

Access Agreement 2018/19

1. Introduction

Teesside University [TU] has an exceptional historic, strategic commitment to excellence in learning and teaching, which emphasises the delivery of high-quality learning and student experience. Working in partnership with students and the Students' Union [SU], TU puts students at the heart of its activities. The Student Charter which outlines the University's commitment to working in partnership with students epitomises this approach.

This Access agreement covers 'home' full-time students who are required to pay regulated tuition fees and who enter the University in the academic year 2018/19.

Teesside University remains committed to building upon its excellent work in access, and student success and progression which is evidenced as follows:

- The University has an outstanding track record on access with 98.9%¹ of new full-time entrants coming from state schools and 28.1%² from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3).
- The University has consistently performed better than its benchmarks² and is nationally recognised as a sector leader in raising aspirations.
- The University has continued work to make substantial improvements in all of its performance indicators which relate to student success and progression.
- The University has increased the percentage of full-time undergraduate students receiving DSAs from 4.8% in 2009-10 to 9.2%³ in 2015-16.

This Access Agreement includes:

- The Institutional context
- The University's Fees for Full and Part time Students
- Access, Success and Progression Measures
- Targets and Milestones
- Monitoring and Evaluation of activity relating to this agreement
- The University's commitments to Equality and Diversity and to providing accurate information to Students
- The University's Statement on Collaboration with Students
- Specific activities supported by the agreement

¹ 2015/16 University Target 1 T1a

² 2015/16 University Target 1 T1a benchmark State Schools 97.4% & low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) 25.0%

³ 2015/16 University Target 2 T7

Teesside University has an excellent record of enabling students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to access higher education. Given this, the emphasis of the Agreement for 2018/19 is more heavily focussed on supporting progression and achievement of these students.

2. Institutional context

Support for the regional economy has been core to the University's mission (dating back to the 1930s, when it was established to support the local engineering and shipping industry). A member of the University Alliance, TU is a distinctive university, situated in Middlesbrough, in the Tees Valley, a geographically isolated area of severe, entrenched deprivation, characterised by:

- High levels of unemployment
- High levels of youth unemployment
- Decline of traditional industry and an over reliance on public sector jobs
- Low levels of attainment (only 46.1% of secondary school pupils achieved 5+ A*-C GCSE compared to 53.8% nationally) (Tees Valley Unlimited Statistics 2016).

The Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership [LEP] area is the 6th most deprived in the country and unlike other regions, the number of deprived communities in Tees Valley has grown over time; 35 wards are in the top 10% of the most deprived wards in the country (Tees Valley Unlimited, 2015).

Following the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor in 2015 and subsequently a new Executive Team, TU is currently undergoing significant transformational change across all strategic portfolios. Building on a rich and distinct heritage, TU has consistently delivered high-quality teaching and an outstanding student experience, attracting students from all backgrounds. The vision of the University's corporate strategy, is outlined below.

Corporate Strategy: Teesside 2020

Vision

Teesside will be a leading University with an international reputation for academic excellence that provides an outstanding student and learning experience underpinned by research, enterprise and the professions.

Mission

Teesside University generates and applies knowledge that contributes to the economic, social and cultural success of students, partners and the communities we serve. Through education enriched by research, innovation, and engagement with business and the professions, we transform lives and economies.

Values

At Teesside University we seek to enhance the experience of all our students, staff and external partners by:

- Delivering excellence in learning, research and enterprise
- Empowering individuals and teams to enhance their contribution to the University
- Fostering creativity, enterprise and innovation
- Embracing diversity and actively opposing prejudice
- Communicating openly, honestly and respectfully at all times
- Committing to sustainability and the protection of our environment
- Taking responsibility and demonstrating leadership

Strategic Aims

The following aims and outcomes outline the focus and ambitions of Teesside 2020 and provide the strategic coherence to underpin the five-year strategic plans.

- **Student and Learning Experience**
To be the preferred choice for a diverse range of students and professionals by providing a stimulating learning environment and innovative curricula that provides an outstanding student and learning experience.
- **Research and Innovation**
To achieve an increase in the volume and quality of world leading and internationally excellent research in selected areas of strength that informs learning and teaching, partner activity and knowledge transfer.
- **Enterprise and Business Engagement**
To provide client-focused knowledge services for industry, businesses and the professions that inform student learning and research to support innovation, regeneration and economic growth.
- **International Strategy**
To be an international university with a global network of partnerships that attracts high-quality students and staff from across the world.
- **Resources and Business Management**
To ensure the University is financially resilient, sustainable and investing significantly in the student experience. Strategic and professional services are best in class, fully supporting the student experience and driving University business management and commercial activities through a model of service excellence.

Simultaneously, TU is in a unique position to take stock of the challenges it faces; the new inter-related supporting strategies (Learning & Teaching, Research & Innovation, International, Enterprise & Business Engagement and Resource & Business Management) signal an enhanced focus on areas of challenge.

The Learning and Teaching Strategy states that:

The central aim of this strategy is to ensure that *all* of our students develop skills and understandings that will enable them to enhance their lives, their communities and their society. This will be achieved through supporting them in a learning community that enables them to flourish and grow through knowledge and skill development. The architecture for this strategy is that of a high quality student experience integrating an education-facing learning strategy. Generation Z students increasingly demand high quality service, akin to excellence in customer service. Within this context, therefore, in

addition to a core focus on learning, teaching and pedagogy, a key component of this strategy is the enhancement of the learning environment and experience. Students will be at the centre of what we do.

Equality and Diversity

The University believes individuals should be able to achieve their full potential. Within the University this means providing development opportunities and removing barriers. The University's policy and strategy framework therefore identifies characteristics of student success; establishes targets and performance indicators; and maintains a commitment to ensuring equality and diversity. These objectives will be served by the fostering of a diverse and supportive environment for students alongside specific and targeted interventions intended to address the particular needs of groups with specific characteristics. The work undertaken as a consequence of this agreement aligns with the University's Equality Action Plan (2016 -2020) which the following aims:

- To raise awareness in the University community of equality and diversity and to develop understanding of respect, rights and responsibilities amongst students, staff and those engaged with the University
- To reduce inequalities in the experience and attainment of student and staff and to ensure that the whole University community can understand and achieve their potential
- To embed equality and diversity into wider University activities

3. Fees

3.1 Full Time 2018-19

- The University will charge £9,250* a year for new entrants to full-time undergraduate degrees
- Sandwich placements and study years abroad will be free
- For Foundation degrees and other undergraduate programmes the tuition fee will be £6,150* per annum including HNC/HND postgraduate ITT and CertHE/DipHE courses.
- All fees at our franchised partners are at the same fee levels as detailed above.

*Fees will be increased in line with guidance rules established by the government each year and will be confirmed subject to the outcome of TEF. The details of estimated number of entrants at each fee level are included in the Resource Plan.

3.2 Part Time 2018-19

The University is committed to ensuring that no part-time student following a programme in a manner as designed and intended will be liable for a full-time equivalent fee of more than £4,625. This means that this agreement does not apply to part-time students.

4. Access, Student Success and Progression measures

The University has analysed the data relating to key performance indicators in respect of both access and retention and student success.

4.1. Access

Based on 2015-16 performance, the University has an excellent record in providing access to Higher Education for groups which have been under-represented in the past. Teesside University ranks 2nd in the HE sector for young full-time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3). Over the years it has consistently exceeded the HESA location adjusted benchmarks and exceeded the sector averages in the following categories.

Table 4.1

OFFA Ref	Access Performance Indicator (%)	2015-16		
		HESA Benchmark	TU Performance	OFFA Target 2018-19
	T1a Young Full Time degree entrants			
-	<i>From state schools</i>	97.4 ¹	98.9	-
T16a_01	<i>From POLAR low participation neighbourhoods</i>	25.0 ¹	28.1	29.4
-	T2a Mature Full Time undergraduate entrants			
	First degree entrants			
-	<i>% of entrants who are mature</i>	n/a	39.6	-
-	<i>% of mature who are from POLAR3 low participation neighbourhoods and have no experience of HE</i>	22.3 ¹	24.0	-
	All undergraduate courses			
-	<i>% of entrants who are mature</i>	n/a	40.2	-
-	<i>% of mature who are from POLAR low participation neighbourhoods and have no experience of HE</i>	21.5 ¹	23.3	-
	T7 Participation of students in receipt of DSAs			
	All undergraduate courses			
T16a_02	<i>% of entrants in receipt of DSAs</i>	7.8	9.2	8.2
T16a_07	<i>% of entrants who have declared disability</i>	n/a	15.7	15.5

¹ location adjusted

4.2 Student Success and Progression

Based on 2015-16 performance, the University has improved its results in terms of those 'Not found at any institution' and are now better than the benchmark. We have also improved those continuing or qualifying and our Employment indicators, in comparison to the previous year. We are continuing to work towards improving this performance through the development and implementation of our principal strategies.

Table 4.2

OFFA Ref	Retention and Student Success Performance Indicator (%)	2015-16		
		HESA Benchmark	TU Performance	OFFA Target 2018-19
	Students achieving their original qualification aim			
	<i>All students</i>			
T16a_03	% achieving their original qualification aim	n/a	80.0	88.1
	T3a Non continuation following year of entry			
	<i>Full time first degree entrants</i>			
	<i>Young entrants</i>			
-	<i>Continuing or qualifying</i>	n/a	88.4	-
-	<i>Not found at any HE institution</i>	9.8	9.9	-
	<i>Mature entrants</i>			
-	<i>Continuing or qualifying</i>	n/a	88.7	-
-	<i>Not found at any HE institution</i>	11.6	10.4	-
	<i>All entrants</i>			
T16a_04	<i>Continuing or qualifying</i>	n/a	88.5	94.4
-	<i>Not found at any HE institution</i>	10.5	10.1	-

OFFA Ref	Retention and Student Success Performance Indicator (%)	2014-15		
		HESA Benchmark	TU Performance	OFFA Target 2018-19
	E1a Employment indicator			
	<i>All first degree full-time graduates</i>			
T16a_05	% in work or further study	93.7	89.7	91.0
T16a_06	% in Professional Level Jobs	n/a	54.1	55.0

4.3 Ongoing Commitments / Additional Access Measures

Teesside University has a strategic commitment to excellence in learning and teaching and recruits the majority of its students from the Tees Valley. The University's top ten feeder schools and colleges are within a 15-mile radius of Middlesbrough, accounting for 46% of undergraduate students, and the majority of TU students are recruited from the North East and Yorkshire. 84.1% of the University's students are OFFA countable and 42% of its students are part-time.

The socio-economic realities of the region outlined above, mean that TU faces a unique set of circumstances and as such, the experience of its students must be both educationally and socially transformative. TU recognises the serious challenges it faces, and as discussed below, is deploying significant resource and investment into addressing student outcomes, via a series of symbiotic work-streams. Furthermore, enhancing the student experience and academic excellence are at the heart of *Teesside 2020*, which reaffirms the University's commitment to educate TU students in their chosen discipline, to become

confident, critical, creative, adaptable, articulate and aspiring, which will be achieved through inspiring, professional and relevant research informed teaching.

As part of our ongoing commitment to providing an excellent teaching and learning experience, Teesside University is embarking on a digital transformation programme. This work directly interfaces with a new future facing pedagogical approach and the creation of a physical and digital student hub. Collectively, these approaches are designed to enhance the student learning experience, make it more accessible, improve retention and academic outcomes for our learners.

Classroom capture technology will be utilised so that sessions can be reviewed at learners own pace. Innovative digital teaching methodologies will be employed both in and out of the classroom through the use of applications and the creation of electronic learning materials. A new student portal will enable students to access their email, course announcements, library information, the VLE, transport links, available PCs on campus, exam results, module evaluation, their timetable and numerous other sources of information.

The student hub will be a single source of information, advice and guidance within the University, which will proactively reach out to students covering areas such as career guidance, financial advice, counselling and wellbeing. As part of phase one of the University's ten-year estates master plan, a new 'Student Life' building in the Campus Heart will be constructed. Running parallel to this will be a Student Life online offering to ensure that students can get access to information when they need it.

These technologies will be integrated seamlessly into the physical offering to ensure that learners have the very best experience. Recent research by Wilkin et al (2017)⁴, however, has demonstrated that digital inequalities still prevail. They go on to note two important areas for addressing this, firstly the provision of technology and secondly a focus on learning, teaching and digital upskilling. They note:

'There is a need to move towards a more holistic understanding of social and digital inequality and try to deliberately to develop schemes that use technology to question and change the status quo. Ensuring regular and flexible technical access is an important ingredient, but changing teaching to facilitate the development of digital literacies... are also all necessary to begin to help educators shape this area' (p.344).

The University will pay particular focus on the digital upskilling of its staff and students. To catalyse this, significant staff development will take place from September 2017 with a launch of a new programme for students in September 2018. Ongoing enhancement and development will then be led by the University's Learning and Teaching Enhancement team.

⁴ Wilkin, S., Davies, H. and Eynon, R., 2017. Addressing digital inequalities amongst young people: conflicting discourses and complex outcomes. *Oxford Review of Education*, 43:3, 332-347

The University will deliver the John Smith's Aspire card, in the form of the Teesside Advance scheme. Students will be given a pre-paid card (£100), which will give them access to books and learning materials via an online store. Students can choose to download electronic books to their mobile devices. The scheme will be delivered as part of our on-going commitment to providing financial help to support access to higher education, whilst simultaneously enhancing students' learning and teaching to deliver academic success.

Each student will be provided with this initiative at the start of their full-time studies with Teesside and this has been included in our agreement within the 'student success' section. As can be seen above the scheme is very much designed to address inequalities within success and progression.

The University is committed to evaluating this scheme throughout the period of the Access Agreement, and will amend and enhance as necessary. An early indication of impact will be provided in the next Agreement.

4.3.1 Access

The trends in young participation report published by HEFCE in January 2015, states that the North East is the region where young people are least likely to access higher education. The latest Higher Education Statistics Agency's (HESA) data published February 2017, confirms that the HE Region also has the highest proportion of entrants from low participation neighbourhoods with a percentage of 23.2% compared to a national average of 11.3%, an 11.9% difference.

Our aim is to develop strong relationships with key schools, colleges and local authorities, charities and other support agencies with a view to delivering a range of targeted activity over the educational lifecycle from Primary through to Post 16 education to those at risk of not achieving their potential. This work includes engagement with a significant number of academies in the Tees Valley and beyond. The University has a strong track-record of engaging with academy schools to ensure we deliver access opportunities to the range of school-level providers.

Through the close working relationships we have with our target schools, we provide them with a sustained programme of progression and attainment activities year on year. Our work is predominantly delivered across Teesside but we have extended this further into the North East region through our partnership with NERAP. We therefore have a regular presence in the schools and also welcome pupils to the campus on repeat occasions at different stages in their education lifecycle. We work with key schools across year groups at key transition points such as the progression from Year 6 to Year 7, during Years 8 & 9 when option choices are being made, and in Years 10 & 11 when pupils are considering their progression options post-16.

We employ a range of methods, depending on the specific cohort we are working with. From lighter touch activities such as 'Detectees'; which brings Primary pupils on campus to explore a University environment; to

'Motivational visits' in Year 8 & 9 where students are encouraged to develop soft skills through activities which further enhance their knowledge of HE; through to subject specific taster session at 'Choose your Future', where students can sample the wide and varied range of subjects available to them. Our established 'Passport' scheme and outreach activity provides opportunity for students to sample university life and study, gain information, advice and guidance on entry requirements, support with personal statement writing and interview preparation.

Student ambassadors play an essential role in all of the aspiration and attainment raising activity we deliver. Sessions are often led by experienced ambassadors who act as positive role models. We have expanded our student ambassador programme considerably, allowing us to deliver more and varied activities as well as ensuring that our ambassador cohort is representative of the young people we are working to reach. We therefore have ambassadors from a wide range of educational background, cultures and experiences.

We have further segmented our target audience to offer tailored activity to those students with additional barriers. Specifically, this includes white working class boys, young people from ethnic minority backgrounds, young carers and care leavers and those with special educational needs. Whilst these young people are engaged through all of the activity above through the school they attend, we also acknowledge a need for more specific interventions. We have delivered activity on and off campus to these audiences, specific to their requirements, but also worked to develop good relationships with BME communities, local authority teams, foster carers, young carers support groups and SEN co-ordinators in schools. Our work in this area has increased over the years, with the development of our relationships with under-represented groups and their communities being a core part of our stakeholder engagement. The University, as a central partner in the local community, will continue to enhance these relationships to encourage participation in higher education from under-represented groups.

We record levels and frequency of participation with each target group and school, to ensure we are engaging with as many young people as possible. The University has purchased the HEAT system for tracking and evaluating the effectiveness of widening participation activity. This will enable us to monitor and track participation of individuals at a granular level to include demographic data pertaining to gender, ethnicity, domicile and disability, we will be further able to measure the success of activity. Evaluation is at the heart of enhancing and refining our engagement with under-represented groups. Each activity is evaluated with participants and partners to provide feedback for improving our activities. Monitoring progress towards our engagement targets is carried out monthly to ensure KPIs around attainment and progression activities are on track.

All of our attainment and progression activities is now complemented by our involvement with the North East Raising Aspiration Partnership (NERAP), which Teesside joined in 2014/15. NERAP act as a single point of contact

for widening participation work in the North East region on behalf of the five North East universities. Activity includes representation at a broad range of school and college events which provide pupils with IAG about higher education and also includes a range of specific targeted activity for under-represented groups. NERAP, and Teesside University, are now part of the NECOP (NE Collaborative Outreach Partnership), a National Network for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO) which works with further education providers to undertake specific targeted work aimed at raising attainment levels through sustained activity. The NECOP (and NERAP) partnerships are the vehicle for sharing best practice across the wider region. Regular communication and reporting takes place within the management structures of these partnerships.

We have developed three key targets for delivering activity during the period of this Access Agreement. Working with our school, college and NECOP partners, our targets are:

- 30,000 students (across all age ranges) engaged in aspiration, attainment and progression activities.
- 16 events developed and delivered to specific target groups to include disadvantaged white males, black and minority ethnic students, SEND students and mature learners.
- 50 students (from years 5/6) targeted to raise attainment in literacy levels (rising to 120 by 2021/22).

The University is committed to develop an outcomes-focussed target for inclusion within our 2019-20 access agreement, building on the results of our attainment-raising project (above).

Regarded as an 'anchor institution' which supports the needs of the regional economy, as well as the aspirations of local communities and individuals, working within this local context, the University continues to enhance its teaching excellence, raising students' aspirations and confidence. It is recognised in the sector as a leader in raising aspirations and has an excellent reputation for providing access to higher education to under-represented groups, consistently performing better than its benchmarks. The NSS data demonstrates that TU offers a strong student experience (NSS overall satisfaction was 87% in 2016) that is carried through a diverse range of demographic groups. TU is a dynamic university and the approach to learning and teaching and interventions detailed below demonstrate its commitment to addressing the challenges it faces and its continued strategic focus on nurturing a culture that facilitates teaching excellence.

4.3.2 Student Success

Student engagement is addressed through TU's course design and approval processes which ensure that contact time appropriate to the discipline and subject is built into student timetables and appropriate weighting given to independent study. In addition, courses are regularly reviewed to take account of discipline, sector and industry developments; the majority of the University's courses are accredited by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs).

Course dashboards and learner analytics have been deployed to review and enhance teaching quality and student engagement. The course dashboard tool is used to measure performance in line with the Institution's published KPIs. Building on the University's deeply embedded attendance monitoring procedures supported by dedicated retention support staff, there will be a continued focus on retention with learner analytics used, to both shape its services and act as a trigger to prompt timely intervention and support for its students.

The Learning Hub in the Library offers academic and employability skills development workshops and one-to-one support sessions, with direct referral links to and from the Schools. The development of the Learning Hub was directly aligned with the introduction of more positive and engaging learning spaces within the library and was steered by academic and professional staff in partnership with students. The Learning Hub Coordinates the Peer Assisted Study Sessions [PASS] scheme (now running in programmes offered by all Schools) which is another strong example of the University's partnership work with students.

PASS was piloted in two subject areas in 2014. Sessions are delivered by student leaders who are supported in their work by an academic champion. Following evaluation and positive feedback new subject areas were nominated by academic Schools and the Scheme has continued to grow each year, based on evaluation and School-identified demand. Weekly and annual monitoring and evaluation has fed into further development of the scheme to focus additionally on foundation level and level 4 schemes, to support transition to HE as well as working within whole programmes rather than particular modules.

In Teesside 2020 there is a clear focus on real world impact, through which the University will deliver high quality teaching and learning that prepares students for a career in the global economy. The Learning and Development team has worked with Academic Schools, facilitating a group to review and embed employability in the curriculum. Careers advisers also work with School staff and students to develop greater in depth knowledge of the specific needs of the School/course. All course teams are expected to demonstrate that they have considered the development of employability opportunities throughout the duration of the course; this is tested as part of the annual monitoring and evaluation process. Additionally, course teams must demonstrate that employers have been involved/consulted with regards to course design, to ensure that the course has relevance to industry and develops key employability skills. In some areas specific modules have been developed, whilst the School of Science and Engineering has implemented a structured framework embedded in the curriculum across its whole portfolio.

The University has implemented a Student Futures strategy that will build on this expertise, further embedding employability within the curriculum and reinforcing TU's commitment to developing the transferable/employability skills of its students. In November 2016, the University was awarded £49,234 from the HEFCE Catalyst Fund to develop and evaluate

an online authentic immersive learning environment for students to develop their employability skills. The project is being developed in partnership with students and local employers. The online environment will utilise a photorealistic virtual scenario, which combines video interaction with examples drawn from a real business environment, to provide students with knowledge and understanding of the selection process for graduate level positions.

As part of the structural changes delivery of Teesside 2020 the University is building on these successes and re-engineering its approach to the delivery of learning and teaching. Further developments during the timeframe of this agreement include:

- The Threshold Quality Standard review leading to the replacement of the existing threshold-based definition and model of quality assessment to an 'indicator and expectations' framework. The new approach will capture the complex and varied ways in which students engage with the University and the ways in which the University works in partnership with students to improve their learning experience and support them to achieve.
- Review of university regulations
- The commencement of a Digital Transformation Programme which aims to change the culture of the University to one where an outstanding student learning experience is enabled and underpinned by technology. Projects in this programme include a review of the VLE, and Digital Literacies development
- A portfolio review of the University's offer to students
- Development of a module evaluation tool to enable effective evaluation and benchmarking across the sector
- Review and rationalisation of progression regulations
- Development of a University-wide Personal Tutoring system
- Development of a suite of Learning Analytics including Classroom usage, Learning Resources usage and engagement with the VLE to inform student support strategy development
- Improvements in course organisation and management including timetabling and student feedback delivery
- Initial development of a holistic, student 'success' model for learning and for life building on the work of the Learning Hub and moving away from a previous 'deficit' model of support. This will involve partnership between students, Academic and Professional Services staff. The physical manifestation of this will be the proposed Student Hub building (commencing 2018).
- Delivery of the TU Advance scheme; allowing students to access digital learning materials to enhance their learning and progression

4.3.3 Progression

Longitudinal data indicate that Teesside students often take a longer period of time to secure highly-skilled employment compared to their peers in other institutions. Within five years of graduation, 82% of students from the 2008/09 cohort are recorded as being in sustained employment or further

study (LEO data), placing Teesside at the forefront of comparable institutions.

The development of employability skills, career support and guidance for both TU students and graduates are strategically embedded. Moreover, as a key economic anchor in the region, the University has a successful history of working with local, regional, national and international employers. The collaborations that academics and the DAE develop in working with employers (such as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships [KTPs]) brings industry expertise back into the University, ensures the relevance of its courses and enables students to have access to a range of activities that will further enhance their employability and professionalism; to think beyond their programme of study.

TU and the Students' Union are major employers of students. Other paid job opportunities within the University are available including, library support assistants, and students as researchers.

Since the introduction of the postgraduate loan, the University has experienced a significant increase in its graduates progressing to further study, reflected in a substantial increase in postgraduate taught numbers (108.3% from 2015/16 to 2016/17). The University is furthering its support for graduates through the design and approval in 2016 of a suite of postgraduate certificates relating to business practice, games and animation, and the cultural and creative industries. These programmes are specifically aimed at recent graduates who require support in developing their portfolios with the support of industry mentors, and are offered with a full fee waiver. The development of the postgraduate certificate suite demonstrates the commitment of the University to offer multiple avenues of support to graduates during their journey from graduation to highly skilled employment.

As a University with a high proportion of local students (who remain in the region after graduation) and a labour market less buoyant than elsewhere in the UK, this is a particular challenge for Teesside University. The University will build on its experience and good practice, further embedding employability within the curriculum, developing and enhancing more employability initiatives and more workplace opportunities for students. As noted earlier, the University has a long-standing commitment to providing opportunities for students to engage in activities that enhance their employability and professionalism. This is reflected in the breadth of innovations and activities that have been developed and implemented. Informed by experience of delivering professional programmes, links with industry and needs of students these activities are aligned with student transition points, ensuring that individuals are supported before, during and after their studies.

4.3.4 Support for Specific Groups

An analysis of the current full-time undergraduate fee regulated student population indicates that 84.1% of Teesside students can be regarded as countable for OFFA purposes. From 2012/13 until 2015/16, on average

49.5% of full-time undergraduates can be defined as first generation students, whose parents or guardians did not possess a higher education qualification. This high level of participation by traditionally under-represented groups means that many measures are most effectively addressed through whole cohorts of students. From a strategic perspective, the University is committed to educating students in their chosen discipline to become *confident, critical, creative, adaptable, articulate and aspiring*. This is facilitated through the development of relevant skills and the acquisition of knowledge within the curriculum relevant to particular employment sectors and pathways. In addition, the University provides opportunities for students to gain experiences that will test and reinforce their learning in ways, which support reflection and personal development. The impact of this approach is demonstrated through the sustained upward trend in both employment and highly skilled employment outcomes for full-time undergraduates over the last three years, from 86.7% to 89.7% and 47.6% to 54.1% respectively. – DLHE data

4.3.4.1 Students with Disabilities or Mental Health Issues

These services are co-ordinated by Student and Library Services in partnership students and with Academic Schools. The Department offers students advice, guidance, pastoral and diagnostic support. Support services are available for a wide range of matters including visually and hearing impaired, students with mobility difficulties including wheelchair users, autistic spectrum disorders. The department also provides advice and guidance for mental health services users and people with specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia. A confidential counselling service is available for students with personal or academic difficulties alongside a well-being centre.

The University is an approved Assessment Centre which supports disabled applicants and current students who are studying in higher education (or further education). The service enables applicants from the Teesside area to have a needs assessment completed at the University, this then helps the University to provide reasonable adjustments for eligible students at the point of presenting evidence. This is supplemented by the funding of full diagnostic assessments, from an educational psychologist, for all pre-arrival students holding a “conditional-firm” or an “unconditional-firm” offer; this ensures that these students have all of their support needs in place at the start of their learning experience. The University seeks feedback from users of its service to inform support offered, and to make adjustments as and when required. The University also has a team of specialists able to help staff who support students with disabilities and mental health challenges, as well as providing continuing professional development opportunities, including training sessions on autism, mental health, disability, dyslexia and pastoral care and boundaries.

4.3.4.2 White males from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds

Building on the University's success for attracting this group of students, TU is committed to ensuring that appropriate retention and student success initiatives are in place. Ensuring that effective transition activities are delivered to foster a sense of belonging and confidence for incoming students, as well as providing information, advice and guidance throughout their time in higher education is essential and the range of initiatives are detailed in the appendix to this Agreement. These activities are delivered by student support services as well as Academic Schools.

4.3.4.3 Targeted support

Other examples of tailored innovations delivered by the University to specific groups include:

- Twenty-One Plus Student [TOPS] - Demonstrating excellence in the outcomes for mature students, as a result of a multi-layered approach to academic support, this programme of support commences prior to induction through the dedicated TOPS event. The purpose of this event is to demystify the university experience, signpost students to a range of support services and contact points, and serve to establish a sense of community among mature entrants. Attendance at the TOPS event continues to grow increasing by 30% from 2015 to 2016.
- Diversi-Tees - Aimed at addressing particular gaps in employment outcomes for specific student groups Diversi-Tees is a mentoring scheme which matches students with mentors in the business community. The programme specifically supports care leavers, BME, disabled and mature students. Mentees draw on the experience of professionals in the workplace to gain employer contacts, identify career options, assist with job applications and offer work shadowing opportunities. Mentors are drawn from a range of organisations including Cleveland Police, HM Revenue and Customs and local councils.

The University's approach to securing improvements in attainment and progression of students from different backgrounds has generated considerable success, particularly in the case of those entering with low tariff scores (200 or less). In recent years, the University has fostered an upward trend in attainment by students with lower than average tariff scores in terms of securing First or Upper Second degree classifications, rising from 47.0% in 2013/14 to 59.3% in 2015/16. This evidence of significant learning gain is a result of the coherent institutional approach to providing pedagogic and pastoral support.

5. Targets and Milestones

The University will continue to target the following groups under the terms of this agreement as detailed in the Resource Plan.

- Young full time first degree entrants by POLAR 3 low participation marker
- Percentage of students in receipt of DSAs / Percentage of students declaring a disability
- Percentage of students achieving qualification aim
- Percentage of entrants to FT First Degree programmes continuing or qualifying following year (2-year time delay)
- Percentage of graduates in work or study 6 months after graduation (1-year time delay)
- Leavers in employment or further study
- Percentage of graduates in professional or managerial jobs 6 months after graduation (1-year time delay)

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

The University's strategic approach to widening participation and equality and diversity ensures regular monitoring of this agreement through its Planning and Performance Review approach at both strategic and operational level, and through its Committee structure, which includes student representation to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive and the University's Board of Governors. Institutional KPIs are set out in the Enterprise & Business Engagement and Learning & Teaching Strategies, again reinforcing the emphasis on corporate ownership. In order to achieve KPIs a number of performance measures and a specific action planning process have been established, including clear ownership of each strand, specific progress indicators and timescales.

The senior manager responsible for the delivery of this Access agreement is the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching).

7. Commitment to Equality and Diversity

The University is committed to embedding Equality and Diversity in to all its strategies and it has an excellent track record in delivering a curriculum and learning experience that recognises diversity and provides positive outcomes for all. The University has set out agreed Equality Objectives through to 2020 which have been developed in consultation with staff and students via the Equal Opportunities Committee and focus groups.

The University has taken care to ensure that its commitments under this agreement and its duties and objectives under the Equality Act are aligned. The objectives developed for the Equality Action Plan 2016 align with the targets established in this agreement.

8. Provision of Information to Prospective Students

Teesside University is committed to publishing clear and accessible information for existing and prospective students on fees and financial support. Channels include:

- The University's website
- Published materials including Prospectuses
- Social Media channels
- Unistats
- Events for a variety of audiences including schools, colleges, and employers
- Open days
- Email communication from the University's CRM system
- External education websites
- Offer letters

The University is fully aware of the implications of the Consumer Protection Laws in respect of our responsibility to provide accurate and timely information and to consult with students on any proposed major changes to provision. The University is committed to providing timely, accurate information to UCAS (for courses that receive applications through UCAS) and the Student Loans Company (SLC) so they can populate their course databases in good time to inform applications.

9. Statement on Collaboration with Students

Teesside has a distinctive approach to working in partnership with students, who are represented on key deliberative committees in the University. In addition, the Student Experience Committee has a student-led agenda and a student Co-Chair.

The University has worked closely with the SU to further develop the system of SU Officers, Student Representatives, and Course Representatives to enable students to strengthen representation across the University. Working with the University, students actively contribute and inform discussions and decision-making on all major student-facing committees of the University as well as a range of working groups, task and finish groups, and approval panels. Through this collaborative relationship, students have opportunities to contribute to the development of University developments in widening participation.

April 2017

Appendix

Access Agreement Expenditure

A summary of Teesside University's Access Agreement expenditure plan for 2018/19 is provided below.

OFFA Countable Expenditure	2018-19 £000's
Access expenditure	£1,287
Student Success expenditure	£1,285
Progression expenditure	£1,352
Expenditure on financial support	£276
Total expenditure	£4,200

Teesside University has an excellent record of enabling students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to access higher education. Given this, the emphasis of the Agreement for 2018/19 is more heavily focussed on supporting progression and achievement of these students.

Specific activities to meet targets are detailed in the tables below.

Improving Access			
Heading	Project	Indicative Activities	Target Group
Close liaison with partnership and feeder organisations	Schools/colleges liaison work Raising aspirations in feeders and local communities	• Pre 16 aspiration raising (including motivational visits, outreach & parental engagement)	Under-represented groups (pre 16)
		• Targeted recruitment activity (including taster days, open days, outreach, and target events for particular student groups)	Under-represented groups (post 16) including SEN/care leavers/young carers/BME
		• Work with key influencers (including events and relationship building)	Parents/carers/teachers
	Ambassadors into Schools	Students working in schools to support learner development and aspiration	Under-represented groups
	HEAT Tracker	Tracking interventions with young people to evaluate effectiveness	Under-represented groups
Targeted recruitment activity	Advice to prospective students on funding available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information provision • Individual guidance • Information sessions • Careers evenings and parents events 	Under-represented groups
	Targeted Recruitment Communications	Targeted Communications to promote pre-entry activity and information to under-represented groups	Under-represented groups
Participation in the NE Raising Aspirations Partnership (RAP) to support pre-16 recruitment activity	Strategic collaboration with other North East Universities to raise aspirations	Support for collaborative fairs, schools and colleges visits and programme of activity	Under-represented groups

Improving Retention and Student Success

Heading	Project	Indicative Activities	Target Group
Support for transition into HE	Induction processes	Activities intended to settle students into course and school and foster belonging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social events • Information provision • Cohort building at course level • Provision of essential information in accessible and targeted forms • LibQuest: Maintenance & further development of game-based interactive guide to the University Library Services 	All Students
	Summer University	Pre-university study to address learning and skills deficits and raise confidence	All Students
Provision of information, advice and guidance	Advice and Information Services	Provision of information, advice and guidance on any issue that affects students. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff based in Academic Schools of study monitoring attendance and engagement and investigating concerns and referring as appropriate to professional services. • Provision of specific information and guidance, development of cohorts and confidence (Pre-arrival days – 21+) 	All Students
	Support for individual students in academic schools	Resources to enhance academic based guidance and support through course teams and schools structures	All Students
	Student Hub Development	A project to enhance clearer pathways for students to access support and development opportunities	All Students
Development of cohort cohesion	Sport participation programme	Programme to encourage activity and engagement – enhancing attachment and social bonding	All Students
	Enhancing the Student Union experience by supporting students in self-organised activities through the SU	Fostering the development and effectiveness of student lead activity to support cohort development, sense of belonging and enhance student skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional support for student societies • Direct funding • Enhancing student engagement 	All Students
	Building community in residences	The aim is to foster belonging and community	All Students

Improving Retention and Student Success (continued)

Heading	Project	Indicative Activities	Target Group
<i>Support for targeted innovative and developmental practice</i>	Peer Assisted Student Support (PASS)	Training and supporting students to support others in learning and development	All Students
	Special Projects through Academic Registry	Review and evaluation of deliverable and transferable project outcomes that address emergent concerns	All Students

Targeted Support for specific groups

Heading	Project	Indicative Activities	Target Group
Provision of individual advice and guidance	Disability support	Support for disabled applicants and students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspiration raising • Work with feeders organisations • Support for applicants • School-based support 	Disabled applicants and students
	Care Leavers support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated advisory support • Financial support for students 	Care Leavers
	Enhanced, specific technological Support	Provision of specific technology requirements to support identified disabled students	Identified disabled applicants and students
	Student Futures-targeted support	Supported 12 week placements for recent graduates. Specific strand to address issues related to differential outcomes identified for target groups	Disabled and white males from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds
	Enhancing access to support for students identified with a diagnosed mental health condition	Developing clearer pathways for vulnerable students including those with identified mental health concerns. Developing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearer support mechanisms • faster referral processes • broader service 	Identified students

Progression to further study or to/within employment

Heading	Project	Indicative Activities	Target Group
<p>Embedding employability skills development in curriculum & provision of volunteering, mentoring and paid work experience opportunities</p>	<p>Student Futures</p>	<p>•Careers Adviser Work-Detailed work with course teams to tailor interventions to support particular cohort needs in relevant labour markets.</p>	<p>All Students</p>
		<p>•Get Ahead Programme-Programme of additional activities & Short Courses which support student development and the use of Students to promote employment activities</p>	
		<p>•VolunTees Programme of volunteering development Identifying appropriate partner organisations • Generating student interest • Identifying student need and matching • Monitoring and rewarding participation • Developing curriculum</p>	
		<p>DiversiTees-Providing appropriate mentors for disabled, BME and mature students to develop skills and awareness</p>	
		<p>Graduate Internships-Supported 12 week placements for recent graduates</p>	
		<p>Assist Graduates access employment by supporting students and directing them towards relevant graduate schemes and coaching them on skills such as interview techniques and CV writing</p>	
	<p>Employability leads in Schools</p>	<p>Specialist roles to support development of employability by co-ordination of extra co and in curriculum activities</p>	<p>All Students</p>

Progression to further study or to/within employment (continued)			
Heading	Project	Indicative Activities	Target Group
Work to embed the University's Learning and Student Experience Strategy and to ensure that all students develop the key attributes identified in the strategy	Learning Hub	Extra and co-curricular provision to support student development through a hub and spoke model to address student skills concerns	All Students
	"Lunch and Learn" staff development	Focussed short staff development sessions examining issues of student diversity	All Students
	Succeed@tees	Development of information skills in students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of liaison networks • Specific provision and student development programme • Enhanced roles of Library staff • Development of on-line resources 	All Students
	Curriculum Development	Continued development of an inclusive and accessible curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on a specific project to identify and transfer good practice around inclusive learning, teaching and assessment 	All Students

Financial Support Expenditure			
Heading	Scheme	Eligibility Criteria	Target Group
Bursaries & Scholarships/In-Kind	Teesside Advance Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergraduate; • Year 0 or 1; • New Entrant; • Full-time; • On campus (not HEBP) 	All Students
Total Financial Support Expenditure			

Table 7 - Targets and milestones

Institution name: Teesside University

Institution UKPRN: 10007161

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

Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu)	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu)	Baseline year (drop-down menu)	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	
T16a_01	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	HESA T1a - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Young Full-time first degree entrants from POLAR3 low participation neighbourhoods	No	2014-15	26.3%	28.9%	29.4%	29.9%	29.9%	University strategy currently covers the period to 2019/20	
T16a_02	Access	Disabled	HESA T7 - Students in receipt of DSA (full-time, first degree entrants)	Participation of students in receipt of Disabled Student Allowance (Full-time undergraduate)	No	2014-15	8.8%	7.9%	8.2%	8.5%	8.5%	University strategy currently covers the period to 2019/20	
T16a_03	Student success	Multiple	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	Students achieving their original qualification aim	No	2014-15	76.7%	86.3%	88.1%	90.0%	90.0%	University strategy currently covers the period to 2019/20	
T16a_04	Student success	Multiple	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (All, full-time, first degree entrants)	Full-time first degree all entrants continuing or qualifying following year	No	2013-14	87.8%	93.8%	94.4%	95.0%	95.0%	University strategy currently covers the period to 2019/20	
T16a_05	Progression	Socio-economic	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	Graduates (obtaining first degrees from full-time courses) in work or study 6 months after graduation	No	2013-14	88.1%	90.0%	91.0%	92.0%	92.0%	University strategy currently covers the period to 2019/20	
T16a_06	Progression	Socio-economic	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	Graduates (obtaining first degrees from full-time courses) in professional level jobs 6 months after graduation	No	2013-14	50.6%	54.0%	55.0%	57.0%	57.0%	University strategy currently covers the period to 2019/20	
T16a_07	Other/Multiple stages	Disabled	Other statistic - Disabled (please give details in the next column)	Percentage of new entrants who have declared a disability	No	2014-15	13.8%	15.0%	15.5%	16.0%	16.0%	University strategy currently covers the period to 2019/20	

Table 7b - Other milestones and targets.

Reference Number	Select stage of the lifecycle	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	
T16b_01	Access	Multiple	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Collaborative NE Raising Aspirations Partnership participation numbers	Yes	2014-15	9000	19965	21000	21000	21000	From 2015/16 the NNCO operating as a Single Point of Contact for the 5 NE HEI's. Existing targets for 2016/17 and 2017/18 have been increased to take into account the growth of the network, and the additional pump prime funding. The five universities have committed funding to sustain collaborative activity to 2019	
T16b_02	Access	Attainment raising	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Activities specifically targeted to support raising aspirations and applications from underrepresented groups	No	2014-15	15	22	24	26	30		
T16b_03	Access	Attainment raising	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Participation numbers of students across all age ranges in relation to aspiration, attainment and progression activities	Yes	2016-17	25000	27500	30000	32500	33500	35000	
T16b_04	Access	Multiple	Other (please give details in Description column)	Events to specific target groups to include BME, mature learners, white working class boys and SEND	Yes	2016-17	12	14	16	18	19	20	
T16b_05	Access	Attainment raising	Other (please give details in Description column)	To help raise the attainment of Yr5/6 literacy levels, this scheme will work closely with local schools. The University will engage with a cohort of students (a maximum of 5 per learning group) to work with over an 8-week placement to improve literacy levels through a series of interventions. An assessment of the young people's literacy levels will be taken at the start of the programme and a second one when the programme ends.	No	2016-17	0	0	50	80	100	120	

Optional commentary on milestones.

This box is character-limited to 1000 characters; however, we are happy for you to upload additional 'supporting information' as a separate Word/pdf document.