



UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON

ACCESS AGREEMENT

2018-19 Entrants

(as at June 2017)

These Access Agreement proposals are based on information and guidance available in June 2017. We reserve the right to submit a revised Access Agreement in the light of emerging details or other changes.

1. The University of Wolverhampton Strategy

INTRODUCTION:

Strategic Plan

The University of Wolverhampton has developed a new strategic plan which was referenced in our Access Agreement for 2017-18. The new strategic plan covers the period 2016-2021 and sets out our **mission** as: *Maximising opportunity through generating knowledge, innovation and enterprise.*

The University's **vision** is: *to be a progressive and influential sector leader, championing diversity, growth, and creating life chances for all while enhancing economic impact and accelerating ambition across the entire University community.*

We are proud of our long heritage of providing wide-ranging educational opportunities to the communities that we serve and making a significant contribution to the West Midlands economy. In recognition of our history and transformative ethos we have predicated the quality and characteristics of the University's work across three broad pillars of endeavour as follows:

- Students First
- Skills and Knowledge for Economic and Social Transformation
- Significant Influence and Impact

The University of Wolverhampton has established a national reputation for widening participation and is committed to increasing access to higher education for students from under-represented groups. The task of widening participation is a complex one that is enhanced by working with a range of partners who also share this objective. A collaborative approach has been taken to widening access to higher education in recognition that learners are also engaged by other organisations and that we need to work closely with them in order to support increased rates of student progression especially from areas of traditionally low participation in higher education, for example white working class communities.

Two key challenges for the University of Wolverhampton are:

1. **To continue to grow our overall student numbers;** maintaining our overall widening participation profile and working to identify and tackle the causes of under-representation amongst specific groups.
2. **To continue to improve the outcomes for all students** (in terms of academic progression, success and graduate employment) and to ensure that any disparities in attainment and outcomes between identified groups are eliminated.

Sponsorship of Schools

The University of Wolverhampton has been heavily involved in supporting a wide range of developmental arrangements with schools and colleges for a number of years. This has increasingly involved a deepening of the relationship and we now currently sponsor University Technical Colleges, primary schools and secondary schools. This more intensive and involved relationship with schools has enabled the University to play a pivotal role in working with schools to enhance pupil attainment and thereby improve rates of progression to higher education.

Our school sponsorship programme has grown consistently over the last four years. We currently sponsor, or co-sponsor, 17 schools. We aim to consolidate this and to grow responsibly in the future.

Outreach with Young Learners and Working with Families

We recognise the importance of tackling aspirations at young ages, for example primary school level, and through successive activities that reinforce key messages about higher education over time. This approach takes into account the significant roles of parents and families in influencing the decision-making of young people.

‘Significant others’ can motivate and encourage, but can also constrain aspirations and narrow the perception of choices through lack of awareness, or understanding of, the opportunities and possibilities that young people could consider. The attitude that higher education “isn’t for the likes of us” is too prevalent within certain communities within the West Midlands region and raises a further barrier to aspiration, confidence and self-belief. The University aims to transform attitudes such as these and foster a positive appreciation of the role of higher education.

We seek to transform attitudes by encouraging parents and families across our communities to perceive higher education as a realistic possibility for their young people and also for learners who are mature and from divergent social and economic backgrounds. Direct contact with higher education and positive experiences of higher education environments, supported by the appropriate use of role models, feature in the strategies that we use to ensure that our communities are better informed about higher education. Both the Primary to HE (P2HE) and the Black Country Children’s University initiatives are important strategies in this respect.

The University of Wolverhampton implemented a national research project as part of the NNCO programme that involved a survey and focus groups with learners (Years 9 to 13) from schools that have higher rates of progression to HE than would be predicted by their GCSE achievements: *‘Breaking Through the GCSE Barrier - An investigation of pupils in Years 9-13: including their educational experiences and aspirations for Higher Education study and career progression’*. The task here was to investigate what is working well to motivate students’ progression to HE. A full report is available, but amongst the different findings was highlighted the importance of universities working with families of pupils and their teachers to inform and raise awareness about higher education and to provide more experiences of HE amongst younger pupils.

Evaluation

The main targets and milestones are incorporated into the University’s Key Performance Indicator framework. These indicators are regularly reviewed by relevant University committees, including Academic Board and the Board of Governors, all of which include student representatives. Overall managerial responsibility for the Access Agreement lies with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Access and Lifelong Learning).

We recognise the importance of being able to measure the impact of initiatives and interventions, in order to be able to better target spend and activities. We have therefore implemented an extensive evaluation programme to be assured of the effectiveness of our widening participation activity that is being led with senior academic oversight. The University’s College of Learning and Teaching (CoLT) is leading our institutional approach to the evaluation of access and outreach work including the work that we are carrying out as part of the Aspire to HE (National Collaborative Outreach Programme).

CoLT is using an interpretative methodological approach using both quantitative and qualitative data to address the 'what works' questions. The overarching evaluation framework adopted for this purpose is that proposed by CFE Research for HEFCE in their report Student Opportunity outcomes framework research: in-depth study (2015). This comprises a series of logical chains between the elements and a series of metrics (indicator bank) for each evaluation area and questions or indicators to guide the evaluation process. Our focus on activities that already appear to be effective is consistent with appreciative enquiry and is likely therefore to yield findings that will allow us to highlight good practice. Whilst this evaluation is primarily focusing on the activities and initiatives as the units of analysis, we will also generate a small number of student case studies that will provide an evaluation of the influences on student decision making from the students' perspective. This approach is intended to reveal influences over the educational journey of individual WP students that might not otherwise emerge.

The University of Wolverhampton records data about its outreach and participants on the HEAT database. This is entered into the HEAT longitudinal tracking system which matches records on individual outreach participants to administrative datasets spanning Key Stage 2 data through to postgraduate study and employment. Tracking reports received from HEAT help the University to better understand the relationship between our outreach provision and the attainment and progression of disadvantaged young people. We are able to track student progression to any HEI, including this institution, so that we can assess the extent to which we are contributing to the increased participation rates of disadvantaged young people as a whole.

Individual members use the HEAT database to record outreach activity and can see where individuals have engaged in activities with more than one HEI. Collectively, this allows the central HEAT service to analyse the timing and combinations of activities that demonstrate most impact on enrolment in HE. As HEAT data begins to mature, it will enable the University to understand the relationship between outreach participation and HE enrolment, retention and success.

It takes time for data about young participants in outreach to mature to the point of understanding their patterns of enrolment in HE as well as their retention and success rates. In the meantime, the HEAT service has developed a model of matching a number of different administrative datasets to the HEAT database which will afford the University a better understanding of the relationship between outreach and key educational outcomes at both pre and post 16, before any enrolment takes place. The collective size and diversity of the database will mean this relationship can be explored against multiple participant characteristics, contributing to the University of Wolverhampton's and the sector's understanding of outcomes for different under-represented groups and recognising that widening participation students are not a homogenous group.

HEAT HESA track findings tells us that outreach participants who engage in a sustained programme of activities, including a campus visit, have higher rates of progression. Similarly, students who engage in outreach early in KS4 in a sustained programme are more likely to attain good GCSE results, evidence that outreach contributes to raising attainment. Sector research tells us that achieving good results at Key Stage 4 is the key determinant in progression to Higher Education and our programme of outreach addresses and responds to the challenges posed in helping to improve the academic attainment of our target schools and their disadvantaged students. HEAT track findings also show that outreach participants who have already completed degrees at their chosen Universities, 62% achieved a 1st class or Upper Second degree, in line with a figure of 61% nationally.

The University is an active participant in a range of collaborative networks that seek to share expertise and best practice. One example is our membership of the National Education Opportunities Network (NEON) which is the professional organisation for access to HE in England with over 60 Higher Education Institution (HEI) members. NEON is a member-based national vehicle developing collaborative relationships through professional development specifically focused on widening access to HE. Membership of NEON supports the University of Wolverhampton to improve the quality and range of its access work by being part of a collaborative national community of widening participation practice.

It is bringing about changes in behaviour that is the harder, but more relevant, test of the effectiveness of access and outreach activity. Our work on the NNCO programme enabled the University of Wolverhampton to conduct in-depth qualitative research with school pupils and deepen our understanding of what works. This included the GCSE research mentioned above but also an approach using 'Q methodology' (explained below).

The University of Wolverhampton's Institute of Education investigated the range of beliefs and views of young people participating in the interventions and activities provided by Explore University.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To identify the range of shared perspectives and disposition towards applying to university following participation in Explore University activities
2. To analyse these experiences/perspectives and draw inferences helpful to the task of enhancing Explore University strategies
3. To analyse expectations and strength of commitment to applying to university

Typically, post-project studies rely on questionnaire surveys and/or interviews to help the project team evaluate their work through the eyes of the participants. Unfortunately, although such methods are well-known and familiar to operate, they also have well-known disadvantages, with low levels of completion and lack of engagement in the process. To improve the level of engagement with the topic of choosing university, and probe deeply into the relationship between home, peers, school, and personal motivation, Explore University chose a less familiar research technique; Q-methodology.

Q-methodology has been around since the 1930s when it was developed as a means of gathering quantifiable data from highly subjective viewpoints (Brown, 1997). Q-methodology does not ask questions of participants, it offers them statements from a range designed to represent all those that are a possibility on the subject. The participants rank the statements in relation to one another, thereby encouraging serious thought about every choice and requiring the review of previous choices until they are satisfied that their rankings truly represent how they feel at that time.

National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) – Aspire to HE

The role of further education colleges in providing access to learning for many who have not had positive or successful experiences in education previously is well recognised. Many colleges also provide higher level learning and have established themselves as excellent providers of higher education programmes. They are therefore well placed to support learners progressing onto higher education. We have established a new 'Aspire to HE' Consortium with Black Country and Telford and Wrekin colleges as part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). The work of our NCOP initiative is planned to complement the University's wider access to higher education strategies and enhance local arrangements for pupils to progress in their learning to higher levels. This work will build on the successes of our National Network for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO) programme (see below) which ran in collaboration with a number of other HEIs. The evaluation strand for the Aspire to HE programme is led by the University's College of Learning and Teaching (CoLT)

and will incorporate experimental evaluation methods within its work, for example Randomised Control Trials (RCT). CoLT has been liaising with CFE Research about arrangements for implementing quantitative methods of evaluation within the Aspire to HE programme.

National Network for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO)

The University led on the recent National Network for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO) ***Explore University*** initiative which operated as a successful collaboration between the University of Wolverhampton and the universities of Keele, Staffordshire and Harper Adams. Explore University provided a Single Point of Contact (SPoC), including the development of a new website, for schools, colleges, pupils and parents/carers within the defined geographical areas. This SPoC service enabled a clear and simple way for these groups to access information about outreach activities offered by each HEI and a means to accessing bespoke support for their learners. The network offered this to all schools and colleges in the defined area but also had a widening participation remit in terms of prioritising certain schools/colleges and groups of learners. Activities offered under the programme included awareness and aspiration-raising.

Explore University successfully provided a SPoC via the co-ordinator and the website. All schools and colleges in the areas originally defined were contacted about the service and signposted to the website for information and details on activities open to them. The website also contained information describing general outreach activities such as open days and a range of information, links and resources for young people, parents/carers and teachers/advisors. The website continues to provide a signposting service for schools to help them find out about ongoing partner outreach activities and also information about the new NCOP schemes. It also contains a series of videos that have been produced by Explore University.

As previously noted, the activities provided by Explore University have been a combination of both awareness **and** aspiration-raising and were delivered either as a collaboration between two or more partners or solely by one partner. The range of activities included those listed below:

- campus tours with workshops and theatre performance
- workshops and presentations in-school and on campus as part of Explore University
- IAG days or wider school 'off timetable' days
- theatre performances arranged as part of wider school events
- summer school on campus
- subject based workshops on campus or on school site
- programmes of activity delivered over a number of weeks
- careers fairs with an Explore University stand providing information on HE opportunities

Increasing Social Mobility

We are pleased that there has been an increased national focus on under-represented and disadvantaged groups entering higher education and the ambitious social mobility goals announced by the Prime Minister (January 2016). We are working at the leading edge of promoting social mobility, enabling and contributing to individual life chances across our communities, and in many cases significantly exceeding benchmarks. We recognise that increasing the progression rate of target groups of learners to HE is a goal which must be accompanied by effective strategies to support their transition into their new study

environment. It is also important to provide effective academic and pastoral support in order to ensure that all students can realise their full potential and not be adversely affected by home background factors and other issues which are not inherently connected to students' capacity and ability to benefit from, and achieve in, HE.

Scholarships and Bursaries

We believe that scholarships and bursaries remain more relevant to the decision-making processes of students belonging to certain socioeconomic statuses (SES). A recent report by LKMco (*'The underrepresentation of white working class boys in higher education –the role of widening participation'*, 2017) cites literature that draws attention to the more utilitarian estimation of white working class boys when considering opportunities for educational progression. Fear of debt and concerns about the 'levels of return' on investment in HE participation remain considerations amongst white working class boys. Our own research also indicates that a more nuanced approach to scholarships and bursaries is required and that while such measures may not have universal appeal or relevance, targeted approaches can be regarded as having value and importance to certain cohorts of students.

We asked Progression Scholarship students what it meant to them to be awarded a scholarship. The majority felt proud of this achievement and pleased that their hard work had been acknowledged by their school or college. This acknowledgement provided motivation and confidence:

"The progression scholarship has shown me that my previous teachers believed in me and they acknowledge my hard work. This has given me a sense of achievement and has made me realise that I am capable of whatever I put my mind to. This scholarship means a lot to me as I feel more than capable of completing my course confidently to get me where I want to be in future years." - Childhood and Family Studies and Education student

"An encouragement to keep on seeking the best of my results." - Pharmaceutical Science student.

A number of students specifically commented on the financial aspect of the award:

"The Scholarship means a lot to me because it will really help me financially. I will be able to buy new books for my course without having to worry about financial problems." - Psychology student.

"When I was awarded the Progression Scholarship it meant that I was going in the right direction for my future and that all my hard work paid off. It also gives me money to expand my horizons and get equipment better suited to my chosen field." - Computer Games Design student

"I feel privileged to have been chosen for this scholarship. It means I can worry less about money and focus on my degree. In addition, I will be proud to have this on my CV in the future." - Social Care with Health Studies student

The University has established a project team to conduct a thorough review of the current financial support/scholarship packages within the current academic year.

2. Tuition Fees

For 2018-19 entrants the University's proposed standard tuition fee for home/EU students on full-time and sandwich undergraduate degree programmes, and the PGCE, will be £9250 plus eligible increases allowable in relation to the TEF. The proposed fee for Foundation

Degrees and HNC/D courses taught at the University will remain at £8250. Proposed tuition fees for full-time Foundation Degrees and HNC/Ds students taught in partner colleges will not exceed £6,000. The fee for 2018-19 entrants onto Foundation Year programmes will be £6,150 plus applied inflationary increases below the OFFA cap for courses below the higher level fees threshold, for example this is expected to be £6165 in 2017/18. There will be no tuition fee charged for sandwich year students or for study year abroad students.

The tuition fee for part-time students, whether University or College based, will not exceed £5850. This is an important Access measure as it provides an alternative route into higher education for any potential applicant who is deterred by higher tuition fees.

3. Access, retention and employability measures

The major expenditure incurred is in supporting a widening participation student base. Additionally, the University expects to spend at least 10% of its additional tuition fee income on more specific Access Agreement and related measures. Our activities will include, for example:

Long-Term Outreach (pre-entry) measures	
<p>Delivery of the Schools Engagement Strategy - An integrated overarching strategy approved by Governors in March 2014 with the following objectives:</p>	<p>To improve the performance of schools in our region;</p> <p>To contribute to economic growth of the region through raising skills levels.</p> <p>The strategy will be delivered via three levels of engagement for schools, covering activities such as academy sponsorship; initial teacher training and CPD (pedagogy and academic subject); progression agreements; bursaries; access to University facilities; outreach.</p> <p>We currently sponsor three secondary academies and two University Technical Colleges. Through the University Multi-Academy Trust we currently sponsor a further 10 primary academies.</p> <p>Delivery of the 'Right Track' progression framework of widening participation outreach activities for targeted students, including white working class boys.</p>
<p>Accessible Advice & Guidance:</p>	<p>We operate two dedicated high street advice and guidance centres for information to the community about study options and access to higher education –</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wolverhampton City Centre • Stafford Town Centre. <p>Advice and guidance is provided to students through the University Centre Telford regional learning base.</p> <p>Advice and guidance is also provided to target cohorts of learners in schools and colleges across the region and further afield.</p>
<p>Development and delivery of learning opportunities through regional learning centres:</p> <p>The Apprenticeship Hub and development/delivery of Degree Apprenticeships:</p>	<p>We are delivering lifelong learning opportunities at University Centre Telford. This is a partnership with Telford College of Arts & Technology, Telford and Wrekin Council and Future Focus (Local Authority Advice & Guidance Service). We will also be opening a regional learning centre in Stafford in 2017 which will be fully operational in 2018-19. Regional learning centres provide progression advice, teaching and learning activity, tasters and events in the heart of communities – taking learning to the learner.</p> <p>The Apprenticeship Hub leads on the development of the University's apprenticeship offer creating work-based models of higher education. These programmes will be of particular value to part-time and mature students as well as students within disadvantaged communities who are concerned about levels of student debt.</p>
<p>Delivering high quality school improvement services through the University's Social Enterprise company – Education Central:</p>	<p>The Director of the University's Institute of Education is also Chief Executive of the University of Wolverhampton's Education Central Multi Academy Trust (ECMAT) bringing the two bodies into closer alignment and establishing a unique and sector leading model for school leadership and improvement.</p> <p>The MAT, underpinned by the expertise of the Institute of Education and the wider University, is a powerhouse for educational improvement and is actively supporting higher levels of pupil attainment. The Institute of Education is one of Britain's largest and most established providers of teacher education, working with around 275 primary schools and 200 secondary schools from across the West Midlands region.</p>

	<p>The University of Wolverhampton's ECMAT sponsors 13 academies, ten primary and three secondary schools, in Birmingham, the Black Country and Staffordshire.</p>
<p>The Black Country Children's University and Primary to HE (P2HE) collaboration:</p>	<p>The Black Country Children's University™ (BCCU) comprises four campuses in Wolverhampton, Walsall, Sandwell and Dudley. Coordinated by the University of Wolverhampton, the BCCU is part of the national Children's University Trust.</p> <p><i>“At the heart of its work is the ambition to raise aspirations, boost achievement and foster a love of learning so that young people can make the most of their abilities and interests”.</i></p> <p>The Primary to HE (P2HE) programme is a collaborative endeavour with Keele, Harper Adams and Staffordshire universities which promotes awareness and experiences of higher education for primary age children in years five and six.</p>
<p>Inspiring Deaf and Hard of Hearing Learners:</p>	<p>Drawing on significant expertise and community links the University is a leading recruiter of Deaf and Hard of Hearing learners. We are the main sponsors of the annual DEAFFEST.</p>
<p>Inspiring Looked After Children:</p>	<p>Working with a number of local authority Virtual Schools, the University co-ordinates research and a dedicated mentoring programme for Looked After Children. We have developed pathways to progression for children from care backgrounds and also for Estranged Students.</p>
<p>Promoting STEM subjects through Sci Fest:</p> <p>Science activities associated with the £25M Science Centre – The Rosalind Franklin Building:</p>	<p>Our week-long celebration of science, technology, engineering and maths with dedicated Primary Day, GCSE Day, 'A'-Level Day and Family Day.</p> <p>A dedicated outreach laboratory/classroom for free use by Schools and Colleges across the region.</p>

ArtsFest and Sports Fest:	These festivals celebrate and encourage participation in the Arts and Sports with events and activities aimed at families and young people.
Reduced part-time tuition fees:	The University has established a lower part-time fee level that promotes and encourages flexible part-time study. This measure is focussed on mature and “in-work” learners who might not otherwise consider a full-time study option.
The University of Wolverhampton is leading a consortium called ‘Aspire to HE’ as part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme.	
Retention, attainment and employability measures	
<p>The University has a Learning & Teaching Strategy with a focus on inclusive practices.</p> <p>While deliberately focussed on all students we recognise that there are disparities in attainment, outcomes and satisfaction amongst BME Students and Students with Disabilities.</p>	<p>Appointment of 40 Graduate Teaching Assistants, focussed on supporting all Level 4 students in understanding assessment requirements, in response to evidence that this specific intervention improves BME student attainment and supports overall retention.</p> <p>The University has committed a significant investment to “The Digital Campus” which will deliver a new Virtual Learning Environment and Applications Anywhere - which will provide access to specialist software for all students – including a suite of accessible software products (designed for students with various disabilities) which will also be available to all students.</p> <p>New “Capture” technologies will be available in all large classrooms which will allow students to review lecture content and revise and develop notes and practical techniques.</p>
Employing graduate interns to deliver a range of support and advice services to existing students.	We currently employ up to 40 graduate interns in a range of roles including applicant advice and nurturing and supporting student engagement and achievement. These opportunities are provided through a salaried scheme that gives employment and training opportunities to recent graduates.

Reducing additional charges to students on courses with specific additional costs.	Activities/materials valued at £250k p.a., previously charged out to students, are now covered in the tuition fee (as per our Statement on a Transparent Tuition Fee).
Career Development week Investment which focusses on raising the career aspirations and professional development experiences of students.	The University invested £200,000 in the inaugural Career Development Week in 2017 and continues to invest in a careers based enrichment week for all students each year of their programme of studies. We have written this week into our academic calendar – students will have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of events, activities, field trips, qualifications and careers fairs.
Investment in co-ordinated mentoring programmes for students to ensure all have the opportunity of a mentor to support their studies.	A review group has been tasked with monitoring the mentoring programmes across the University and has looked at where there are consistencies and where resources can be shared. The commitment is that students will have the opportunity to have a mentor.
Introduction of new value added data methodology (as part of HEFCE catalyst project) to more closely review attainment at module and course level	Course teams will be provided with value added data to enable them to better scrutinise the disparities in attainment that exist between communities with different protected characteristics (particularly focusing on the BME attainment gap).
Maintaining increased funding for student advisor provision in Faculty of Education Health and Wellbeing.	FEHW were provided with additional funding of £60,000 for 2016/17 to enable them to recruit two extra student advisors to support the needs of their student base. They have used these posts to allocate named student advisors to particular areas of need in the Faculty (for example foundation year provision (LEAP)).
Provision for students previously supported by the DSA.	We have developed options to provide alternative support to students no longer eligible for DSA support.
Hardship funds	We will maintain the level of financial support for students previously earmarked as the Access to Learning Fund. <i>The University has committed £630,000 to the Dennis Turner Opportunity Fund replacing the previous government cut to the Access to Learning Fund.</i>

<p>'Skills for Learning' support provided in Learning Centres:</p>	<p>The University supports students at all levels through an extensive programme of on-line support, workshops and individual guidance delivered beyond the curriculum through our Learning Centres.</p>
<p>A range of 'Employability' initiatives:</p>	<p>Opportunities for all students to undertake structured work experience, participate in mentoring opportunities, receive high quality IAG and have access to a job pool of employment opportunities.</p> <p>The University offers an integrated "Employability Award" that works in parallel with the curriculum to offer an opportunity to recognise and reflect on employability skills.</p> <p>We have one of the highest numbers of KTPs in the UK; and we have introduced a further scheme (KEEN) which provides graduates with an opportunity to work full-time in a business on short-term commercial projects.</p> <p>Enterprise Action is a three-year project designed to support entrepreneurs in the Black Country and the Marches areas of the West Midlands to start up a business.</p> <p>This project, funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), will assist 480 entrepreneurs and lead to the creation of 250 new enterprises. It is primarily aimed at enterprises in the science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) and creative sectors which are less than two years old.</p> <p>It will deliver enterprise support to fledgling entrepreneurs and innovators, inward investors looking to locate in the Black Country area, students, graduates and University associates.</p>
<p>Volunteering Bureau – Volunteer Central.</p>	<p>A joint Students' Union/University initiative designed to offer students the opportunity to improve their employability through volunteering activities.</p>

The proposals outlined in this Access Agreement continue to develop our on-going work, endorsed by our Board of Governors, reflecting four key areas:

Firstly, we will continue to enhance the employability of our students as a direct means of influencing social mobility. Where appropriate, we will employ students or graduate interns to undertake outreach/enrichment and student support work, which will mean that additional financial support will be available to students, but in the form of payment for work undertaken (with associated employment experience) rather than simply as a scholarship or fee waiver.

Secondly, Schools and Colleges Engagement Strategy; this envisages holistic and joined-up engagement with academies, trusts, schools and colleges, encompassing the work of our social enterprise Education Central, our own outreach, and direct provision of, and wider support for, teacher training.

Thirdly, we will develop, in partnership with a range of public and private providers, regional learning centres to enable students who are less geographically mobile to participate in our programmes. The development of initiatives to reach out to family members (Adult Learners) via our partner schools will also feature as part of the regional learning centre strategy.

Fourthly, we will continue to support the aspirations of our students in successfully completing their studies through a focus on support for enrolled students; ensuring progression, monitoring retention and enabling successful outcomes so that every student has the potential to succeed.

5. Additional Financial Support for Students

Distinction Scholarships

Scholarships will be provided to all UK-based entrants with ABB grades at A level, or equivalent (as defined by HEFCE).

Sports Scholarships

A fixed number of scholarships will be offered for entrants with an outstanding record in sport.

Progression Scholarships

A fixed number of scholarships will be reserved for candidates nominated by schools and colleges participating in the University's Schools Engagement Framework.

Access Bursaries

To be eligible for consideration, candidates must:

- Have applied to study (and subsequently enrol) on a full-time course with a tuition fee of £6000 p.a. or more.
- Have firmly accepted a conditional or unconditional offer of a place at the University of Wolverhampton by July 2018; and

And either

- Be a disabled person with Deafness /hearing Loss or other hearing impairment and eligible for support via the Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) which has been

declared to the University prior to enrolment. (If necessary, this criterion may be reviewed in the light of the detailed Government changes to DSA eligibility expected to be developed shortly).

Or

- Be a Care Leaver, which must be declared to the University prior to enrolment or an estranged student. [A care leaver is someone who has previously lived with foster parents, in a children's home, orphanage, or sheltered accommodation. [The Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#) defines a care leaver as someone who has been in the care of the Local Authority for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday].

These schemes are not specifically targeted at 'OFFA countable' students, since we would take the view that this is not an inclusive access measure. However since more than 50% of our overall intake are from the lowest income groups, and our key partner schools are based in low participation neighbourhoods, it is assumed that at least 50% of Distinction Scholars and Sports scholars, and 80% of Partnership Scholars, will be 'OFFA countable'.

6. Targets and Milestones

OUR COLLABORATIVE OUTREACH TARGETS		
AMBITION	FOCUS	SPECIFIC MEASURE(s)
<p>We will act to raise aspirations to Higher Education amongst Looked After Children / Care Leavers. These are a significantly disadvantaged and under-represented group.</p> <p>The University will combine its academic expertise in this field and associated support for Care Leavers who do become students with an ambitious collaborative project: Aspire2Uni.</p>	<p>Working with four local authorities in our region we will coordinate an intensive and effective progression programme. Working with the Creating Chances Trust to provide mentoring and aspiration-raising for children from Year 7 onwards.</p> <p>As part of the programme the University will organise a series of ongoing events and initiatives from year seven through to year thirteen, designed to raise aspirations, break down barriers and inform progression to HE. A dedicated mentor will be available for the young people, and Virtual Schools will provide any academic support required to aid progression. Working with local businesses, the Creating Chances Trust will raise funds and access high quality work placements, potential employment opportunities and professional role models.</p>	<p>To increase the number of participants (mentees) by at least 30 students in each year of the programme.</p> <p>Ultimately, utilising the HEAT database we will be able to track progression into Higher Education.</p>

At the time of writing, the University is implementing the (new) National Collaborative Outreach Programme: Aspire to HE.

OUR ACCESS TARGETS

AMBITION	FOCUS	SPECIFIC MEASURE(S)
<p>We will seek to deliver an annual increase in the proportion of students enrolled from low participation neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Overall, the University's UK student body will reflect the total population demographic of the communities we serve with respect to ethnicity and gender.</p>	<p>We will focus on low participation target wards within our regional footprint as identified by the National Collaborative Outreach Programme.</p> <p>We will deliver an improved flexible offer to grow part-time student numbers (with an emphasis on mature learners)</p>	<p><i>Percentage of (young) full-time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 20% to 23% by 2020. <p><i>Continue to grow the number of students enrolled on a part-time course.</i></p>
<p>We will seek to deliver an annual increase in the proportion of Disabled People enrolled and studying at the University.</p>	<p>We will continue to improve levels of pre-entry advice and guidance to support declaration of a disability that will enhance the delivery of support packages and with a specific emphasis on Deaf and Hearing-impaired learners, reflecting our specific expertise in this area.</p>	<p>To increase the number of enrolled students who declare a disability to reflect the working age population:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 13% to 16% by 2020.

OUR STUDENT SUCCESS TARGETS

AMBITION	SPECIFIC MEASURE(S)
<p>We will support all students to make good progress and be successful in their studies.</p> <p>Our aim is to provide an inclusive learning and teaching environment that will enable all students to reach their potential.</p> <p>We have identified an outcomes / attainment gap amongst BAME students that we are focussed on eliminating.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain above benchmark the retention of students in each category identified in the HESA performance indicators (i.e. young and mature, and by neighbourhood participation markers). • To maintain above benchmark the proportion of students who complete first degree courses. • To increase the proportion of students awarded first class or upper second class degrees. • To increase the proportion of BAME students awarded first class or upper second class degrees.

<p>We will support all students to realise their ambitions for graduate employment and career development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain above benchmark performance for graduate employment (and further study) – as currently measured – and to exceed the UK average graduate employment rate.
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7. Monitoring and evaluation

As described more fully in Section 1 (University Strategy) we recognise the importance of being able to measure the impact of initiatives and interventions, in order to be able to better target spend and activities. We have therefore implemented an extensive evaluation programme to be assured of the effectiveness of our widening participation activity that is being led with senior academic oversight. The University's College of Learning and Teaching (CoLT) is leading our institutional approach to evaluation of access and outreach work including the work that we are carrying out as part of the Aspire to HE (National Collaborative Outreach Programme).

CoLT is using an interpretative methodological approach using both quantitative and qualitative data to address the 'what works' questions. The overarching evaluation framework adopted for this purpose is that proposed by CFE Research for HEFCE in their report 'Student Opportunity outcomes framework research: in-depth study (2015).'

As described more fully in Section 1 (University Strategy) the University is a member of the collaborative Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) service which assists members in the targeting, monitoring and evaluation of both their individual and their collaborative Fair Access activities. It allows member universities to demonstrate outreach participation in relation to success at key transition points, collectively explore best practice in combining qualitative and quantitative research on outreach and in the future, perhaps, facilitate the development of collaborative targets.

8. Provision of information to prospective students

The University provides the information specified by OFFA, including the provision of information to UCAS and the Student Loans Company, as required to populate their applicant-facing web services. The University will additionally use the following forms of communication:

- Web-based information on Fees and Scholarships 2018-19
- Information on Fees/Scholarships 2018-19 for applicants on students application portal (E:Vision)
- Fees and Funding presentations at all open days (hand-outs provided)
- Specific Fees and Funding presentations to top 100 feeder schools/colleges delivered throughout the academic year
- Fees and Funding 2018-19 'Money Matters' brochure to be produced and distributed to all local/regional stakeholders (Schools/Libraries/Town Halls/Community organisations)
- Briefing sessions for local/regional HE advisors in local/regional schools during 2018-19 academic year.
- Improved information for mature applicants.
- Direct Advice and Guidance via our high street centres and regional learning centres.

9. Student Involvement in Access Agreement Design and Monitoring

Since December 2011 the President of the Students' Union has been a member of the University's Fees, Bursaries and Scholarships Working Group which keeps under review University tuition fee policy and makes recommendations where required to the Corporate Management Team and the Board of Governors. The President of the Students' Union has been actively involved throughout the decision making process associated with this Access Agreement.

10. Equality and Diversity

The proposals contained in the University's Access Agreements have been evaluated under the new procedure for Equalities Impact Assessment approved by our Corporate Management Team. This has considered whether any aspects of the proposals are likely to have an unintended detrimental impact on any of the twelve categories of student, including the six protected characteristics, and has identified action taken, or to be taken, to address issues raised.

11. Summary

Widening Participation and the opening up of HE opportunities to a wider range of individuals is a key part of the University's mission and purpose. As a University committed to listening to our students and responding quickly to funding and policy changes, we need to be able to make in year changes in the way we manage activity and expenditure, both to protect the student experience and to ensure continuing financial sustainability.

The University of Wolverhampton makes a significant financial investment in supporting a widening participation student base and this expenditure is difficult to separate out from wider spend. However, the University expects to spend at least 10% of its additional tuition fee income on more specific Access Agreement and related interventions.

Table 7a - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body.

Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle	Main target type	Target type	Description	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline Data	Yearly milestones				Comments
								2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2021-23	
T16a_01	Access	Disabled	Other statistic - Disabled (please give details in the next column)	Continue to increase overall number of enrolled students who declare with a disability as percentage of the total student population.	No	2014-15	12%	14%	15%	16%	17%	
T16a_02	Access	Part-time	HESA T2b - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (All, part-time, entrants)	Increase the number of part-time undergraduate entrants to 2020 by 2020	No	2014-15	1780	1880	1880	1980	2020	
T16a_03	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	HESA T1b - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (Young, full-time, undergraduate entrants)	Increase year on year to 23%	No	2014-15	20%	21.5%	22%	22.5%	23%	
T16a_04	Student success	Multiple	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Better than benchmark	No	2014-15	10.5	9.8	9.6	9.4	9	
T16a_05	Student success	Mature	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (Mature, full-time, first degree entrants)	Better than benchmark	No	2014-15	18.4	15	14	13	12	
T16a_06	Student success	Multiple	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (All, full-time, first degree entrants)	Better than benchmark	No	2014-15	13.6	12	11.5	11	10.5	
T16a_07	Progression	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	HESA T3b - No longer in HE after 1 year & in low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR 3) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Better than benchmark	No	2014-15	12.3	11	10.5	10	10	
T16a_08	Student success	Multiple	HESA T5 - Projected degree (full-time, first degree entrants)	Improve % predicted to complete 1st degree to benchmark	No	2014-15	68.5	71	72	73	74	
T16a_09	Access	Care-leavers	Other statistic - Care-leavers (please give details in the next column)	Increase the number of participants in Aspire2Uni programme	Yes	2015-16	30	90	120	150	180	
T16a_10	Student success	Multiple	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	Continue to improve the proportion of ALL students who achieve a 1st or 2:1 degree outcome.	No	2014-15	61.3	63	65	67	69	70
T16a_11	Progression	Multiple	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	Maintain DLHE employed or further study above benchmark and above UK average	No	2014-15	95	96	96	96	96	
T16a_12	Student success	Ethnicity	Other statistic - Ethnicity (please give details in the next column)	Increase the % of BME graduates achieving 1st or 2:1s	No	2014-15	50	54	57	60	63	65
T16a_13	Access	State school	HESA T1b - State School (Young, full-time, undergraduate entrants)	Increase entry to HE from 'family schools' (Smestow, ACE Academy and Wednesfield High) by 15% year on year	Yes	2016-17	53	+15%	+15%	+15%	+15%	

Other commentary on milestones

The University has carefully reviewed the statistical targets and milestones (table 7a). Over the last twelve months we have developed and published a new strategic plan and associated Key Performance Indicators to 2021 - ensuring that our strategic ambitions are aligned with our Access Agreement for maximum impact and institutional focus. We have not therefore stretched our targets in all cases in the AY 2021/22 where these might be outside of the scope of the University's approved strategic plans. We would also highlight that in some examples where we have set out to reach and maintain a "better than benchmark" position that to maintain a better than benchmark

performance will be properly challenging. We have also reviewed and stretched two of the targets and milestones (good honours outcomes) where the KPI's in our strategic plan are more ambitious than our previous access agreement commitments. This ensures that we have an institutional focus on a common set of targets and milestones.

The University has not included a new target specific to work with schools where we already have an extensive network of school partnerships. We would highlight our target to increase the number of participants in the Aspire2Uni project as a school-related target... The Aspire2Uni project works with three local authority areas and their virtual school networks to raise aspirations amongst children in care.