with mental health and wellbeing, and cultural issues with declaring and seeking support with mental health and disability, are some of the emerging challenges faced by students.

Institutional data on the use of our support provision, differentiated by risk indicators like IMD Quintile, Ethnicity, Disability, and Age, indicate that our target student groups often seek, engage with, and receive support less often and below their proportion in our student population. We have reflected that into our new APP, through an emphasis on assessing student needs early and targeting support with them pro-actively.

Figs 31a-d show three-year trends in support provision by target group at BNU.

Fig.31a Proportions (in %) of students by IMD Quintile using BNU support services around disability (IDD); mental health and wellbeing (Counselling); learning support (SLA); digital skills (LT); placements, careers, and employability (SOCS); study resources and digital literacy (Library), and Student Union provided support with student appeals (Student Hub).

Fig.31b Proportions (in %) of students by Ethnicity using BNU support services around disability (IDD); mental health and wellbeing (Counselling); learning support (SLA); digital skills (LT); placements, careers, and employability (SOCS); study resources and digital literacy (Library), and Student Union provided support with student appeals (Student Hub).
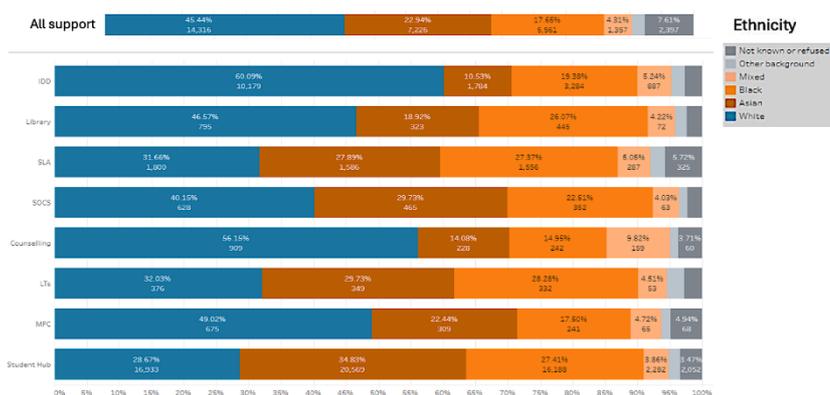

Fig.31c Proportions (in %) of disabled and non-disabled students using BNU support services around disability (IDD); mental health and wellbeing (Counselling); learning support (SLA); digital skills (LT); placements, careers, and employability (SOCS); study resources and digital literacy (Library), and Student Union provided support with student appeals (Student Hub).
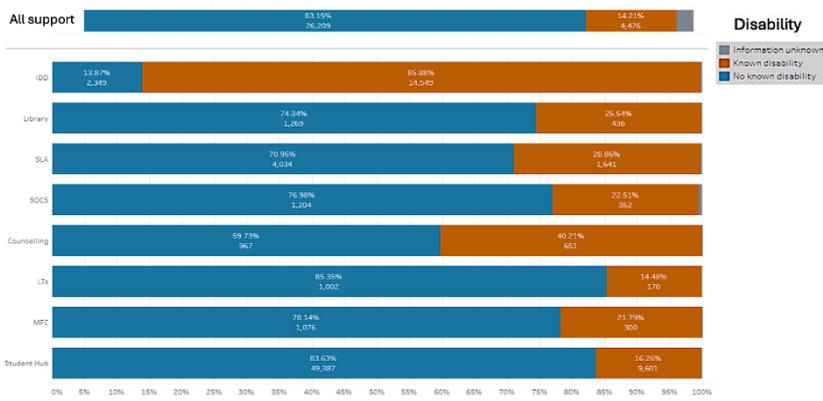
Fig.31d Proportions (in %) of mature and young students using BNU support services around disability (IDD); mental health and wellbeing (Counselling); learning support (SLA); digital skills (LT); placements, careers, and employability (SOCS); study resources and digital literacy (Library), and Student Union provided support with student appeals (Student Hub).
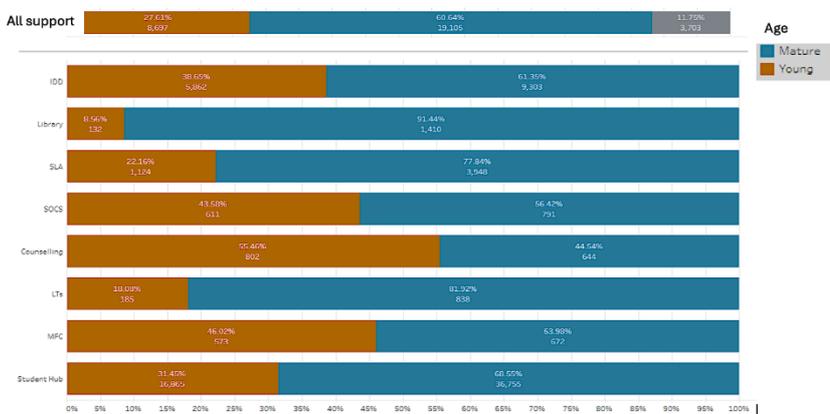

Belonging and student success can also be influenced by engagement in peer and co-curricular activities[31]. Our Student Union runs an annual Big Deal programme of activities, including student societies, sport clubs, recreation, additional skills, and volunteering, that are access-free and paid for by a BNU grant of c. £760k p.a. Students from our target groups engage in Student Union activities at an often-higher rate than their comparator groups. In 2023-24, for example, 35% of all IMD Quintiles 1 and 2 students, compared to 34% of students from Quintiles 3, 4, and 5 engaged in Big Deal activity (37% of all Global Majority students and 66% of all disabled students were also engaged). Student Union research on the effect of engagement with Big Deal and broader Union activity on progression from Level 5 to Level 6 suggests a 7.5% uplift in progression for engaged students. Engagement in the co-curriculars influences also our students' sense of belonging and reduces the chance of withdrawing. 39% of students surveyed in 2022-23 on considering leaving BNU cited their engagement in Big Deal activities as a significant factor in deciding to continue with their studies (13% of the surveyed students stated the Big Deal had been the main factor).

Overall, we acknowledge that the Risks related to academic and personal support, mental health, and post-Covid effects, are likely to impact on our students, and particularly the students from our target groups.

Annex B details further evidence on the effects of the Risks and the good practice in the HE sector to mitigate them.

Risks 10 and 11 – Cost pressures (pre-and post-entry) & capacity issues

Cost pressure increases affect student ability to complete courses and obtain a good grade. The latest, 2024 Student Academic Experience Survey by Advance HE and HEPI[32] reported that 56% of students nationally are in paid employment and work significantly more hours a week than in 2023. The 8.2hrs per student per week in paid employment is 10 hrs short to earn enough to plug the gap between the maximum Government maintenance support and estimated minimum income thresholds to cover the cost of living in the four Home Nations[33].

BNU offers variety of financial support, from general and targeted bursaries (care-leaver, estranged-student, and Gypsy-Roma-Traveller-Showman-Boater) to by-application and emergency hardship funds, and £150 p.a. learning resource funds given to all our students to purchase learning resources like books or towards the purchase of a laptop.

The majority, or two thirds of the support we allocated in 2023-24 was spent on rent, bills, and food, which illustrates the scale of the challenge for the recipients.

Our financial support provision is in line with national and international evidence of the impact such support can have on student continuation and completion[34] (less so on attainment[35]).

We have more work to do on refining how we target financial support. Our staff and student consultations on the new APP revealed that our students may not be sufficiently aware of the support on offer and how to get it (Risk 10) and need more support with accessing and purchasing, digital devices for study, including any independent study and catching up they need to do using online learning resources like recordings of taught sessions (Risk 11).

BNU provides also non-financial support with the cost of living, in following of the evidence from literature[36] and recommendations by the OfS[37], including:

> free and subsidised meals and hot drinks on campus,
> a food bank,
> cooking and refrigeration utilities to enable students to cook on campus,
> food vouchers,
> warm spaces on campus.

The Student Union leads the way through their provision of subsidised cafés, a free-meal programme, Monday Monthly Meals, Re-Fill Station, Bucks New Usage, Help Yourself, etc., all of which have seen significant growth of users. That includes distributing more than 6,000 free meals in 2023-24 – an 11% increase from 2022-23.

Participants in the student consultations on the APP mentioned further areas for support that are included in the OfS recommendations, like providing childcare on campus for students with dependents and assisting with the cost of commute or offering free university transport to and from campus.

Both Risks pose significant barriers to student success to many of our target student groups.

Annex B provides further evidence from the literature of the sizeable impact of the cost of living and capacity issues on student success, and on effective approaches to supporting students.

9.8.3 Progression (Post-graduation)

Risk 12 in the EORR relates to the area of progression from undergraduate study, which is where we have set our final priority target. This risk impacts on all BNU students, as well as those from our target groups.

The following summarises our context in relation to the risk, and our considerations of its occurrence. Further information related to Risk 12 can be found in the main Access and Participation Plan, and in Annex B.

Risk 12 – Progression from Higher Education

Good progression outcomes, i.e., a graduate job or enrolment into postgraduate study, are of great importance to BNU not only because progression is a national area of risk, but because all our target student groups are subject to Risk 12 and face barriers to progression and lower outcomes than their comparator groups[38,39,40].

Graduates from poorer socio-economic backgrounds, e.g., IMD Quintiles 1 and 2, earn 7-9% less than their better off peers. Graduates who were eligible for Free School Meals at school tend to have lower employment rates and earn 10% less than their peers. POLAR 1 and 2 graduates (comparable to graduates from TUNDRA Quintiles 1 and 2) have similar rates of employment and progression to higher study, but lower rates of income compared to peers from POLAR 5 areas. Care experienced students have comparable progression rates to their non-care experienced peers,

and graduates who entered HE with BTEC qualification earn two-thirds less than graduates entering HE with four or more A-grades in their A-levels.

Among Global Majority graduates, Asian graduates, including those of Chinese background, are least likely to have progressed to graduate employment or higher studies 15 months after graduating. All other Global Majority groups have comparable or lower graduate employment rates than White graduates. As regards earning 10 years after graduation, the Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Black Caribbean graduates earn on average the least, whereas the Chinese and Indian graduates tend to have the highest earnings among all ethnicity groups, including White graduates.

Graduates who had declared a disability during their undergraduate studies do not earn significantly less but are 5% less likely to be in paid employment than their non-disabled peers. Disability type also plays a role, with graduates with a 'cognitive and learning' type of disability having higher, and graduates with a 'social and communication' type of disability having substantially lower progression rates than their non-disabled peers.

Mature graduates too have lower progression rates and lower long-term earnings than younger graduates. These national trends bear particular significance to BNU given the make-up of our student body, with more than 60% coming from an economically disadvantaged background, 40% - from an ethnic background within the Global Majority, and more than 80% being mature.

Our review of the literature on effective approaches to closing progression gaps highlighted practices we have already put in place, e.g., embedding skills development into curricula[41], making curricula more relevant for graduate jobs[42], and providing relevant work experience through, for example, placements[43], all of which are hallmarks of our Curriculum'23.

We already see positive effects from our strategic work on progression. For example, BNU ranks 1st in the South-East and in the Top 20 provider (or, top 15%) nationally, by the proportion of graduates (70% at BNU) who state they use what they learnt at BNU into their current job. Our graduates are also more likely than the average graduate in the UK to earn over £45k fifteen months after graduating.

Initiatives like our enrichment modules that focus on developing employability skills and offered to all students and tailored to the academic school and subject, or mandating placements for all students, and our employability dedicated online platform for job and placement offers, employer presentations, and online modules on e.g., writing a CV and preparing for job interviews, drive the success with progression outcomes.

We are aware of the remaining challenges. Our staff and student consultations on the new APP flagged areas where we still have work to do, e.g., the targeting of specific student groups, the introduction of a needs analysis of employability skills and related support with student confidence in the ability to develop these skills, providing support with finding a suitable placement and targeting financial assistance with the costs associated with attending the placement.

The Student Union provides an additional line of support to our students around skills development and with placements. For example, the free 'Additional Skills' sessions delivered through the Big Deal programme help develop transferrable skills. Attendance of these sessions increased by 55% year-on-year in 2023-24. Another free-of-charge initiative, the Big Deal's Leadership Academy, helps student hone leadership skills, and saw more than 100% increase in participation in 2023-24. The Union helps also with volunteering, including community volunteering, both of which enhance our students' social capital, work relevant skills, and CVs.

Annex B provides further evidence from the literature for the potential positive impact on progression outcomes of the activities we have included in this APP.

Annex B

Evidence base for activities

Intervention Strategy	Activity	Evidence (reference / links)	Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity
IS1 Preparation, Induction and Transitions Programme.	**Academic-linked pre-entry support, preparation and expectations** **Scope:** **Target**: disadvantaged (IMD), BAME, and learners with BTEC entry qualifications, as well as care-leaver- and estranged learners. **What is it?** A range of pre-entry and onboarding support including: • Information and advice on, e.g., course, accommodation, application process, etc. • Pre-entry preparatory activities for offer holders and enrolled students	[1] OFFA, 2018. Office for Fair Access annual report and accounts 2017-18. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728202/2017-18_OFFA_annual_report_2307FINAL.PDF [2]Crawford, C. 2014. Socio-economic differences in university outcomes in the UK: drop-out, degree completion and degree class. London: IFS. Available at: https://ifs.org.uk/publications/socio-economic-differences-university-outcomes-uk-drop-out-degree-completion-and [3]TASO. 2023. Evidence Toolkit. https://taso.org.uk/evidence/toolkit/ [4]Frauke P., C. Spiess, C. Katharina & V. Zambre. 2018. Informing Students about College: An Efficient Way to Decrease the Socio-Economic Gap in Enrolment: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment. DIW Berlin Discussion Paper No. 1770, Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3287800 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3287800 [5]van Lamoen, P. M., M. Meeuwisse, A.M.F. Hiemstra, L.R. Arends & S.E. Severiens, S. 2024. Supporting students' transition to higher education: the effects of a pre-academic programme on sense of belonging, academic self-efficacy, and academic achievement. European Journal of Higher Education, pp.1–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2024.2331122 [6]Beard, L.M., K. Schilt & P. Jagoda. 2023, Divergent Pathways: How Pre-Orientation Programs Can Shape the Transition to College for First-Generation, Low-Income Students1. Sociol Forum. https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12923	Evidence shows that: • lower attainment rates of disadvantaged students are a key barrier to their access of HE; when disadvantaged students achieve the same attainment levels as their better off peers, they are almost equally likely to succeed in accessing HE[1,2]. • residential or online-based pre-enrolment programmes of orientation, information, and advice on higher education can impact positively student aspirations, motivation for studying in HE[3], increase the access of HE by first-in-the-family students[4]; pre-enrolment activities focused on information and advice, as well as developing relevant academic skills can also enhance student learning and performance early on into the first year of study in HE, as well as sense of belonging and peer social capital[5,6]; while the uplift in academic performance can be small, c.1% up on non-attending students[7], the other benefits from such programmes remain. • induction programmes boost development of peer capital and self-advocacy skills by disadvantaged students (e.g., first-in-the-family; low family income)[8,9]. • student integration into higher education, institution, and course, is central to transition and continuation[10,11]. • late enrolment into an HE course, or the next level of an HE course, can impact negatively on student performance in terms of achievement, retention, and attainment outcomes[12] and can be used to

covering, e.g., academic skills, expectations, time management, etc. • Learning difference diagnostic to inform support needs Welcome Week and Induction covering academic and social, school-, support services-, Student Union-, etc. specific information. Late starter support.	[7]Perrine, R. M. & J. W. Spain. 2008. Impact of a Pre-Semester College Orientation Program: Hidden Benefits? Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 10(2), pp.155–169. https://doi.org/10.2190/CS.10.2.c [8]Austen, L., R. Hodgson, C. Heaton, N. Pickering & J. Donaldson. 2021. Access, retention, attainment and progression: an integrative review of demonstrable impact on student outcomes. Advance HE. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/10204 [9]Scottish Framework for Fair Access. 2024. Extended Induction. https://www.fairaccess.scot/intervention/extended-induction/ [10]Tinto, Vincent. "Stages of Student Departure: Reflections on the Longitudinal Character of Student Leaving." The Journal of Higher Education, vol. 59, no. 4, 1988, pp. 438–55. JSTOR, https://doi.org/10.2307/1981920 [11]Arshad-Snyder, S. 2017. The Role of Faculty Validation in Influencing Online Students' Intent to Persist. Dissertation/thesis. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest LLC. search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED576756&site=ehost-live [12] Maalouf, K.J. 2012. The Influence of Late Registration on Academic Outcomes and Retention at a Multi-Campus Community College. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), dissertation. Old Dominion University. https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/chs_etds/71 [13] Siefken, J. 2017. Registration Delay and Student Performance. Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Vol. 17(2), pp. 45-52. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1142349.pdf [14]Myhill, D. 2020. Addressing Barriers to Student Success: Final report to the Office for Students.	target appropriate support specifically at late enrolling students[13]. • students with BTEC entry qualifications are particularly vulnerable to lower continuation, completion, and attainment rates; socio-economic deprivation in the student's background, combined with a BTEC qualification, exacerbates the risk[14]. • pre-enrolment support with academic writing and mathematics, preferably in person, and online modules on other academic skills, as well as post-enrolment provision of personal tutoring, early into Year 1, have all been found effective at smoothing the transition and narrowing the gaps in outcomes for BTEC students[14,15]. As part of this activity, we will embed: • information and advice on the support and other provisions at BNU into our pre-enrolment activities and our academic induction process (Welcome Week). • academic skills development into our pre-enrolment activities. • learning needs analysis to inform targeted support to students after enrolment. • targeted support to students who enrol late into their first and subsequent years of UG study.

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| | | OfS. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/f65a2a58-da6b-4b37-8130-62b161f17638/abss-transforming-transitions-exeter-report.pdf

[15]Morgan, M. 2023. Prior learning experience, study expectations of A-Level and BTEC students on entry to university and the impact of Covid19. The Office for Institutional Equity. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/10683 | |

	Building community and belonging **Scope**: **Target**: All students. **What is it?** Production of a literature review on the links between belonging and wellbeing for dissemination to all staff <u>and</u> embedding activities that build belonging and community into pre-enrolment and Year 1, e.g., • Fresher's Fortnight (SU run) programme of social activities. • Group learning activities in Week 1 across all programmes to foster academic belonging. • Introducing at pre-enrolment	[1]Tinto, V. 1997. Classrooms as communities: Exploring the educational character of student persistence. The Journal of Higher Education, 68(6), pp. 599–623. https://doi.org/10.2307/2959965 [2]Tinto, V. 2003. Learning Better Together: The Impact of Learning Communities on Student Success. Higher Education Monograph Series. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780429279355-3/learning-better-together-vincent-tinto [3]Austen, L., R. Hodgson, C. Heaton, N. Pickering & J. Donaldson. 2021. Access, retention, attainment and progression: an integrative review of demonstrable impact on student outcomes. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/10204 [4]Morgan, H. & A-M., Houghton. 2011. Inclusive curriculum design in higher education. Considerations for effective practice across and within subject areas. Advance HE. https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/inclusive-curriculum-design-higher-education [5]Schuelka, M. 2018. Implementing inclusive education. Helpdesk Report. K4D. https://tinyurl.com/yeyvhbfc [6]Arshad-Snyder, S. 2017. The Role of Faculty Validation in Influencing Online Students' Intent to Persist. Dissertation/thesis. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest LLC. search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED576756&site=ehost-live [7]Hall, M. M., R.E. Worsham, & G. Reavis. 2021. 'The Effects of Offering Proactive Student-Success Coaching on Community College Students' Academic Performance and Persistence', Community College Review, 49 (2): 202-237. http://doi.org/10.1177/0091552120982030 [8]Schneider, M., & Preckel, F. (2017). Variables associated with achievement in higher education: A systematic review of meta-	Evidence from the literature around belonging, inclusion, and learning communities in HE, and their impact on student outcomes, suggests that: • belonging to a learning community correlates positively with aspirations and motivation for learning, expectations of oneself, and academic achievement[1,2]. • pedagogic and other approaches (e.g., academic induction, personal tutoring, peer-mentoring and coaching, collaborative learning) to enhancing student interactions with staff, peers, and the campus that make students feel 'seen', 'known', and valued, have a demonstrably positive effect on belonging[3]. curriculum inclusivity encompasses all teaching, learning, and assessment dimensions and is about anticipating and considering students' entitlement to accessing and participating in a course[4]. inclusivity relates not only to curricula and learning, teaching, and assessment, but also to institutional policy, resources and funding, and staff development, practice, and leadership[5]. lack of inclusivity, e.g., in the curriculum in terms of belonging and representation, associates with gaps in continuation, completion, and attainment for, e.g., Global Majority students, care experienced students, first-in-the-family students, and students from lower socio-economic ('working-class') backgrounds[6,7]. what teachers do, i.e., the inclusivity of teaching, can substantially affect student learning and outcomes[8]. role-modelling and coaching by staff who 'look', 'speak', and have similar backgrounds as disadvantaged and underrepresented student groups[9] can positively affect student transition to

and Induction of staff role-models with lived experience as our target student groups.

analyses. Psychological bulletin, 143(6), 565. https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000098

[9]Darby University. 2024. Role Models and Allies. https://www.derby.ac.uk/about/equality-and-diversity/role-models-allies/

[10]Lunsford, L., G. Crisp, E. Dolan & B. Wuetherick. 2017. Mentoring in Higher Education. SAGE Publications Ltd. https://tinyurl.com/4ne83h72

[11]Gladstone, J.R. & A. Cimpian. 2021. Which role models are effective for which students? A systematic review and four recommendations for maximizing the effectiveness of role models in STEM. IJ STEM, Ed 8(59). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40594-021-00315-x

[12]Capstick, M.K., L.M. Harrell-Williams, C.D. Cockrum & S. West. 2019. Exploring the Effectiveness of Academic Coaching for Academically At-Risk College Students. Innov High Educ, 44, pp.219–231. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-019-9459-1

[13]Alzen, J.L., A. Burkhardt, E. Diaz-Bilello, E. Elder, A. Sepulveda, A. Blankenheim & L. Board. 2021. Academic Coaching and its Relationship to Student Performance, Retention, and Credit Completion. Innov High Educ 46, pp. 539–563. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-021-09554-w

[14]Sanger, C.S. 2020. Inclusive Pedagogy and Universal Design Approaches for Diverse Learning Environments. In: Sanger, C., Gleason, N. (eds) Diversity and Inclusion in Global Higher Education. Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-1628-3_2

[15]AdvanceHE. 2020. Flipped Learning. Starter Tools. https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/flipped-learning-0

[16]Murillo-Zamorano, L.R., J.Á. López Sánchez & A.L. Godoy-Caballero. 2019. How the flipped classroom affects knowledge, skills, and

HE, belonging, continuation, motivation, and self-efficacy[10]; perceived competence, similarity to students, and attainability of the role-model's success may be determining factors for the effectiveness of role-modelling for target groups[11].

- staff-student or peer-coaching in academic skills enhances achievement and retention of at-risk students[12,13].

- employing established frameworks like Universal Design for Learning[14] in curriculum design enhances inclusivity and equality of opportunity for learning.

- curriculum and teaching design models like flipped classroom, task-based learning, and Just-in-Time-Teaching (JiTT) that scaffold learning within and alongside the timetabled teaching are very effective at engaging students in guided independent learning[15,16,17,18,19].

- mixing asynchronous wraparounds (pre- and post-) of face-to-face, hybrid, or online (synchronous) timetabled teaching (e.g., the UWL Flex model[20]) increases student engagement with guided independent learning, student sense of preparedness for assessment, assessment submission and pass rates (especially for disadvantaged and underrepresented students), and student satisfaction (especially for first year students)[20].

- personal tutoring links to increased sense of belonging and satisfaction of students through connectedness[21], which is crucial for successful transition to HE[22,23].

- when effective, personal tutoring systems benefit student on-course success in terms of grades, attendance, and engagement through academic and wellbeing support[24].

Scaffolded On-course Transitions Programme **Scope**: All students. **Target**: Students from across the UK. **What is it?** A universal curriculum model for scaffolding of learning and academic skills that may include: - developing through consultation student journey roadmaps through key transition points in UG study for each target group. - Annual personal development analysis through, e.g., measurement of education gain. - Annual academic	engagement in higher education: Effects on students' satisfaction, Computers & Education, Vol. 141, 103608. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2019.103608 [17]Killi, S. & A. Morrison 2015. Just-in-time Teaching, Just-in-need Learning: Designing towards Optimized Pedagogical Outcomes. Universal Journal of Educational Research, Vol. 3, No. 10, pp. 742 - 750. https://www.hrpub.org/journals/article_info.php?aid=2947 [18]Merrill, D. 2002. First Principles of Instruction. ETR&D, 50 (3), pp. 43–59. https://mdavidmerrill.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/firstprinciplesbymerrill.pdf [19]Wass, R., & C. Golding. 2014. Sharpening a tool for teaching: the zone of proximal development. Teaching in Higher Education, 19(6), pp. 671–684. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2014.901958 [20]UWL. 2023. UWL Flex. https://campuspress.uwl.ac.uk/uwlflex/ [21]Palmer, M., P. O'Kane & M. Owens. 2009. Betwixt spaces: student accounts of turning point experiences in the first-year transition, Studies in Higher Education, 34:1, 37-54. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070802601929 [22] Thomas, L. 2006. "Widening Participation and the Increased Need for Personal Tutoring." In Personal Tutoring in Higher Education, edited by Liz Thomas and Paula Hixenbaugh, 21–31. Stoke on Trent, UK: Trentham Books. [23]Reinheimer, D. & K. McKenzie. 2011. The Impact of Tutoring on the Academic Success of Undeclared Students, Journal of College Reading and Learning, 41:2, 22-36. https://doi.org/10.1080/10790195.2011.10850340	- criteria for effectiveness of personal tutoring include, e.g., how often tutors meet with tutees, how meetings are initiated, what if any records of meetings are kept, how meetings run, i.e., whether individually or in groups, and what meetings are for[25]. - engagement in reflection on learning and skills development through personal development planning (PDP) affects positively attainment and the effectiveness of learning approach[26]. - mapping the student journey around key transition points and across target student groups can help optimise the student experience and support provision[27,28]. As part of these two activities, we will embed evidence-based: - activities and approaches that enhance socialising and collaborative learning, aimed at developing cohesive learning communities, belonging, and mattering, including an annual academic induction across all levels of UG study. - role-modelling by our staff aimed at our target student groups, to further support our efforts at developing student sense of belonging and confidence. - wrap-around guided independent learning, designed to good practice in the sector and literature. - an institutional personal tutoring framework that ensures consistency in the provision and quality of personal tutoring across our academic schools. - engagement of students in reflection on their learning through an approach for measuring educational gain. - student journey maps for our target student groups.

	induction covering common needs areas at every UG Level. • Standardised, blended learning-based scaffold across modules for guided independent learning. • Allocation of personal tutor and schedule of engagement to every student.	[24]Stuart, K., K. Willocks & R. Browning. 2021. Questioning personal tutoring in higher education: an activity theoretical action research study, Educational Action Research, 29:1, 79-98. https://doi.org/10.1080/09650792.2019.1626753 [25]The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. 2014. "What Students Think of Their Higher Education Analysis of Student Submissions to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in 2012-13." http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/What-Students-Think-of-Their-Higher-Education.pdf [26]Gough, D., D. Kiwan, K. Sutcliffe, G. Simpson & N. Houghton. 2003. A systematic map and synthesis review of the effectiveness of personal development planning for improving student learning. EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London: London, UK. https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10174646/1/LTSN_June03.pdf [27] Rains, JP. 2017. Defining student journey mapping in higher education: The 'how-to' guide for implementation on campus. Journal of Education Advancement & Marketing, 2(2), pp.106-119. https://www.henrystewartpublications.com/sites/default/files/EAM2.2_DefiningstudentjourneymappinginhighereducationThehowtoguideforimplementationoncampus.pdf [28]Young, A., L. Dawes & B. Senadji. 2023. Using journey maps as a holistic, reflective approach to capture student engineering identity experiences. European Journal of Engineering Education, 49(1), pp.22–44. https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2023.2268023	
IS2 Intentional Curriculum, Teaching, Learning & Assessment,	**Flexible curriculum and pedagogy** **Scope**: **Target**: All students.	[1]Loon, M. 2021. Flexible learning: a literature review 2016 - 2021. Advance HE. https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/flexible-learning-literature-review-2016-2021	Evidence on the effects of flexible and inclusive learning provision indicates that: • enables students to tailor when and how they learn[1,2.]

| and Monitoring | **What is it?** Deliberate flexing of curricula, teaching, learning, and assessment through:
• Flexible timetabling.
• Flexible learning, through enrichment content that offer extra-curricular topics.
• Flexible assessment, through choice and alignment with student interests. | [2]Soffer, T., T. Kahan & R. Nachmias. 2019. Patterns of Students' Utilization of Flexibility in Online Academic Courses and Their Relation to Course Achievement. The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 20(3). https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v20i4.3949

[3]Summers, R., H. Higson, H. & E. Moores. 2022. The impact of disadvantage on higher education engagement during different delivery modes: a pre- versus peri-pandemic comparison of learning analytics data. Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 48(1), 56–66. https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2021.2024793

[4]Ryan, M. D. & S.A. Reid. 2016. Impact of the flipped classroom on student performance and retention: A parallel controlled study in general chemistry. Journal of Chemical Education, 93(1), pp.13-23. https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.jchemed.5b00717

[5]Buck, E. & K. Tyrrell. 2022. Block and blend: a mixed method investigation into the impact of a pilot block teaching and blended learning approach upon student outcomes and experience. Journal of Further and Higher Education, 46(8), 1078–1091. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2022.2050686 | • flexibility can enhance student outcomes, and the quality of student experience, compared to the traditional, face-to-face mode of learning[2].
• flexibility needs to be carefully balanced and between in-person and online activities to benefit disadvantaged learners[3].
• flexible teaching and learning models like flipped classroom and block teaching produce significant benefits in both attainment and persistence (retention), especially for students of lower prior attainment, e.g., lower entry tariffs[4,5].
• students use the flexibility afforded in the timetabling and teaching, learning, and assessment, to juggle more effectively various responsibilities alongside learning, which impacts positively on attainment[6].
• overall, flexing the education provision raises student continuation, completion, attainment, belonging, and satisfaction, particularly of students from our target groups, e.g., mature learners, students with non-traditional entry qualifications, fist-in-the-family students, etc.[7]
• flexibility can also relate to the pathways to students from non-traditional backgrounds, e.g., mature students, for accessing higher education, e.g., foundation years and Access to HE diploma courses; there are indications that such flexible pathways can be effective, in the UK context and internationally, e.g., in Australia, as a means to accessing degree courses without the necessary entry qualifications[8,9]; the Australian experience however also suggests that learners who access degree courses through these flexible pathways continue to struggle more academically than their direct-entry peers[10]. |
| | **Inclusive Curriculum Review and Design**

Target: Target groups.

What is it? Curriculum development and evaluation framework comprising equality impact assessment, a whole-institution, student led review of | [6]Page, N., G. Forster-Wilkins & M. Bonetzky. 2021. The impact of student timetables and commuting on student satisfaction. New Directions in the Teaching of Physical Sciences, 16(1), pp.2051-3615. https://doi.org/10.29311/ndtps.v0i16.3793

[7]OfS.2021. Improving opportunity and choice for mature students. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/7042/ofs-insight-brief-9-updated-10-may-2022.pdf

[8]HESA. 2019. Year 0: A foundation for widening participation? https://www.hesa.ac.uk/blog/16-05-2019/foundation-year-research | • curriculum inclusivity encompasses all teaching, learning, and assessment dimensions and is about |

reading lists, a strategy for student-staff and peer partnerships, and a staff training programme in equality and inclusivity that focuses on BNU specific target areas and student groups, and on approaches to fostering student belonging.

[9]TASO. 2023. Foundation year programmes (post-entry). https://taso.org.uk/intervention/foundation-year-programmes-post-entry/

[10]Pitman, T., S. Trinidad, M. Devlin, A. Harvey, M. Brett & J. McKay. 2016. Pathways to Higher Education: The Efficacy of Enabling and Sub-Bachelor Pathways for Disadvantaged Students. National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE), Perth: Curtin University. https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Final-Pathways-to-Higher-Education-The-Efficacy-of-Enabling-and-Sub-Bachelor-Pathways-for-Disadvantaged-Students.pdf

[11]Morgan, H. & A-M., Houghton. 2011. Inclusive curriculum design in higher education. Considerations for effective practice across and within subject areas. Advance HE. https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/inclusive-curriculum-design-higher-education

[12]Schuelka, M. 2018. Implementing inclusive education. Helpdesk Report. K4D. https://tinyurl.com/yeyvhbfc

[13]Arshad-Snyder, S. 2017. The Role of Faculty Validation in Influencing Online Students' Intent to Persist. Dissertation/thesis. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest LLC. search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED576756&site=ehost-live

[14]Hall, M. M., R.E. Worsham, & G. Reavis. 2021. 'The Effects of Offering Proactive Student-Success Coaching on Community College Students' Academic Performance and Persistence', Community College Review, 49 (2): 202-237. http://doi.org/10.1177/0091552120982030

[15]Lubicz-Nawrocka, T. & C. Bovill. 2021. Do students experience transformation through co-creating curriculum in higher education?, Teaching in Higher Education. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2021.1928060

anticipating and considering students' entitlement to accessing and participating in a course[11].

- inclusivity relates not only to curricula and learning, teaching, and assessment, but also to institutional policy, resources and funding, and staff development, practice, and leadership[12].

- lack of inclusivity, e.g., in the curriculum in terms of belonging and representation, associates with gaps in continuation, completion, and attainment for, e.g., Global Majority students, care experienced students, first-in-the-family students, and students from lower socio-economic ('working-class') backgrounds[13,14].

- providing students with opportunities to collaborate with staff and peers on diversifying and co-creating curricula, assessment, course content, and learning resources helps develop learning communities, engagement with and enjoyment of learning, persistence and attainment[15].

- equality impact assessment is an established approach to modelling the effect of higher education policies and processes on protected characteristics under equality law[16]; inclusivity impact assessment (SEER) is a novel approach that combines the modelling of effects of curricular and support provision designs and practices on both equality and inclusivity for target student characteristics in the equality law and EORR.

As part of these two activities, we will:
- explore options for flexing our teaching timetable, teaching, learning, and assessment practices, as well as diversify student choice of extracurricular learning.
- formalise student-staff partnerships as part of our drive towards more inclusive and diverse curricula.

		[16]Advance HE. 2020. Equality impact assessment. https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/governance-and-policies/equality-impact-assessment	• conduct a review of reading lists across all modules and programmes in partnerships with our students. • evaluate the effects of flexing and enhancing inclusivity through an equality impact assessment approach.

	Embedding support to enhance success
	
	Target: All students, with particular consideration of our target groups.
	
	What is it?
	A framework for reviewing and embedding into curricula aspects of student support, e.g., mental health and wellbeing, group work, self-advocacy, developing social capital.
	The framework will be put into practice through adding support needs and interventions to student journey roadmaps (IS1), introduction of academic coaches to
		[1]Thomas, L. 2012. Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: a summary of findings and recommendations from the What Works? Student Retention & Success programme Summary Report. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-Summary-report.pdf
		
		[2]Parker, H., A. Hughes, C. Marsh, S. Ahmed, J. Cannon, E. Taylor-Steeds, L. Jones & N. Page. 2017. Understanding the different challenges facing students in transitioning to university particularly with a focus on ethnicity. New Directions in the Teaching of Physical Sciences, Vol.12 (1). https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1231896.pdf
		
		[3]OfS. 2023. Blended learning and OfS regulation. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/blended-learning-and-ofs-regulation/themes/
		
		[4]Coombs, H. 2022. First-in-Family Students. HEPI Report 146. https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/First-in-Family-Students.pdf
		
		[5]TASO. 2023. Summary report: What works to reduce equality gaps for disabled students. https://taso.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/TASO-report-what-works-to-reduce-equality-gaps-for-disabled-students.pdf
		
		[6]Thomas, Liz. 2020. Excellent Outcomes for All Students: A Whole System Approach to Widening Participation and Student Success in
			Evidence related to academic skills development and provision of support with that suggests that:
			• developing academic and other skills, e.g., that help with coping in a higher education environment, is important across student groups and characteristics, and has implications for transition and continuation in higher education[1].
			• insufficient support with developing such skills during the first year of undergraduate study impacts negatively the continuation and attainment of disadvantaged students[1], including Global Majority learners[2], mature learners[3], first-in-the-family learners[4], and disabled learners[5].
			• embedding skills into curricula works most effectively when[6]:
			  o the skills and their development (when and how) are made prominent in the student experience from the first year of study.
			  o students collaborate with both academic staff and skills specialists (e.g., learning/academic support staff) in developing the skills[7].
			  o support with skills development is accessible and signposted throughout the student journey.
			  o skills development is personalised through needs analysis, for example based on student confidence levels related to a 'curriculum' of skills, that reveals what students do not know

	provide support proactively, partnership with the Brilliant Club to deliver support to target groups of students and launch of re-engagement planning for disengaged students underpinned by our Attendance and Monitoring policy and aligned with our Support to Study process.	England. Student Success. Special Issue: Enabling Excellence through Equity. Vol. 11 (1). https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2101-0067
		
		[7]Bailey, R. 2018. Student writing and academic literacy development at university. Journal of Learning and Student Experience, Vol.1: Article 7. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/301021821.pdf
		
		[8]Checkoway, B. 2018. Inside The Gates: First-Generation Students Finding Their Way. Higher Education Studies, Vol 8(3). https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v8n3p72
		
		[9]Wavehill. 2022. What Works in Supporting Student Mental Health. Final Report to the Office for Students. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/7584/evaluation-of-the-mhcc-what-works.pdf
		
		[10] Hunt, J.M., N. Langowitz, K. Rollag & K. Hebert-Maccaro. 2017. Helping students make progress in their careers: An attribute analysis of effective vs ineffective student development plans. The International Journal of Management Education, Vol. 15 (3), pp. 397-408. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2017.03.017
		
		[11]Thomas, L. 2020. Excellent Outcomes for All Students: A Whole System Approach to Widening Participation and Student Success in England. Student Success, 11(1), pp.1-11. https://doi.org/10.5204/ssj.v11i1.1455
		
		[12]Power, J., A. Griffiths & S. Jones-Devitt. 2024. An evidence based approach to re-engaging students by re-framing support for success. Innovative practice in higher education, 6(1), pp. 1-26. https://salford-repository.worktribe.com/OutputFile/2884558
			('hidden curriculum') and what skills they should focus on[8].
			
			  o skills development and support are framed as a means for success and overcoming challenges for students who have already succeeded in overcoming challenges, e.g., related to a disability, or their socio-economic background (e.g., first-in-the-family students).
			
			  o embedding mental health and wellbeing into curricular and co-curricular activities achieve a wide range of impacts, from improved mental health, financial, and general wellbeing literacy and the development of coping mechanisms and awareness of the available support and how to access it, to increased self-reporting and seeking support by student groups that generally are less likely to report and seek help[9].
			
			  o sector-wide frameworks, e.g., the Mental Wellbeing Embeddedness Framework[13], and established toolkits for reviewing and embedding wellbeing into curricula[14] and the wider student experience can guide the development of institution frameworks for embedded skills development[10].
			
			• students who have a clear understanding of what support is available to them and how to access it are more likely to develop a sense of belonging and continue with their studies[11].
			
			• identifying disengaged students sooner enables quicker and more target provision of support; students with non-traditional entry qualifications, students from the lowest areas of participation in HE (TUNDRA Quintiles 1 and 2), and students from the most deprived backgrounds (IMD Quintiles 1 and 2) may be most at-risk of disengaging with learning[12].
			
			As part of this activity, we will:

			• develop and implement a framework for embedding and reviewing curricular and co-curricular skills. • enhance our centrally provided support, alongside that embedded into our curricula, by delivering targeted interventions through our academic coaches and our partnership with the Brilliant Club.

	Responsive to industry with embedded careers and employability development
	
	Scope:
	
	Target: All students.
	
	What is it?
	Engagement with industry partners through advisory boards that steer embedding of employability skills development and career readiness activities into curricula.
		[1]Ramaiah, B. & D. Robinson. 2022. What works to reduce equality gaps in employment and employability? TASO. https://taso.org.uk/news-item/what-works-to-reduce-equality-gaps-in-employment-and-employability/
		
		[2]Percy, C. & K. Emms. 2020. Drivers of early career success for UK undergraduates: an analysis of graduate destinations surveys. Edge Foundation. https://www.edge.co.uk/sites/default/files/documents/edge_hesa_analysis_report_web-1.pdf
		
		[3] Scott, F. J. & D. Willison. 2021. Students' reflections on an employability skills provision, Journal of Further and Higher Education, 45:8, pp. 1118-1133. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1928025
		
		[4]Moore, J., J. Sanders & L. Higham. 2013. Literature review of research into widening participation to higher education. Bristol: HEFCE. http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2013/wplitreview/
		
		[5] Pegg, A., J. Waldock, S.Hendy-Isaac & R. Lawton. 2012. Pedagogy for employability. The Higher Education Academy. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/3983
		
		[6]Pugh, S.L. & M.J. Grove. 2014. Establishing Industrial Advisory Boards Using a Practice Transfer Model. HEA. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/5075
			Evidence related to developing employability skills and support career readiness suggests that:
			• disadvantaged students have less positive employment outcomes than their better off peers[1].
			• the most important factor for career success and satisfaction appears to be whether graduates were confident they could function / perform effectively across a range of relevant skills[2].
			• features of higher education that associate positively with high graduate career satisfaction and earning potential include[2]:
			  o focus on skills development.
			  o relevance of the curriculum to graduate jobs.
			  o relevance of the degree, degree classification (grade), and the qualification for graduate jobs.
			  o relevant work experience during the degree.
			  o whether the graduate job was obtained through the university.
			• cohort tailored, needs based support with the development of employability skills works best, according to alumni feedback[3,4] and good practice from the UK HE sector[5].
			• establishing industry advisory boards can significantly speed up the embedding of

		[7]Cole, D. & M. Tibby. 2013. Defining and developing your approach to employability. The Higher Education Academy. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/3982	employability related activities into curricula (e.g., via a Practice Transfer Adoption model)[6,7]. As part of this activity, we will: • strengthen our existing set up of industry advisory boards and use these as a vehicle for making all our curricula more employability ready and career oriented.
	Personal Tutor Programme **Scope:** **Target**: All students. **What is it?**	[1]Austen, L., R. Hodgson, J. Dickinson, C. Heaton & N. Pickering. 2021. Access, retention, attainment and progression: a review of the literature 2016-2021. Advance HE. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/10204 [2]Grant, A. 2006. "Personal Tutoring: A System in Crisis." In Personal Tutoring in Higher Education, edited by Liz Thomas and Paula Hixenbaugh, 11–20. Stoke on Trent, UK: Trentham Books. [3]Attwood, R. 2009. "The Personal Touch." Times Higher Education, May 7. https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/the-personal-touch/406424.article [4]The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. 2014. "What Students Think of Their Higher Education Analysis of Student Submissions to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in 2012-13." http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/What-Students-Think-of-Their-Higher-Education.pdf	Evidence on personal tutoring and its effectiveness for student transition, belonging, and on-course success, suggests that: • effective personal tutoring enhances the post-entry participation, continuation, and inclusion post-entry of students, and students from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups in particular, e.g., Black and other minoritised students[1]. • most UK universities run a personal tutoring system[2] that aims to provide 'proximity of staff to students, teaching methods centred on the idea of learning as a partnership, and students receiving personal attention from staff'[3]. • personal tutoring effectiveness derives from features of the tutoring scheme like, how often tutors meet with tutees, how meetings are initiated, what records of meetings are kept, whether meetings run individually or in groups, and what meetings are for[4]. As part of this activity, we will: • make personal tutoring a universal offer across BNU and will develop a framework and policy for its delivery for quality assurance purposes and parity of student experience.
IS3	**Mental health and wellbeing support**		Evidence on mental health support and its impact on students suggests that:

Targeted Student Support	**Scope:** **Target**: All students. **What is it?** Counselling service for students based on self-referral for one session at a time or a block of six sessions.	[1] OfS. 2019. Mental health: Are all students being properly supported? Insight 5. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3986/insight-brief-mental-health-are-all-students-being-properly-supported.pdf [2] OfS. 2023. Meeting the mental health needs of students. Insight 20. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/8812/insight-brief-20-meeting-the-mental-health-needs-of-students.pdf [3] OfS. 2019. Access and participation data analysis. Students with reported mental health conditions. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3978/access-and-participation-data-analysis.pdf [4] Worsley, J., A. Pennington & R. Corcoran. 2020. What interventions improve college and university students' mental health and wellbeing? A review of review-level evidence. National Grey Literature Collection: 1-54. https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Student-mental-health-full-review.pdf	• reporting of mental health conditions among the full-time student population in England increases steadily[1,2], and students with mental health conditions tend to experience lower continuation, completion, attainment, and progression rates[2,3]. • approaches related to counselling and central provision of support with mental health and wellbeing that are effective include mindfulness-based interventions, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), and interventions delivered via technology[4,5]; CBT-related interventions are sustained over time[5].
IS3 Targeted Student Support	**Students Union Advice Centre** **Scope:** **Target**: All students. **What is it?** Designated advice and support service provided by the Union in a range of student experience areas, from accommodation and finances to on-course learning, legal advice, and personal issues.	[5] Worsley J.D., A. Pennington & R. Corcoran. 2022. Supporting mental health and wellbeing of university and college students: A systematic review of review-level evidence of interventions. PLoS ONE 17(7): e0266725. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0266725 [6] McVitty, D. 2024. It is not sustainable to expect universities to offer specialist mental health support. WonkHE. https://wonkhe.com/blogs/it-is-not-sustainable-to-expect-universities-to-offer-specialist-mental-health-support/ [7] Hughes, G. & L. Spanner. 2019. The University Mental Health Charter. Leeds: Student Minds. https://www.studentminds.org.uk/uploads/3/7/8/4/3784584/191208_umhc_artwork.pdf [8] Hughes, G. & L. Spanner. 2019. The University Mental Health Charter. Principles of good practice. https://www.studentminds.org.uk/uploads/3/7/8/4/3784584/191202_summary_leaflet_01.pdf [9] Wavehill. 2022. What Works in Supporting Student Mental Health. Final Report to the Office for Students. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/7584/evaluation-of-the-mhcc-what-works.pdf [10] Lister, K. & Z. Allman. 2024. Embedding mental wellbeing in the curriculum: a collaborative definition and suite of examples in practice. Front. Educ. 8:1157614. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1157614 [11] Thomson, LJ. & H.J. Chaterjee. 2013. UCL Creative Wellbeing Measures. UCL. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/biosciences/culture-nature-health-research/ucl-creative-wellbeing-measures [12] Allman, Z. 2022. What good looks like in embedding mental health support across HE. WonkHE. https://wonkhe.com/blogs/what-good-looks-like-in-embedding-mental-health-support-across-he/	• psychoeducational interventions have been found least effective[5]. • embedding preventative measures into curricula is likely to be more effective than offering more mental health support[6]. • Student Minds' University Mental Health Charter framework synthesises the good practice from the UK HE sector in supporting mental health and wellbeing in institutional support services, student social environment (e.g., accommodation), and in the academic environment, with a focus on transitioning to HE study and embeddedness into teaching, learning, and assessment[7,8]. • curricular embedding of awareness and practices for mental health and other types of support can take different forms, from designated sessions or workshops (e.g., the SITUATE initiative at the University of Sussex) and advisory groups and specialists to lead curricular change (e.g., the University of Nottingham project on developing guidance on good practice in intervening around student mental health), to using student mental health analytics for predictive modelling of risk and targeting of at-risk students (e.g., the Northumbria University mental health analytics platform)[9].
IS3 Targeted Student Support	**Disabled learner diagnostic and support** **Scope:**		

	Target: All students. **What is it?**	[13]Dubber, J. 2024. Doin' it for themselves: how empowering and supporting students' unions is key to tackling challenges facing students. *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education*, *28*(3), pp. 132–140. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603108.2024.2311916 [14]Dickinson, J. 2019. Do students' unions make a difference? WonkHE. https://wonkhe.com/blogs/do-students-unions-make-a-difference/
IS3 Targeted Student Support	**Student Learning and Achievement** **Scope:** **Target**: BTEC/Level 3 entrants. **What is it?** A programme of learning support activities including, e.g., writing cafes, assignment prep drop-ins, advice on developing academic skills.	[15]Safer, A., L. Farmer & B. Song. 2020. Quantifying Difficulties of University Students with Disabilities. Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, v33, n1, pp. 5-21. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1273641.pdf [16]Policar, L., T. Crawford & V. Alligood. 2017. Accessibility Benefits of E-Learning for Students with Disabilities. Disabled World. www.disabled-world.com/disability/education/postsecondary/e-learning.php [17]Verdinelli, S., & D. Kutner. 2016. Persistence factors among online graduate students with disabilities. Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 9(4), 353–368. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039791 [18]Djenana, J. 2016. Post-secondary students with disabilities and digital learning: What do we know about their lived experiences? Conference: E-Learn: World Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, and Higher Education 2016At: Washington, DCVolume: Proceedings of E-Learn: World Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, and Higher Education 2016, pp. 997-1001. https://tinyurl.com/3j2w5hzb [19]Hubble, S. & P. Bolton. 2021. Support for disabled students in higher education in England. Briefing Paper. House of Commons. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8716/CBP-8716.pdf [20]TASO. 2023. What works to reduce equality gaps for disabled students. Summary Report. https://taso.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/TASO-report-what-works-to-reduce-equality-gaps-for-disabled-students.pdf
IS3 Targeted Student Support	**The Calling Project** **Scope**: **Target**: Level 4 students. **What is it?** Check-in point and a feedback and advice/support opportunity for all	[21] Williams, M., E. Pollard, J. Langley, A.-M. Houghton & J. Zozimo. 2017. Hefce. https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/30436/1/modelsofsupport.pdf [22]Thomas, L. 2012. Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: a summary of findings and recommendations from the What Works? Student Retention & Success programme Summary Report. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-Summary-report.pdf [23]Checkoway, B. 2018. Inside The Gates: First-Generation Students Finding Their Way. Higher Education Studies, Vol 8(3). https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v8n3p72 [24]Rosenthal, R. 2010. Pygmalion Effect. In The Corsini Encyclopedia of Psychology (eds I.B. Weiner and W.E. Craighead). https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470479216.corpsy0761 [25]Bailey, R. 2018. Student writing and academic literacy development at university. Journal of Learning and Student Experience, Vol.1: Article 7. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/301021821.pdf

- partnering with students and enabling their leadership of curricular reform in the context of support provision, raising awareness, and self-advocacy, is very effective and can help destigmatise help seeking and reporting of mental health and other kinds of challenges by certain student groups[9], many of which (e.g., mature students, students from lower economic background, Global Majority students) are likely to experience higher attrition due to lower rates of presenting to and engagement with available support, e.g., mental health support[2].
- sector-wide frameworks, e.g., the Mental Wellbeing Embeddedness Framework[10], and established toolkits for reviewing and embedding wellbeing into curricula[11] and the wider student experience help guide the development of a whole-institution approach[12].

Evidence on the effect of supporting and advising students by Student Unions (SUs) suggests that:
- SU support, advisory, and representation activities can be effective at enhancing student mental health, belonging, and engagement[13].
- Students engaging in SU activities are twice as likely to feel supported and to feel as part of a community with staff and other students; 92% of students who rate their SU highly are also confident about their studies and degree, compared to just 66% of the students who do not rate their SU highly[14].

Evidence on effects and effectiveness of disability support in higher education suggest that:
- The support provided to students with disability can have profound effect on their continuation and attainment[15], e.g.,

	Level 4's to ask questions and seek advice and support during the Christmas break between the Autumn and Spring terms.	[26]Thomas, Liz. 2020. Excellent Outcomes for All Students: A Whole System Approach to Widening Participation and Student Success in England. Student Success. Special Issue: Enabling Excellence through Equity. Vol. 11 (1). https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2101-0067
		
		[27]Gilani, D., R. Parke & N. Wilson. 2022. Peer-to-Peer Phone Calls as a Method of Providing Proactive and Personalised Support to Enhance Student Engagement. Student Engagement in Higher Education Journal, 4(2), pp. 82–104. https://sehej.raise-network.com/raise/article/view/1068
			provision of support as early as in the first semester/term of study affects positively the continuation of disabled students.
			   o hearing impairment students, regardless of provision of interpretative support, as well as students with ASD, tend to have lower attainment.
			   o STEM students with disability have lower attainment and continuation rates (although, that seems to apply generally to STEM students, so may not be related to disability).
			   o Ethnically minoritised students with disability may be less likely to do as well (and/or take up available support) as their white comparator group, so culturally responsive support and teaching may be necessary.
			   o male students with disability are also less likely to take up support and may need more encouragement to do so.
			• related to IS2, Activity 1, flexible learning via online teaching removes physical barriers for students with particular disabilities[16] and provides disabled students with more time to complete assessments[17] and more control over their learning, scheduling, pacing, and course navigation[18].
			• many eligible students do not know of the existence of the disability financial support (Disability Allowance Support, DSA), and only about 40% of such students have heard of DSA before entering university[19], which necessitates raising student awareness of DSA and diagnosing eligible conditions for DSA at the pre-enrolment, enrolment, or induction stages in HE[20,21].
			
			Evidence on the effect of providing targeted support with learning and wider academic skills suggests that:

			• insufficient support with relevant skills development during the first year of study in HE impacts negatively on the continuation and attainment of disadvantaged students[22]. • lack of awareness of the 'hidden curriculum' and academic conventions in HE, low confidence and imposter syndrome, student perception that their tutors have low expectations of them, which exacerbates the lack in self-belief, all contribute to negative on-course outcomes for disadvantaged students[23,24]. • embedding academic skills into curricula from Year 1 and having academic staff and skills specialist collaborate in supporting students to develop the skills appears the most effective approach to supporting the development of academic and learning skills[25]. • making skills support accessible and signposted throughout the student journey has a strong impact on student self-efficacy around time-management, reflection, and asking for help[26]. • using different communication channels, e.g., phone calls, to check in on students, particularly disengaged ones, can help re-engaged them; peer-to-peer supportive phone call interventions have been shown to work, and multiple call interventions over an academic year appear to work better than single call ones[27]. As part of these activities, we will: • expand our provision of mental health and wellbeing counselling through the introduction of a self-referral booking system • continue our support and funding to the SU at BNU for providing information, guidance, and advice to students.

			• enhance our provision of information, guidance, and activities around diagnosing disability early on in the student journey, encouraging students to self-report disability, helping them develop self-advocacy skills, and supporting them with applying for DSA. • embed wrap-around support for our students with key academic skills at the right points of the student journey. • continue to deliver, and evaluate the impact of our Calling Project, via which we provide students with a check point for their academic performance and needs.

IS3
Targeted Student Support
	Financial Support and the Big Deal
	
	A package of financial and other cost-of-living related support, including:
	• bursaries, hardship funds, one-off learning resource fund for all students.
	• the Student Union's Big Deal programme with its free events, training, and societies offer and provision of free food
		[1] TASO. 2023. Financial support (post-entry). https://taso.org.uk/intervention/financial-support-post-entry/
		
		[2]OfS. 2020. Understanding the impact of the financial support evaluation toolkit: Analysis and findings. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/474c9580-e99a-4d24-a490-3474e85ae199/financial-support-evaluation-report-2016-17-2017-18.pdf
		
		[3]Harrison , N., S. Davies, R. Harris & R. Waller. 2018. Access, participation and capabilities: theorising the contribution of university bursaries to students' wellbeing, flourishing and success. Cambridge Journal of Education. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2017.1401586
		
		[4]Hordosy, R., T. Clark & D. Vickers. 2018. Lower income students and the 'double deficit' of part-time work: Undergraduate experiences of finance, studying, and employability. Journal of Education and Work 31(4), pp. 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2018.1498068
		
		[5]Thomas, L. 2012. Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: a summary of findings and recommendations from the What Works? Student Retention & Success
			Evidence on the effect of financial support on disadvantaged student groups suggests that:
			receipt of financial support (grants, bursaries, scholarships, and fee-waivers) increases continuation and completion[1] and can close continuation gaps for disadvantaged students[2].
			positive effect of financial support on attainment (good degree outcome) is less evident[1].
			receipt of financial support also:
			   o increases recipient capacity to focus on their studies[3].
			   o Improves social life[3].
			   o helps build a social network[3].
			   o Increases recipient's self-esteem[3].
			   o reduces the need for working in term time[4].
			   o increases sense of belonging and mattering[5,6].
			• means-based financial support is more effective than merit-based support, particularly for disadvantaged students[7].
			• bursaries especially help increase continuation of disadvantaged students[8].
			• students eligible for means-based support may not receive it because their household income has not been officially assessed (meaning they miss out also

| | | and other products on campus.
• Laptop loan scheme and DSA laptop assistance.
• Student-facing workshops on budgeting and managing personal finances. | programme Summary Report. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-Summary-report.pdf

[6]Clark, T., & R. Hordósy, 2019. Social Identification, Widening Participation and Higher Education: Experiencing Similarity and Difference in an English Red Brick University. Sociological Research Online, 24(3), 353–369. https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780418811971

[7]Herbaut , E. & K. M. Geven. 2019. What Works to Reduce Inequalities in Higher Education? A Systematic Review of the (Quasi)Experimental Literature on Outreach and Financial Aid Policy Research Working Papers. https://doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-8802

[8]Murphy, R. & G. Wyness. 2015. Testing Means-Tested Aid. CEP Discussion Paper No 1396, Centre for Economic Performance. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/35438856.pdf

[9]Harrison, N. & R. Waller. 2017. Success and Impact in Widening Participation Policy: What Works and How Do We Know? Higher Education Policy 30(2), pp. 141-160. https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1057/s41307-016-0020-x.pdf

[10]Moores, E. & A P. Burgess. 2023. Financial support differentially aids retention of students from households with lower incomes: a UK case study, Studies in Higher Education. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2022.2125950

[11]Kaye, N. 2021. Evaluating the role of bursaries in widening participation in higher education: a review of the literature and evidence, Educational Review, 73:6. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2020.1787954 | on a maintenance grant) and/or because they find navigating the bursary application process difficult to navigate; that increases their risk of dropping out[10].
• adopting an effective method for identifying students at a greater risk and therefore in greater need of financial support is necessary for the overall effectiveness of the financial support provision[11].

As part of this activity, we will:
• continue to provide a wide range of financial support.
• review eligibility criteria and application process.
• embed student facing workshops on managing personal finances and budgeting. |
| IS3 | **Targeted mentoring** | | | Evidence on the effect of peer tutoring and mentoring suggests that: |

| Targeted Student Support | **Scope:** mentoring schemes in the schools of Business and Law, Human and Social Sciences, Creative and Digital Industries; reverse mentoring.

Target: Care leaver, Foundation Year students, BAME students, and disabled students.

What is it?
Mentoring schemes for, e.g., care leavers (1:1 mentoring, 5 face-to-face sessions between November and May every year), PAL (Peer Assisted Learning) for Foundation Year students, module mentoring schemes for Level 4 students, reverse mentoring by target group students of members of the Executive. | [1]TASO. 2024. Mentoring, counselling, coaching and role models (post-entry). https://taso.org.uk/intervention/mentoring-counselling-role-models-post-entry/

[2]Dekker, I., M. Luberti & J. Stam. 2023. Effects of supplemental instruction on grades, mental well-being, and belonging: A field experiment. Learning and Instruction, 87. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2023.101805
[3]Black, F. M. & J. MacKenzie. 2008. Peer support in the first year. The QAA. https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/11603/1/peer-support-in-the-first-year-1.pdf

[4]Paloyo, A. R., S. Rogan & P.M. Siminski. 2016. The effect of supplemental instruction on academic performance: An encouragement design experiment. Economics of Education Review, 55, pp. 57-69. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2016.08.005

[5]Ody, M. & W. Carey. 2009. Demystifying Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS): What...? How...? Who...? Why...? In: In: The challenge of learning development, 6th LDHEN symposium, Bournemouth. https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=7418

[6]Dawson, P., J. Van der Meer, J. Skalicky & K. Cowley. 2014. On the effectiveness of supplemental instruction: A systematic review of supplemental instruction and peer-assisted study sessions literature between 2001 and 2010. Review of Educational Research, 84, pp. 609–639. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654314540007

[7]Miller, V., E. Oldfield & M. Bulmer. 2012. Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) in first year chemistry and statistics courses: insights and evaluations. Paper presented at the Proceedings of The Australian Conference on Science and Mathematics Education. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/229409498.pdf | peer tutoring (PAL, or peer-assisted learning; PASS, peer-assisted study sessions) and peer mentoring support student continuation and completion of tutees and mentees[1]; evidence for effect on attainment is less strong, although see[2]. Other benefits for tutees include improved transition, making friends, developing learning skills for HE, better understanding of course content[3,4]; tutors benefit from revising course material, increased interaction with staff, developing leadership skills, and improved employment prospects[5]. First year ethnically minoritised students, students from lower socio-economic status (e.g., IMD Quintiles 1 and 2, Free School Meal eligible students, care leaver/care experienced students) and mature students are the most common target groups with positive impact from engaging in peer tutoring and mentoring[1]. PAL and PASS provide academic support and can work well 1:1 or in small groups (6-12 tutees)[6,7], one or more tutors, in-person or online, with some evidence that online peer schemes may be more effective at supporting development of cognitive skills[8,9]. peer mentoring can provide pastoral, social, and emotional support, career and professional development support, and role modelling[10]; it can be very effective during transitioning, to raise belonging[11], and benefits mentees also in terms of personal development, stress reduction, and increases in self-efficacy and agency[12,13,14]. opt-out[9], structured[15], synchronous (in-person or online), more frequent contact with the tutor or mentor[16], matching of tutees and mentees to tutors and mentors by sociodemographic characteristics[17], |

[8]Topping, K. J. 2023. Advantages and Disadvantages of Online and Face-to-Face Peer Learning in Higher Education: A Review. Education Sciences, 13(4), Article 326. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13040326

[9]Andrews, J. & R. Clarke. 2011. Peer Mentoring Works! How Peer Mentoring Enhances Student Success in Higher Education. Engineering Education Research Group, Aston University, Birmingham. https://research.aston.ac.uk/files/2875614/Peer_mentoring_works.pdf

[10]Jacobi, M. 1991. Mentoring and Undergraduate Academic Success: A Literature Review. Review of Educational Research. 61(4), pp. 503-532. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543061004505

[11]Teshera-Levye, J. & H.D. Vance-Chalcraft. 2024. Peer mentorship and academic supports build sense of community and improve outcomes for transfer students. J Microbiol Biol Educ. 25:e00163-23. https://doi.org/10.1128/jmbe.00163-23

[12]Budge, S. 2006. Peer Mentoring in Postsecondary Education: Implications for Research and Practice. Journal of College Reading and Learning, 37(1), pp. 71–85. https://doi.org/10.1080/10790195.2006.10850194

[13]Hall, R. & Z. Jaugietis. 2011. Developing Peer Mentoring through Evaluation. Innov High Educ 36, pp. 41–52. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-010-9156-6

[14]Akinla, O., P. Hagan & W. Atiomo. 2018. A systematic review of the literature describing the outcomes of near-peer mentoring programs for first year medical students. BMC Med Educ 18, 98. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-018-1195-1

[15] TASO. 2023. Understanding online mentoring delivered as part of multi-intervention outreach programmes.

and training of tutors and mentees in teaching methods[18], are all recommended for higher effectiveness.

- reverse mentoring, where senior leadership of an HE provider are matched to student mentors from specific target groups, supports acquiring insights into the student mentor's lived experience and barriers to participation in HE[19]; greater senior leader awareness of challenges experienced by students and associated refinement of institutional policies are some of the benefits[20].

As part of this activity, we will:
- continue to provide and expand across schools, programmes, and modules mentoring and PAL schemes aimed at target student groups.
- Introduce a reverse mentoring scheme.

https://s33320.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/TASO-Report-%E2%80%93-Understanding-online-mentoring-delivered-as-part-of-multi-intervention-outreach-programmes.pdf

[16]Garcia-Melgar, A., J. East & N. Meyers. 2015. Hiding in plain sight: The 'relationship' in peerassisted learning in higher education. Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education, Special Edition Academic Peer Learning. https://doi.org/10.47408/jldhe.v0i0.361

[17]Reddick, R.J. & K.O. Pritchett, K.O. 2015. 'I don't want to work in a world of Whiteness:' White faculty and their mentoring relationships with Black students. The Journal of the Professoriate, 54–84. https://caarpweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/8-1_Reddick_p54.pdf

[18]Lewis, M. & L. Ritchie. 2010. Evaluation of the South Yorkshire Aimhigher Associates programme 2009–2010. Sheffield: Aimhigher South Yorkshire. https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/13175/1/11_35.pdf

[19]Foster, M. 2023. How reverse mentoring helps co-create institutional knowledge. Times Higher Education. https://www.timeshighereducation.com/campus/how-reverse-mentoring-helps-cocreate-institutional-knowledge

[20]Peterson, C. & D. Ramsey. 2020. Reducing the gap! Reciprocal mentoring between Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students and senior leaders at the University of Gloucestershire, Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education, 25:1, 34-39. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603108.2020.1738583

IS4 Authentic Employability Development through Universal Placements	**Pre-enrolment diagnostic and response** **Scope:** **Target**: All students. **What is it?**	[1]TASO. 2024. Information, advice and guidance for employment and employability (post-HE). https://taso.org.uk/intervention/information-advice-and-guidance-for-employment-and-employability-post-he/ [2]TASO. 2024. Technology-based solutions to improve employability / employment outcomes (post-HE). https://taso.org.uk/intervention/technology-based-solutions-to-improve-employability-employment-outcomes-post-he/ [3]TASO. 2024. Teaching employability skills (post-HE). https://taso.org.uk/intervention/teaching-employability-skills-post-he/	Evidence on the effect of providing students with developing employability skills and career readiness support suggests that: - career counselling, expert and industry speaker talks, provision of work opportunities (placements, internships), simulators of, e.g., work experience or CV writing, and teaching and workplace learning of employability skills, are all examples of support that may benefit the development of competencies and potentially also, progression outcomes[1,2,3]. - placements generally have a (small) positive effect on progression outcomes, with graduates who completed placements during UG study finding employment quicker and changing perception of their self-efficacy (confidence), knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards work, specific careers, and their academic programme[4]. - Placements associate also with better academic performance in the final year of UG studies, higher starting salary[5], and overall higher earning potential than non-placement students[6]. - Students from disadvantaged groups may benefit the most from participating in placements[7].
	Careers Advice and Support **Scope:** **Target**: All students. **What is it?** A range of advice and support with career readiness; may include - bookable online or face-to-face appointments with careers adviser. - career skills sessions online or face-to-face.	[4]Inceoglu, I., E. Selenko, A. McDowall & S. Schlachter. 2019. (How) Do work placements work? Scrutinizing the quantitative evidence for a theory-driven future research agenda. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 110(B), pp. 317-337. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.09.002. [5]Brooks, R. & L. Youngson. 2016. Undergraduate work placements: an analysis of the effects on career progression. Studies in Higher Education, 41(9, pp. 1563-1578. http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/28982/ [6]Delis, A. & C. Jones. 2023. The impact of work placements on graduate earnings. Studies in Higher Education, 48(11), pp. 1708–1723. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2023.2211999 [7]Rolland, S. A., J.W. Jones & G. Bunting. 2023. The impact of a year in industry on academic outcomes in higher education (engineering). European Journal of Engineering Education, 48(4), pp. 747–760. https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2023.2194244	As part of the activities in this Intervention Strategy, we will: - implement an evaluation approach of employability skills development by our students from pre-enrolment to graduation. - provide career advice and support through in-person or virtual sessions with our career advisers, and via our online careers and employability platforms. - provide work-based learning, social capital development, and networking with employers through mandatory placements for all students and career fairs.
	Careers Online **Scope:**		

	Target: All students. **What is it?** A range of online resources to support student career development and management, and to access jobs and work experience, e.g.: • Handshake, our mobile careers portal. • BNU Future website providing careers information and resources, including on our industry partners, and more than 700 internships, placements, and graduate jobs. • partnership from 2024-25 with Employability, an inclusion charity that can provide online and in-		• embed employability skills into our curricula through 'Opportunities' modules that align with our graduate attributes. • Provide co-curricular opportunities to develop employability skills like leadership through activities run by our Student Union, e.g., Leadership Academy.

	person staff and student development in inclusivity in the work place and disability related legal rights, as well as tailored careers support to our disabled and neurodivergent students.		
	Employability in the Curriculum and Enrichment **Scope:** **Target**: All students. **What is it?** Personal development modules embedded into most of our programmes and focused on the development of skills aligned with BNU Graduate Attributes, e.g., critical thinking, digital skills, problem solving, innovation, collaboration,		

resilience, leadership, social responsibility, ethics, and empathy.	
Leadership Academy **Scope:** **Target**: All students. **What is it?**	
The BUCKS Award **Scope:** **Target**: All students. **What is it?**	
STRIVE Festival (run by the SU) **Scope:** **Target**: All students. **What is it?** An annual event aimed at showcasing and networking with employers, and activities like careers talks, e.g., on self-employment, careers workshops, e.g., on CV	

	writing, and wellbeing sessions, e.g., on resilience.		
	Whole-Institution Approach to Placements & Support **Scope:** **Target**: All students. **What is it?**		

IS5
Partner support and development strategy
	Scope:
	
	Target: All Franchised students.
	
	What is it?
	Strategic support of BNU franchised partners with on-course improvement of student outcomes via data sharing, data analysis, shared professional development, innovation, and governance initiatives, regular review of student support (e.g., financial support), as well as engagement with key external
		[1]Braisby, N., I. Harper & D. Page. 2024. What is wrong with franchise provision? HEPI Debate Paper 36. https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/What-is-wrong-with-franchise-provision.pdf
		
		[2]EPI. 2021. The effects of high-quality professional development on teachers and students: A cost-benefit analysis. https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/the-effects-of-high-qualityprofessional-development-on-teachers-and-students/
		
		[3]The Sutton Trust. 2014. What makes great teaching?. https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/great-teaching/
		
		[4]Thomas, J. 2022. Create Aspire Transform: How can Creative Professional Development (CPD) support Creative Cultural Learning in schools? Int J Art Des Educ, 41, pp. 125-141. https://doi.org/10.1111/jade.12396
			Evidence indicates that:
			    differences in outcomes between parent and franchised provisions are common, and steps towards more equitable outcomes include strategic alignment, introducing an Ofsted style quality inspection and a risk register, and exchange of good practice with other franchisers[1].
			    sharing professional development as part of partnership can be beneficial for student aspiration and attainment raising[2,3,4].
			
			As part of this Intervention Strategy, we:
			• have already introduced an Ofsted-style quality inspection regime.
			• are negotiating closer alignment of strategic oversight of provision with our partners.
			• will introduce closer data sharing and providing data analysis on franchised on-course student outcomes to all partners.
			• will develop shared professional development activities with our partners.

	stakeholders such as TASO, SEER, the Brilliant Club and Uni Connect.		

Fees, investments and targets
2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Buckinghamshire New University

Provider UKPRN: 10000975

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	Distance learning mode	N/A	8110
First degree	Taught mode	N/A	9250
Foundation degree		N/A	9250
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree		N/A	11100
Sandwich year		N/A	1850
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
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	Dancebox Theatre Works	10084951	9250
First degree	David Game College Ltd	10015688	9250
First degree	London School of Commerce & IT Limited	10023434	9250
First degree	London School of Science & Technology Limited	10008362	9250
First degree	Mont Rose College of Management and Sciences Limited	10023777	9250
First degree	Newbury College	10004596	9250
First degree	Oxford Business College UK Limited	10020439	9250
First degree	RTC Education Ltd	10008455	9250
First degree	Unknown - RH CAST. Awaiting UKPRN. Company Number provided in lieu.	13750076	9250
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
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	Air Transport	N/A	5300
First degree	Aviation and Security	N/A	3835
First degree	Building & Constuction	N/A	5730
First degree	Civil Engineering	N/A	4625
First degree	Engineering	N/A	6935
First degree	Orgnaisational Resilience	N/A	3790
First degree	Social Science and Tourism	N/A	5370
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	Aylesbury College	10000473	6935
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Buckinghamshire New University

Provider UKPRN: 10000975

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	£197,000	£201,000	£206,000	£210,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£1,012,000	£1,012,000	£1,012,000	£1,012,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£214,000	£220,000	£227,000	£234,000

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 (£)	£85,000	£87,000	£90,000	£92,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£112,000	£114,000	£116,000	£118,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	**Total access investment (£)**	**£197,000**	**£201,000**	**£206,000**	**£210,000**
Access activity investment	*Total access investment (as % of HFI)*	*0.4%*	*0.4%*	*0.5%*	*0.5%*
Access activity investment	**Total access investment funded from HFI (£)**	**£158,000**	**£162,000**	**£167,000**	**£171,000**
Access activity investment	**Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)**	**£0**	**£0**	**£0**	**£0**
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£212,000	£212,000	£212,000	£212,000
Financial support investment	**Total financial support investment (£)**	**£1,012,000**	**£1,012,000**	**£1,012,000**	**£1,012,000**
Financial support investment	*Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)*	*2.3%*	*2.2%*	*2.3%*	*2.3%*
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£214,000	£220,000	£227,000	£234,000
Research and evaluation investment	*Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)*	*0.5%*	*0.5%*	*0.5%*	*0.5%*

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Buckinghamshire New University

Provider UKPRN: 10000975

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
	PTA_1														
	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 support continuation for Black students, aiming to eliminate the gap in continuation between these students and their white peers by 2032-33.	PTS_1	Continuation	Ethnicity	Black	White	Baseline is 4-year aggregate (2018-19 to 2021-22).	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	5.6	5.5	5	4.5	3.5
To support continuation for Asian students, aiming to eliminate the gap in continuation between these students and their white peers by 2032-33.	PTS_2	Continuation	Ethnicity	Asian	White	Baseline is 4-year aggregate (2018-19 to 2021-22).	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	6.3	6	5.5	5	4
To support continuation for students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintile 1), aiming to eliminate the gap in continuation between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2032-33.	PTS_3	Continuation	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1	IMD quintile 5	Baseline is 4-year aggregate (2018-19 to 2021-22).	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	4.8	4.5	4	3.5	2.5
To support completion for students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 and 2), aiming to eliminate the gap in completion between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1 and Q2, aggregate) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), by 2034-35.	PTS_4	Completion	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 5	Baseline is 4-year aggregate (2015-16 to 2018-19).	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	9.3	9	8.5	8	7.3
To support completion for Asian students, aiming to eliminate the gap in completion between these students and their white peers, by 2034-35.	PTS_5	Completion	Ethnicity	Asian	White	Baseline is 4-year aggregate (2015-16 to 2018-19).	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	8.8	8.4	8	7.5	6
To support attainment (achievement of a First or 2:1 degree award) for students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintile 1), achieving a reduction in the gap in attainment between the most disadvantaged students (IMD Q1) and their more affluent peers (IMD Q5), aiming to halve the gap by 2032-33.	PTS_6	Attainment	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1	IMD quintile 5	Baseline is 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23).	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	29.4	28.5	26.5	24	21

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 support attainment (achievement of a First or 2:1 degree award) for Black students, aiming to eliminate the gap in attainment between these students and their white peers by 2033-34.	PTS_7	Attainment	Ethnicity	Black	White	Baseline is 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23).	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	8.4	8	7.5	7	6
To support attainment (achievement of a First or 2:1 degree award) for Asian students, aiming to halve the gap in attainment between these students and their white peers by 2032-33.	PTS_8	Attainment	Ethnicity	Asian	White	Baseline is 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23).	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	17.3	16.8	16	15	14
To support attainment (achievement of a First or 2:1 degree award) for mature (21 years and over) students, achieving a reduction in the gap in attainment between mature and young students, aiming to halve the gap by 2032-33.	PTS_9	Attainment	Age	Mature (over 21)	Young (under 21)	Baseline is 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23).	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	17.3	16.8	16	15	14
	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
	PTP_1														
	PTP_2														
	PTP_3														
	PTP_4														
	PTP_5														
	PTP_6														
	PTP_7														
	PTP_8														
	PTP_9														
	PTP_10														
	PTP_11														
	PTP_12														