



## **Access and participation plan: 2020-21 to 2024-25**

### **Introduction**

Askham Bryan College is a specialist land-based college offering a range of both further and higher education programmes in the north of England. Undergraduate higher education programmes are offered in the areas of Agriculture, Animal Management, Arboriculture, Conservation, Equine, Horticulture, Sport and Veterinary Nursing and Zoo Management. Higher education provision is currently delivered in validated partnerships with three university partners: Harper Adams University, the Royal Agricultural University and Leeds Trinity University.

There are currently over 500 students studying on higher education undergraduate programmes at the College in 2018-19. Over 75% of our students enrol on Level 5 programmes (Foundation degrees), with over half of these progressing onto a final Level 6 (BSc Top-up) award.

The College's commitment to widening participation is articulated in the following documents:

- Strategic Plan
- Access and Participation strategy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy
- Higher Education Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy

Steps have been taken to promote progression from our wider further education campuses located across North Yorkshire and Cumbria, and in addition we actively work with schools in these regions. We work collaboratively as a member of the Higher York Network to deliver collaborative targets related to access to higher education via the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). The College has embedded a focus on supporting underrepresented groups and is building capacity to monitor, evaluate and make evidence-based decisions relating to our widening participation activities.

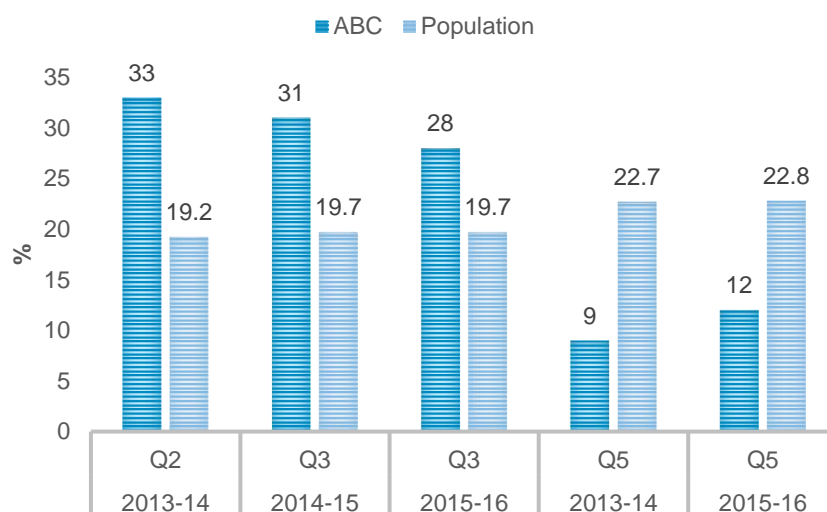
Links are made throughout this plan to the Office for Students (OfS) Key Performance Measures (KPM) where appropriate. In this Access and Participation Plan (APP), we have committed to contribute to national targets relating to gaps in access, success and progression of underrepresented groups in higher education, with due regard to our regional and specialist context. Specific focus is placed on access and success measures for particular underrepresented groups where the largest gaps were shown following our assessment of performance (Section 1). Specific investment into robust monitoring and evaluation will further to enable us to fully understand the processes involved in generating outcomes from our targets.

# 1. Assessment of performance

## 1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

### 1.1.1 Access

In 2016-17, there was a gap of only five percentage points between number of students at the College when comparing students most and least represented groups, with 17% of entrants coming from POLAR4<sup>1</sup> Quintile (Q) 5 and 12% of entrants coming from POLAR4 Q1 respectively. Although this compares positively to the national picture where the gap is substantially larger (a gap of 32 percentage points in 2017-18), the ratio of students at the College from POLAR4 Q5 and POLAR4 Q1 has flipped in recent years: currently, the College now has proportionally more students coming from POLAR4 Q5 than POLAR4 Q1, which is a reverse of the position in 2013-14 where 16% students originated from POLAR4 Q1, compared to 11% originating from POLAR4 Q5. The OfS dashboard data records no significant differences in access according to POLAR4 quintiles in recent years (from 2016-17) however prior to that there were some significant differences, as displayed in Figure 1.1.



**Figure 1.1.** Significant differences in POLAR4 quintile participation rates at the provider (ABC= Askham Bryan College) compared to the population (all providers). Data source: OfS Dashboard Data.

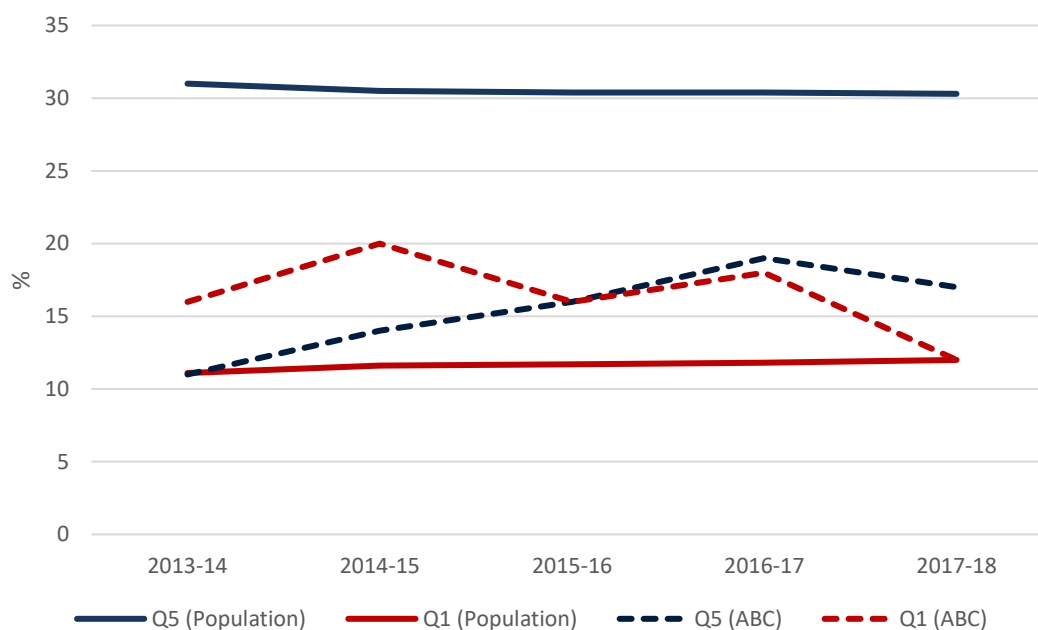
In 2013-14, the College had significantly more students from POLAR4 Q2 areas compared to the population. Participation from POLAR4 Q3 areas was significantly higher at the College compared to the population in both 2014-15 and 2015-16. In 2013-14 and 2015-16, there was a significant difference in participation of young people from POLAR4 Q5 areas at the College compared to the population, however this was a negative difference, with significantly less participation from POLAR4 Q5 students at the College compared to the wider population (in 2013-14, (9% V 22.7% respectively, and in 2015-16, 12% V 22.8% respectively). Again, this

<sup>1</sup> POLAR4 is a measure of likelihood of participation in HE according to postcodes, ranging from Quintile 1 (least likely to participate) to Quintile 5 (most likely to participate)

measures favourably as evidence of access for students from least represented areas at the College.

There were significant differences in access of different groups classified according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation<sup>2</sup> (IMD) quintiles classified groups over the past five year, however the profile is quite spiky, especially for IMD Q1 and Q2, with no general trend apparent relating to individual IMD groupings.

With reference to the OfS KPM1 (the gap in participation between most and least represented groups<sup>3</sup>), the College's performance is currently above expectation, with a substantially smaller gap in participation between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5. However, although still 'within tolerance' the gap is widening for the College, as displayed in Figure 1.2.



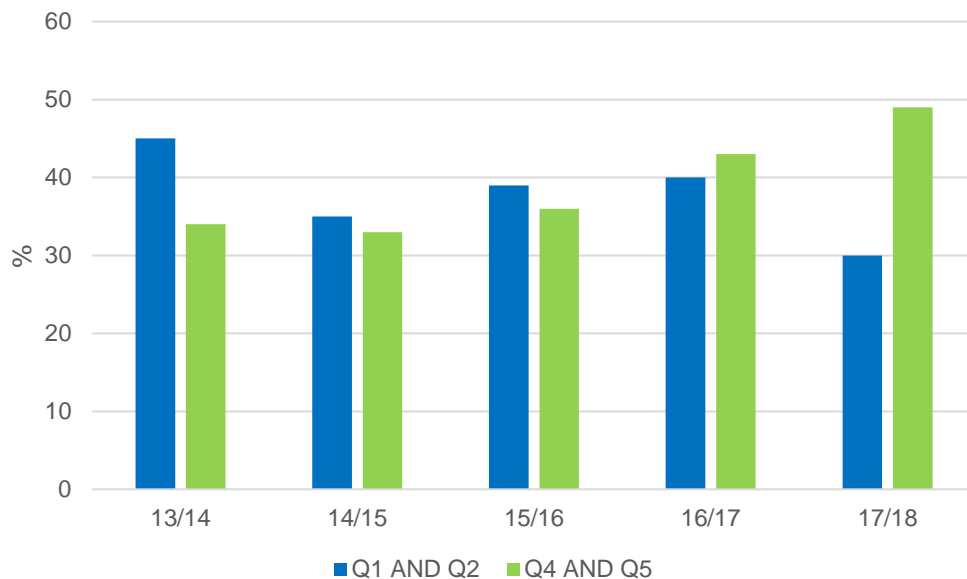
**Figure 1.2.** Five year trend comparing proportions of entrants from POLAR Q1 and POLAR Q5 areas at the provider (ABC) compared to the population. *Data source: OfS dashboard.*

There has been a trend in recent years towards less students from POLAR4 Q1 enrolling at the College, however there is a spread across all five POLAR4 quintiles. When aggregating the data and comparing POLAR Q1/Q2 to POLAR Q4/Q5 however (Figure 1.3), it presents a slightly different picture than a direct comparison between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5.

There is an increasing trend in enrolments of students from areas more likely to participate in higher education (POLAR4 Q4/Q5) than those areas least likely to participate (POLAR 4 Q1/Q2). This is a changing trend and presents an opportunity for improvement. In 2017/18, there was a gap of 19 percentage points between POLAR 4 Q1/Q2 and POLAR4 Q4/Q5.

<sup>2</sup> Index of multiple deprivation, where IMD quintiles 1-2 represents the areas of highest deprivation

<sup>3</sup> In 2017-18 this gap was 30.9 percentage points, which has seen a steady reduction in the gap over past five years



**Figure 1.3.** Five year trend comparing proportions of entrants from POLAR Q1/Q2 and POLAR Q4/Q5 areas at the provider (ABC). *Data source: OfS dashboard.*

## 1.1.2 Success

### 1.1.2.1 Non-continuation

In terms of the gaps in non-continuation rates between students groups based on POLAR4 classifications, there are no significant differences in non-continuation rates when comparing students from POLAR4 quintiles. Continuation rates have improved for all students and the following is observed:

- Continuation rates of students classified as POLAR4 Q1 have increased from 60% in 2014-15 to 75% in 2016-17.
- Continuation rates of students classified as POLAR4 Q2 have increased from 65% in 2013-14 to 75% in 2016-17
- Non-continuation gap between POLAR4 Q1-Q2 and POLAR4 Q3-Q5 groups (all students) is not significant, with fluctuations of between 0 and 7 percentage points only since 2013-14, however there is a negative percentage point gap in continuation between POLAR Q1-2 and POLAR Q3-5 males, which is currently at 20pp.
- Non-continuation gap between IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 groups (all students) is not significant, however there is a significant percentage point gap in continuation between IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 males, which has widened by 29 percentage points since 2012-13.

We will continue to monitor gaps in continuation to inform future programmes of activity as articulated later in this plan (Section 3).

### 1.1.2.2 Attainment

There are no significant attainment gaps in this category, however the dataset is small as typically over 70% of our students are on Foundation Degree (FdSc) programme (Level 5) and are not classified according to BSc classifications. However, with the introduction of more BSc programmes at the College from 2017-18, there will be a larger dataset available to analyse from 2020 onwards in terms of attainment. We will continue to monitor attainment

gaps between underrepresented groups and their peers as part of our ongoing self-evaluation.

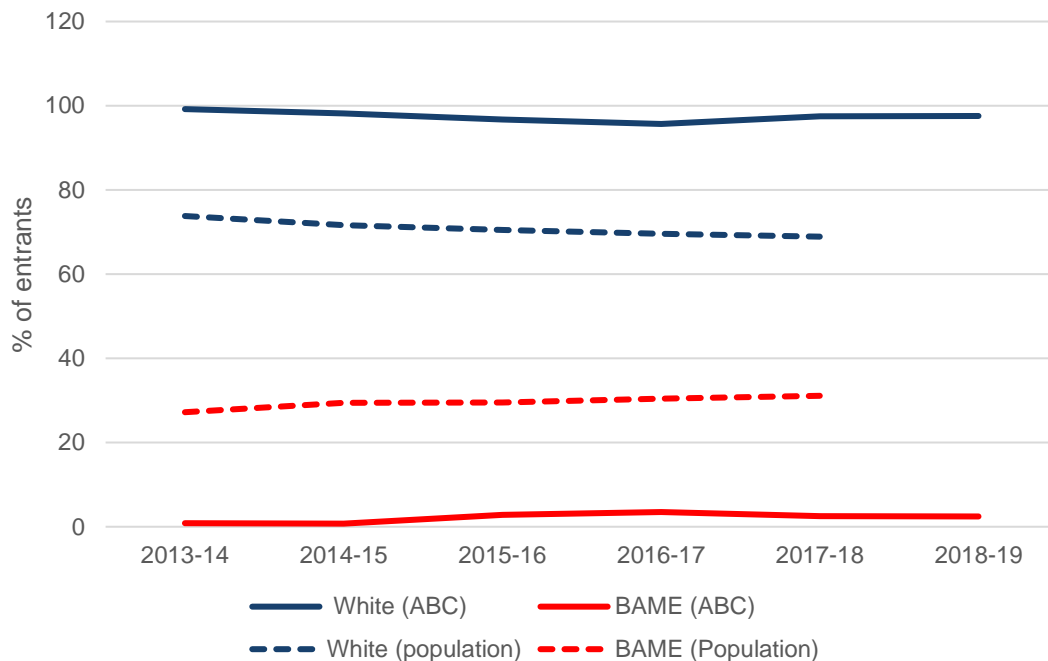
### 1.1.3 Progression to employment or further study

There are no significant gaps between groups in this category.

## 1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students

### 1.2.1 Access

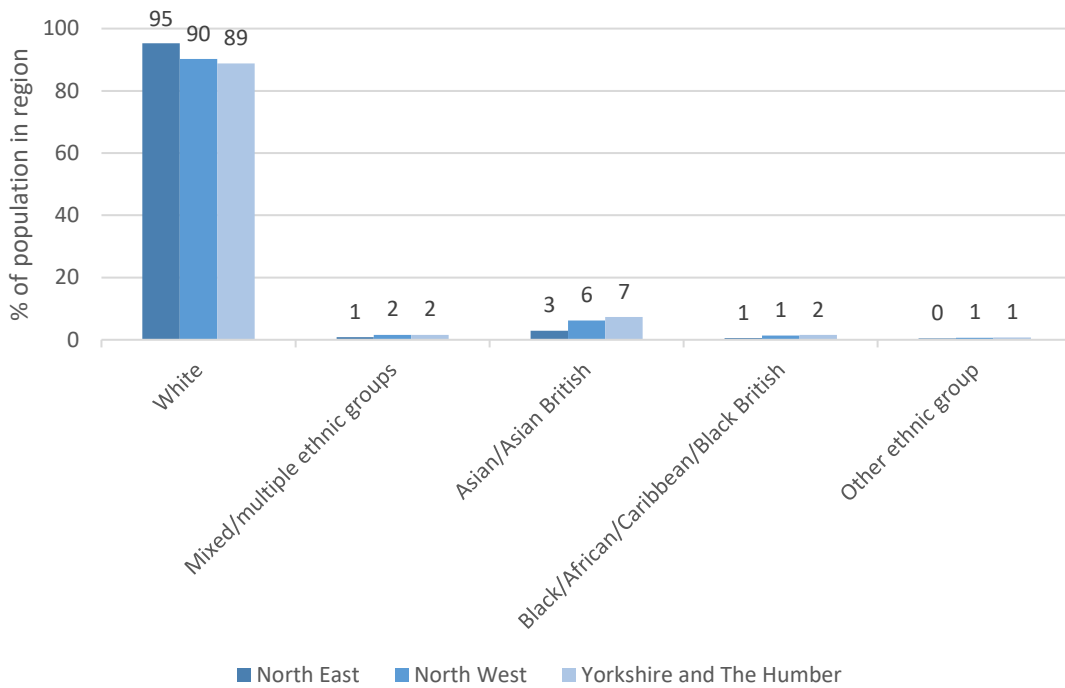
There are significant access gaps between white students and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students at the College, with BAME students accounting for less than 5% of the student population on higher education programmes. This is significantly lower than the population statistics, as shown in Figure 1.4.



**Figure 1.4** Proportions of white and BAME entrants to HE programmes at Askham Bryan College from 2013-14 to 2018-19, compared to all providers. *Data sources: OfS Dashboard (population data) and internal provider data (ABC).*

This is also reflected in our applications numbers however, with less than 5% of applicants are from BAME students, which makes any further analysis by ethnic group difficult due to small numbers. Annex 1 categorises the breakdown of BAME students at the College over the past five years.

The College's higher education campus is situated in North Yorkshire, offering specialist land-based provision, and typically recruits the majority of students from the region. The regional ethnicities are displayed in Figure 1.5, and reflects an almost identical picture to the ethnic make-up of the College's HE student population.



**Figure 1.5.** Ethnicities of regional populations in areas from which the majority of enrolments at Askham Bryan College are drawn. *Data Source: NOMIS, Census 2011<sup>4</sup>*

In 2016/17, 76% of HE enrolments at UK higher education institutions were white<sup>5</sup>, with the remaining 24% black, Asian or minority ethnic. However, these statistics will vary depending on subject studied. In the land-based context, when comparing other land-based providers<sup>6</sup>, the BAME population at Askham Bryan College is very similar, even without the regional context, suggesting that land-based providers do not typically recruit BAME students. However, the College recognises that there may be opportunities for promoting and encouraging BAME students to study at the College, particularly in terms of promotion of the land-based industries as potential career opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds, and we have set a modest target relating to increasing BAME students at the College by 2024-25.

### 1.2.2 Success

Due to there being less than 5% BAME students at the College, the priority focus for 2020/21-2024/25 period will be on access of BAME students. We propose to monitor success and progression at later stages, should our access interventions for BAME students be successful.

#### 1.2.2.1 Non-continuation

There is no significant difference in continuation rates of BAME students compared to white students. There is little data available to enable us to draw any meaningful conclusions on continuation rates of BAME students. Success rate will be monitored at a later stage, pending recruitment of larger numbers of BAME students.

<sup>4</sup> NOMIS (2013) Official Labour Market Statistics: KS201EW- Ethnic Group

<sup>5</sup> HESA (2018) Higher Education Student Statistics: UK, 2016/17 - Student numbers and characteristics Available at: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/11-01-2018/sfr247-higher-education-student-statistics/numbers>

<sup>6</sup> OfS data dashboard for other land-based providers

### 1.2.2.2 Attainment

There is little data available to enable us to draw any meaningful conclusions on attainment rates of BAME students. Annex 2 presents comparative data between white students<sup>7</sup> and BAME students<sup>8</sup>, which has been drawn from our internal data records. As the numbers of BAME students are low, even when the data is aggregated, it cannot be used to draw any meaningful conclusions, however we recognise that there are apparent gaps in attainment between white and BAME students (Annex 2).

This measure relates to the OfS KPM4: the gap in degree outcomes between white and black students. Nationally, in 2017-18 there was a difference of 23.1 pp between the proportion of white and black students getting a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2.1. Although the data presented in Annex 2 indicates a smaller percentage point differences for our data on white and BAME attainment (gap of 16 percentage points most recently), this cannot be used to draw any meaningful conclusions at this point in time due to scarcity of data. However, as access of BAME students is a priority, we will continue to monitor this KPM in line with our data.

### 1.2.3 Progression to employment or further study

There is little data available to enable us to draw any meaningful conclusions on progression rates of BAME students. Progression of all students is an ongoing priority at the College, which includes BAME students. Successful monitoring of this measure will be dependent on increasing access of BAME students (Section 1.2.1).

## 1.3 Mature students

### 1.3.1 Access

The gap in Access proportions between young (under 21) and mature (over 21) has gradually widened from 12 percentage points in 2013-14 to 28 percentage points in 2017-18 at the College. However, despite this, the College's part-time student population is still greater than when compared to all English HE providers (28% in 2017-18).

### 1.3.2 Success

#### 1.3.2.1 Non-continuation

There are no significant differences in the gaps in continuation between young and mature students at any point from 2012-13 to 2016-17 (ratio ranges from 0.8-1.1). It is worth noting that the gap (although insignificant) was in favour of mature students in 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2016-17.

#### 1.3.3.2 Attainment

There are no significant attainment gaps between young and mature students at any point from 2013-14 to 2017-18.

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<sup>7</sup> 2017-18 leavers

<sup>8</sup> Aggregated data 2013-14 to 2018-19

### 1.3.3 Progression to employment or further study

There is a gap in progression between young and mature students, which has increased from 0.9 pp in 2012-13 to 12 pp in 2016-17. However, these percentages are based on small numbers<sup>9</sup> due to the measure being 'highly-skilled employment'. It should be noted that we operate in a specialist sector, which offers different graduate outcomes - whilst the majority of our graduates gain employment, it is rarely classified as highly-skilled due to the nature of job opportunities in the land-based industries. The land-based sector is predominantly comprised of micro-businesses, with 95% of businesses in the sector employing less than 10 staff (85% employing fewer than 5 staff)<sup>10</sup>. The occupational breakdown of the land-based sector is significantly different compared to broader industries, with 48% employed in skilled trades, which includes farmers, stockperson/groundsperson roles. As such, the land-based industries may not offer the same managerial and professional opportunities compared to other sectors. This may be a barrier for our graduates to enter the 'highly skilled workplace', which are mainly defined as managerial and professional, as defined by the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) groups 1-3.

Furthermore, the greater proportion of the students on which these data are based are foundation degree graduates<sup>11</sup>, who are perhaps less likely to progress to highly skilled employment, compared to first degree graduates. When the data are broken down to focus on first degree graduates only, the number gap is never more than 5 students when comparing young to mature learners. Furthermore, since 2012-13, there has number of young students in this data set has gradually increased, whereas the number of mature students has remained fairly static, which may influence the percentage point difference. We will continue to monitor progression over the life of this plan, and we will commit to including targets relating to progression in the future if required.

## 1.4 Disabled students

### 1.4.1 Access

Access proportions for disabled students at all other providers was 14.6% disabled in 2017-18 compared to 29.0% at the College, which also represents an increasing trend from 17% in 2013-14 (all other providers 11.8%). There were no significant gaps in Access related to disability at the College.

Figure 1.6 represents the disaggregation of student disability by type over the past five years. Performance compared to all other providers is described below.

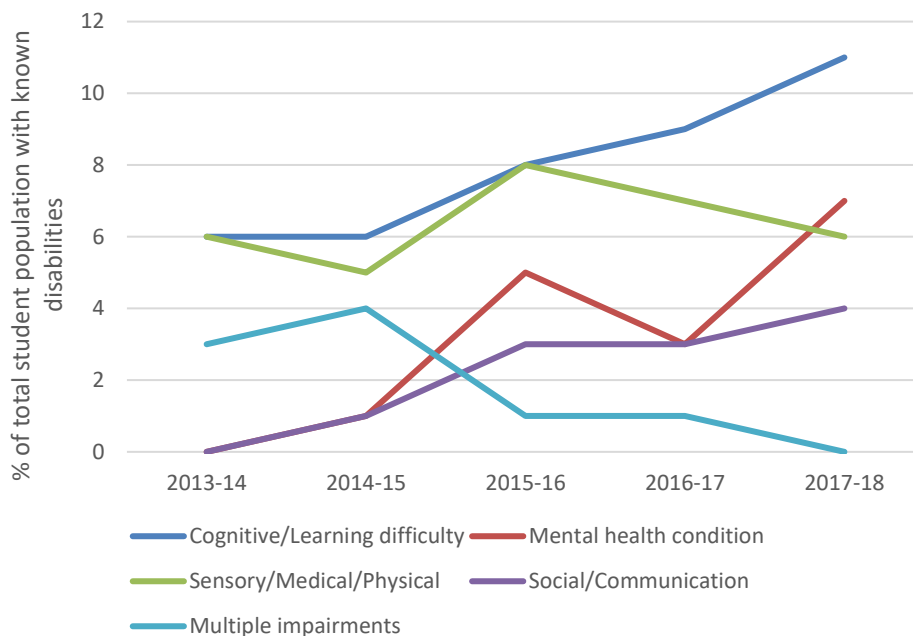
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<sup>9</sup> In 2012-13, the number of young and mature students on which these data are based was 30 and 20 respectively; in 2016-17 the number of young and mature students was 55 and 20 respectively

<sup>10</sup> LANTRA. 2014. *The UK Land-Based and Environmental Sector: Skills Assessment Update Spring 2014* [online]. Available at: [https://www.lantra.co.uk/sites/default/files/The-UK-Land-based-and-Environmental-Sector-Skills-Assessment-Update-Spring-2014\\_0.pdf](https://www.lantra.co.uk/sites/default/files/The-UK-Land-based-and-Environmental-Sector-Skills-Assessment-Update-Spring-2014_0.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Over 70% of students at the College are enrolled on Foundation degrees





**Figure 1.6.** Five-year trend of proportions of students (total population) with known disabilities.

In terms of disability type in 2017-18, 11.5% of the total student population declared a cognitive or learning difficulty compared to 5.5% at all other providers. This is in contrast to the comparison in 2013-14 when the proportion of students at the College with cognitive or learning difficulties was only 6% (compared to 6.2% at all other providers).

The College has also seen a rise in the proportion of students declaring a mental health disability, with a rise from 1% of the student population in 2014-15 to 7% in 2017-18 (all other providers: 1.4% and 3.4% respectively).

Students with social or communication skills is also higher at the College when compared to other providers, with 4% of students in 2017-18 declaring this type of disability (0.8% at all other providers).

## 1.4.2 Success

### 1.4.2.1 Non-continuation

The gaps in non-continuation between non-disabled and disabled students is not significant, and over the past five years has fluctuated in favour of either group at any one time. There is no evidence for an increasing trend in a difference in continuation rates between disabled and non-disabled students.

Overall continuation rates for disabled students was 83% in 2017-18, which has increased from 65%.

Due to small numbers, it is difficult to tease out any reliable data when disaggregating the data by disability type

### 1.4.2.2 Attainment

Attainment rates for disabled students in all providers has risen steadily since 2013-14, from 71% to 76% in 2017-18.

At the College, there are no differences in attainment between disabled and non-disabled students. In 2017-18 there was a difference of 2.8 pp<sup>12</sup> between proportion of disabled and non-disabled students getting a 1<sup>st</sup> or a 2.1 (all providers) although this was not statistically significant.

#### 1.4.3 Progression to employment or further study

There is little data available to enable us to draw any meaningful conclusions on continuation rates of disabled students compared to non-disabled students. Progression of all students to further study or employment will be a priority for us in the 2021-24 period, which will include disabled students.

### 1.5 Care leavers

#### 1.5.1 Access

The College does not have any data on students' status as care-leavers on entry, aside from those students who have progressed internally from a Level 3 programme of study at the College. These numbers of students are very small (less than 10 students) and cannot be used to draw any conclusions in relation to access. The College is aware that further work needs to be undertaken in this respect and will include more robust data sourcing from 2019-20 entry onwards to ensure key priority groups are captured and further analysis can be undertaken. We have committed to collecting data on care leavers from 2019 entry onwards to allow us to monitor this aspect and to include a target in the future where appropriate.

#### 1.5.2 Success

##### 1.5.2.1 Non-continuation

There are no significant differences recorded, however the low numbers do not allow any meaningful conclusions to be drawn

##### 1.5.2.2 Attainment

There are no significant differences recorded, however the low numbers do not allow any meaningful conclusions to be drawn

#### 1.5.3 Progression to employment or further study

There are no significant differences, however the low numbers do not allow any meaningful conclusions to be drawn

### 1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

#### 1.6.1 Interaction of gender and deprivation

Participation of male students from deprived areas is currently lower at the College compared to the population. For example, in 2017-18, male participation from IMD quintiles 1 and 2 combined was only

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<sup>12</sup> Percentage point gaps always are calculated as the proportion of the first group being referenced minus the proportion of the second group being referenced. Negative gap=first group has lower proportion than second group; positive gap= first group has higher proportion than the second

7% compared to a population proportion of 17%. Whilst POLAR4 data captures the young people entering higher education according to participation likelihood, the IMD measure includes all students, not just 18 year olds. As a significant proportion of the College's students are over 21 on entry, the IMD measure should be considered in this respect. In 2016/17 there was a continuation gap (negative) of 20 percentage points between males from IMD Q1 and Q1 compared to males from IMD Q4 and Q5, compared to a national gap of 6.9 percentage points.

#### 1.6.2 Interaction of gender and POLAR quintiles 1 and 2

Similarly, participation of males from POLAR quintiles 1 and 2 is lower at the College compared to the population (6% compared to 12% respectively in 2017-18).

### 1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

None identified.

## 2 Strategic aims and objectives

### 2.1 Target groups

Target groups have been selected based on the analysis of performance described in Section 1 and are summarised in Table 2.1. No targets have been referenced against KPM 2, which relates to high-tariff providers, which the College is not.

### 2.2 Aims and objectives

The college is committed to providing equality of opportunity and outcomes for all students by embedding best practice in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) for all students to enable and support their studies, irrespective of their background<sup>13</sup>. This commitment to equality of opportunity further includes an ongoing commitment to resourcing the EDI committee and other operational areas to address key programmes of work in respect of access, success and progression of all students.

#### Strategic aims

Aligned to related College policy and strategy documents, the following strategic aims have been agreed relating to access and participation priorities over the period of this APP:

1. Increase participation by students from areas of low participation and/or economically disadvantaged areas in higher education by 2022/23.
2. Increase participation by BAME students in land-based higher education study by 2024/25.
3. Reduce (or maintain where applicable) continuation and attainment gaps between underrepresented groups and their peers by 2022/23.

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<sup>13</sup> Askham Bryan College Equality Objectives. Available at: <https://www.askham-bryan.ac.uk/the-college/equality>

4. Strengthen practice to gather strong evidence: Prioritise the use of evidence and evaluation measures to effectively inform programmes of activity relating to access and participation priorities from 2020/21.

## Objectives

1. Reduce the gap in participation between students from POLAR Q1 and Q2 and their peers from 2020-21 (Target PTA\_1).
2. Increase participation from black, Asian and ethnic minority (BAME) groups by 2024-25 (Target PTA\_2).
3. Reduce the gap in participation between male students from IMD Q1 and Q2 compared to males from IMD quintiles 3-5 from 2020-21 (Target PTA\_3).
4. Reduce continuation gap between males from IMD Q1-Q2 and males from IMD quintiles Q3-Q5 (Target PTS\_1).

In order to achieve our objectives, the following interventions will be put in place from 2019/20 onwards:

- Identify target schools within the region and undertake sustained activity at pre-16 and post-16 relating to progression to Higher Education, including workshops, 'aspire' activities and taster days/visits to the provider. These activities will complement existing activities being run as part of NCOP, and we will use the collaborative expertise of the NCOP partnership to plan activity.
- Undertake a sustained digital marketing and social media campaign to target underrepresented groups.
- Identify schools, colleges and communities within the Leeds City region<sup>14</sup> with high black and minority ethnic populations to undertake sustained activity at pre-16 and post-16 relating to progression to Higher Education, specifically relating to study and careers in the land-based sector.
- Undertake targeted activity in the Tees Valley and Middlesbrough<sup>15</sup> regions, the latter being one of the regions of greatest deprivation in England, via work at our Stewart Park and Newcastle campuses and linked schools and local communities.
- Co-ordinate targeted activities in the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area, which has almost 17% of neighbourhoods in the most deprived 10% nationally<sup>16</sup>, according to the IMD.

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<sup>14</sup> Leeds City region is an area of increasing ethnic diversity, with growth in black and minority ethnic population 10.8% to 18.9% in the period between censuses in 2001 and 2011, with up to 64% BAME population in some areas (Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011> [Accessed June 2019])

<sup>15</sup> 49% of neighbourhoods in the Middlesbrough region are classed as highly deprived (Source: The English Indices of Deprivation 2015. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/465791/English\\_Indices\\_of\\_Deprivation\\_2015\\_-\\_Statistical\\_Release.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/465791/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Statistical_Release.pdf) [Accessed May 2019].

<sup>16</sup> Source: The English Indices of Deprivation 2015. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/465791/English\\_Indices\\_of\\_Deprivation\\_2015\\_-\\_Statistical\\_Release.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/465791/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Statistical_Release.pdf) [Accessed May 2019].

- Undertake work to identify barriers to progression and success in BAME student groups.
- Identify appropriate support mechanisms to encourage, support and inspire a more diverse student population to land-based education.
- Continue to strategically invest in a range of measures to increase participation and access to academic and pastoral support for students including small taught groups (average class size is currently 18 students); the use of course managers and graduate teaching assistants to support, advise and tutor individuals; continue to use bridging programmes and enhanced academic skills sessions pre-entry and between levels of study.

Target Group	Stage of Lifecycle	Commentary	OfS KPM	Ambition
Students from POLAR4 Q1 and Q2	Access (PTA_1) Success	The initial priority will be Access for this target group, however all stages of the lifecycle will be monitored as part of our ongoing monitoring and evaluation	KPM 1  KPM 3	Reduce the access gap to 6 percentage points by 2024-25  Maintain continuation gap to less than 5 percentage points by 2024-25
BAME students	Access (PTA_2)	The initial priority will be Access for this target group, however attainment will be monitored in relation to KPM 4.	KPM 4	Increase BAME access to 8% of total student population by 2024-25
Males from IMD Q1 and Q2	Access (PTA_3) Success (PTS_1)	The initial priority will be Access for this target group for the period 2020/21-2024/25.	KPM 1	Increase participation by males from economically disadvantaged areas to 15% of the total student population by 2024-25  Continuation gap of less than 5% by 2024-25
Care-leavers	Access (PTA_4)	We currently do not collate these data however we have put measure in place to do so from 2019-20 and will monitor access, success and progression of these students over the life of this APP	N/A	Fully understand the proportion of care-leavers in our student population, and ensure equal opportunity in terms of access, success and progression for these students.

**Table 2.1** Summary of underrepresented groups that will be targeted in the 2020/21-2024-25 period, indicating stages of the lifecycle and reference to the Targets and Investment Plan numbers, plus reference to the Key Performance Measures (KPMs)

## 3 Strategic measures

### 3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Our Higher Education Strategy, which is aligned to the overarching College Strategy, focusses on keeping students at the heart of what we do, and aims to deliver the following strategic priorities in relation to our higher education provision:

- 1) Deliver inspiring and outstanding learning, underpinned by scholarship and applied research;
- 2) Maximise our higher education student's educational achievements on graduation enabling them to add value to the communities they will live and work in; and
- 3) Create a sustainable, collegiate and aspiring higher education environment.

We have considered and referenced this plan to other relevant policies (internal and external) which bring together a College-wide approach to promoting equality of opportunity, widening participation and supporting inclusive teaching and learning.

The College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy outlines the College's commitment to celebrating and valuing the diversity of the College community, which includes promoting an inclusive and positive culture, and increasing awareness and understanding. Student EDI objectives are published in the College EDI strategy. The College operates an EDI Committee, which will receive reports from the Access and Participation Working Group (APWG) on progress against the targets outlined in this plan.

Access and Participation activities and outcomes will be monitored via the EDI Committee, which is chaired by an Executive Director of Curriculum. Via this committee, we will ensure that the whole-College strategies relating to EDI and access and participation are fully aligned to ensure equality of opportunity is addressed, especially where protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act (2010) fall outside the Office for Students' definition of underrepresented groups.

The APWG will form the operational group and will meet no less than three times a year to ensure effective evaluation of programmes of activity which form the theory of change contained in this APP. The APWG will be chaired by the Director of Higher Education and membership includes staff from curriculum areas including Academic and Professional Development lecturers and staff active in research (to advise on evaluation), plus staff from wider College teams including Marketing, Employability/Careers Service, Student Recruitment and Learning Support. Students will also be involved in the APWG as working ambassadors and advisers throughout the process. This pool of staff and students will ensure a diverse representation to enable us to effectively monitor and evaluate our strategic measures and report to the Executive.

The 2019-2023 Higher Education Learning, Teaching and Assessment (TLA) Strategy<sup>17</sup> will include the following priorities for equality of learning opportunities:

- Inclusive, accessible and supportive teaching and learning for all students
- Inclusive and accessible curriculum design, delivery, assessment and feedback
- Students as partners in learning and teaching
- Building students' own academic confidence

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<sup>17</sup> Currently under review, completion date of end July 2019

- Evaluation of activities to inform future priorities

Future curriculum developments will consider inclusivity and academic support as priorities to ensure our strategic aims are reflected in curriculum. For example, we will continue to offer our Extended Foundation Degrees<sup>18</sup> to widen access for all students. From 2020, we will also introduce revised academic skills/development modules which will be embedded into all curricula, which will include more accessible and inclusive learning tools for students to increase engagement. Currently, all curricula at the College includes a bespoke professional development set of modules to enhance career development and enable development of employability skills.

Attainment and progression gaps will be addressed by the TLA strategy, by actively supporting equality of opportunity with the whole student body, including careers and employability opportunities, as outlined in the College’s Employability Strategy, which identifies the following key objectives for students:

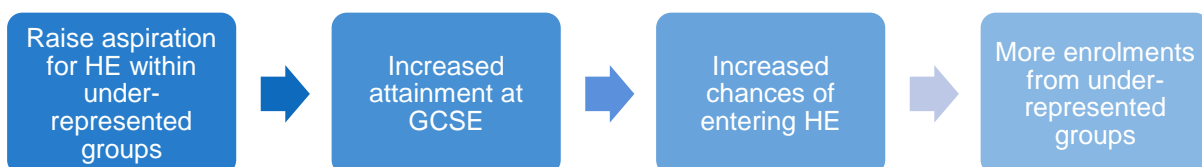
- All students will have the opportunity to develop personally and professionally through meaningful experiences
- All students will have the opportunity to engage with a range of employers and institutions to develop their employability
- All students will have the opportunity to engage with programmes of career development as offered by the Careers Service

In addition, the College’s Student Mental Health Strategy 2018-2020 is in place to support students who experience mental ill-health which may impact on their success, providing another support mechanism for disabled students whilst studying.

Our APP aligns very closely with the Higher York strategy<sup>19</sup>, which outlines the collaborative stance of the involved organisations related to access and participation, success and progression of all higher education students within the collective institutions, including our involvement in NCOP work.

### 3.1 Strategic measures

Figures 2.1-2.2 describe the programmes of activity which will be used during the life of this APP, relating to (1) raising attainment in schools and (2) supporting student success in underrepresented groups.



**Figure 2.1** Theory of change based on the relationship between GCSE attainment and the likelihood of progressing into higher education, relating to strategic aims (1) Increase participation by students from areas of low participation and/or economically disadvantaged areas in higher education by 2022/23, and (2) Increase

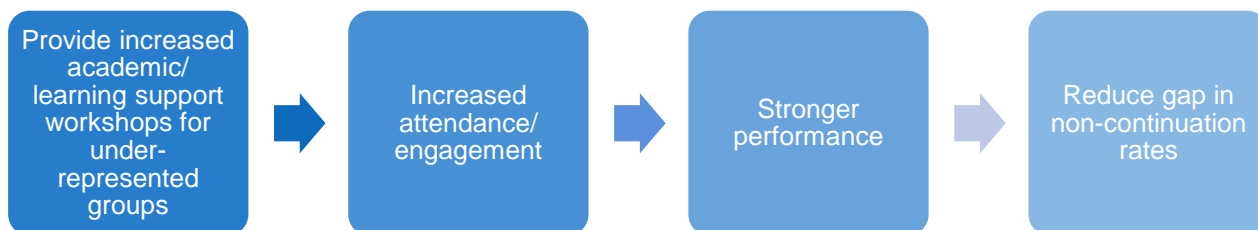
<sup>18</sup> Includes a foundation/preparatory year

<sup>19</sup> Higher York: Strategy and Priorities for 2019-22. Available at: <http://www.higheryork.org/>



participation by BAME students in land-based higher education study by 2024/25, and Targets: PTA\_1, PTA\_2, PTA\_3, PTA\_4.

There is much evidence to suggest that raising academic attainment in disadvantaged groups in schools and colleges, means they are almost as likely to enter higher education as their non-disadvantaged peers<sup>20</sup>. In addition, activities relating to raising attainment contributes to better access and participation, and in turn attainment increases student success<sup>21</sup>. Student support is mentioned as a factor which can influence students' decision to withdraw from higher education<sup>22</sup>, therefore we have committed to increasing academic support networks for underrepresented groups to support students' continuation in higher education.



**Figure 2.2** Theory of change based on the relationship between student support and retention, relating to strategic aims (1) Increase participation by students from areas of low participation and/or economically disadvantaged areas in higher education by 2022/23, and (2) Increase participation by BAME students in land-based higher education study by 2024/25 and Targets: PTS\_1.

Financial support will also be offered to students who meet one or more of the criteria for underrepresented groups as defined in Section 4.2 of this plan. Although there is conflicting evidence regarding the effectiveness of financial aid on student success and continuation<sup>23 24</sup>, anecdotal evidence from our student body suggests that students from underrepresented groups may experience significant stress as a result of financial pressures which can negatively impact on their attendance and engagement. We recognise that we need to contextualise this claim to ensure it is an effective strategic measure to support our APP targets. As part of our evaluation strategy, we are committed to exploring the actual impact of financial support on student outcomes over the next five years, which will contribute to forward-focussed priorities. The aim of providing financial support is to minimise additional stress on students which may enable them to maintain higher levels of engagement and participation, which may help them to achieve a positive outcome in terms of success and progression. Investment in financial support will range from £20,000 to £24,500 in any one academic year over the life of this plan.

<sup>20</sup> <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180511112330/https://www.offa.org.uk/universities-and-colleges/guidance/topic-briefings/topic-briefing-raising-attainment/#attainmentks4>

<sup>21</sup> Summarised in briefing: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/536f4e79-4e32-4db0-a8a2-66eb4e2b530b/raising-attainment-in-schools-and-colleges-to-widen-participation-ofs-topic-briefing.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/6204/1/barriers.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> [https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/enhancing\\_access\\_retention\\_attainment\\_and\\_progression\\_in\\_higher\\_education.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/enhancing_access_retention_attainment_and_progression_in_higher_education.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/sraa/documents/Hoare%20and%20Lightfoot.pdf>



### 3.2 Student consultation

The Students' Union (SU) have been actively involved in discussions relating to this Access and Participation Strategy, including consideration of the target groups and priorities for access, success and progression. The SU has actively spoken to members of the wider student body to gain an understanding of the potential barriers some underrepresented groups face in higher education. Involvement with students from a range of backgrounds in the design of the APP was facilitated via the following:

- Enabling the SU to conduct focus groups with underrepresented groups
- Meetings with senior staff and a range of students<sup>25</sup> specifically relating to the APP
- Working closely with the SU itself, whose members represent a diverse range of students, with the majority representing one or more underrepresented group.

Furthermore, consultation between senior staff and staff representatives who regularly engage with students from underrepresented backgrounds (e.g. Student Services, Learning Support and Academic Support lecturers) was facilitated, to gain an insight into some barriers staff are made aware of when involved with different student groups. Some key themes captured during consultation with a range of students, which helped to form some of the implementation plans of this APP, included:

- The value of wider student support systems (mental health, course managers, small group sizes)
- A need for increased visibility in schools and regional urban areas (with higher diversity) to increase the diversity of the student body at the College
- The need to educate communities to promote a deeper understanding of land-based HE programmes and career choices.

Senior staff have met with the student body to discuss this proposed plan and students have had the opportunity to feedback in relation to our assessment of performance and our proposed targets. We have taken this feedback into consideration in developing our targets for investment in access, success and progression measures.

Throughout the life cycle of this Access and Participation Plan, the Students' Union is committed to working alongside key staff to monitor, evaluate and review our approaches to supporting underrepresented groups. The SU has representation on the Access and Participation Working Group, and students from underrepresented groups are recruited to join this committee on an annual basis. There is full student membership on our Corporation, with the President and Vice-president of the Students Union representing the student body. Students also sit on all our main reporting and decision-making committees and boards including Corporation, Academic Board (including its three functional sub-committees), Course Meetings and Student Council. Feedback is collected and discussed at all these meetings and equality, diversity and inclusion is a standard agenda item on all agenda. The main mechanisms through which students engage with regulatory matters, including the APP, is via the Academic Board and its sub-committees (developmental/operational aspects) and at a strategic level via membership of the Corporation. Students also co-author a student feedback paper at all three of the Academic Board sub-committees, plus at the Academic Board.

### 3.3 Evaluation strategy

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<sup>25</sup> Students were invited on a voluntary basis, however, checks with internal data confirmed a range of students from underrepresented groups were consulted.

We have used the standards of evidence framework<sup>26</sup> to determine our evaluation strategy, to enable us to effectively evaluate our programmes of activities in relation to the desired outcomes. A key focus will be the development of robust methods, aligned to the theories of change identified above, to enable us to collect high-quality evidence for evaluation and subsequent decision-making. Overall, we will use a combination of enquiry methods, appropriate to each programme of activity.

### 3.3.1 Narrative evaluation

Narrative evaluation methods will primarily be used to evaluate our programmes of activity described in the logic chains in Figures 2.1-2.2, based on anecdotal evidence that students entering the College, as a low-tariff provider, often experience poor academic confidence which may impact on their overall success.

### 3.3.2 Empirical enquiry evaluation

We will also use some empirical enquiries to supplement our evaluation over the whole course of our access and participation activities. Where possible, we will aim to collect individual-level data to enable tracking of individuals through their lifecycle to fully evaluate impact of our activities. Empirical enquiry evaluation methods will include:

1. HE taster workshops delivered to under-represented groups to improve their knowledge of land-based HE (e.g. to BAME students). We will conduct surveys before and after the workshops to explore if there is a change in knowledge/perception following the workshop. Individualised tracking will be conducted where possible to track student journey to higher education.
2. Pre-16 and post-16 work with schools to evaluate perceptions of land-based HE and land-based career choices. Again we will conduct pre- and post-session surveys to explore whether a change in knowledge/perception has occurred. Individualised tracking will be conducted where possible to track student journey to higher education.

### 3.3.3 Financial support evaluation

We propose to invest in some financial support provision for students over the life of this APP, therefore we will engage with appropriate financial support evaluation tools<sup>27</sup> to ensure effective monitoring of student outcomes as a result of this type of support. We will use (1) the survey tool to evaluate how and why financial support might affect students' outcomes, and also (2) the interview tool to gain a more in-depth understanding of the impact of financial support on student outcomes. Due to the relatively small number of students likely to be in receipt of financial support, we do not intend on using the statistical tool for further analysis of the data.

### 3.3.4 Timescales

To ensure that our evaluations are effective in improving practice, we will initially focus on collating robust evidence in the short-term (2020-21) to enable us to effectively evaluate the impact and to inform future programme design. For example, for care-leavers, we will focus on obtaining robust data on this group from 2019 onwards which we will then use to inform any future programmes of activity targeting this particular group. For target groups where we already have effective

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<sup>26</sup> Access and participation standards of evidence and; Using standards of evidence to evaluate impact of outreach. Available from: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/standards-of-evidence-and-evaluating-impact-of-outreach/>

<sup>27</sup> Office for Students Financial support evaluation toolkit: Available at <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/financial-support-evaluation-toolkit/interview-tool/>

mechanisms in place for tracking students e.g. males from IMD quintiles1-2, we will ensure that any participants in programmes are recorded to enable us to effectively monitor the impact of our programmes longer term. The results of evaluations will feed into longer-term programme design (post 2024-25) and strategy development.

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Programme/Activity</b>	<b>Continuous improvement</b>
Short-term (2020-21)	Implement robust techniques to capture high-quality data	Reliable/robust data sets
Medium-term (2021-22 to 2023-24)	Evaluate impact of programmes of activity	Explore effectiveness of programmes of activity  Evidence-informed future programme planning
Long-term (2024-25 and beyond)	Use outcomes of evaluations to inform future strategy	Evidence-based, contextualised strategy  Evidence-based programmes of activity for future

**Table 3.1** Timescales for continuous improvement of evaluation strategy.

### 3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

Access and Participation activities and outcomes will be monitored via the EDI Committee, which is chaired by an Executive Director. The Access and Participation Working Group (APWG) will conduct the operational elements of this plan, and will meet no less than three times a year to ensure effective evaluation of programmes of activity which form the theory of change contained in this APP. The APWG is chaired by the Director of Higher Education and membership includes staff from curriculum areas including Academic and Professional Development lecturers and staff active in research (to advise on evaluation), plus staff from wider College teams including Marketing, Student Recruitment and Learning Support, and student representation. This pool of staff/students will ensure a diverse representation to enable us to effectively monitor and evaluate our strategic measures using a wide range of skills. As part of the Higher York network, we aim to work together with the other partners in the network to share good practice and expertise over the period of this APP.

The APWG will consider aspects of the evaluation programmes which relate to ethics, safeguarding, and other risk measures, drawing on the expertise within the membership. Progress against targets will be reported to the EDI Committee and the Academic Board at least three times per year.

The EDI Committee reports to the Senior/Executive Leadership Team and to Corporation/governing body via the Quality and Standards Committee (a sub-committee of Corporation). Senior responsibility for monitoring of this APP will sit with the Director of Higher Education, reporting to the Chief Executive Officer, both of whom sit on the Quality and Standards Committee, where progress against APP targets will be presented by the Director of Higher Education at each meeting. An annual report, including progress against targets, will be presented to the full Corporation, normally in December each year. Progress will be monitored via the Quality and Standards Committee and full Corporation via the aforementioned reporting structure, and any pending actions, include lack of progress, will be delegated by the Chair to the Chief Executive and Director of Higher Education.

Using the mechanisms described above, the outcomes of our evaluations will be used to influence future strategic measures and or policy/strategy development. For example, if our evaluations

indicated a successful intervention for a target group such as the proposed academic support sessions, this could be used to influence future TLA strategy developments.

## 4. Provision of information to students

### 4.1 General student information

The College also provides information on the Key Information Page<sup>28</sup> on the College website which will be a single point of information for all prospective (and current) students and will include the following information:

- Programme specifications and module information for each higher education programme
- Programme fees
- Student support services including finance, accommodation, transport.
- Terms and Conditions;
- Term dates including examination dates;
- Details of the financial support available to underrepresented groups of students, with respect to the provisions set out in the Access and Participation Plan, including eligibility and funds;
- All policies relevant to academic study
- All policies and/or guidance relating to wider College experience

This Key Information page will be completed by September 2019, and will be available on the website for current and prospective students. Prospective students will be made aware of this information page when issued with an offer letter, and current students will be made aware of this via text message. In addition to providing information relating to financial support for underrepresented groups on the website, the Students' Union (SU) has committed to displaying posters in key areas of the College to ensure all students are aware of the support available. The SU will also be undergoing training to ensure full understanding of the eligibility criteria and processes involved to enable it to effectively advise and guide students to the available financial support.

### 4.2 Financial support for students

Financial support may be offered to students who meet one or more of the eligibility criteria, aligned with the targets set out in this plan, as follows:

- Students from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR quintiles 1 and 2) and with low household income<sup>29</sup> (less than £25,000)
- Black, Asian or minority ethnic students
- Male students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2 and with low household income<sup>30</sup> (less than £25,000)
- Care-leavers
- Disabled students

Successful students will be eligible to receive a maximum of £500 in each year of their studies to contribute to supporting their study.

## 5. Appendix

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<sup>28</sup> Available at: <https://www.askham-bryan.ac.uk/higher-education/key-information-for-applicants>

<sup>29</sup> Based on Student Finance England Residual Household Income (RHI)

<sup>30</sup> Based on Student Finance England Residual Household Income (RHI)

**Access and participation plan  
Fee information 2020-21**

Provider name: Askham Bryan College

Provider UKPRN: 10000415

**Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees**

\*course type not listed

**Inflationary statement:**

We do not intend to raise fees annually

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	2019-20 and 2020-21 (and after) starts	£9,000
First degree	BSc Top-up 2020-21 starts	£8,000
Foundation degree		£9,000
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE		£9,000
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	Placement Year	£1,800
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	N/A	£4,500
Foundation degree	N/A	£4,500
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	N/A	£4,500
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

# Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Askham Bryan College

Provider UKPRN: 10000415

## Investment summary

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

### Note about the data:

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Total access activity investment (£)</b>	£215,000.00	£234,000.00	£242,825.00	£246,000.00	£248,825.00
Access (pre-16)	£86,000.00	£93,600.00	£97,100.00	£98,400.00	£99,500.00
Access (post-16)	£64,500.00	£70,200.00	£72,825.00	£73,800.00	£74,625.00
Access (adults and the community)	£32,250.00	£35,100.00	£36,400.00	£36,900.00	£37,350.00
Access (other)	£32,250.00	£35,100.00	£36,500.00	£36,900.00	£37,350.00
<b>Financial support (£)</b>	£20,000.00	£20,000.00	£21,500.00	£23,000.00	£24,500.00
<b>Research and evaluation (£)</b>	£28,185.00	£28,785.00	£29,385.00	£29,995.00	£30,595.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Higher fee income (£HFI)</b>	£1,490,375.00	£1,648,110.00	£1,718,955.00	£1,769,985.00	£1,840,860.00
<b>Access investment</b>	8.1%	8.2%	8.1%	8.0%	7.9%
<b>Financial support</b>	1.3%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
<b>Research and evaluation</b>	1.9%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%
<b>Total investment (as %HFI)</b>	11.3%	11.1%	11.1%	11.0%	10.9%



