Oxford Brookes University

Access and Participation Plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

1. Assessment of performance

Unless stated otherwise, the analyses in this report draw on data from UK-domiciled, undergraduate students studying full-time or sandwich courses at Oxford Brookes University and at our Associate College Partnerships. Where possible we have referenced national higher education data sources supplemented with internal data. Unless otherwise stated the data sources by life cycle stage are as follows:

- Applicant data are from UCAS end of cycle reports, from UCAS Undergraduate reports by sex, area background, and ethnic group, or from purchased UCAS EXACT data.
- Entrant, Continuation, Attainment and Progression data are from the OfS Access and Participation data resources.
- National data, including that from HESA, UCAS and TEF metrics, were used for sector benchmarks.
- Regional population data is derived from the Local Authority.

Additional analysis has been undertaken on the relative performance of Oxford Brookes students registered through the University's Associate College Partnerships. This analysis has shown some gaps in performance against the data for the average of ACPs, which has led to the initiation of discussions with college partners to pinpoint where gaps are significant and to work with partners to better understand the data and to develop action plans to address differences in access, success and progression.

Summary of performance

| Underrepresented group	Access	Success - Continuation	Success - Attainment	Progression
POLAR4	Priority	Monitor and review	Continue to learn and improve	Monitor and review
English IMD	Priority	Continue to learn and improve	Monitor and review	Priority
Ethnicity	Priority	Continue to learn and improve	Priority	Priority
Age on Entry	Monitor and review	Continue to learn and improve	Monitor and review	Continue to learn and improve
Disability	Continue to learn and improve	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review
Care leavers	Priority	Continue to learn and improve	Monitor and review	Continue to learn and improve

1.1   Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access

The data analysis undertaken using UCAS, OfS and regional data indicates an underrepresentation of students from POLAR Q1&2 and students from IMD Q1&2, and a very strong representation of students from POLAR Q5 at the University. Applicants and entrants from POLAR Q1 and Q2 have been consistently low over the five-year period from UCAS cycles 2014 to 2018, with no substantial changes in participation over the years. Comparing the gap in participation between the most (POLAR Q5) and least (POLAR Q1) represented groups, the gap has widened slightly since 2014/15.

Graph 1 demonstrates that compared with data for Oxfordshire the University has an underrepresentation of students from POLAR Q1 but has recruited a higher proportion of students from POLAR quintile 2 than the regional position. The high recruitment from POLAR Q5 reflects the Oxfordshire demographics.

Graph 1: Comparing the proportion of POLAR4 MSOAs in Oxfordshire and the UK against 2018/19 entrants for Oxford Brookes and the sector
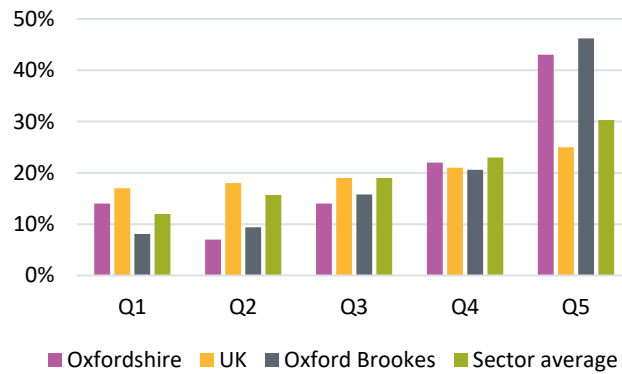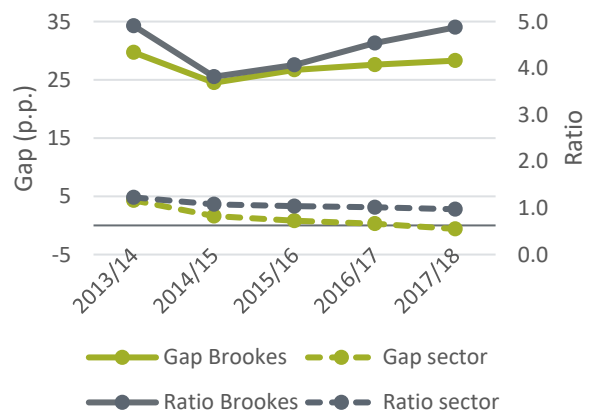
A comparison with sector data from the OfS shows that the University recruits lower proportions of students from POLAR Q1 (graph 2) and IMD Q1 when compared to the sector average (graph 3).

Graph 2: Ratio and gap in proportion of entrants between POLAR Q5 and Q1 - Brookes vs sector
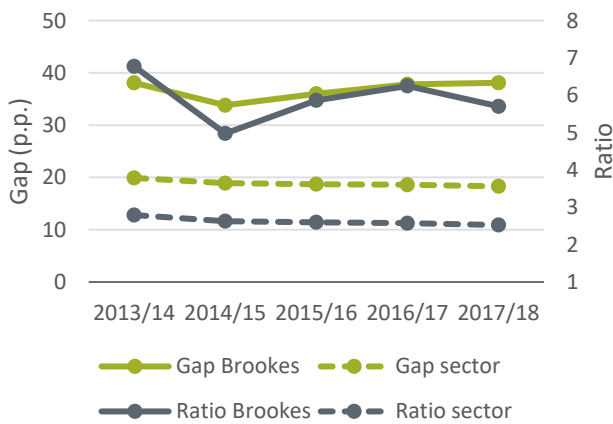
Graph 3: Ratio and gap in proportion of entrants between IMD Q5 and Q1 - Brookes vs sector

Success

Non-continuation

Analysis of the data shows some small gaps in non-continuation for students from POLAR Q1&2 compared with those from Q3,4&5 (all within 5 p.p.). Further analysis demonstrates that continuation performance is affected by the intersection between socio-economic background and ethnicity, and is referenced specifically in Section 1.6. The gaps in non-continuation between students from POLAR Q1 and those from Q5 compared with the sector average are very slight, and there is no difference with the sector for Q1&2 compared with Q3,4&5 (see graph 4).

In the TEF year four contextual data sets for Oxford Brookes University, the core metrics for continuation of students from POLAR Q1 or Q2 and IMD Q1 or Q2 are both above benchmark with a positive flag for IMD Q1 or Q2. This suggests that performance in these areas is good.

As demonstrated in graph 5, for students from IMD Q1 & Q2 there are small gaps and these are below those of the sector average position.

Graph 4: Gap in continuation between POLAR4 quintiles - Brookes vs Sector
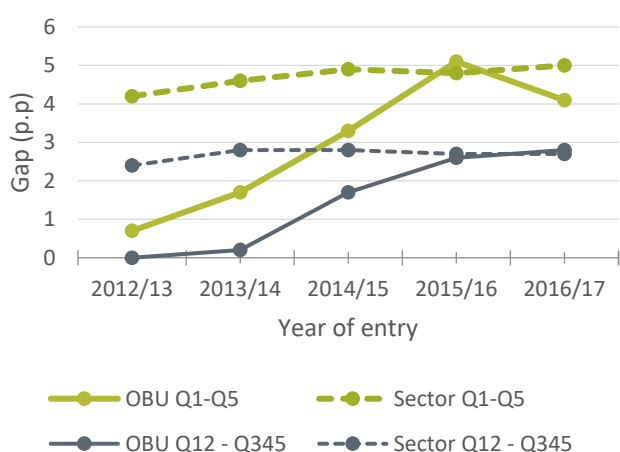
Graph 5: Gap in continuation between IMD quintiles - Brookes vs Sector
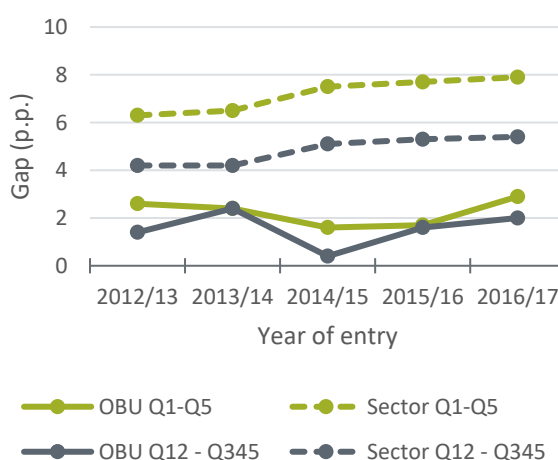
Attainment

Gaps in degree outcomes between students from low participation neighbourhoods and their counterparts are small (see graph 6). However, there is a gap of 14.5 p.p. between students from IMD Q1 and Q5 (see graph 7). The gaps have narrowed in recent years due to strong improvements in the attainment rates of students from POLAR Q1& Q2 and IMD Q1 & Q2. In 2017/18, good completion of students from POLAR Q1 & Q2 exceeded those of students from POLAR Q3-5. The gaps in attainment compare favourably with those for the sector as shown below.

Graph 6: Gaps in degree outcomes by POLAR quintiles - Brookes vs Sector
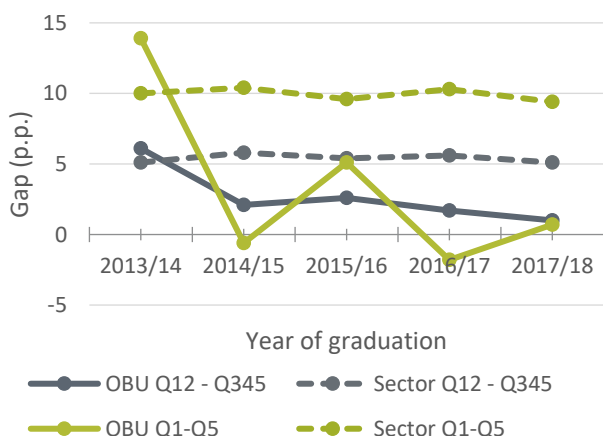
Graph 7:Gaps in degree outcomes by IMD quintiles - Brookes vs Sector
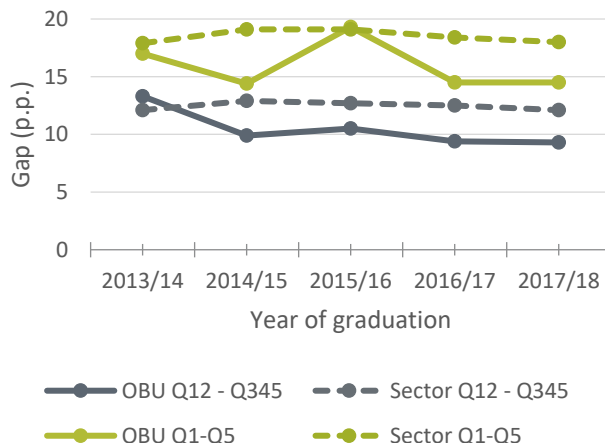
**Progression to highly skilled employment or higher-level study**

There is a gap in the proportions of students progressing to highly skilled employment or further study between students from POLAR Q1&2 and Q3-5, however the gap has narrowed in the most recent year from 7.6 p.p. in 2015/16 to 3.9 p.p. in 2016/17 (see graph 8). The gap is in line with the sector. In a separate multivariate analyses we found that, when controlling for subject of study, there is no substantial progression gap (highly skilled/graduate outcomes) between students from high and low participation neighbourhoods.

There is, however, a substantial and statistically significant gap in the proportions of students progressing to highly skilled employment or further study from IMD Q1&2, and particularly IMD Q1 (see graph 9). This gap persists even when controlling for subject of study and degree outcomes. Logistic regression results show that, even when taking differences in these factors into account, young students from areas of the highest deprivation (IMD Q1&2) are 39% less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study than IMD Q3-leavers

Graph 8: Gaps in progression by POLAR quintiles - Brookes vs Sector
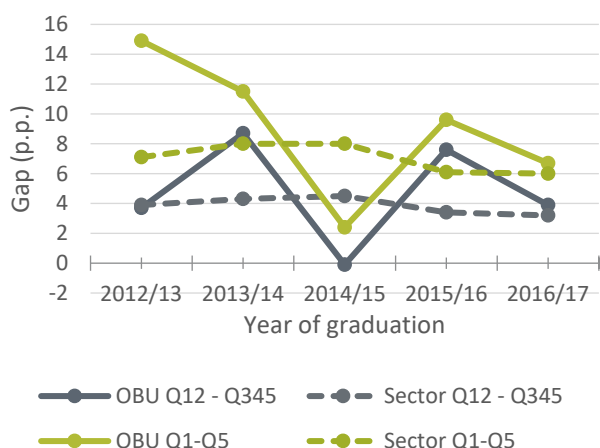
Graph 9: Gaps in progression by IMD quintiles - Brookes vs Sector
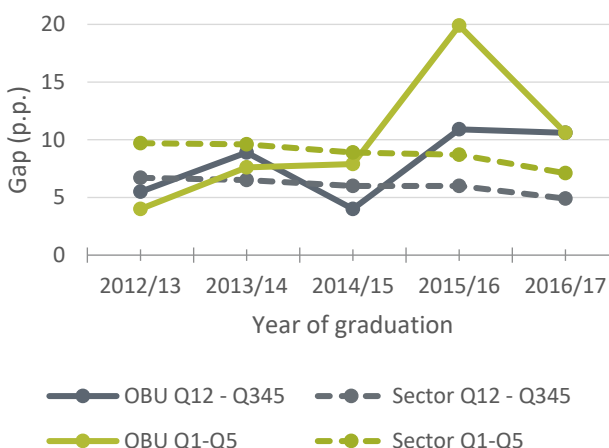
1.2   Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

The historic data for Oxford Brookes set out below shows that there has been a relatively flat position in terms of the overall proportions of applicants from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, with applications from Black and Asian students declining over the period, compared with a growth in applications from White students (see graph 10). The resulting gap is predominantly based on lower proportions of Black and Asian entrants than are observed in the sector, as shown in graph 11.

Graph 10: Proportions of Oxford Brookes applicants by ethnic group
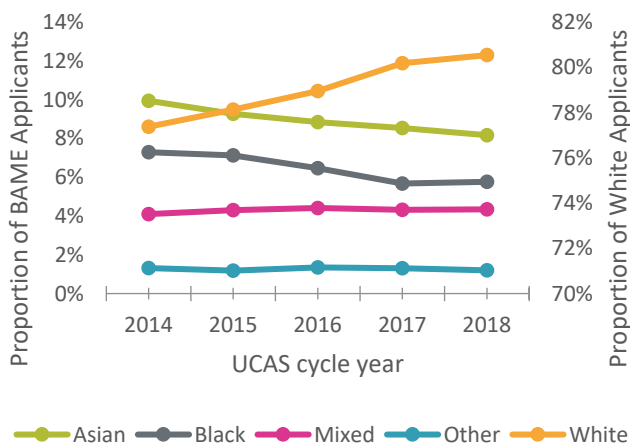
Graph 11: Proportions of black, Asian and BAME entrants - Brookes vs Sector

4
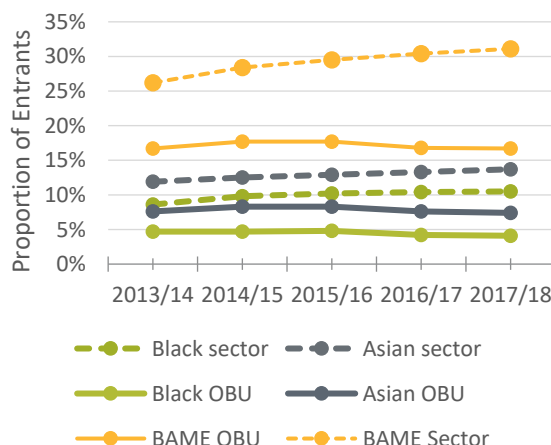
Success

Non-continuation

Our analysis of four-year trends in the non-continuation rates of White and other ethnic groups did not identify any gaps between different ethnic groups. Furthermore, in the TEF year four contextual data sets for Oxford Brookes University, the core metrics for continuation of BAME students and of each individual ethnic group, are significantly above benchmark. This is evidence that the University's performance on this metric is strong when controlling for a number of other characteristics.

Attainment

Analysis of attainment for each of the different ethnic groups indicates that there is a sustained gap over the analysis period for BAME students (see graph 12). The data shows that, when disaggregated, the significant gaps exist for Black and Asian students. The gap in performance for students from the 'other' category is based on a very small number (15) for the final year of analysis. Analysis against sector data (see graph 13) shows that the gap in attainment is not dissimilar to the average as set out in the chart below.
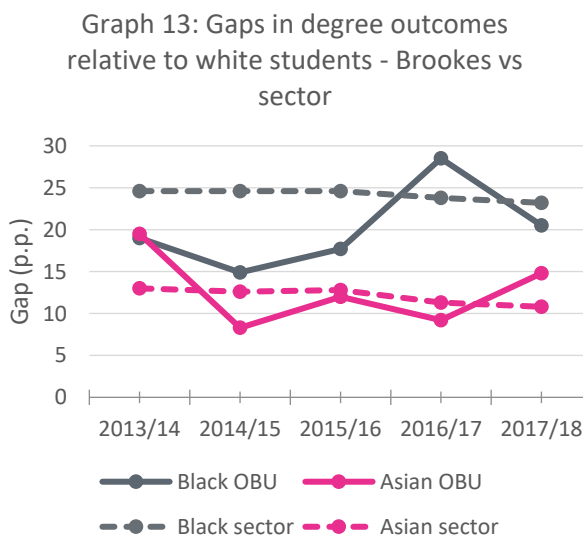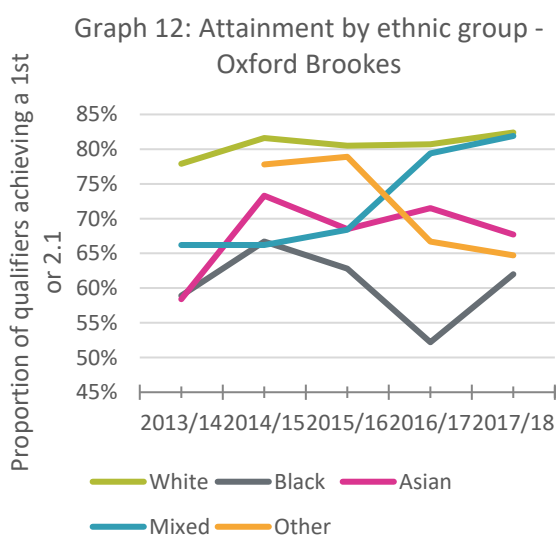

Graph 12: Attainment by ethnic group - Oxford Brookes

Graph 13: Gaps in degree outcomes relative to white students - Brookes vs sector

Grade Point Average and detailed module results

Since the Grade Point Average (GPA) was introduced at Oxford Brookes in 2013/14 we have been systematically conducting statistical analyses to examine if there are any substantial gaps in detailed module results of underrepresented student groups. Unlike the traditional degree classification, our GPA calculation includes module results across all three years of an honours degree. The analysis highlighted significant differences in learning trajectories of BAME and White students. Students from ethnic minority groups have a lower overall mark as well as a lower level 4 and levels 5/6 average module mark than other students. However, the difference is small for level 4 results (lower by 1.26 points) and bigger for level 5/6 results (lower by 2.10 points). White students appear to make a much more substantial improvement at the later stages of their degree than our BAME students, resulting in an increased attainment gap in the second and final year of study. This gap is particularly high for Black compared with White students.

Progression to highly skilled employment or higher-level study

Our analysis identified substantial gaps in the proportions of students progressing to highly skilled employment or higher-level study between White and other ethnic groups. As demonstrated in graph 14, this gap has narrowed for the mixed/other ethnic group but has widened for Black students in the last two years. In a separate multivariate analysis we confirmed that there is a substantial progression gap between BAME and White students, even when controlling for subject of study. Logistic regression results show that, controlling for subject of study, Black students are 50% less likely to secure highly skilled employment or further study than their White peers; Asian students are 42% less likely.

In comparison to the sector (see graph 15), the gap in progression relative to White students has been higher for all ethnic groups for the past two years, particularly for graduates from Black and Asian ethnic groups.

Graph 14: Proportion of Brookes graduates in highly skilled employment or higher-level study by ethnic group
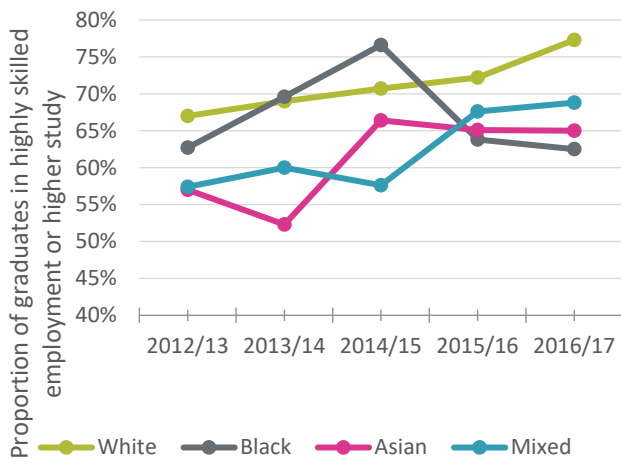
Graph 15: Gaps in progression relative to white students - Brookes vs sector
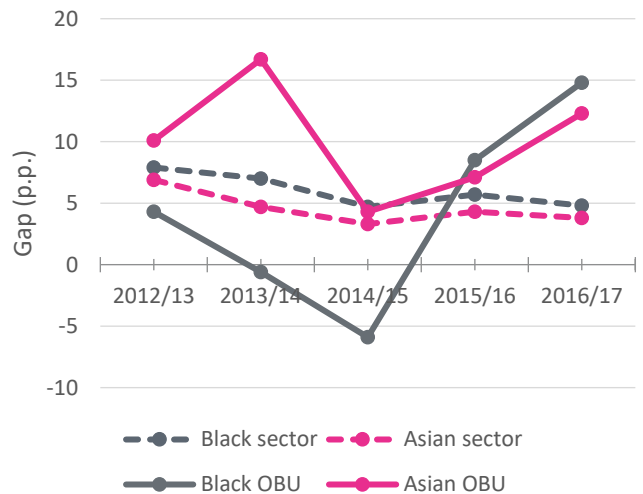
1.3   Mature students

Access

Oxford Brookes typically attracts a high number of mature students (aged over 21 on entry). While the proportion of mature UCAS applicants has been below the sector average for the past five years, our mature student entrant proportions have been above the sector average in recent years, but with a downturn in the latest cycles, largely as a result of a decline in applications and enrolments of mature students onto our Nursing programmes (see graph 16).

Graph 16: Proportion of entrants by age on entry - Brookes vs sector
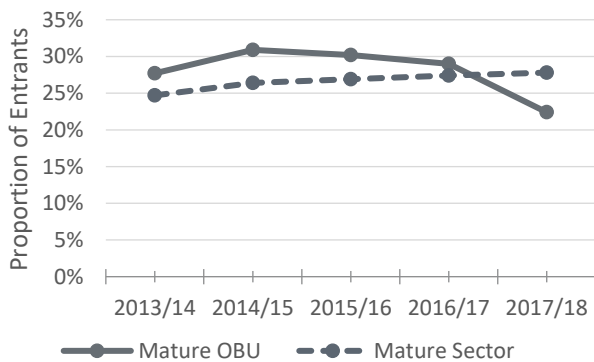
Graph 17: Continuation rates by age on entry - OBU and Sector
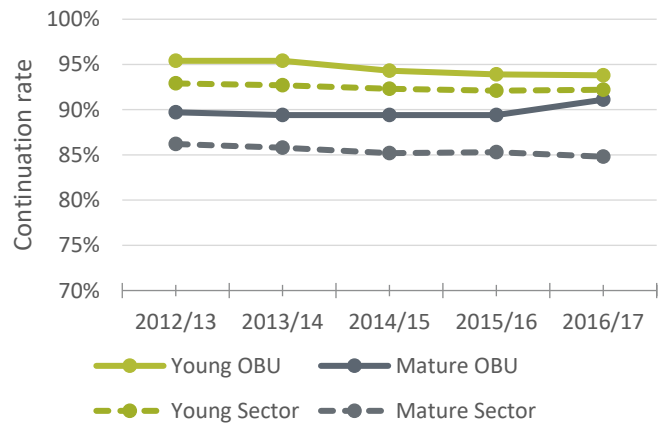
Success
Non-continuation

Our analysis identified a small gap in non-continuation rates between young and mature students, which has narrowed in recent years (see graph 17 above). In the TEF year four contextual data sets for Oxford Brookes University, the core metrics for continuation of mature students is significantly above benchmark. This suggests that performance on this metric is strong. Comparison with the sector confirms this analysis.

Attainment

Our analysis identified a substantial and significant gap in attainment between young and mature students. This gap has widened overall since 2012/13 although it has slightly narrowed in the most recent year (see graph 18). A separate multivariate analysis found that when controlling for subject of study, ethnicity and gender, the differences between young and mature qualifiers are statistically significant (logistic regression results show that, when taking into account differences in these controlling factors, mature students are 31% less likely to get a first or upper

second class degree than their younger peers). However, when also controlling for entry tariff (in addition to the factors mentioned above), the differences in attainment by age are no longer statistically significant. This suggests that differences in mature vs young attainment could be explained by the difference in their average entry tariff (around 130 points for young entrants vs 112 points for mature entrants). It is important to note that a sizeable proportion (over half) of mature students come with a non-tariffable qualification (while tariff is known on average for over 96% of young cohorts). This sizeable group had to be excluded from this analysis. While this analysis suggests that age might not be the primary factor driving the results of this group, we remain committed to reducing the gap at the University.

Analysis against sector data shows that the gap in attainment is not dissimilar to the sector average.
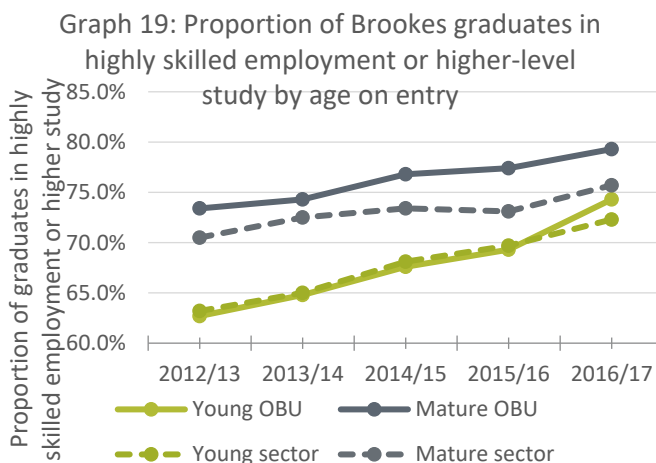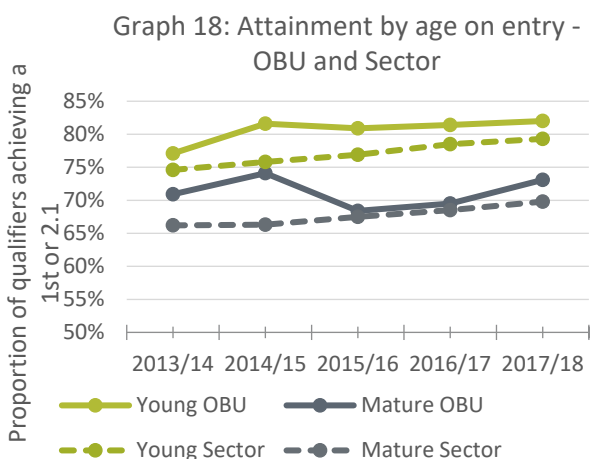
Graph 18: Attainment by age on entry - OBU and Sector

Graph 19: Proportion of Brookes graduates in highly skilled employment or higher-level study by age on entry

Progression to highly skilled employment or higher-level study
Our analysis identified a gap in the proportion of students progressing to highly skilled employment or further study. However, outcomes of mature students have been consistently better than those of young students in the past five years (see graph 19 above). Furthermore, in the TEF year four contextual data sets for Oxford Brookes University, there is a positive flag for performance against sector benchmarks for the 'Highly skilled employment and further study' metric for progression of mature students. This position is borne out by the performance relative to the sector which shows a consistent positive gap.

1.4   Disabled students

Access
The proportion of applicants with a declared disability has increased every year in the past five years from 10.7% in the 2014 UCAS cycle year to 14.9% in the 2018 cycle. The proportions of Oxford Brookes applicants and entrants have been consistently above the sector average in the past five years (see graph 20).

Graph 20: Proportions of Brookes entrants by disability type/status

Legend:
- Cognitive or Learning Difficulties
- Mental Health Condition
- Sensory, Medical or Physical Impairment
- Multiple Impairments
- Social or Communication Impairment
- Any known disability OBU
- Any known disability Sector
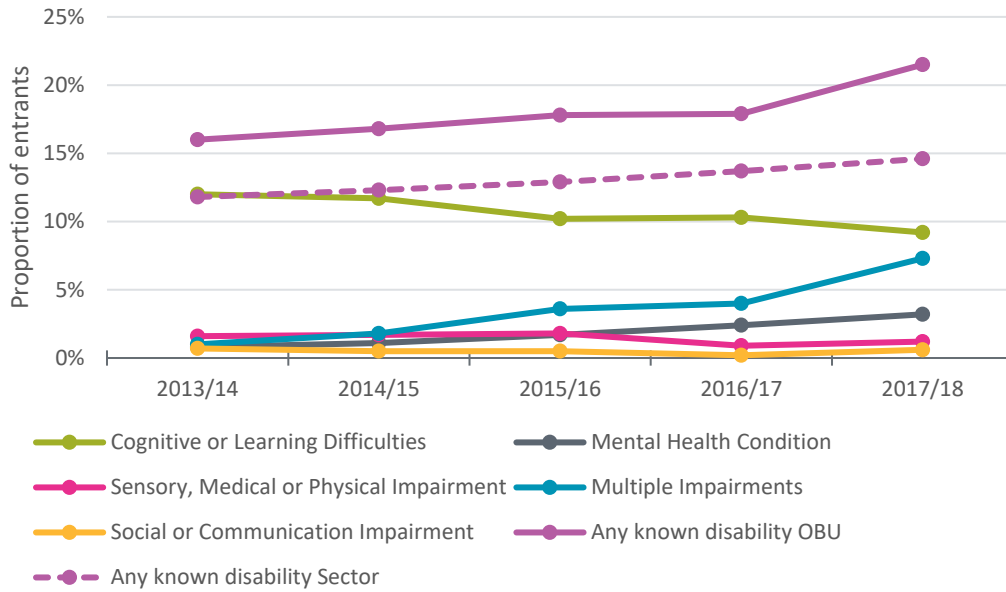
Success

Non-continuation

Our analysis identified some differences in non-continuation rates for students with sensory, medical and or physical disabilities (see graph 21). Overall, the analysis did not identify a consistent gap in continuation rates between students with a known disability and those with no known disability, with continuation rates being slightly higher than sector (see graph 22).

Graph 21: Brookes continuation rates by disability type

Legend:
- CognitiveAndLearning
- MentalHealth
- SensoryMedicalAndPhysical
- MultipleImpairments
- NoKnownDisabilityType
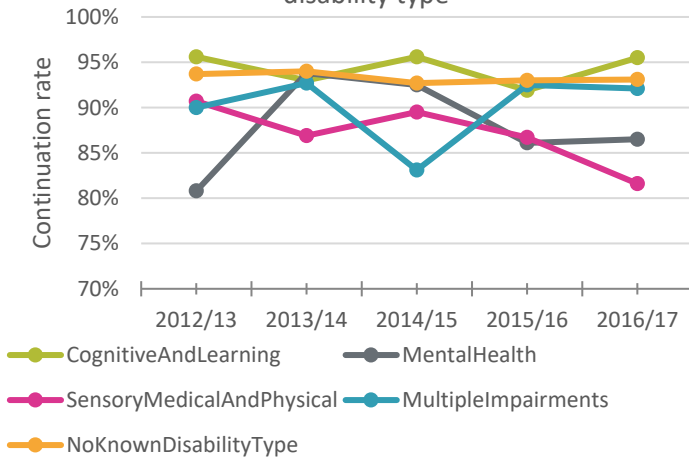
Graph 22: Continuation rates disability status - Brookes vs sector

Legend:
- No known disability OBU
- Disabled OBU
- No known disability sector
- Disabled sector
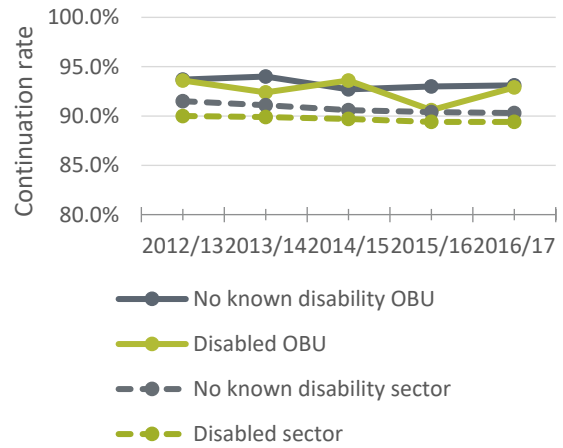
Attainment

The gap in degree outcomes between students with a known disability and those with no known disability has varied in the past five years and there is variability according to disability type (see graph 24). However, the outcomes of Oxford Brookes disabled students exceed those of the sector (see graph 23).

8

Graph 23: Attainment by disability status - OBU vs sector

Proportion of qualifiers achieving a 1st or 2.1

Legend:
- No known disability OBU
- Disabled OBU
- No known disability Sector
- Disabled Sector
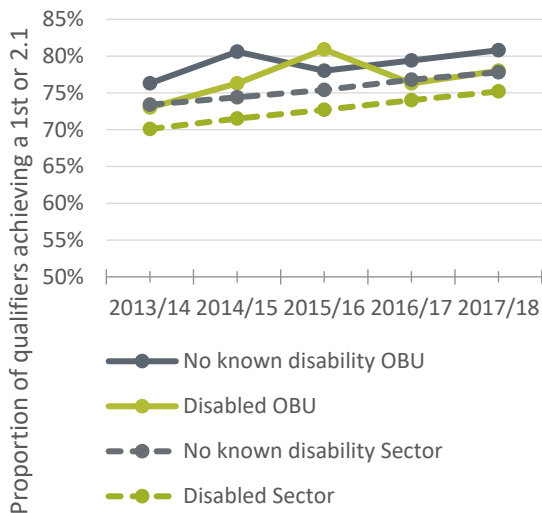
Graph 24: Attainment by disability type - Oxford Brookes

Proportion of qualifiers achieving a 1st or 2.1

Legend:
- CognitiveAndLearning
- MentalHealth
- SensoryMedicalAndPhysical
- MultipleImpairments
- NoKnownDisabilityType
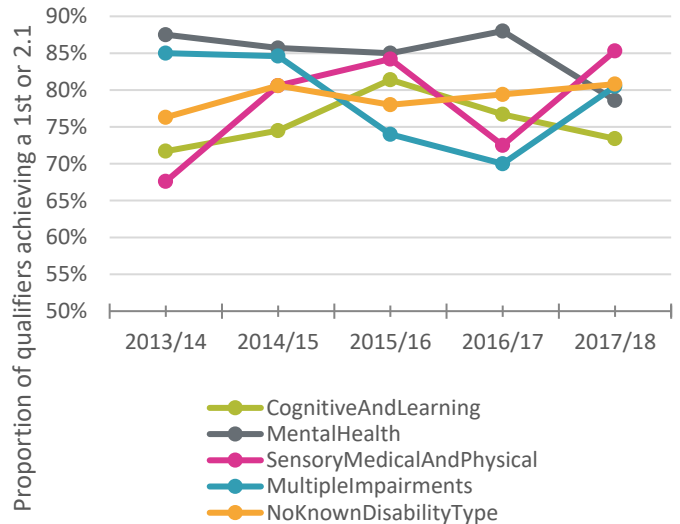
Progression to highly skilled employment or higher-level study

Our internal analysis did not identify a significant gap in the proportions of students progressing to highly skilled employment or higher-level study between students with a known or no known disability until last year, when those with a known disability showed a lower level of progression for the first time (see graph 25). The University will continue to monitor this area to see whether the performance reverts in the next available metrics.

Graph 25: Proportion of Brookes graduates in highly skilled employment or higher-level study by age on entry

Proportion of graduates in highly skilled employment or higher study

Legend:
- No known disability OBU
- Disabled OBU
- No known disability Sector
- Disabled Sector
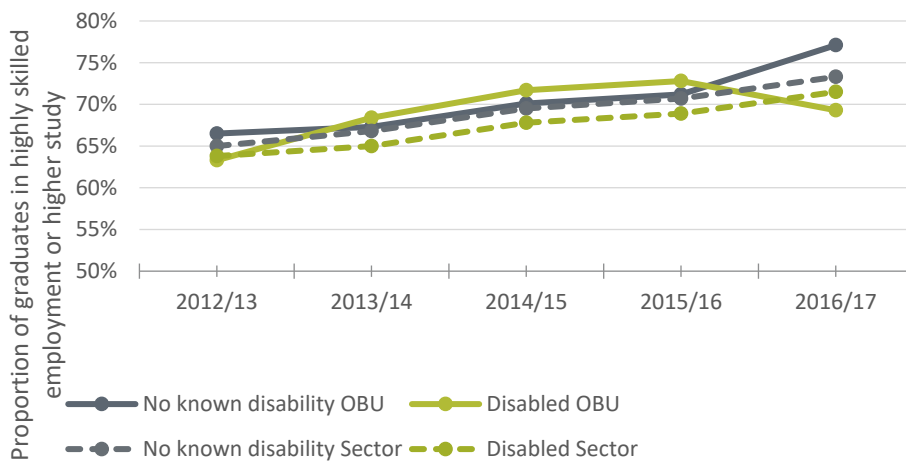
1.5   Care leavers

As shown below, we recruit small numbers of students who have come from a care background.

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Proportion of Care Leavers	0.5%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%
Care leaver entrants	19	30	34	31	33

We have some preliminary insights based on three-year aggregations of data, which indicate that care leavers may be underperforming in the attainment metric. However, due to the small populations it would not be meaningful to draw conclusions or carry out in-depth analysis, but we will continue to monitor the group's performance.

	First year retention	Proportion of qualifiers achieving a 1st or 2.1	Proportion of graduates progressing to highly skilled employment or higher-level study
Non-care leavers	90.7%	79.3%	72.5%
Care leaver	88.2%	58.1%	75.0%
Care leavers base population (N)	93	31	28

1.6   Intersections of disadvantage

The analysis of access at the intersection of socio-economic disadvantage and ethnicity shows that the University consistently recruits significantly higher proportions of White students from Q3,4&5 than any other group (see graph 26). Although this pattern is reflective of the overall sector position, the gaps at the University are significantly more pronounced. White 'working class' students are underrepresented at Oxford Brookes compared to the sector when measured by both IMD and POLAR. Analysis of the data shows that only 14% of the total White student population are from IMD Q1&2 compared with 40% of BAME students.

Graph 26: Proportion of Brookes entrants by IMD quintile and Ethnicity
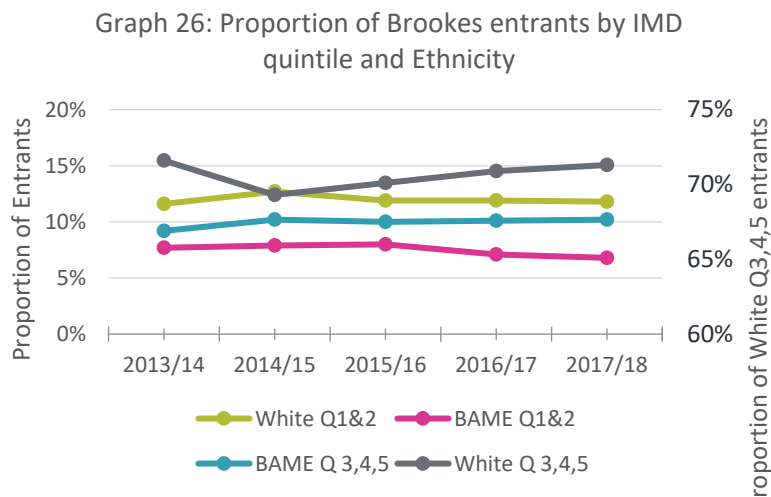
The gaps in good degree outcomes between White students from areas of high deprivation (IMD Q1&Q2) and their counterparts (IMD Q3-5) have narrowed from 9.2 p.p. in 2013/14 to 5.0 p.p. in 2017/18. However, the good degree outcomes of BAME students from IMD Q1&Q2 as well as BAME students from IMD Q3-Q5 have been at least 5 p.p. below that of their White counterparts for the past three years (see graph 27). The BAME IMD Q1&Q2 group is the only group to have seen a drop in good degree outcomes since 2015/16.

Graph 27: Attainment by IMD quintile and ethnicity - Oxford Brookes

10
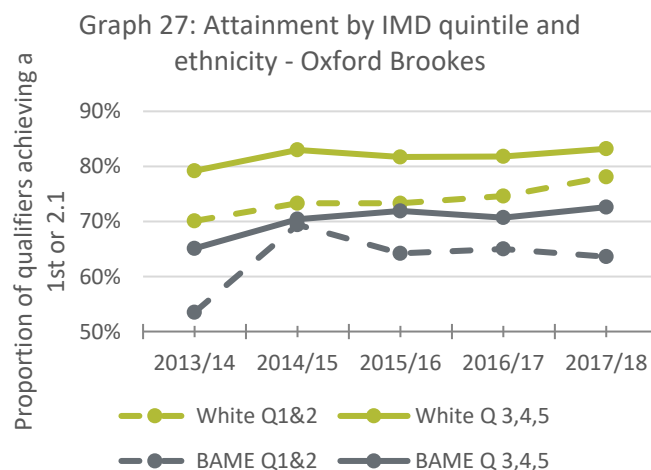
Our analysis identified a substantial difference in progression to highly skilled employment or higher study between students from IMD Q1&Q2 and IMD Q3-5, particularly in the last two years. The progression outcomes of all BAME students are lower than those of their White counterparts, with BAME IMD Q1&Q2 students having had consistently poorer outcomes than all other groups and being the only group to have shown a decline since 2014/15.

Graph 28 Proportion of Brookes graduates in highly skilled employment or higher-level study by IMD quintile and ethnicity
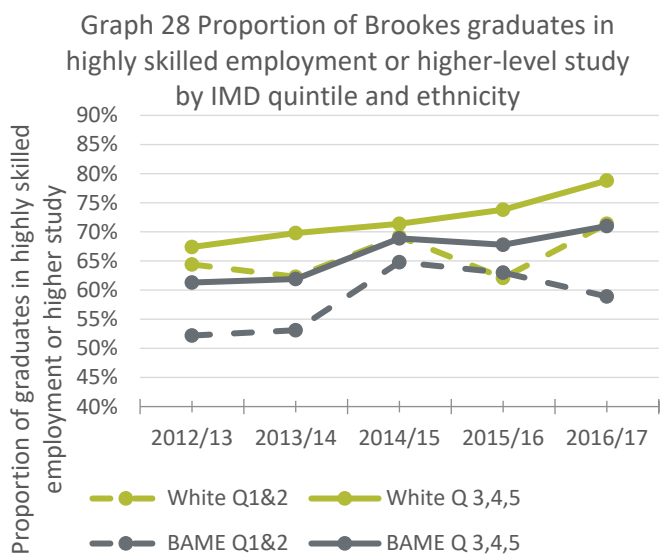
2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

On the basis of the self-assessment detailed above, the following groups will be targeted at specific stages of their life-cycle:

1. Students from the least represented group (POLAR4 Q1 & Q2): Access
2. English IMD Q1 & 2: Access and progression
3. Black and Asian students: Access, attainment and progression
4. Care leavers: Access

We will also monitor a number of areas where currently gaps are either small (with respect to our priority areas), where new gaps have emerged only very recently, or where data is unreliable due to very low numbers. On this basis we will monitor: (1) continuation and progression of the least represented groups (POLAR4 Q1 & 2); (2) attainment of students from English IMD Q1 & 2; (3) access and attainment of mature students, particularly at the intersection with ethnicity; (4) continuation (particularly for students with a declared disability due to mental health or a sensory, medical or physical condition), attainment (particularly for students with cognitive or learning disability) and progression for students with a declared disability; and (5) attainment levels of care leavers. Specific action plans will be developed and implemented where necessary.

2.2 Aims and objectives

Oxford Brookes University aims to support the access, success and progression of students from our local and regional communities, ensuring that our student body is representative of the communities that we serve.

In setting out the strategic aims below we have focused on those areas we believe will make the most contribution to unexplained gaps at a national level, as well as those gaps which will support the achievement of our institutional strategic aims.

A1. To ensure all students with the potential to succeed at Oxford Brookes University have equality of access.

O1. To reduce the gap in entrants between the least and most represented groups (POLAR4 Q1 and Q5) from a ratio of 5.7 to 4 by 2024/25.

O2. To increase the proportion of entrants from low socioeconomic areas (IMD Q1) from 7.3% to 13% by 2024/25.

O3. To increase the proportion of entrants from Black and Asian ethnicities to 10% and 12% respectively by 2024/25.

O4. To increase the proportion of entrants who are care leavers from under 1%. Due to ongoing work with local stakeholders we will be in a better position to set a target for this objective in summer 2020.

A2. To ensure equality of opportunity for all students enrolled at Oxford Brookes University

O5. To reduce the gap in degree outcome between Black and White students from 20.4pp to 10pp by 2024/2025.

O6. To reduce the gap in degree outcome between Asian and White students from 14.7pp to 7pp by 2024/2025.

O7. To reduce the gap in progression to highly skilled employment or further study between Black and White students from 14.8pp to 8pp by 2024/2025.

O8. To reduce the gap in progression to highly skilled employment or further study between Asian and White students from 12.3pp to 6pp by 2024/2025.

O9. To reduce the gap in progression to highly skilled employment or further study between students from low and high socioeconomic backgrounds from 10.6pp to 5pp.

The above objectives focus on quantifying the progress we intend to make over the duration of the 2020/21 to 2024/25 plan, which constitute a first step in our ambition to contribute fully to the sector improvement as set out in the OfS KPMs. Beyond this plan our goal is to be fully in line with an improved sector performance and we will be able to quantify this ambition fully in the 2025/26 to 2030/31 access and participation plan.

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overview

The University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy 2018-2022 sets out the overarching aims to bring about progress for our staff and students, with a focus on the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010. In addition, the University's Race Equality Strategy 2018-2025 sets out more specifically how the University will progress equality of opportunity and enhance inclusivity for our BAME staff and students. The work outlined in this Access and Participation Plan shows how the University will deliver improvement for identified under-represented groups of qualifying students, on qualifying courses. Whilst there is some discrete ground in terms of scope and audience of each of these strategies, there is also a large degree of overlap. A critical role in ensuring coordination and integration of these various strategies is through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group. This group, which is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, brings together key stakeholders with lead cross-institutional responsibility for key areas such as student experience, access and participation, staff development and student welfare. Future iterations of our EDI and Race Equality Strategies will be considered by this group in light of the commitments set out in our Access and Participation Plan.

A number of common themes run through each of these strategies and the Access and Participation Plan. This increases visibility and awareness of these priorities and enables opportunities to be more fully exploited. For example, under the EDI Strategy a number of initiatives are being progressed to diversify our staff body and to improve career progression for BAME staff. This includes efforts to diversify the Governing Body through targeted recruitment to vacancies. The under-representation of BAME academic staff, particularly at senior level, has repeatedly been identified by our own student body and in the wider sector as a barrier to access and attainment for BAME students. This EDI initiative therefore fully supports the aims set out in the Access and Participation Plan. The

EDI strategy also sets out the commitment to improve awareness and understanding of privilege, under-representation and unconscious bias to support the culture change needed to fulfil the objectives of the Access and Participation and Race Equality Strategies. As a first step in this direction we are currently providing mandatory implicit bias and inclusive practice training for all staff in the University, including our Governing Body. To enhance our EDI work and to support the realisation of the EDI and Race Equality Strategies, as well as the Access and Participation plan, we are embedding Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) in our curriculum development work and have a process in place to ensure that all staff and student facing policies go through an EIA at the stage of development or review.

We are developing our curriculum to provide a range of entry routes into degree level study. This includes broadening our range of foundation years and looking at ways to promote these as alternative routes to study for students who may not achieve our usual tariff. Our current foundation years are successful at recruiting a more diverse student intake, particularly BAME and disabled students, and our consultation with students shows this can be a valuable route in developing academic skills and confidence for many students. Our foundation years sit within a much wider range of alternative routes into higher education, which includes successful recruitment from Access to HE diplomas. We have a rapidly developing portfolio of higher and degree apprenticeships that are successfully recruiting a diverse range of students both on campus, through our partners, and through 'on-site' delivery. Our long-standing Associate College Partnership provides a wide variety of routes into higher education for students who have less traditional academic backgrounds. This includes foundation degrees, apprenticeships, and Level 6 'top-ups' that provide progression routes from a range of intermediate qualifications. All have curriculum and pedagogy designed for students who wish to combine work and study. We continue to work with our partners to ensure that we are developing flexible provision at a variety of Levels and entry points that meets the needs of employers and students looking for an alternative route through to higher education. We are a partner in the successful Institute of Technology bid led by Swindon College and play an active role in strategic developments in education in Oxfordshire, Swindon and Wiltshire, where our campuses are based. We engage actively in both the Oxfordshire, and Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).

Over the last year we have also been engaged in a review of our market position with a particular emphasis on understanding the perceptions that drive the behaviour of potential and actual applicants. This work has provided valuable insights that are now feeding into the development of our University strategy and our brand identity both of which will clearly emphasise the institution's commitment to inclusion and diversity.

Strategic measures

ACCESS

Sustained and targeted outreach (A1: O1-4)
We will continue to deliver an evidence-based programme of sustained outreach activity. In previous years we have based our offer to schools and colleges on sector examples of effective practice and have concentrated on developing sustained relationships with schools. Through our use of HEAT we know that participation in our outreach activities improves the chances of students from low participation areas progressing to higher education. For example, 26% of our POLAR3 Q 1 and 2 outreach cohort progressed to higher education, compared to a comparative local young participation rate of just 18% (Oxfordshire POLAR Q1&2 areas). We have not placed sufficient focus on evaluation that allows us to understand what works and why; we therefore have limited evidence of the impact of particular initiatives. Our strategic measures in this area continue to be based on evidence of effective practice from the sector, as well as the evidence we do have from our own activities. In section 3.3 we set out the significant work we are undertaking to improve our evaluation activity and to ensure that evidence of impact informs the continuous improvement of our interventions.

Our outreach work will have the following four strands:

1. We will continue to deliver a large-scale sustained outreach programme for targeted sixth form and college learners aimed at supporting the transition to Oxford Brookes. From 2020-21 we will extend recruitment to this programme to the wider geographical area covered by our school partnerships strategy. Participants will be targeted based on individual and local indicators of under-representation.

   There is well-documented evidence (e.g. HEAT 2018) that sustained contact with targeted students has the most impact on their progression to higher education. We have delivered two sustained outreach programmes targeted at sixth form and college learners for a number of years. Evaluation of both programmes shows that approximately 30% of participants applied to Oxford Brookes with around 20% enrolling. Where we engaged participants from schools without a history of applications to Oxford Brookes, these conversion rates were maintained. This indicates that we will increase our recruitment by widening the geography of our programme to areas without historical progression to Oxford Brookes.

2. We will continue to implement our school and college partnerships strategy: to establish meaningful and sustained partnerships with institutions with a relatively high proportion of BAME students, and/or students from low participation areas and low socioeconomic areas who we believe will be interested in, and benefit from, an Oxford Brookes education. We will continue to sponsor The Oxford Academy, an 11-19 Academy that serves areas of low HE participation in Oxford. Half of students are eligible for free school meals and a quarter receive SEN support.

   Historically, Oxford Brookes University has delivered significant levels of local outreach activity to increase progression to higher education from areas of low participation. This approach has not been successful in tackling the underrepresentation of some student groups at Oxford Brookes. This is due to the demographics of our local area limiting our ability to reach some student groups, as well as a limit on the number of students interested in attending their local university. In September 2018 we launched a new partnership offer to a wider range of schools and colleges. This is based on extensive research with an external partner to identify those schools and colleges that have large populations of students currently underrepresented at Oxford Brookes. Our research into the perceptions of Oxford Brookes among students in a wider geographic region shows that these views are often developed through the lens of our location rather than through accurate awareness of our strengths or the nature of our portfolio. Building sustained relationships with schools and colleges in parallel with targeted campaigns to raise awareness of the inclusive nature of Oxford Brookes will allow us to tackle one of the first barriers identified in our theory of change – that of awareness and perceptions of belonging.

3. We will deliver a tailored programme of support for mature students entering university-level study for the first time. This activity will be targeted predominantly at Access to HE learners, adult community learners, and adults in employment within Oxfordshire, Swindon and Wiltshire. While we do not have a specific objective related to mature students, there are significant intersections with ethnicity (Black and Asian) that mean increased recruitment of mature students would result in increases in the proportion of BAME students.

   It is well documented that mature learners approach the decision to enter higher education differently to young learners (e.g. MillionPlus 2018). We recognise the importance of tailored support for mature students and have put in place a specific named advisor who works closely with our admissions and transitions teams to support mature students from enquiry through to enrolment and beyond. In 2018-19 we also began to pilot a programme of more focussed initiatives aimed at increasing the number of applications from mature students. A new evaluation plan is in place for these activities and we will continue to refine and improve our offer using sector evidence and learning from our evaluation.

4. We will continue to contribute to collaborative outreach, predominantly through our role as the lead institution on the Study Higher UniConnect Partnership. This plays a key part in our local and regional strategy to support our communities. The University is committed to delivering the aims, and related targets, of Study Higher in collaboration with its key partners: Buckinghamshire New University, University of

Oxford and the University of Reading. The aim of the Study Higher NCOP is to increase progression to higher education from target wards by 3% between 2016 and 2021. We will work through Study Higher to ensure our targeted outreach work is promoted through the developing Outreach Hub. From 2023 we will work with Study Higher to contribute to collaborative, effective delivery of attainment raising activity.

Attainment Raising

Overall, attainment at age 16 in Oxfordshire is at or above the national average when looking at attainment 8 and the proportion of students with English and Maths at Grade 5. Similarly the proportion of KS2 students meeting the expected standard is in line with the national rates. However, this overall level of attainment is achieved in the context of a significant disadvantage gap. As is the case nationally, the educational outcomes gap for students on FSM starts early and continues through education. The attainment of pupils in Oxfordshire with SEND support and those eligible for FSM at EYFS falls below the national levels, and this continues into KS1. Progression into higher education reveals similar levels of inequality, with Polar4 Q1 having some of the lowest progression rates nationally.

As a University, we already deliver significant activity to support the attainment of students earlier in their educational journey.

Educational effectiveness is particularly important for the attainment of children from low household incomes (e.g. Goldstein et al. 2007) and yet we know that disadvantaged pupils are least likely to attend high performing schools (Education Policy Institute 2017). As a provider of initial teacher education and broader undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Education, Oxford Brookes plays a key role in the provision of high quality teaching, particularly at Primary stage. Just under half of our graduating teachers work in Oxfordshire, with 75% remaining in the wider region after graduation.

Our sustained partnerships with schools deliver a progressive outreach programme that includes activities focussed on metacognition, study skills and oracy; these are areas of intervention where the likelihood of positive impact on educational attainment is supported by significant sector evidence. Our evaluation shows that our activities have a positive impact on participants' communication skills and confidence in study skills. By 2023 we will launch a student advisory panel which will bring together level 3 students to inform the development and design of our outreach activities.

We are actively involved in the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership, with senior Oxford Brookes University staff on the steering groups and workstrands. The partnership has a workstrand specifically focussed on educational attainment and increasing the number of children who are KS3 ready at age 16.

In autumn 2022 we will launch a new Parent Power project in partnership with the Brilliant Club. Parents and carers have a strong influence on attainment which can be influenced both by their own education (Chowdry et al. 2009) and their approaches to parenting and level of engagement in their child's education. The Brilliant Club Parent Power project is based on a theory of change that supports parents to become more engaged in their child's education and act as higher education champions through increased knowledge and confidence. Parental Engagement has been identified as one of the priority areas of focus to improve academic attainment within Oxfordshire. We will establish Parent Power groups in East Oxford and North Oxfordshire, which are both areas that have lower educational attainment for disadvantaged students and low progression to higher education.

We believe there is more that we can do, building on our existing partnerships to combine expertise. We will develop an evidence-based theory of change to outline the ways in which we can contribute to reducing the attainment gap at 16 within our local area. We will prioritise the development of initiatives that have the potential to have a wider impact through scalable projects and robust evaluation that contributes to the sector's understanding

of what works. We will work closely with leaders of learning and teaching at schools in our region to develop further collaborative approaches to supporting pre-16 attainment.

Care Leavers
During 2019-20 we will review our approach to outreach with care leavers as part of our participation in the NNECL quality framework pilot. We will explore opportunities to collaborate with other local providers and key stakeholders, including through the Study Higher NCOP Outreach Hub. We will develop a strategy to support the access, success and progression of care leavers to be implemented from the 2020-21 academic year and will publish this on our website. We will set a target for care leaver entrants by summer 2020.

Contextual admissions (A1: O1-4)
For all target groups under A1 our theory of change has identified the need for a greater proportion of students to meet the conditions of an offer from Oxford Brookes. We therefore need to ensure that we have a transparent admissions policy that effectively identifies individual potential. For the 2020 admissions cycle we will develop a contextual admissions policy that uses individual level indicators that sector evidence shows are valid measures of educational context. We will publish a contextual offer for each programme which reflects the minimum level of attainment required to enable success on the course. Indicatively this could be as much as a 3 grade A level reduction for a course that has typical entry requirements of 120 UCAS points. Using the new WP indicators collected by UCAS, we will make unconditional offers to care leavers who are predicted to achieve the minimum level of attainment. Students who have completed our sustained outreach programme will also be eligible for a contextual offer as part of a package of support to aid their transition. We set out below the measures we will take to support students who enter Oxford Brookes with a contextual offer.

In order to support the continued recruitment of mature students, by the 2021 application cycle we will also develop a framework for considering non-tariffed qualifications and alternative experience as part of the admissions process. We will work with our local FE colleges to develop progression agreements from Access to HE diplomas onto appropriate degree courses, delivered both on campus and through our Associate College Partners.

Financial support (A1: O1 - O4 A2:O1)
Evaluation of our current bursary demonstrates that it has had a levelling effect on retention rates between recipients and their peers, a finding that is supported by sector evidence (Nursaw 2015). However, the current eligibility criteria have not been effective at ensuring financial support reaches students from areas of low participation and low socioeconomic backgrounds. We know that these students are more likely to apply for financial aid once enrolled, indicating an overall shortfall in the funding they need to meet their living costs. We also recognise the evidence that suggests that financial support can engender a sense of belonging between recipients and the institution. This sector evidence was echoed by current Oxford Brookes students who shared their experiences at a recent consultation session. There was a strong theme of financial support enabling choice for students where that may otherwise be limited.

In addition, effectively targeted financial support is a strategic measure that will enable us to make progress against our access targets. Analysis of our decliners' and clearing surveys indicates that cost and funding related factors are more important in decision making to BAME students and those applying with vocational qualifications; both indicators that intersect with our target groups for Access. There is sector evidence that shows that concerns over funding drive students from low household incomes or low socioeconomic areas to choose universities that are closer to home, or where the cost of living can be supported through easy to access part-time work (Nursaw 2015). A central tenet of our Access strategy is to position Oxford Brookes as an attractive proposition to students beyond our traditional geography. Recent consultation with current students has confirmed that the cost of living in Oxford remains a significant barrier to choosing Oxford Brookes, where living costs are perceived to be higher than comparable universities. Research recently commissioned by Oxford Brookes with Youthsight identified that teachers in low participation schools consider financial concerns to be the biggest concern for their pupils. Particular barriers were identified in relation to the cost of visiting universities, and the ability to consider moving further away from home.

We will invest £5.8m in financial support in 2020-21, under the following schemes.

The Oxford Brookes Bursary will be targeted at students with low household incomes, with enhanced bursaries for students from low participation areas or low socioeconomic areas and for mature students. The objectives of this bursary are:

1. To address the (real and perceived) barrier of cost of living in order to support the recruitment of students from underrepresented groups
2. To maintain successful retention of students from underrepresented groups
3. To increase a sense of belonging at Oxford Brookes among recipients

In keeping with objective 3 above, we will also provide a number of targeted awards as part of sustained packages of support. We will introduce financial support for those who participate in our sustained outreach programmes, aimed at supporting their set-up and transition into higher education. We will continue to award Community Scholarships to students who have overcome significant hardship and who meet a variety of widening participation indicators. In June 2019 we are piloting a targeted travel bursary for Open Day attendees. If effective, we will roll this out to future applicant events.

Finally we will continue to provide targeted support for groups of students who face specific financial barriers to accessing higher education. Through our signing of the 'Stand Alone Pledge' and our participation in the pilot Care Leavers' Quality Framework led by NNECL, as well as through engagement with our current students, we will continue to develop our understanding of how financial support can best support these students.

DEGREE OUTCOME (A2: O5 & O6)

In the action plan, submitted as part of our 2019/20 Access & Participation Plan, a number of actions were proposed aimed at the reduction and elimination of the degree outcome gap for Black and Asian students, which has also been identified as a strategic priority for the current plan (A2: O5 & O6). Many of these actions aim to address the challenges identified in the increasing evidence base that is now being accumulated[6]. While a substantial body of work to develop insight and interventions to address the BAME degree outcome gap is evident in the institution, partially as part of an institutional project to enhance the student experience, many of these initiatives did not incorporate an evaluation stage. As a result, there is little evidence from our own work that can guide and support the development of the strategic measures outlined below. As a consequence, we have drawn on sector evidence (UUK/NUS 2019) to inform our approach enabling us to implement initiatives that have been evaluated, while continuing to develop our understanding of the factors contributing to gaps in continuation and degree outcome in our own context.

We are in the process of developing further and implementing a range of the measures proposed in the action plan, all of which will be fully evaluated (see section 3.3) to guide the continued improvement of our approach. As such, strategic measures proposed in the current plan are a continuation/expansion of those developed initially for the action plan.

The immediate focus is to increase our understanding of our own context and to explore those factors that may contribute to the degree outcome gap. During the academic year 2019/20, we will conduct focus groups and interviews with students from BAME backgrounds but also those from other under-represented groups to explore their experiences and to understand potential barriers to benefitting fully from the academic experience. We will also implement and evaluate a range of pilot interventions, adapted from those that have been shown to be successful elsewhere (Singh 2011, Thomas 2012), in programmes where a degree outcome gap for Black and Asian students is evident. The evaluation of this pilot work will further inform our understanding of the context we work in while building examples of good practice that can be adopted more widely in the institution. We anticipate that a full evaluation of this work and the outcomes of the qualitative research will be available by summer 2021 with the former allowing us to achieve better quantification of the unexplained degree outcome gap for Black and Asian students. These analyses and the evaluation of the planned pilot interventions will enable us to fully review our degree outcome gap targets and our strategic and operational approach to the aims and objectives set out in section 3.1 by summer 2021.

There are also a number of broader initiatives that are being developed and/or implemented across the institution. As outlined originally in the action plan, we are progressing with the implementation of an Inclusive Curriculum

Framework and are currently testing and refining a 'toolkit' of best practice and an 'audit tool' to assist academic programmes with reflection and to provide an impetus for change. The toolkits will be available to programme teams in the next few months and will inform curriculum development and review. The framework will cover the full academic cycle from curriculum development to revalidation, including formulation of learning outcomes, methods of content delivery, diversity of curricular content, pedagogic approaches, assessment, and feedback. The aim of the framework is to ensure that the curriculum, as well as teaching and assessment methods, reflects the experiences of all students and that teaching, assessment and feedback methods provide opportunities for all students to engage with content in suitable ways.

To support the implementation of the inclusive curriculum framework, we are also developing a training programme for academic staff to increase familiarity with the concept of an inclusive curriculum and how to implement it.

The importance of a sense of belonging is a recurrent theme in studies exploring the barriers to success for BAME students (Stevenson et al 2019). In our own institution, as part of recent student consultations, the low proportion of BAME academics has been identified as one factor contributing to a feeling of 'otherness'. As outlined in section 3.1, we are taking active steps to increase the proportion of BAME academic staff and to enhance career development opportunities for existing staff. A lack of integration is another barrier reported by our BAME students, as well as those identifying as coming from socio-economically less advantaged backgrounds. This is of particular interest in our context, where we have a disproportionately large student body that is ethnically white and from more affluent backgrounds. To address this issue, we are developing a buddying system in which new starters are 'buddied up' with students who have experience with the degree course and the institution. This system will be put in place, initially in programmes with a large gap in degree outcomes, during the academic year 2019/20. Recognising the importance of relevant cultural experience, which was stressed during recent student consultations, we are aiming to 'buddy up' students from similar ethnic groups wherever possible. In addition, building on the work led by Manchester University under the 2018 HEFCE Catalyst bid, we are exploring the creation of networks for students and staff to create spaces for discussion around inclusivity and equal opportunities to push work on access and participation forward. We will capitalise on already existing networks, such as the BAME staff network and an emerging BAME student network. We are also exploring ways to provide increased opportunities for new starters to interact either with each other or with students who have been studying for some time. Such opportunities may exist during freshers' week, through student societies and sports clubs and as part of the curriculum delivery (e.g., group work). In all our activities we are committed to a model of co-creation; involving students actively in the development, enhancement and evaluation of initiatives and intervention.

As outlined above, we are developing a contextual admissions policy. To ensure that students who receive a contextual offer will succeed at Oxford Brookes University, we will provide an enhanced transition package focussed on building academic study skills, as well as facilitated early access to our study advice service, Upgrade. We will look to develop this initiative beyond the enrolment and induction phases of the student lifecycle, ensuring that transitional support is sustained and accessible throughout the educational journey. We will monitor the effectiveness of this approach in making progress towards our targets and with regard to the impact on individual students.

We are also currently developing a new mental health strategy and are in active discussions with one of our local NHS Trusts to improve student access to psychological therapies.

As part of the strategic measures we are also developing further our approach to the provision and use of data. On an institutional level we are developing an attainment-related KPI that reflects 'value added'. Such an approach has been developed and successfully implemented by Kingston University (McDuff 2019). The KPI will be embedded in the University planning cycle to monitor progress with the attainment work at a Faculty and departmental level. As part of this work, and using a new data warehouse that has been commissioned, we will develop a programme-level dashboard, covering the full student life-cycle, that will provide information on a range of KPIs, including the analysis of success and progression gaps for specific student groups. The dashboard will allow programme teams to actively monitor performance of different groups of students thus providing the necessary basis for reflection and action. This approach will be embedded in the University's quality processes such as annual reviews, programme reviews and re-validations. As part of the data warehouse development we are also implementing a learning analytics package that will enable students and academic advisors to track engagement and performance. Together with work to enhance the academic advisor system this data tool can function as an 'early warning system' that will allow

academic advisors and students to engage in a meaningful way and to potentially determine particular support needs.

PROGRESSION (A2: O7-9)

A growing body of evidence demonstrates a correlation between effective targeted careers provision, social mobility, attainment and improved graduate outcome (UPP Foundation 2018). Historically we have taken an inclusive approach to the delivery of Careers activity but, as noted above, targeted approaches add value. Recent investment in resource and some changes to the focus of existing roles have enabled our Careers team to form a cross-team working group with direct responsibility for developing targeted interventions that address barriers to progression and graduate level employment for under-represented groups. Led by the Head of Careers, the working group includes a Careers Consultant, Data Analyst, Employer Engagement Managers and the Volunteer Coordinator.

Inclusive approach
We will ensure that all our Careers materials reflect best practice in the use of representative language, diverse case studies, role models and examples. We will undertake an audit of current materials and resources to be completed by the end of 2019 and will use this to inform the development of future resources and to enable this approach to be embedded and on-going.

Professional work experience
The importance of professional experience in improving graduate outcomes is well documented. A recent survey (Bright Network 2018) shows 62% of BAME students plan to start a graduate job straight after university, 7% higher than the overall average when compared to data on White students or broken down by gender. Despite this ambition, lack of knowledge of the labour market and not undertaking professional work experience are cited as possible causes for the gap in BAME students accessing graduate level roles. A number of our programmes offer professional work experience opportunities where students choose to undertake it, but there has been no formal evaluation of uptake patterns across different groups of students or the impact of the experience on progression into highly skilled employment. Any future interventions will be fully evaluated to support the continuous improvement of our activities.

We will support targeted students to access professional work experience, increasing the uptake among underrepresented groups. Through specialist employer engagement roles we will increase the number of accessible opportunities for professional work experience. In support of this, in 2019/20 we will pilot a programme of workshops targeted at all groups of underrepresented students detailed in section 2.1. These workshops will focus on developing students' awareness of employability skills and personal development, knowledge and understanding of the opportunities open to them, application techniques, confidence and resilience. To evaluate this programme we will enhance our current suite of monitoring and feedback processes by using a more comprehensive approach, including qualitative methods for assessing learning gain and impact. This analysis will be used to inform the ongoing development of our work to increase the uptake of professional work experience, based on student need.

Working with inclusive employers
We will enhance our existing programme of Careers Fairs by targeting particular employers who demonstrate a commitment to inclusive recruitment practices.

We have introduced a new post - Employer Engagement Manager - from summer 2019, in order to focus on developing meaningful relationships with employers that offer proven successful diversity schemes such as the Civil Service Diversity Summer Internship Programme; the Harper Collins BAME Graduate Scheme; The Bright Network. This new post will also enable us to gather data, where available, from organisations on applications from Oxford Brookes students, their characteristics and success rates in order to identify need and provide targeted interventions as outlined above.

In partnership with Santander Universities, we will work to ensure that our existing Santander SME Internship Programme has increased engagement from underrepresented students. We have recently expanded this scheme and work with a large network of local eligible SMEs offering increased numbers of internships.

Volunteering

Taking part in volunteering is cited as providing higher levels of self-efficacy and skills leading to enhanced education and employment outcomes. There is evidence to show that BAME students and students from lower socio-economic groups experience barriers to accessing volunteering (Lawton et al 2019). This can be related to perceptions of the value of volunteering as well as time pressure due to working part time to fund studies or for caring responsibilities. From 2019/20 we will establish an on-campus Volunteer Centre, operating a brokerage model placing students with local community groups thus developing extra and co-curricular opportunities. This will be facilitated by the new post of Volunteer Coordinator who will support engagement with volunteering, providing targeted interventions (one to one appointments, workshops and volunteer fairs) designed to promote positive perceptions of volunteering and to provide accessible opportunities that address any barriers particularly for students from the targeted groups. A new online platform will measure impact through monitoring individual students' involvement, the activity undertaken and time committed.

Evidence-based assessment

To ensure careers initiatives and delivery are rooted in an evidence-based approach, the group will increase the use and scrutiny of quantitative and qualitative analysis of institutional and external data sets. We will apply this information to inform the diagnosis of student need, delivery of targeted interventions, and the evaluation of interventions. As outlined in our Access and Participation Action Plan 2019/20, as an example of our commitment to gaining a deeper insight into our students' career thinking and readiness, we will be implementing Careers Registration in 2019/20. While still being fully evaluated, a significant emerging theme from institutions already reporting on this process is the importance of improving the understanding of students' decision making and planning in order to provide impactful support.

3.2 Student consultation

As outlined in section 3.4, a newly formed Access & Participation Group (APG), chaired by the institutional Access & Participation lead, is tasked with a cross-University overview of activities in this area. As part of its remit, it is also responsible for the formulation and implementation of the Access and Participation Plan. The group has a student representative from the Students' Union executive committee. The representative consults with colleagues in the Students' Union and the wider student body on matters arising.

As part of the work on the Access and Participation Plan, students participated in a number of consultation events. The consultations included Oxford Brookes Students' Union elected officers, student reps, and other current students such as mature students, students who identified as being from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and students from a mix of ethnic groups. During consultations, students discussed their experiences with respect to particular aspects of the identified gaps which informed the formulation of the strategic aims which were then in turn tested with the student groups. A number of initiatives/actions detailed above are a direct outcome of these student consultations and are addressing the two main themes arising from the consultations, namely cost of living and sense of belonging. In summary, these are:

- The provision of the Oxford Brookes Bursary as a cash bursary, which aims to enable choice where this may not otherwise be available (e.g., choice of accommodation, support with living costs allowing full engagement with the curriculum and with extra-curricular activities)
- A 'buddying system' to support transition into University life
- The creation of opportunities for integration through social activities that are culturally sensitive as well as curricular activities, such as group work in early stages of the teaching cycle.
- Targeted work with under-represented groups to enhance progression opportunities (e.g., workshops to enhance awareness of employability skills, personal development, application techniques etc).

In addition, our plans to expand the ways in which we involve students in the future monitoring and design of our access and participation work were directly shaped by the consultation with students in the writing of this plan. Going forward we will establish a range of interest groups with students and academics to provide fora in which to discuss the ongoing work around access and participation in particular and equality, inclusion and diversity more broadly. This will include working closely with the existing BAME staff network. Oxford Brookes Students' Union also has a number of specific interest groups (e.g., a BAME student group) that APG will work with in order to inform and

improve our work. As outlined earlier, we are committed to a model of co-production, which these interest groups will provide the basis for.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

The University's Access and Participation Group (APG) approved a new evaluation strategy for widening participation in early 2019 which incorporates reflections from the completion of the self-assessment tool. The focus of our evaluation is to provide evidence of impact that can inform the development and continuous improvement of sector-leading and evidence-based widening participation interventions, which enable Oxford Brookes to meet its strategic and operational objectives.

Implementation of the evaluation strategy is managed by a dedicated full-time Widening Participation Evaluation Manager who works across the whole student lifecycle. This role is supported by a Widening Participation Evaluation Officer who works intensively on the evaluation of our access initiatives and a post-doctoral Research Assistant predominantly responsible for the evaluation of our success and progression initiatives. The ongoing development of our evaluation strategy will be supported through participation in the NERUPI network, close working with colleagues from the Study Higher NCOP, and the dissemination of best practice within Oxford Brookes. This will be supported by an evaluation toolkit and training programme for practitioners. Oxford Brookes is also seeking to establish an informal network for local WP evaluation practitioners.

Evaluation is built into widening participation activity at the design stage. For example, for our Access activity we have developed a project proposal template that supports practitioners in pulling together the internal and external evidence to build a rationale and to set clear and measurable objectives. We utilise the NERUPI framework to define outcomes for all of our Access activity and to ensure that any new initiatives continue to form part of a coherent and sustained programme. We will be investigating how the newly released NERUPI framework for levels 5 and 6 can support our evaluation of success and progression activities.

In preparing this plan we completed the evaluation self-assessment tool. We identified that much of our evaluation has previously focused on process or narrative evaluation, and therefore one of the key work-strands of our evaluation strategy is to develop a new evaluation matrix that maps the intensity of our activity against the appropriate standards of evidence. In developing this plan, we have put together theory of change models for our target underrepresented groups. We will continue to develop and refine these models, reflecting on the evaluation and evidence emerging from our own work as well as the wider sector.

We are a member of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) membership service, which assists Higher Education Institutions in England to target, monitor and evaluate their outreach activity. Being part of the HEAT service allows us to share the costs of a monitoring and evaluation system and it also underpins the collaborative delivery of evidence-based evaluation.

Our evaluation reporting cycle is in line with the University's existing planning timelines, however completion of the self-assessment tool identified that we can do more to ensure that the outcomes of evaluation are used systematically to improve programme design. From 2019, the University's Access and Participation Group will receive an annual widening participation impact report, as well as more regular reporting on larger-scale initiatives in-year. Our revised project proposal documents are designed to be updated at least annually, with the results of evaluation in relation to the original objectives fed in to the continuous improvement of the project. In addition, we will use the Widening Participation Forum to develop a shared understanding of those activities that are having the most impact.

It is an aim of our evaluation strategy to move beyond internal dissemination. We intend to be in a position to contribute to future calls for evidence through the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes.

We have identified in section 3.1 how evidence and evaluation has supported our decisions on strategic measures; we outline below how some of our areas of significant investment will be evaluated.

Brookes Engage

Brookes Engage is one of our most established sustained programmes of widening participation outreach. We have evaluated this programme through the use of questionnaires and focus groups, as well as tracking of participants through HEAT. Going forward, we will build on this existing evaluation, adding in further opportunities to qualitatively understand impact, using more creative visual methods such as collage and photo-voice. This will support a shift from doing research *on* participants to *with* participants. We will also seek to engage with parents/carers around their perceptions of impact. Once students graduate from the programme we will maintain contact (to the best of our ability) and aim to set up reflective narrative interviews with past students. This will generate invaluable insights into the barriers and facilitators to HE and support our development of the programme. We will also expand the data we currently collect for HEAT, enabling more rigorous and systematic tracking and analysis of student outcomes.

Evaluation of financial support

In line with the strategic aims of our financial support, future evaluation of this support will focus on assessing and measuring the impact and effectiveness of financial support on three key areas:

- Reducing the barrier of cost of living
- Maintaining the successful retention of students from underrepresented groups
- Increasing a sense of belonging at Oxford Brookes among recipients

Using the OfS toolkit as a starting point, we will develop our own bespoke evaluation which addresses the three areas identified above but also provides formative evaluation in order to help us refine our offering (e.g. the transparency of the support). We will develop an online survey which will help the University understand the impact of the financial support. This survey will be followed up with various focus groups utilising participatory methods (e.g. photo voice), in which we will explore this impact in greater detail, using the OfS interview framework to structure our focus groups.

3.4 Dissemination and the sharing of good practice

Our Evaluation Strategy provides the framework from which we will evaluate our APP interventions and we will continue to ensure that evaluation is embedded from the start of any APP initiative. Three dedicated evaluation experts will ensure the successful delivery of our Evaluation Strategy and we will use the findings to inform future practice.

We aim to develop a platform for internal dissemination of our evaluation outputs, working with the Centre for Academic Enhancement and Development, our widening participation forum and our widening participation managers to share and influence good practice. We will enhance our presence in the external environment through active engagement with established sector networks including NEON, FACE, TASO and the APP Special Interest Group.

3.5 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The University has established a new leadership role at Pro Vice-Chancellor level to lead on all activities concerning access and participation. The PVC/Dean holding this role chairs a newly formed, cross-institutional Access & Participation Group (APG) that reports directly to the University's senior management team. A 6-monthly report, approved by APG, in which the PVC reports on progress against targets and any specific actions associated with target delivery is presented first to the senior management team and following that, goes to the Board of Governors for information and discussion. In this way, the Board of Governors is directly involved in the monitoring of progress and has the opportunity to provide input into both strategic and operational aspects of the delivery of the plan.

The Access & Participation Group has a student representative (an executive member of the Students' Union) who through this membership is directly involved in the monitoring of progress against the plan.

APG oversees delivery of the plan at the level of the institution. Working groups are formed to support delivery of particular projects associated with the delivery of the plan, which allows for direct overview over all activities at

institutional level. This overview informs the 6-monthly report presented to the senior management team and the Board of Governors.

4. Provision of information to students

Information about the fees and financial support that apply to prospective and current students will continue to be published clearly on our website. Published tuition fees on course webpages and our student finance webpages are accompanied by further information to support students in understanding the potential changes to tuition fees and the University's approach to implementing any changes.

In addition, we produce printed materials for open days and recruitment events, deliver finance talks and have members of our finance team available to answer questions at our open and applicant days. All recruitment and outreach staff, as well as our team of student ambassadors, have up to date knowledge of fees and financial support. As set out in section 3.1 above, as part of our branding and marketing strategy, we will continue to develop more innovative ways of promoting clear messages about our financial support to those who are eligible.

The eligibility criteria and value of financial support for the Oxford Brookes Bursary, which is our main financial support tool to support access and participation is set out below:

Household income	Additional eligibility criteria for Brookes Bursary	Oxford Brookes Bursary (per year, for each year of your course)
Under £25,000	None	£750
	Age over 21	£1,500
	Low socioeconomic area (postcode in IMD Q1&2) or Area of low participation in HE (postcode in POLAR Q1&2)	£3,000
£25,000 - £34,999	Not applicable	£500

5. Appendices

1. Appendix 1: Oxford Brookes Targets_Investment_Plan_10004930

2. Appendix 2: Oxford Brookes University Fee_Information_10004930

3. Appendix 3: Oxford Brookes University - OfS self-assessment tool_10004930

4. Appendix 4: Oxford Brookes Students' Union Statement_10004930

References

Bright Network. (2018). *What do graduates want?*
https://www.brightnetwork.co.uk/media/files_live/public/bright_network_research_report_2018_-
_what_do_graduates_want.pdf. (accessed 20.06 2019).

Chowdry, H. Crawford, C. Goodman, A. (2009). Drivers and barriers to educational success - evidence from the longitudinal study of young people in England. Department for Children, Schools and Families: London, UK

Downing, G. (2018). *Mature student literature review*. Internal research carried out to inform university practice going forward. Oxford, Oxford Brookes University.

Education Endowment Foundation (2017) The Attainment Gap. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/bitesize-support/closing-the-attainment-gap

Goldstein, H. Burgess, S. & McConnell, B. (2007). Modelling the effect of pupil mobility on school differences in educational achievement. Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series A (Statistics in Society), 170, 4, 941- 954.

HEAT. (2018). *HESA tracking report 2007/08 - 2016/17*. Canterbury, University of Kent.

Lawton, R. Hylton, K. Watt, W (2019). The ABC of BAME. New, mixed method research into black ....
https://www.academia.edu/38498689/The_ABC_of_BAME._New_mixed_method_research_into_black_Asian_and_minority_ethnic_groups_and_their_motivations_and_barriers_to_volunteering. (accessed 20.6.2019).

McDuff, N. (2019). How to gather and utilise the right data. Presentation. *The BAME attainment gap: learning from the student experience*, 05.06.2019, London, SOAS.

MillionPlus. (2018). Forgotten learners: building a system that works for mature students. Research report. Available from:
file:///C:/Users/p0088931/Downloads/Forgotten_learners_building_a_system_that_works_for_mature_students.pdf (accessed 30.05.2019).

s. (2015). *What do we know about the impact of financial support on access and student success? Report to the Office for Fair Access by Nursaw Associates*. OFFA.

Reay, D. Ball, S. and David, M. (2002). It's taking me a long time but I'll get there in the end: mature students on access courses and higher education choice. *British Educational Research Journal*, 28(1), 5-19.

Santander Talent. Internships https://talent.santander.co.uk/Internships.(accessed 20.6. 2019).

Shoderu, R. Kane, S. Husbands, D. Holly, D. (2012). *Developing a sense of belonging: findings from a three institution study with implications for BME students and staff engagement.* Available from: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/42143273.pdf (accessed 13.06.2019).

Singh, G. (2011). *Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students' participation in higher education: improving retention and success. A synthesis of research evidence.* Coventry, HEA.

Social Mobility and University Careers Services - UPP Foundation." https://upp-foundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/1714-Social-Mobility-and-University-Careers-Services-report-Digital.pdf-.pdf. Accessed 20 Jun. 2019.

Stevenson, J. O'Mahony, J. Khan, O. Ghaffar, F. and Stiell, B. (2019). *Understanding and overcoming the challenges of targeting students from under-represented and disadvantaged ethnic backgrounds*. Available from:
https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/d21cb263-526d-401c-bc74-299c748e9ecd/ethnicity-targeting-research-report.pdf
(accessed 12.06.2019).

Thomas, L. (2012). *What Works? Student Retention & Success Summary Report.* Available from: www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/ What-Works-Summary-report.pdf (accessed 12.06.2019).

Universities UK/NUS. (2019). *Black, Asian and minority ethnic student attainment at UK Universities: #closingthegap*. Available from: www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2019/bame-student-attainment-uk-universities-closing-the-gap.pdf (accessed 30.05.2019).

Access and participation plan
Fee information 2020-21

Provider name: Oxford Brookes University

Provider UKPRN: 10004930

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*Course type not listed by the provider as available to new entrants in 2020-21. This means that any such course delivered to new entrants in 2020-21 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

Inflationary statement:

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

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	3 yr (incudes healthcare)	£9,250
First degree	EQS/EQT Equine Science Delivered on Campus	£9,250
First degree	ITT ED15 3 yr	£9,250
First degree	Integrated Masters MC10I 1 yr	£9,250
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	LSF Foundation Stage (MC10)	£7,570
Foundation year/Year 0	MC10	£9,250
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	PGCE ED59 ED62 ED87 1yr	£9,250
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	Integrated Masters MC10I 1 yr	£1,380
Sandwich year	MArchD Placement 1yr (first year) BE55	£1,380
Sandwich year	Placement Year 1yr	£1,380
Erasmus and overseas study years	International Exchange & Erasmus Outgoing 1 yr	£1,380
Other	Associate School Direct Programme ED120	£7,250
Other	MArchD 2 yrs BE55	£9,250

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

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	Abingdon and Witney College 10000055 - Abingdon and Witney College	£7,570
First degree	Activate Learning 10004927 - Activate Learning	£7,570
First degree	Bridgwater and Taunton College 10000878 - Bridgwater College	£7,570
First degree	Brooklands College 10000950 - Brooklands College	£7,570
First degree	Solihull College and University Centre 10005946 - Solihull College & University Centre	£7,570
First degree	Swindon College 10006463 - Swindon College	£7,570
First degree	Wiltshire College and University Centre 10007527 - Wiltshire College & University Centre	£7,570
Foundation degree	Abingdon and Witney College 10000055 - Abingdon and Witney College	£7,570
Foundation degree	Activate Learning 10004927 - Activate Learning	£7,570
Foundation degree	Bridgwater and Taunton College 10000878 - Bridgwater College	£7,570
Foundation degree	Brooklands College 10000950 - Brooklands College	£7,570
Foundation degree	Solihull College and University Centre 10005946 - Solihull College & University Centre	£7,570
Foundation degree	Swindon College 10006463 - Swindon College	£7,570
Foundation degree	Wiltshire College and University Centre 10007527 - Wiltshire College & University Centre	£7,570
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	3 yr (incudes healthcare)	£5,775
First degree	ITT ED15 3 yr	£5,775
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	Hons Degree MC10	£5,775
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	PGCE ED59 ED62 ED87 1yr	£5,775
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	MArchD 2 yrs BE55	£5,775

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

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	Abingdon and Witney College 10000055 - Abingdon and Witney College	£5,045
Foundation degree	Activate Learning 10004927 - Activate Learning	£5,045

Foundation degree	Bridgwater and Taunton College 10000878 - Bridgwater College	£5,045
Foundation degree	Brooklands College 10000950 - Brooklands College	£5,045
Foundation degree	Solihull College and University Centre 10005946 - Solihull College & University Centre	£5,045
Foundation degree	Swindon College 10006463 - Swindon College	£5,045
Foundation degree	Wiltshire College and University Centre 10007527 - Wiltshire College & University Centre	£5,045
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Office for Students (OfS)

Targets and investment plan
2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Oxford Brookes University

Provider UKPRN: 10004930

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 figures in Table 4a relate to all expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education. The figures in Table 4b only relate to the expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education which is funded by higher fee income. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£1,169,289.00	£1,180,216.00	£1,191,362.00	£1,202,731.00	£1,214,327.00
Access (pre-16)	£250,379.00	£253,239.00	£256,157.00	£259,133.00	£262,168.00
Access (post-16)	£695,112.00	£700,170.00	£705,329.00	£710,591.00	£715,959.00
Access (adults and the community)	£223,798.00	£226,807.00	£229,876.00	£233,007.00	£236,200.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£5,876,023.00	£5,931,063.00	£5,964,639.00	£6,298,903.00	£6,714,702.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£163,447.00	£165,611.00	£167,818.00	£170,070.00	£172,366.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£31,884,495.00	£33,180,275.00	£34,224,525.00	£34,878,405.00	£34,883,005.00
Access investment	3.7%	3.6%	3.5%	3.4%	3.5%
Financial support	18.4%	17.9%	17.4%	18.1%	19.2%
Research and evaluation	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Total investment (as %HFI)	22.6%	21.9%	21.4%	22.0%	23.2%

Targets and investment plan
2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Oxford Brookes University

Provider UKPRN: 10004930

Targets

Table 2a - Access

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones 2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To reduce the gap in entrants between the least and most represented groups (POLAR4 Q1 and Q5)	PTA_1	POLAR 4 Q1	Ratio in entry rates for POLAR4 quintile 5: quintile 1 students	No	OfS access and participation dataset	2017/18	5.7:1	5.5:1	5:1	4.8:1	4.5:1	4:1	The current target constitutes a first step in our ambition to contribute fully to an improved sector performance. We aim to be in line with sector performance as at 2030/31 in 2030/31.
To increase the proportion of entrants from IMD Q1	PTA_2	IMD Q1	Proportion of entrants from IMD Q1	No	OfS access and participation dataset	2017/18	7.3%	8%	9%	10.5%	11.5%	13%	The current target constitutes a first step in our ambition to contribute fully to an improved sector performance. We aim to be in line with sector performance as at 2030/31 in 2030/31.
To increase the proportion of entrants from Black ethnic groups	PTA_3	Black students	Proportion of entrants from Black ethnic groups	No	OfS access and participation dataset	2017/18	4.1%	5%	6%	7%	8.5%	10%	The current target constitutes a first step in our ambition to contribute fully to an improved sector performance. We aim to be in line with sector performance as at 2030/31 in 2030/31.
To increase the proportion of entrants from Asian ethnic groups	PTA_4	Asian students	Proportion of entrants from Asian ethnic groups	No	OfS access and participation dataset	2017/18	7.4%	8%	9%	10%	11%	12%	The current target constitutes a first step in our ambition to contribute fully to an improved sector performance. We aim to be in line with sector performance as at 2030/31 in 2030/31.
To increase the number of entrants who are care experienced	PTA_5	Care-leavers	Number of students who are care experienced	No	The access and participation dataset	2018-19	27		37	43	51	60	
	PTA_6												
	PTA_7												
	PTA_8												
	PTA_9												
	PTA_10												
	PTA_11												
	PTA_12												
	PTA_13												
	PTA_14												
	PTA_15												
	PTA_16												
	PTA_17												
	PTA_18												

Table 2b - Success

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones 2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To reduce the percentage point gap gap in degree outcome between black and white students	PTS_1	Black students	Percentage point gap between the proportion of Black and White students achieving a 1st or 2.1	No	OfS access and participation dataset	2017/18	20.4 pp	20 pp	18 pp	16 pp	14 pp	10 pp	We will match sector level performance as at 2030/31 by 2030/31
To reduce the percentage point gap in degree outcome between Asian and white students	PTS_2	Asian students	Percentage point gap between the proportion of Asian and White students achieving a 1st or 2.1	No	OfS access and participation dataset	2017/18	14.8 pp	14 pp	13 pp	10 pp	8 pp	7 pp	We will match sector level performance as at 2030/31 by 2030/31
	PTS_3												
	PTS_4												
	PTS_5												
	PTS_6												
	PTS_7												
	PTS_8												
	PTS_9												
	PTS_10												
	PTS_11												
	PTS_12												
	PTS_13												
	PTS_14												
	PTS_15												
	PTS_16												
	PTS_17												
	PTS_18												

Table 2c - Progression

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)

	number			collaborative?				2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
To reduce the gap in progression to highly skilled employment or further study between black and white students	PTP_1	Black students	Percentage point gap between the proportion of Black and white students entering highly skilled employment	No	OfS access and participation dataset	2016/17	14.8 pp	14 pp	13 pp	11 pp	9.5 pp	8 pp	The current target constitutes a first step in our ambition to contribute fully to an improved sector performance. We aim to be in line with sector performance as at 2030/31 in 2030/31.
To reduce the gap in progression to highly skilled employment or further study between Asian and white students	PTP_2	Asian students	Percentage point gap between the proportion of Asian and white students entering highly skilled employment	No	OfS access and participation dataset	2016/17	12.3 pp	12 pp	11.5 pp	10 pp	8 pp	6 pp	The current target constitutes a first step in our ambition to contribute fully to an improved sector performance. We aim to be in line with sector performance as at 2030/31 in 2030/31.
To reduce the gap in progression to highly skilled employment or further study between students from low and high socioeconomic backgrounds	PTP_3	IMD Q1&2	Percentage point gap between the proportion of students from IMD Q1/2 and the proportion of students from IMD Q5 entering highly skilled employment	No	OfS access and participation dataset	2016/17	10.6 pp	10 pp	9 pp	7.5 pp	6 pp	5 pp	The current target constitutes a first step in our ambition to contribute fully to an improved sector performance. We aim to be in line with sector performance as at 2030/31 in 2030/31.
	PTP_4												
	PTP_5												
	PTP_6												
	PTP_7												
	PTP_8												
	PTP_9												
	PTP_10												
	PTP_11												
	PTP_12												
	PTP_13												
	PTP_14												
	PTP_15												
	PTP_16												
	PTP_17												
	PTP_18												