

Teesside University- Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

1.0 Assessment of performance

Teesside University (TU) has a long-established strategic commitment to supporting individuals from under-represented groups. The socio-economic realities of the region mean TU faces a unique set of circumstances, and as such, the experience of its students needs to be both educationally and socially transformative. As an ‘anchor institution’, TU has played, and continues to play, a leading role in widening participation both regionally and nationally. In the current year (2018/19), 80% of TU’s students are APP countable and 73% are recruited from the North East. TU is extremely proud of the continued success that has been achieved in supporting these students; consistently outperforming benchmarks in most indicators as shown in our TEF metrics below:

TEF metrics – FT headcount

	Core	Years			Level of study			Age		POLAR		National IMD		Ethnicity		Disabled		Sex	
		1	2	3	PG-UG	1st deg	Other UG	Y	M	Q1 or Q2	Q3, Q4 or Q5	Q1 or Q2	Q3, Q4 or Q5	W	BME	Y	N	M	F
The teaching on my course	85.8	87.8	83.8	85.8	91.9	85.6	94.7	84.7	87.7	84.2	84.7	85.8	85.2	85.6	87.0	84.4	86.0	83.0	87.5
Assessment and feedback	76.2	77.4	75.9	75.7	72.4	76.0	91.7	74.5	79.3	74.5	74.1	76.7	75.3	76.2	76.8	75.0	76.5	73.3	78.1
Academic support	81.2	84.4	79.4	80.3	86.7	81.0	94.7	80.8	82.0	81.1	80.1	81.8	79.9	80.8	83.7	80.3	81.4	81.6	81.0
Continuation	90.2	89.5	90.0	90.9	93.2	90.2	86.8	90.6	89.4	90.0	91.3	89.7	90.5	89.8	DP	90.0	90.2	88.0	91.9
E'ment or further study	91.3	88.9	91.9	93.1	88.3	92.0	82.9	90.7	92.2	89.3	92.0	89.6	92.7	91.9	DP	89.9	91.5	87.1	94.1
Highly skilled e'ment or further study	74.2	66.4	77.2	79.6	80.5	75.3	59.4	70.0	82.1	67.6	72.1	73.1	75.5	74.8	DP	77.4	73.7	70.2	76.9

Key

Positive flag in core/split metrics	Negative flag in core/split metrics	Indicator is present but no flag
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The data presented in section one provides an honest and robust assessment of TU’s current performance and the rate of progress in closing the gaps between all target groups, across all lifecycle stages. This assessment has been used to stretch TU’s ambition and identify further improvements (detailed in sections 2 and 3 of the plan). Throughout the plan, TU will demonstrate that this assessment has been used not only to inform specific targeted interventions, but also a whole institutional strategic approach to supporting access and participation. Unless otherwise stated data has been sourced from APP 2021 data resources provided by OfS based on the HESA Student Return 2017/18 and Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education 2016/17. In general, analysis refers to full-time students. Reference to part-time students is made where a significant gap has been noted (and cannot be explained by low numbers).

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socio-economic status

Tees Valley is one of the most disadvantaged areas in the country; 35 wards (out of 99) are in the most deprived wards in the country. TU currently recruits 73% of students from the North East, and the top ten feeder schools and colleges are within a 15-mile radius of Middlesbrough, accounting for 46% of full-time undergraduate students.

Access

Since 2013 the proportion of TU students recruited from IMDQ1 has increased, with the gap between IMDQ1 and the remaining quintiles increasing over a 5-year period. This trend differs from the national picture; TU students from IMDQ1 equal 35.9% which is significantly higher than the national average of 21.6%.

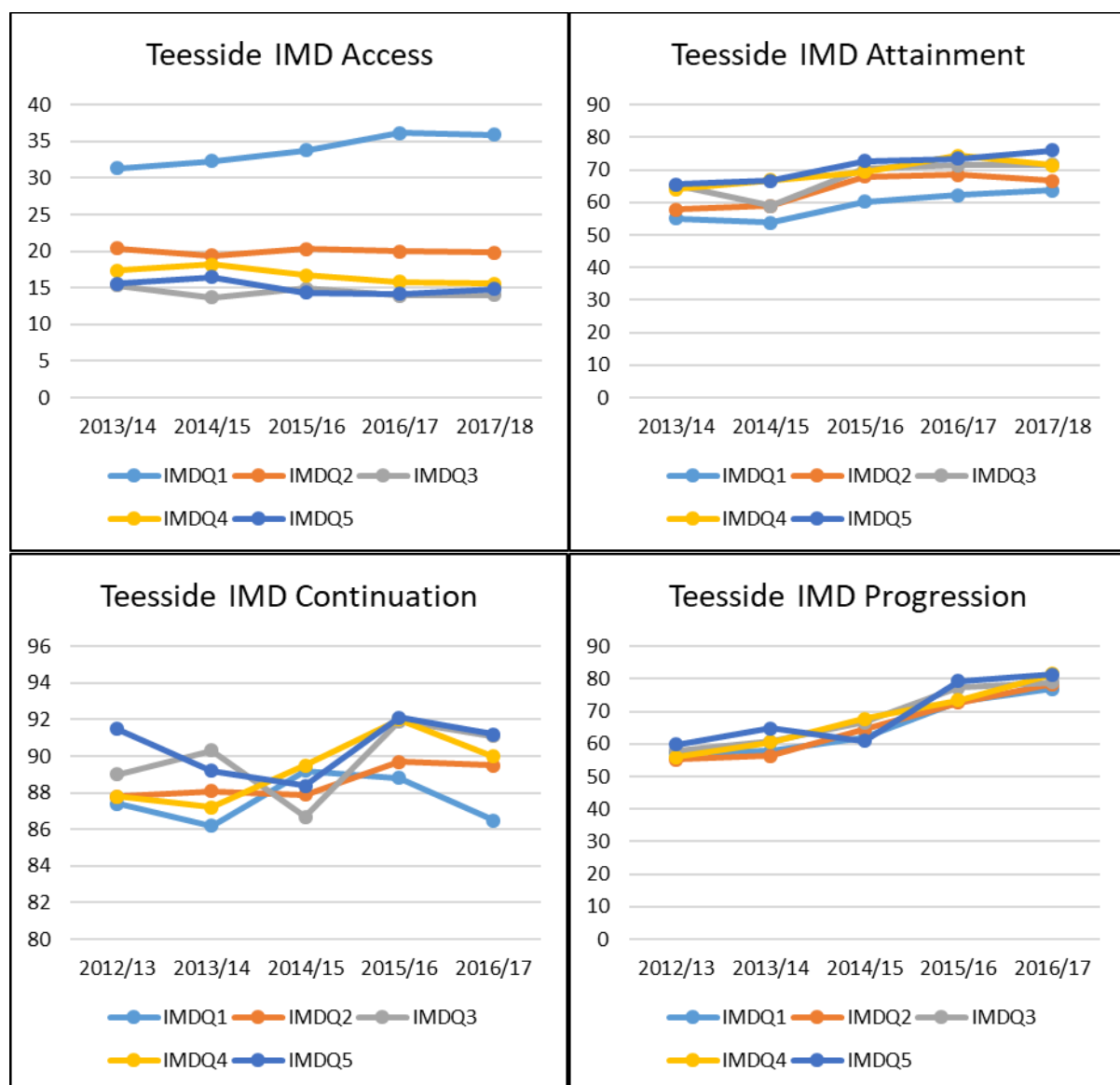
Attainment

In terms of attainment, TU's performance across all IMD quintiles has improved since 2013. In relation to IMDQ1, attainment has increased from 55% to 63.7% and the gap between this quintile and all other quintiles has reduced, except for when comparing against IMDQ5. Additionally, the gap between IMDQ1 attainment at TU and the national average is narrowing (7% to 3.4%).

Continuation and progression

Continuation and progression performance in IMDQ1, 2, 3 and Q4 have improved since 2013. However, the gap in performance for IMDQ1 and IMDQ5 for the same period has fluctuated. In 2014/15 the gap between these two quintiles was eradicated for both indicators (with IMDQ1 outperforming IMDQ5). Unfortunately, this trend has reversed and these gaps have now increased (4.1% to 4.8% for continuation and 2.6% to 4.4% for progression).

Analysis of part time data reveals that there has been significant improvement in progression for students from IMDQ1, (Q1 79.3% to Q5 93.1%). However, there is still a gap between students from IMDQ1 compared with students from IMDQ5 (55.7% in 2014/15 to 79.3% in 2016/17).



Access

Since 2013 the proportion of TU students recruited from POLAR4 Q1 has increased, with the gap between POLAR4 Q1 and the remaining quintiles increasing over a 5-year period. TU students from POLAR4 Q1 equal 30.6%, which is significantly higher than the national average of 12.0%.

Attainment

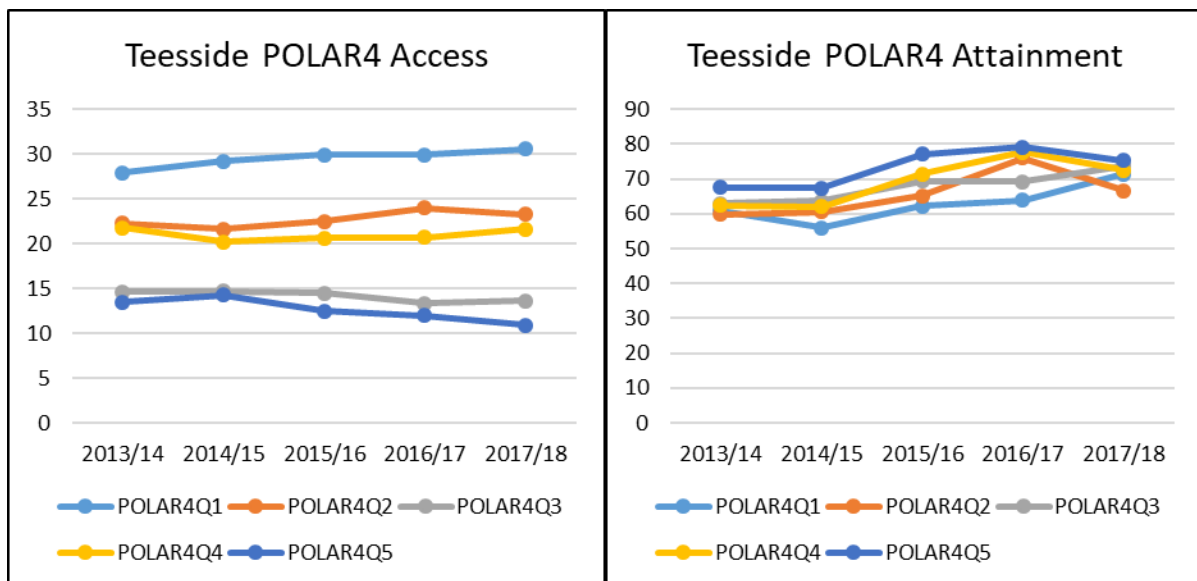
Since 2013, attainment has improved across all POLAR4 quintiles. After an initial decline in performance, attainment of students from POLAR4 Q1 has increased from 60.9% to 71.4%. Over the last 5 years, the gap in attainment between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 has narrowed from 6.7% to 3.9%. Additionally, the gap between POLAR Q1 attainment at TU and the national average is narrowing (8.5% to 3.2%).

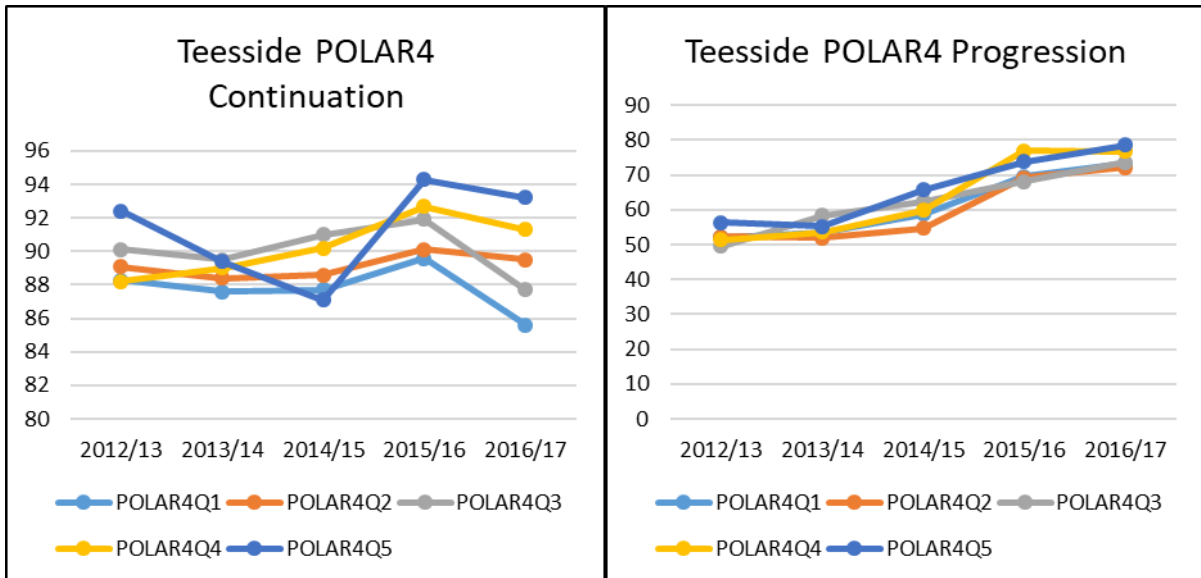
Continuation

Over the last 5 years, continuation of students from POLAR4 Q1 has decreased and the gap in performance between Q1 and Q5 has increased from 4.1% to 7.6%. This trend mirrors, but is more pronounced, than the national picture. In 2016/17, continuation rates declined across all quintiles, this cohort will be closely monitored to understand if this is a trend or a one off.

Progression

Progression has significantly improved across all POLAR4 quintiles and TU now outperforms the national data in each quintile. Whilst the gap in performance between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 at Teesside has widened slightly, this measure has fluctuated over the period and this is seen in the light of significant performance improvements.





1.2 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students

The Tees Valley has a very small BAME population (5.2%); 94.8% of the regional population are classed as White compared to 85.9% nationally. This demographic is reflected in TU's student population, where overall 11.8% of students are from a BAME background.

Access

The gap between the proportion of new entrants from a BAME background and those from a White ethnic background is considerable. At 76.3% the difference is significantly higher than the sector average (37.8%). However, it is reflective of TU's local demographics and recruitment footprint. Since 2013, the proportion of TU students recruited from BAME backgrounds has remained broadly static. Against a national trend of increasing BAME recruitment, the gap between TU and the national average has increased.

Attainment

The gap between BAME and White students at TU has been consistently narrowing (12.6% to 9.5%) with both groups showing improvements in performance. The gap in attainment between TU BAME students and the national average has also narrowed over the same period.

Continuation and progression

BAME students at TU consistently outperform White students in the continuation measure. Since 2012, both BAME and White students have seen significant improvement in progression. Whilst there is still an internal gap, the progression rate for BAME students at TU is better than the national progression rates.

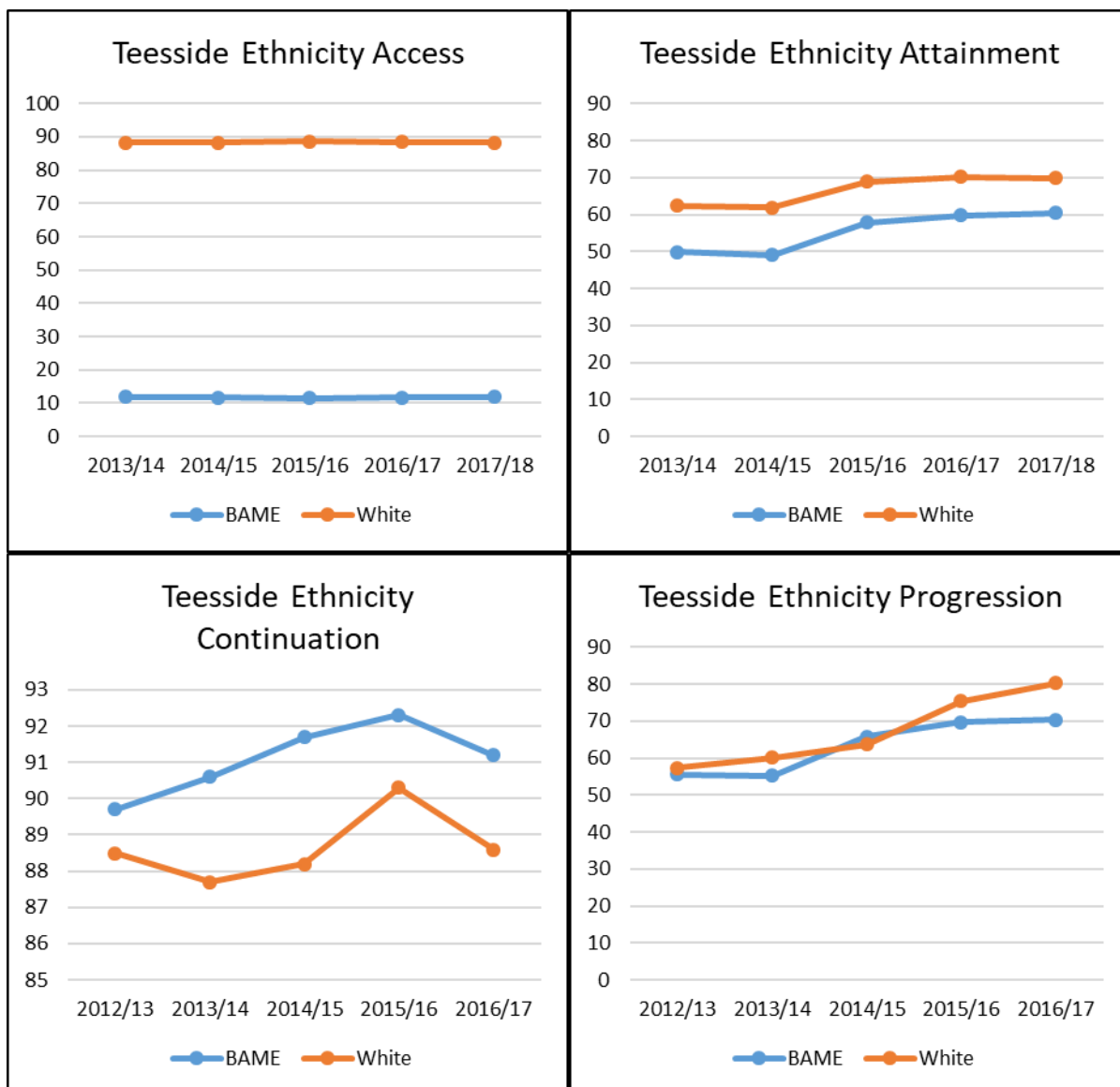
Further disaggregation of BAME student data highlights similar trends to those for the overall BAME cohort.

Attainment

In terms of attainment both Black and Asian students at TU underperform when compared to their White counterparts, however, the gap in performance is narrowing.

Continuation and progression

All BAME groups outperform White students in the continuation measure except for Black students, however, this small gap has only presented itself in the final year of the current data. In respect of progression, TU has seen improved performance across all groups although the pace of improvement has been quickest in the White student indicator.



1.3 Mature Students

Access

Since 2013, TU performance in relation to recruitment of mature students has improved significantly, and has consistently outperformed the sector. The gap in the proportion of new entrants that are young to those that are mature has reduced from 28.6% to 11%. It is predicted that 15-19 years olds in the Tees Valley will continue to fall until 2020 before increasing year on year to 2027.

Attainment

Whilst the difference between attainment for young and mature students widened in 2016/17, this is now reducing, and the performance gap has narrowed when compared to the national data (7.5% to 5.1%).

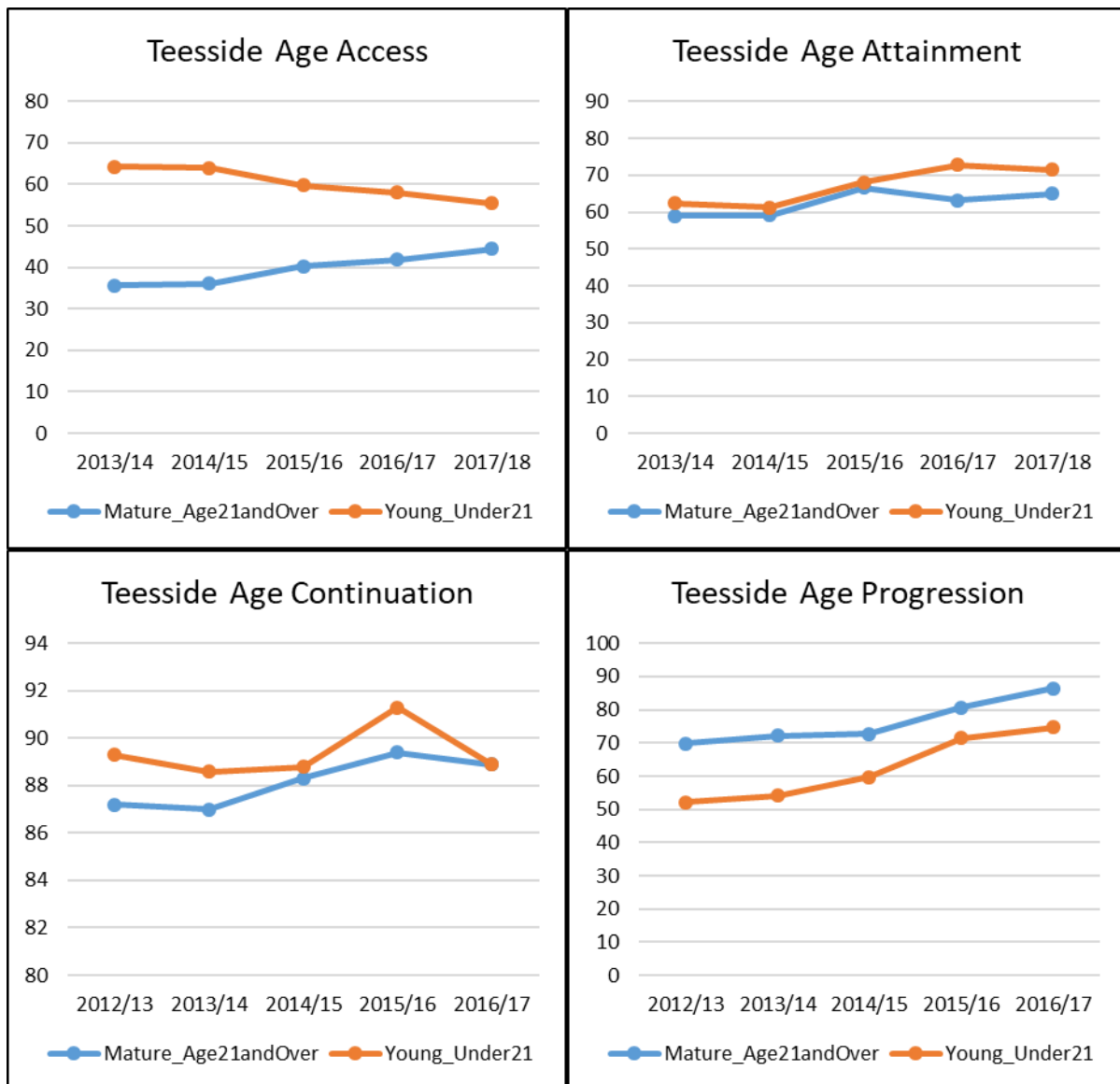
Continuation and progression

TU continues to outperform the national data on mature student continuation. TU's upward trajectory since 2013 is in contrast to a downward trajectory nationally. Mature students continue to perform better than younger students for progression, and TU continues to outperform the national data and has extended the gap significantly over the period (-0.7% to 10.8%).

Analysis of the part time data highlights a gap in continuation rates for mature students when compared to young students (67.0% to 80.9%). TU has set 3 continuation targets and anticipates that the activities planned will impact this measure. Close attention will be paid to the part time metrics to ensure improved performance.

Progression

A gap in performance in respect of part time young student progression when compared to mature students has been identified, however we also note a significant improvement in performance in this cohort and the gap is closing (14.4% to 9.8%).



1.4 Disabled Students

Access

Since 2013, TU's recruitment of students with disabilities has increased (11.8% to 17.1%) and the pace of improvement is faster than the national trend.

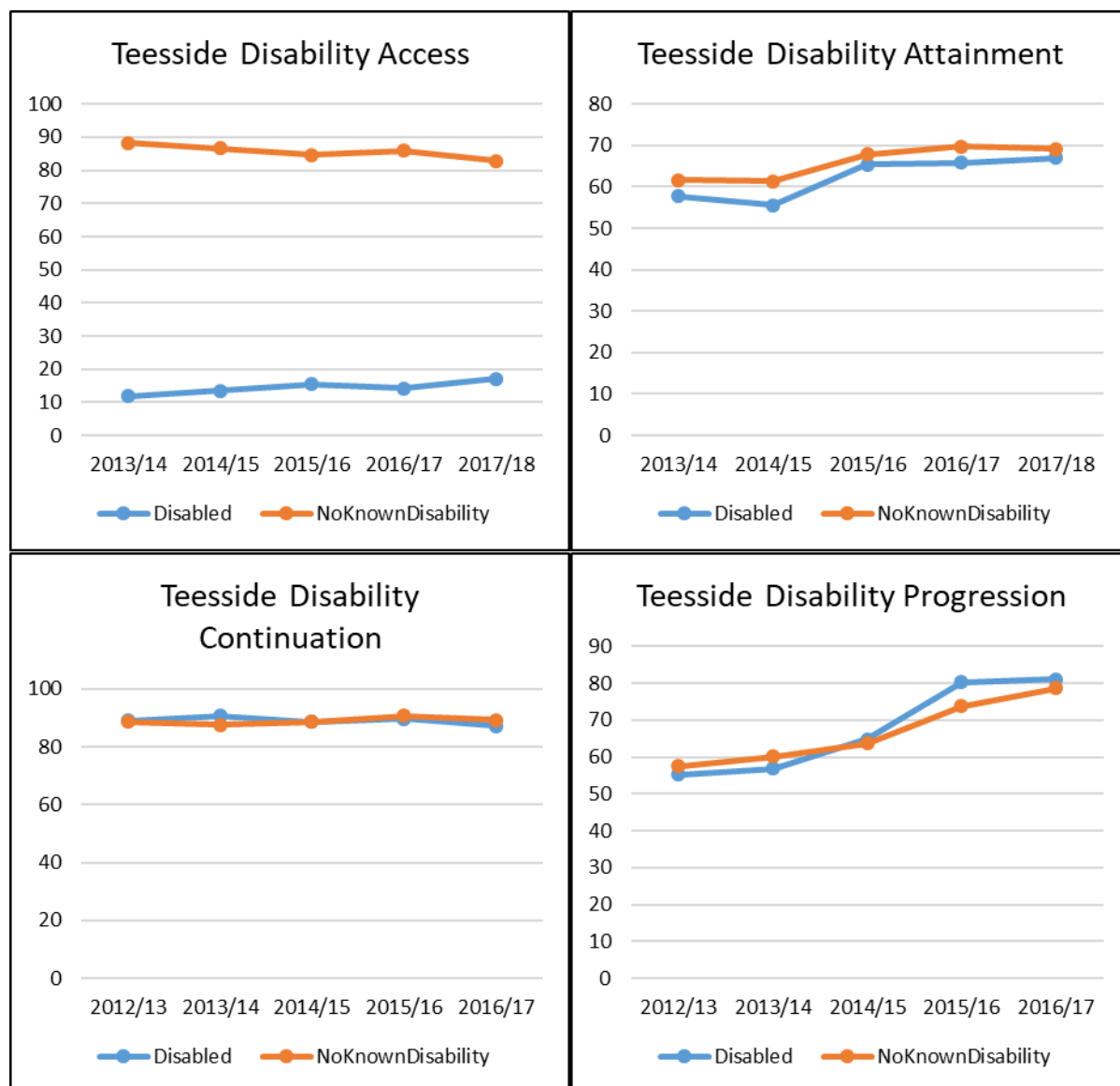
Attainment

TU has significantly improved the attainment of disabled students over the last 5 years, narrowing the gap with those with no known disability (3.9% to 2.2%). Although a gap in performance for

students with a disability still exists between TU students and the national data, the gap is reducing (13% to 8.9%).

Continuation and progression

In the last 5 years, there has been a small decline in terms of continuation, mirroring the national trend. Since 2012, TU has increased progression rates from 55.2% to 81%. Disabled students now perform better than students with no known disability, outperforming the sector (-8.6% to 9.5%).



Access

TU has more students than the sector average in all disability categories, except for students with multiple disabilities (2.1% compared with 2.3%). Further disaggregation of data to disability type results in small cohort sizes making analysis less meaningful. Since 2013, students with cognitive and learning disabilities accounted for the highest proportion of students with a disability. The second largest group has been students with mental health disabilities.

Attainment

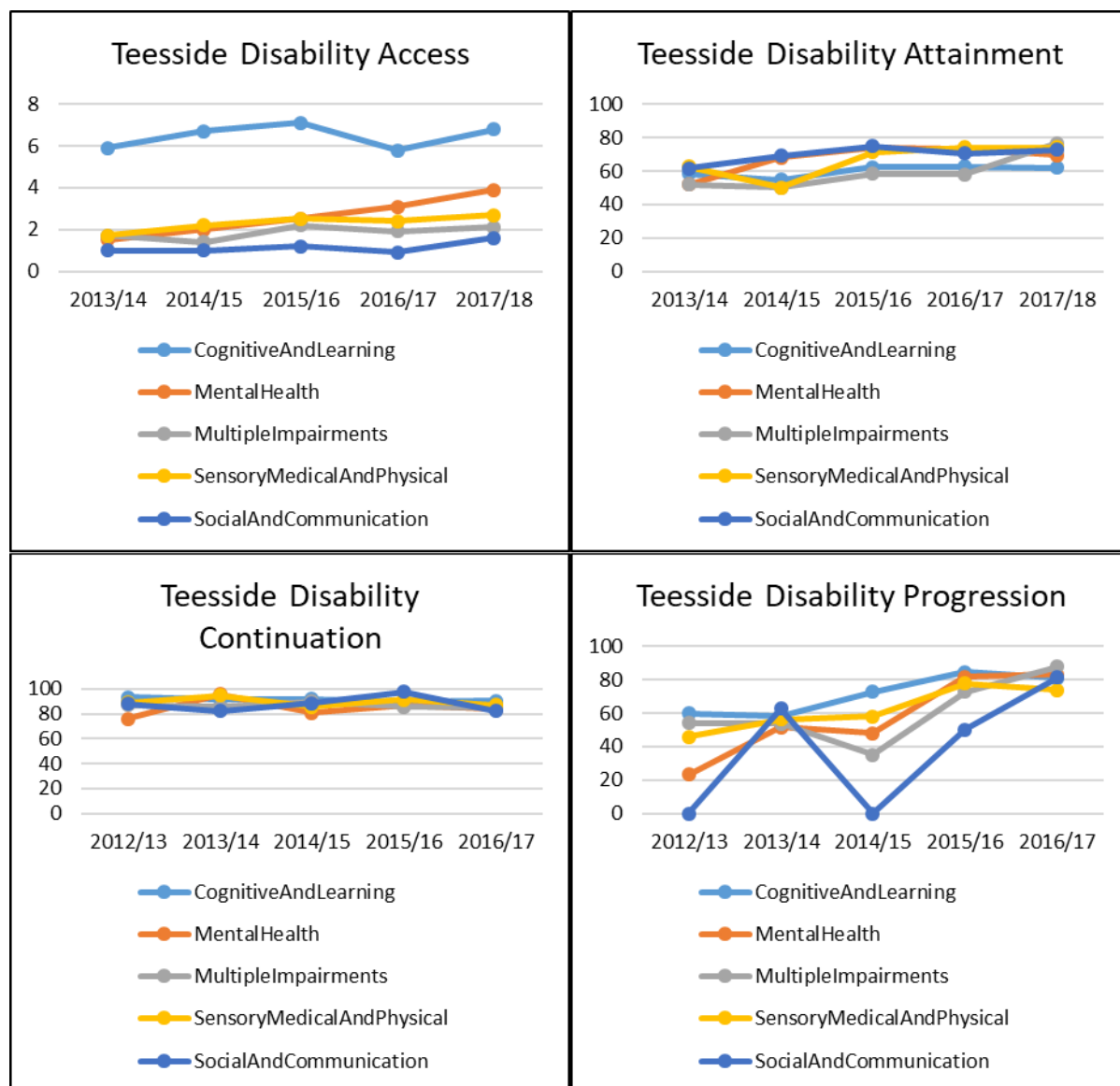
In terms of attainment, students with cognitive and learning disabilities have consistently underperformed when compared to those with no disability. In 2017/18, attainment for this group was below all other categories of disability. This trend is similar to the national picture where

students with cognitive and learning disabilities have consistently performed poorly, when compared to students with other disabilities and those with no known disability.

Continuation

At TU, continuation across the last 5 years has fluctuated in all disability categories, generally underperforming in comparison to the national average. In 2017/18 students with social and communication disabilities had the lowest rate in continuation but this only amounted to a cohort of 35 students. Students with mental health issues had the next lowest rate at 83.9%.

Progression of all disabled students has improved considerably since 2012.



1.5 Care Leavers

For several years TU has delivered targeted support to help care leavers access higher education (HE) and performance has improved (TU's care leaver population has increased from 0.6% in 2013/14 to 1.9% in 2018/19). However, TU is fully cognisant that the number of care leavers accessing HE at TU is extremely low and that this is a real challenge (as it is for the sector as a whole).

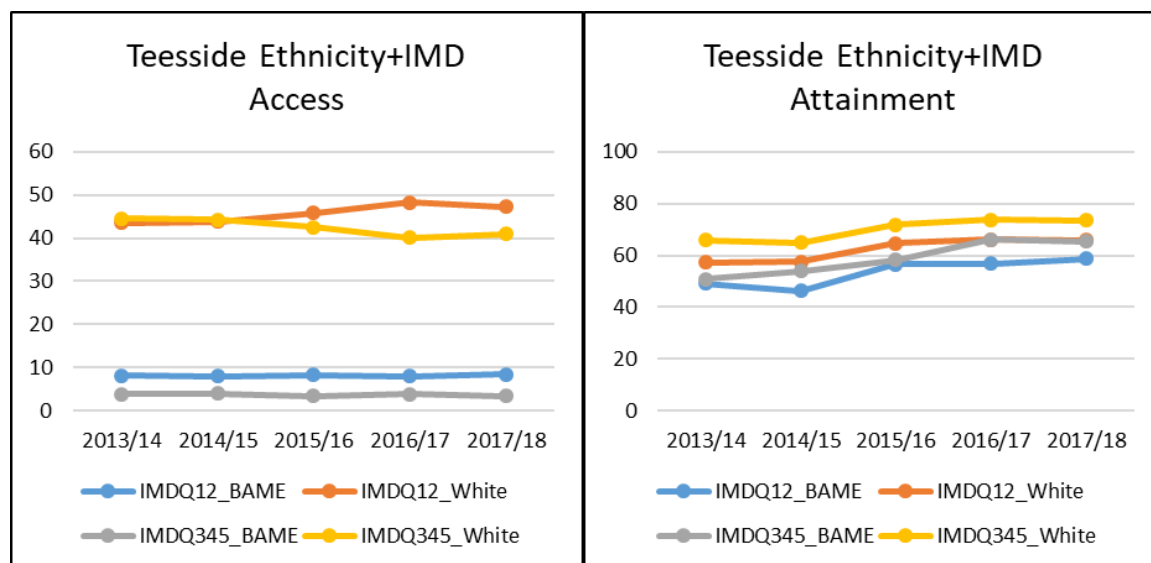
At present, there is limited care leavers data for the other stages of the student life cycle (both at TU and across the HE sector) and due to currently low numbers, analysis of this data would be meaningless.

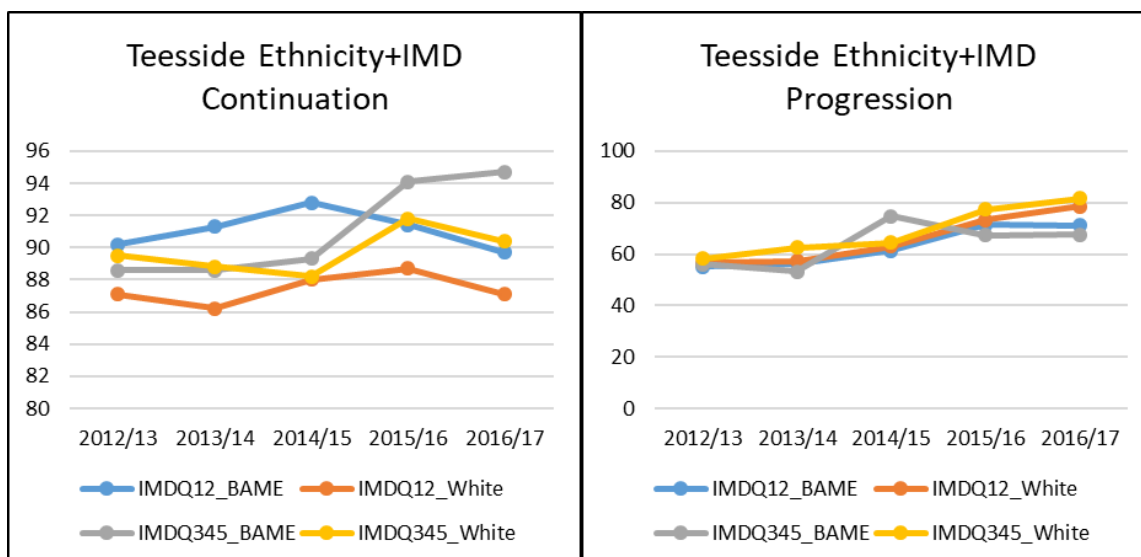
1.6 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status with ethnicity

As stated previously Tees Valley has a very small BAME population. The gap between the proportion of new entrants from a BAME background in all IMD quintiles and those from a White ethnic background has remained significant. Since 2013 the proportion of TU students recruited from BAME backgrounds regardless of IMD quintiles has remained broadly static. TU's performance in terms of recruitment of BAME students across all quintiles has worsened against the national picture.

At TU attainment has improved for BAME students across all IMD quintiles and whilst this is lower than the national data the gap in attainment for BAME students from IMDQ1&2 has narrowed over the period (9.4% to 6.2%). Continuation has consistently been high in this measure with BAME student continuation generally outperforming White students, although there has been a dip in performance for BAME students from IMDQ1&2 more recently.

TU now outperforms the national data for continuation of BAME students from all IMD quintiles and the gaps in performance have widened over the period (1.4% to 3.4%). Progression data for BAME IMDQ1&2 has significantly improved over the period (55.1% to 71.1%) and TU now outperforms the national data.





1.7 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status with gender

Access

Since 2013 recruitment of females from POLAR4 Q1&2 has continued to improve whilst recruitment of male students from POLAR4 Q1&2 has remained broadly consistent. TU continues to outperform the national data in terms of access for both female and male students from Q1&2.

Attainment

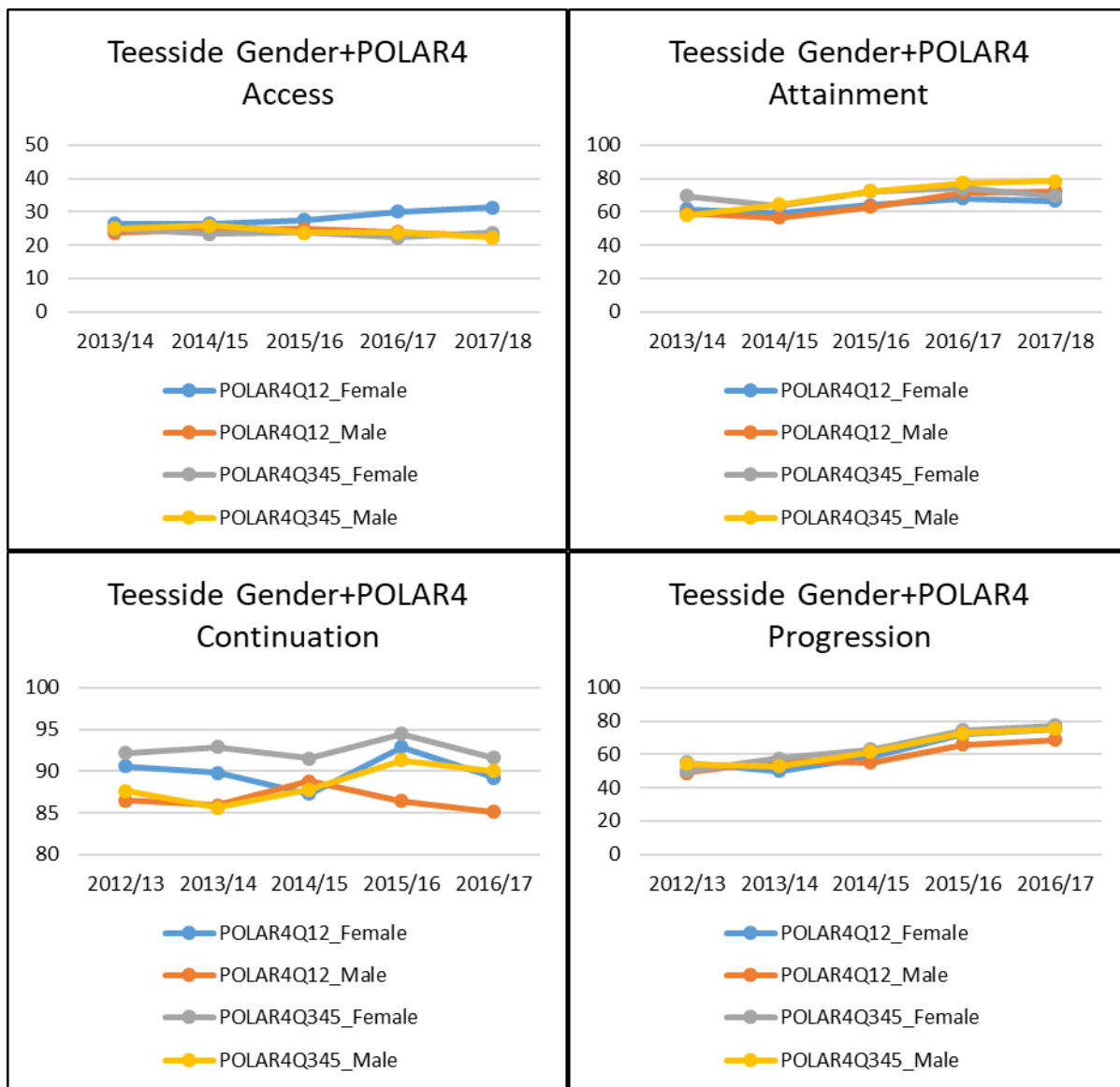
Attainment has improved for both males and females from Q1&2, however, this is at a slower rate than for males in Q3, Q4, and Q5. Currently, the largest gap in performance is between females in POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 and males in POLAR4 Q3, Q4 and Q5 (11.9%).

Continuation

Since 2012, continuation has fluctuated for students in all categories. Currently, the largest gap in performance is between males in POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 and females in POLAR4 Q3, Q4 and Q5 (6.5%). This trend mirrors the national picture where continuation is 5.2%.

Analysis of the part time data highlights a gap in continuation performance between female students from POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 when compared to female students from POLAR Q3, Q4 and Q5 (73.6% to 90.2%). It should be noted, the numbers in this metric are very small (40/55 to 35/40). For this reason, no targets have been set but performance in this measure will continue to be monitored.

Across all genders and quintiles TU's performance over the period has improved significantly, the gaps when compared nationally in all categories have been eradicated except for males in POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 where TU has still seen considerable progress.



1.8 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status with age and gender

As previously described the Tees Valley is one of the most disadvantaged areas in the country; 35 wards (out of 99) are in the most deprived wards in the country, additionally 94.8% of the regional population are classed as White compared to 85.9% nationally.

Access

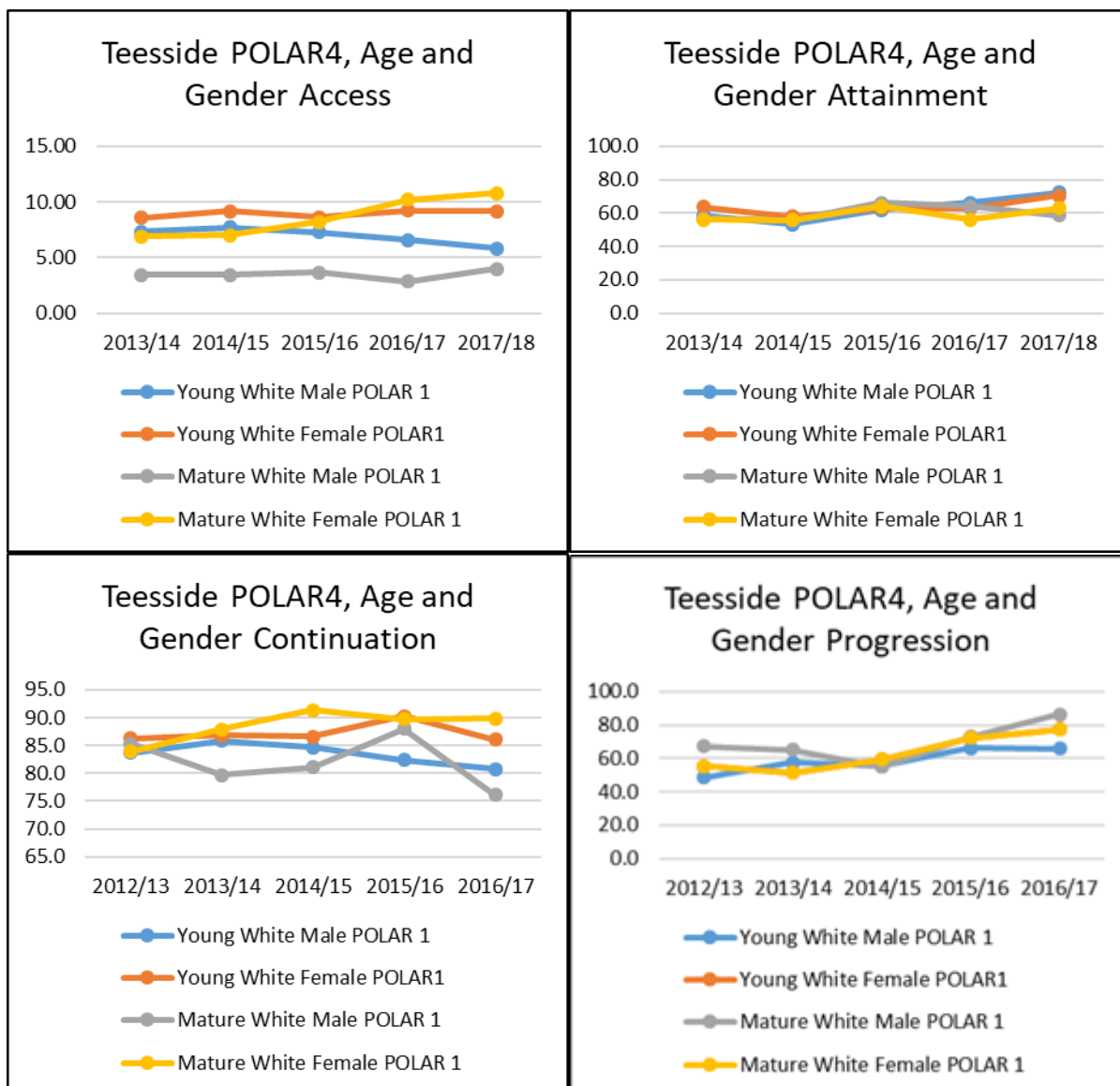
Across all ages and genders recruitment of students from POLAR4 Q1 has increased and is consistently above the national average.

Attainment

Since 2013, there has been an improvement across all ages and genders from POLAR4 Q1 in attainment with both young white males and females showing significant improvement.

Continuation and progression

Over the last 5 years there has been no improvement in continuation rates for students in any group, with the exception of mature white females in POLAR4 Q1. Although there have been significant increases in progression rates for students in POLAR4 Q1, young white males are still significantly behind those in other categories with the largest gap being compared with mature white females (22.3%).



1.9 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

There are wider groups of students who may experience barriers to HE, however, at present, there is insufficient data to analyse these groups.

Carers

TU's Student and Library Services department (SLS) and Students' Union (SU) have identified carers as a group who have specific needs. In recent years, specialist support has been provided to such students. Although there is currently no statutory requirement to report on these students, TU is investigating a reporting mechanism for students to self-declare carer status using the definition in the HESA Student Return.

Estranged students

SLS has identified additional support needs of students who are estranged from their families and has supported them through the process of gaining their estranged status. Work in this area relies on students self-declaring, therefore data is limited. TU is currently developing plans to improve this.

Children from military families

TU has signed the Armed Forces Covenant and is committed to the wellbeing of those who served including their families. TU is currently investigating mechanisms for collating data for this group, facilitating an assessment of issues in this area.

Refugees

The number of refugees within TU's local area has begun to increase in recent years but remains low. At present, there is limited data to enable an assessment of challenges for this group. TU is currently exploring how this can be improved. In the interim, TU has implemented a Sanctuary Award scholarship that includes a bursary payment and full course fee waiver for refugees.

2.0 Strategic Aims and Objectives

2.1 Target Groups

Given the assessment of TU's performance in section 1, 13 target groups have been identified which will focus on the interventions for the period of the APP (2020-2025). As well as TU targets, contributions will be made to collaborative targets through the partnership with other North East institutions shown below.

Target groups (TU and collaborative) and areas of intervention

Target Group	Stages of the student lifecycle		
	Access	Success	Progression
1. IMD Q1		X	
2. POLAR4 Q1 Young white males			X
3. Males POLAR4 Q1 and Q2		X	
4. Females POLAR4 Q1 and Q2		X	
5. BAME students	X	X	X
6. Care leavers	X		
7. Students with cognitive and learning disabilities		X	
8. Students with mental health issues		X	
9. POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 (collaborative)	X		
10. Care leavers (collaborative)	X		

IMD Q1

TU has a number of strategic aims for this target group, which will be delivered through a series of focused interventions, for example:

- A refreshed tutorial programme and an improved offer including mentoring, summer internships and work shadowing schemes.
- Curriculum design and delivery infused with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) ensuring that all students are supported to meet their potential.

IMD Q1 - aims and targets

Strategic aims	Baseline		Targets				
	Year	Data	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
10S -Reduce the attainment gap between IMD Q1 & Q5	2017/18	12.4	10.4	8.4	6.4	4.4	2.4
5S -Reduce the continuation gap between IMD Q1 & Q5	2016/17	4.8	2.8	2.2	1.6	1	0

Males and Females POLAR4 Q1 and Q2

It is TU's intention to reduce the identified performance differences for this target group and continue on a positive trajectory. Several strategic aims will be delivered through interventions such as:

- Introduction of a new learner analytics solution, to derive actionable insights into student performance enhancing our ability to target our student support with precision.
- Early stage employability interventions, targeted volunteering and internship provision, employability awards and 'Inspired in TU' alumni sessions.
- Implementation and use of analytics, including a new employability platform called Target Connect, to analyse levels of engagement, target support where required and develop graduate attributes.

POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 (male and female) - aims and targets

	Baseline		Targets				
	Year	Data	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
6S - Reduce the continuation gap between males in POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 & females in Q3, Q4 & Q5	2016/17	6.5	4.5	4.0	3.5	3.0	2.5
7S - Reduce the attainment gap between females in POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 & males in Q3, Q4 & Q5	2017/18	11.9	8.9	7.9	6.9	5.9	4.9
12P - Reduce the progression gap between young white males from POLAR4 Q1 and mature white females from POLAR4 Q1	2016/17	22.3	16.3	14.8	13.3	11.8	10.3

Whilst TU shows outstanding performance in Access to HE for North East students from disadvantaged backgrounds, we are working with other local HE partners to ensure progress with this collaborative target. We are firmly committed to maintaining our own performance in this area.

POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 (male and female) – aims and targets (collaborative)

	Baseline		Targets				
	Year	Data	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
3A - To increase the HE entry rate at age 18 for North East students from POLAR4 Q1 & Q2	2017/18	49.0	51.0	53.0	55.0	57.0	59.0

BAME Students

Due to the low number of BAME students in TU's access indicator this has been identified as an area for improvement. Improving access is a clear priority for TU and an ambitious target for access for BAME students have been set. Additionally, TU has committed to reducing the gap for BAME students' attainment and progression, and will monitor this closely as the population grows. The key strategic aims outlined below will be delivered through a variety of mechanisms including:

- Targeted promotion of core recruitment/WP activity at pre and post 16 to our BAME audience, working with schools and colleges with large BAME cohorts and community groups.
- Development of mutually beneficial relationships locally with key influencers in BAME communities with support from TU's Multi-Faith Advisor.
- Globally Connected AEF guidance targets students' understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and integration, and the development of cross-cultural friendships.
- BAME Careers Ambassadors will be appointed and used to encourage further participation from BAME students in the employability programme.

BAME students - aims and targets

	Baseline		Targets				
	Year	Data	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
1A - To increase the percentage of BAME students in the TU student population	2017/18	11.8	12.3	12.8	13.3	13.8	14.3
11S - To reduce the attainment gap between BAME students and White students	2017/18	9.5	6.5	5.5	4.5	3.5	2.5
13P - To reduce the progression gap between BAME students and White students	2016/17	9.9	5.9	4.9	3.9	2.9	1.9

Students with Cognitive and Learning Disabilities

TU will reduce differences in performance of disabled students through measures including:

- Designing inclusive and accessible resources and approaches (including assessment and feedback) for course delivery.
- Identifying technology that can support reasonable adjustments and empower student learning.
- Further engagement with assistive technologies.
- Early intervention approaches, developing resources to support student learning at the earliest opportunity while they wait for individualised support through DSA funding.

Students with cognitive and learning disabilities – aims and targets

	Baseline		Targets				
	Year	Data	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
8S - Reduce the attainment gap between those students with cognitive & learning disabilities and those without a disability	2017/18	7.3	4.3	3.3	2.3	1.3	0

Students with Mental Health Issues

In line with the rest of the sector, there has been an increasing number of students accessing TU's Mental Health services. UUK has highlighted a six-fold increase in the number of students disclosing a mental health condition since 2007. A 2017 Institute for Public Policy Research report noted that 94% of HE providers reported an increase in demand for counselling services, and 86% reported an increase in demand for disability services.

Support for this group of students has been designated as high priority for TU. Through the Learning and Teaching Strategy (LTS) TU will:

- Introduce specific guidance and support relating to attainment, progression and achievement for those with mental health issues, including a new Mental Health, Wellbeing and Resilience (MHWR) strategy.
- Embed learner analytics to support curriculum redesign and identify key areas of support.

Students with mental health issues - aims and targets

	Baseline		Targets				
	Year	Data	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
9S - Reduce continuation gap between those students with mental health conditions and those without a disability	2016/17	5.3	3.3	2.8	2.3	1.8	1.3

Care Leavers

In general, care leavers face a wide range of barriers which make it difficult for HE institutions to engage with and recruit from. The national benchmark for care leavers accessing HE is 6%, and over the next five years TU aims to significantly increase the number of care leavers accessing HE

through a variety of measures. The care leaver cohort are identified as a specific group within the Student Recruitment and Marketing (SRM) strategy, and TU will continue to support this group through its core recruitment and widening participation activity. In addition, a combination of targeted support will be delivered, for example:

- A targeted promotion of core recruitment/widening participation activity at pre and post 16 to looked after children and care leavers audience, including working with local authority teams and foster carers.
- Development of relationships with corporate parents to ensure dissemination of accurate information and to address perceived barriers.
- Continue working collaboratively with partner institutions in the North East through NERAP to deliver sustained interventions to looked after children with a view to raising aspirations and affecting changed behaviour with a view to future progression.

Care leavers - aims and targets

	Baseline		Targets				
	Year	Data	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
2A - To increase the percentage of care leavers in the TU student population	2017/18	1.9	2.4	2.9	3.4	3.9	4.4

Care leavers - aims and targets (collaborative)

	Baseline		Targets				
	Year	Data	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
4A - To increase the percentage of participants in Choices, a dedicated care leaver programme, who state that they expect to go to University as a result of the programme	2017/18	46.0	49.6	53.2	56.8	60.4	64.0

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

TU was founded almost 90 years ago with a mission to transform lives and economies. This commitment to developing skilled, work-ready graduates, civic value and social impact remains just as relevant today and underpins the dynamic and innovative anchor institution TU has become. TU believes that individuals should be able to achieve their full potential and is committed to creating an inclusive campus that embraces diversity and supports students across the whole lifecycle.

As section 1 highlights, 80% of TU students are APP countable and 73% are recruited from the North East. Within this context, access and participation is core activity and TU's work addresses many key challenges faced by those from under-represented groups, including those with low aspirations, lack of access to professional networks, limited social and cultural capital and issues connected to student confidence. TU seeks to broaden horizons and raise aspirations amongst all students and the local community, by enhancing access to education, skills development and employment opportunities.

As this plan demonstrates, access and participation remains a priority and is a key part of TU's strategic approach. TU continues to develop targeted measures and ambitious aims to reach out to students that are often harder to engage.

TU remains firmly committed to inclusivity and equality of opportunity through all stages of the student lifecycle; supporting under-represented groups to succeed and ultimately progress from HE. TU has a long-established APP Working Group which is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching). The working group comprises of senior managers and student representation from across TU. The APP has been formulated under the guidance of this group,

drawing in subject experts and practitioners to ensure TU's approach is informed by best practice in HE and beyond.

Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

Enabling individuals to achieve their full potential is a core university value and TU is committed to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into all of the strategies. Through a robust policy and strategy framework, TU has an excellent track record in delivering a curriculum and learning experience that recognises diversity and provides positive outcomes for all. TU has an agreed set of equality objectives which foster a diverse and supportive environment for staff and students. Alongside this, specific interventions targeted at the needs of particular groups have been identified. The work undertaken as a consequence of the APP aligns with TU's Equality Action Plan (2016-2020) which has 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 both students and staff to ensure that the whole University community can understand and achieve their potential.
- To embed equality and diversity into wider TU activities.

In developing this plan, TU has taken care to ensure that the commitments under the APP align not only with TU's own Equality Action Plan but also with future plans and duties under the Equality Act.

The Executive Director of Human Resources is also the Equality and Diversity Champion and chairs an executive committee. This committee includes membership from across key departments, a number of whom have responsibility for delivering and monitoring the steps outlined in the APP.

Campus Masterplan

In 2017, TU launched the campus masterplan which sets out the intention to transform the campus through strategic investment in the development of the estate to further enhance the student journey. Reinforcing the commitment to providing an outstanding student and learning experience, TU's ambitious plans include a range of projects from new teaching and learning spaces to accommodation. A key development will be the creation of a central student support facility that will bring together student-facing aspects of various services, avoiding the need for students to navigate or even be aware of TU's departmental structure when requiring assistance or support.

The Student Life Building will be a student-led central service, enabling students to access information, development and support to empower them as autonomous lifelong learners. The building will be a technology-enabled environment, integrating the physical and digital and will support a variety of learner needs. As well as providing a single point of contact for students to obtain comprehensive advice and support, the facility will provide substantial social, group and individual learning spaces, with significant IT and digital facilities and a catering provision. The Student Life Building in particular will provide seamless access to TU's mental health, wellbeing and disability services, offering access to sector leading supportive advice and guidance. The space will also proactively reach out to students and encourage them to take positive steps for their wellbeing through campaigns and activities open to all. Alongside the support aspects of the Student Life Building, it will promote and communicate opportunities on offer to students regarding employment and volunteering, a careers and employability centre will therefore be integral to the facility.

Alignment with other strategies

TU has a long-established strategic commitment to access and participation. TU's corporate strategy, Teesside 2020, sets out an ambitious approach that places students at the heart of everything TU does. The mission is:

TU 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.

This intent is embedded throughout TU's corporate strategies and articulated further in strategies, which underpin them. Strategic aims and objectives are underpinned by an overarching Theory of Change approach which provides a logical structure for exploring how and why a particular intervention works within a specific context:



The Theory of Change approach adopted by TU draws upon established models for measuring the impact of social policy programmes and educational interventions (Mason & Barnes, 2007; Laing & Todd 2015). It provides clarity in establishing the relationships between enabling factors, activities and outcomes, therefore allowing identification of key measurement points throughout the lifetime of a project and beyond. The systematic approach of Theory of Change more robustly captures the cumulative impact of the various factors which can impinge on the implementation of an initiative, and facilitates the nuances of individual factors to be explored through the evaluation. Where a desired outcome has not been achieved, the model allows the specific factors contributing to the failure to be identified and explored.

For each initiative, the Theory of Change model is applied through the following structure:

Step	Overview
1. Current Situation (Rationale)	The existing situation which the intervention is designed to address is clarified, informed by the perspectives of all stakeholders. This is underpinned by the utilisation of appropriate data.
2. Enabling Factors (Requirements)	The contextual requirements to undertake the project are defined, including those that lie beyond the remit of the project team. Potential barriers may also be highlighted to ensure that they are captured and explored within the evaluation process.
3. Processes/Activities (Interventions)	An overview of the specific steps which the project team will take to achieve the desired changes is developed. Each activity or process should be measurable as part of the evaluation. It should provide a structured and logical progression in delivering activities which culminate in the desired outcomes.

4. Desired Outcomes (Achievements)	The intended achievements of the project by the end of its operational lifetime, in terms of the measurable impact on learning, teaching and the student experience, will be clearly defined. The statement forms the foundation of the Theory of Change, and is the prime focus of the evaluation. It is expected that the formation of the outcomes will not be developed in isolation, but rather should be informed by engagement with relevant literature and existing practice from across the sector.
5. Longer Term Impact	Beyond the lifetime of a project, it is likely that the project may have a broader impact on key stakeholders, the institution and/or the sector. The project team will identify such long term changes, and plan future evaluative activities accordingly. The key benefit of this approach lies in encouraging the project team to consider a longitudinal approach to evaluation.

The Theory of Change is fundamental to the evaluation process, and its rigour and robustness are essential in ensuring that the impact of an intervention is comprehensively explored.

TU's APP commitments are particularly core to the following strategies, which will be detailed in this section:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
- Student Recruitment and Marketing (SRM)
- Learning and Teaching (LTS)
- Mental Health, Wellbeing and Resilience (MHWR)
- Student Futures Strategy (SFS)
- Campus Masterplan (CM)

Access

The Student Recruitment and Marketing Strategy (SRM) strategy sets out a commitment to support all students, from all backgrounds, with the ability and desire to take part in HE. Delivered through targeted outreach activity and development of relationships with key TU partners, the strategy aims to maximise opportunities for students to progress into HE. Given TU's recruitment patterns, the majority of outreach and liaison work is focussed on target groups identified within the APP. Activity is built around particularly encouraging students from low-participation areas, BAME students and care leavers to engage with activities both on and off campus. TU also works with schools and colleges, as well as army bases, to support children from military families.

Through the SRM strategy, TU has established strong relationships with key stakeholders to deliver a range of targeted activity over the student lifecycle from primary through to post 16 education, to those at risk of not achieving their potential. Whilst much of the APP activity delivered through this strategy is focussed locally, TU has extended outreach provision beyond Teesside

through involvement in the North East Raising Aspiration Partnership (NERAP) and North East Collaborative Outreach Programme (NECOP). Going forward, the development of the Outreach Hub will be key to signposting provision and instigating a step change in attitude, and expectation of young people to apply and progress to HE in all its forms.

TU provides dedicated advisory support for care leavers wanting to progress to HE, such as advice on finance (including a care leavers' bursary), accommodation and welfare. In 2013, TU hosted the first 'Raising aspirations for young people in care' conference. Bringing together professionals and key influencers, including local authority teams, foster carers and schools, this flagship conference attracts 80-100 delegates each year. Workshops have included attachment, resilience, mental health and preparing care leavers for life after care. In 2019, Lisa Cherry, a care leaver herself, will be delivering a keynote speech on her research focused on improving outcomes for young people. Alongside this, TU continues to deliver year round activity for looked after children and care leavers of varying ages. Based around informing young people of opportunities and financial support available, this work is already having an impact. TU is committed to further growing the numbers of care leavers enrolling.

Student Success

TU's Learning and Teaching Strategy (LTS) is designed to deliver an outstanding student and learning experience. This is framed through the concept of Future Facing Learning (FFL), a distinctive pedagogic model which provides students with the skills, knowledge and tools to thrive in complex and uncertain futures. Curriculum design and delivery is infused with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), ensuring that all students are supported to meet their potential. Since September 2019, the FFL toolkit (a suite of specialist apps) has been deployed to staff and students, with a particular emphasis on accessibility and inclusivity, to sustain parity in the access of all students to appropriate digital tools.

The Academic Enhancement Framework (AEF) provides the mechanism through which the FFL is embedded within the curriculum, through the provision of guidance and support across the nine priority areas. A number of these (wellbeing, future ready, transitions and student success) are directly related to TU's targets relating to attainment, progression and achievement. A series of key initiatives delivered through the AEF position TU to deliver against ambitious access and participation targets. A suite of institutional guidance documents will support course teams in undertaking curriculum redesign, drawing upon peer reviewed research and innovative sector practices. The professional development offer for teaching staff will be reviewed and revised, with a specific emphasis on providing staff with the tools to address the identified gaps in attainment and progression. Bespoke projects will be implemented, with support from central teams, in localised subject areas based on a data-driven assessment of performance against the targets. Where appropriate, TU's Students as Researchers scheme will be utilised to explore the learning experience from a student perspective, and supplement work conducted by staff, in recognition of the value of the student voice in designing and delivering enhancements. Innovative practices will be shared through inclusion in TU's annual Learning and Teaching Enhancement conferences.

In 2019/20, TU will introduce a new learner analytics solution, drawing upon a wealth of data sources to derive actionable insights into student performance and behaviour at individual, cohort and institutional levels. The introduction of learner analytics will significantly enhance the ability to target TU's student support with precision.

A core theme identified in TU's LTS and AEF is wellbeing and the need to provide seamless, effective and accessible advice, guidance and support through integrated structures. A significant part of this work, a new Mental Health, Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy (MHWR) aims to build and maintain a healthy community for students. The strategy will promote mental health, well-being and resilience whilst providing responsive services with key partners to support individuals experiencing periods of difficulty. Building on current strengths of student support and wellbeing services the MHWR strategy will develop and maintain a healthy community through:

- The provision of holistic and integrated mental health, resilience and well-being activities across the whole of the student journey, building on the strengths of our current student support and well-being services.
- Further developing agile, streamlined and needs led mental health and counselling provision, with effective triage and risk management.
- Embedding mental health literacy in the curriculum across TU to promote awareness of the issues, build resilience and wellbeing, and ensure colleagues can respond appropriately.
- Developing robust policies and protocols around mental health, resilience and wellbeing, collaborating with partners in the NHS and 3rd sector to ensure appropriate 24/7 cover and risk management.

Student Progression

Teesside University has transformed its approach to graduate employability and entrepreneurship through the implementation of a bold Student Futures strategy (SFS), to give its students and graduates the best possible prospects of achieving their career ambitions. An inspiring employability and entrepreneurship strategy is central to the University’s mission to “transform lives and economies”. TU is committed to broadening horizons and ensuring graduates are equipped with the knowledge, skills and experience for success in their chosen careers. Supporting local businesses, involving them in curricular and co-curricular activities, and giving them access to student talent, is a key part of its economic anchor role. The vision set out within the SFS is to support and empower students to become confident, employable graduates, who will shape their own future and the future of society. The SFS outlines TU’s approach to embedding employability within the curriculum and providing opportunities to develop graduate attributes that allow them to become effective global citizens, employees and entrepreneurs. The socio-economic realities of the region mean that TU continues to face a set of circumstances that require it to provide a student experience that is both educational and socially transformative. As part of TU’s ongoing commitment to enhancing the student and learning experience, the FFL has been implemented, which is designed to provide students with the knowledge, skills and tools to thrive in a complex and uncertain world.

Articulated in the SFS, future readiness is instilled by developing an understanding of the needs of individual students. In 2017, TU commenced the collation of data from all taught students at enrolment pertaining to employment history, career readiness and individual development needs. In 2017/18, 20,987 students provided this information. This data is used to identify specific areas for development at institutional, course or individual levels, including signposting students to relevant support and training for their future career aspirations. Supporting the approach and commitment to student futures, TU has recently secured OfS challenge competition funding which will be used to improve the rates of progression of students from under-represented groups, by providing targeted support to develop skills, attributes and meaningful graduate-level opportunities in Tees Valley.

Our strategic aims and planned measures are summarised in the table below:

Key to table

1A	<u>Access Target</u> To increase the percentage of BAME students in the TU student population by 2.5% by 2024/25
2A	<u>Access Target</u> To increase the percentage of care leavers in the TU student population by 2.5% by 2024/25
3A	<u>Access Collaborative Target</u> To increase the HE entry rate at age 18 for North East students from POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 by 10% by 2024/25
4A	<u>Access Collaborative Target</u> To increase the percentage of participants in Choices, a dedicated care leaver programme, who state that they expect to go to University as a result of the programme by 18% by 2024/25

5S	<u>Success Target</u> Reduce the continuation gap between the IMD Q1 & Q5 by 4.8% by 2024/25
6S	<u>Success Target</u> Reduce the continuation gap between males in POLAR4 Q1& Q2 & females in Q3, Q4 & Q5 by 4% by 2024/25
7S	<u>Success Target</u> Reduce the attainment gap between females in POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 & males in Q3, Q4 & Q5 by 7% by 2024/25
8S	<u>Success Target</u> Reduce the attainment gap between those students with cognitive & learning disabilities and those without a disability by 7.3% by 2024/25
9S	<u>Success Target</u> Reduce continuation gap between those students with mental health conditions and those without a disability by 4% by 2024/25
10S	<u>Success Target</u> Reduce the attainment gap between IMD Q1 & Q5 by 10% by 2024/25
11S	<u>Success Target</u> Reduce the attainment gap between BAME students and White students by 7% by 2024/25
12P	<u>Progression Target</u> Reduce the progression gap between young white males from POLAR4 Q1 and mature white females from POLAR4 Q1 by 12% by 2024/25
13P	<u>Progression Target</u> Reduce the progression gap between BAME students and White Students by 8% 2024/25
Strategy	EDI – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy SRM – Student Recruitment and Marketing Strategy LTS – Learning and Teaching Strategy MHWR – Mental Health, Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy SFS – Student Futures Strategy CM – Campus Masterplan

STRATEGIC MEASURE	TARGETS	STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT	UNDERPINNING EVIDENCE	ACTIVITY * Activities are likely to support multiple target groups and align with multiple strategic measures.	MILESTONES
Inclusive Access	1A, 2A, 3A, 4A	SRM, EDI, LTS	<p>Final Report: What works? Student Retention and Success</p> <p>DfE Policy Paper: Principles to guide HE providers on improving care leavers access and participation in HE</p> <p>UWE Moving on up: Pathways of care leavers and care-experience students into and through HE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Targeted promotion of core recruitment/WP activity at pre and post 16 to BAME audience, working with schools and colleges with large BAME cohorts and community groups. - Targeted promotion of core recruitment/widening participation activity at pre and post 16 to looked after children and care leavers audience, including working with local authority teams and foster carers. - Development of mutually beneficial relationships locally with key influencers in BAME communities with support from TU's Multi-Faith Advisor. - Development of relationships with corporate parents to ensure dissemination of accurate information and to address perceived barriers. - Development of an Outreach Hub to signpost provision and instigate a step change in attitude and expectation of young people to apply and progress to HE in all its forms. -Provision of dedicated advisory support for care leavers wanting to progress to HE, such as advice on finance (including a care leavers' bursary), accommodation and welfare. - Hosting and participating in the 'Raising aspirations for young people in care' conference, bringing together professionals and key influencers, including local authority teams, foster carers and schools. - Globally Connected AEF supports cultural diversity of our students and staff being reflected in our marketing activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On-going throughout APP 2020-25. Reviewed annually. - On-going throughout APP 2020-25. Reviewed annually. - On-going throughout APP 2020-25 with recruitment of Associate Faith Advisors by Dec 2019. - On-going throughout APP 2020-25. Reviewed annually. - On-going throughout APP 2020-25. Reviewed annually. - On-going throughout APP 2020-25. Reviewed annually. - On-going throughout APP 2020-25. Reviewed annually. - From Sept 2020. Evaluation July 2022.

Digital Transformation	5S, 6S, 7S, 8S, 9S, 10S, 11S	LTS, MHWR	<p>IES Report: Models of support for students with disabilities</p> <p>Henderson, M., Selwyn, N., and Aston, R., (2015) What works and why? Student perceptions of 'useful' digital technology in university teaching and learning, <i>Studies in Higher Education</i>, 42 (8), pp. 1567-1579</p> <p>Herrington, J. and Parker, J., (2013). Emerging technologies as cognitive tools for authentic learning. <i>British Journal of Educational Technology</i>, 44(4), pp.607-615.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identifying technology that can support reasonable adjustments and empower student learning. - Further engagement with assistive technologies. - Deployment of FFL toolkit (a suite of specialist apps) to staff and students, with a particular emphasis on accessibility and inclusivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From Sept 2019. - From Sept 2019. - From Sept 2019. Review Aug 2021. Evaluation Aug 2022..
Inclusive Design Environments	1A, 2A, 5S,6S, 7S, 8S, 9S, 10S, 11S, 12P, 13P	LTS	<p>Universal Design for Learning and Digital Environments (The Journal for Inclusive Practice in Further and Higher Education)</p> <p>Report to HEFCE Causes of differences in student outcomes</p> <p>Final Report What works? Student Retention and Success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curriculum design and delivery infused with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) ensuring that all students are supported to meet their potential. - Designing inclusive and accessible resources and approaches (including assessment and feedback) for course delivery. - Continue working collaboratively with NERAP to deliver sustained interventions to looked after children with a view to raising aspirations and affecting changed behaviour with a view to future progression. - Globally Connected AEF guidance targets students' understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and integration, and the development of cross-cultural friendships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From Jan 2021. Review Jan 2022. Complete Jan 2023. - From Sept 2020. Review Jan 2022. Evaluation Sept 2023. - On-going throughout APP 2020-25. - From Sept 2020. Evaluation July 2022.

			Future Learning Spaces: Space, Technology and Pedagogy (Advance HE, 2019)		
Learner Analytics	5S, 6S, 7S, 8S, 9S, 10S, 11S	LTS	<p>Report to HEFCE Causes of differences in student outcomes</p> <p>Student wellbeing and mental health: the opportunities in learning analytics (Jisc, 2018)</p> <p>Learning analytics and student success – assessing the evidence (Jisc, 2017)</p> <p>Learning Analytics in Higher Education: A review of UK and international practice (Jisc, 2016)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of a new learner analytics solution to derive actionable insights into student performance enhancing our ability to target our student support with precision. - Embed learner analytics to support curriculum redesign and identify key areas of support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From Jan 2020. Evaluation Jan 2023. - From Sept 2021. Evaluation Jan 2024.
Student Support	3A, 8S, 9S, 10S, 11S, 12P, 13P	LTS, CM, SFS	<p>Institute for Public Policy Research – Not by Degrees – Improving student mental health in UK’s Universities</p> <p>Blackbulion University Resources</p> <p>Jesnek, L. M. (2012). Empowering the Non-Traditional College Student and Bridging the" Digital Divide". <i>Contemporary Issues in Education Research</i>, 5 (1), 1-8.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early intervention approaches, developing resources to support student learning at the earliest opportunity while they wait for individualised support through DSA funding. - OfS challenge competition funding used to improve the rates of progression of students from under-represented groups, by providing targeted support to develop skills, attributes and meaningful graduate level opportunities in Tees Valley. - Development of Student Life Building will provide seamless access to TU’s mental health, wellbeing and disability services, offering access to sector learning supportive advice and guidance. - Provision of credit for course texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On-going throughout APP 2020-25. Reviewed annually. - Sept 2019 – Sept 2022 reporting quarterly and at the end of each year. - Pilot from Sept 2019. Opening Jan 2020 for full roll-out from Sept 2020. - On-going throughout APP 2020-25 with commitment to using OfS

			<p>Vigdor, J. L., Ladd, H. F. and Martinez, E. (2014), Scaling the Digital Divide: Home Computer Technology and Student Achievement. <i>Economic Inquiry</i>, 52: 1103-1119.</p> <p>NUS 2018 Poverty Commission Report.</p> <p>NUS asks institutions to be upfront about hidden costs – press release 19 March 2019.</p>		financial support toolkit to evaluate impact.
Wellbeing	8S, 9S	MHWR, LTS	<p>Institute for Public Policy Research – Not by Degrees – Improving student mental health in UK's Universities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce specific guidance and support relating to attainment, progression and achievement for those with mental health issues, including a new Mental Health, Wellbeing and Resilience (MHWR) strategy. - Wellbeing AEF guidance support an inclusive environment engaging all students with inclusion and wellbeing, including support for transitions, cohort identity and learning and assessment. - Embedding mental health literacy in the curriculum across TU to promote awareness of the issues, build resilience and wellbeing and ensure colleagues can respond appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sep 2019 – July 2020. - From Sept 2020. Evaluation July 2022. - From Sept 2020. Evaluation July 2022.
Widening Employment Opportunities	12P, 13P	LTS, SFS	<p>Final Report What works? Student Retention and Success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A refreshed tutorial programme and an improved offer including mentoring, summer internships and work shadowing schemes. - International volunteering opportunities for those students who need more encouragement and exposure to the job market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On-going throughout APP 2020-25. - Building on pilot activity in Summer 2019 this will be expanded to other countries from 2020. - From Sep 2019 with an initial project review date summer 2020.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Early stage employability interventions, targeted volunteering and internship provision, employability awards and 'Inspired in TU' alumni sessions. - Implementation and use of analytics, including a new employability platform called Target Connect, to analyse levels of engagement, target support where required and develop graduate attributes. - BAME and Young White Male Careers Ambassadors will be appointed and used to encourage further participation from BAME students in the employability programme. - Expansion of the successful University DiversiTeens mentoring scheme working with care leavers, BAME, disabled and mature students. - Introduction of a new 'Inspired in TU' series of alumni sessions to engage students in career planning and leadership training on campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On-going throughout APP 2020-25. - From Autumn 2019 with an initial project review date of Summer 2020. - Development during 2019-20. On-going throughout APP 2020-25. - 2019-2022 delivery of at least one 'Inspired in TU' session in each of the 3 years.
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3.2 Student consultation

TU has a long-standing commitment to working in partnership with students. Building on the Student Charter, developed in 2013, the student voice is deeply embedded across governance, curriculum development and teaching enhancement. Elected representatives from the Students' Union are active members of all decision-making committees including Board of Governors, University Senior Management Team and Academic Board. Furthermore, the Student Experience Committee (co-chaired by a student representative and senior academic) plays an active role in shaping policy and procedure, through discussion on specific student-led agenda. Alongside this, the Students' Union School Representative System (which has been running for more than 10 years), recruits and trains students to engage with the management of each academic school.

Students are at the heart of curriculum development and shaping of the wider student experience. With specialist training and support from Academic Registry, students actively engage in curriculum design through course approval and review events. Significant investment has been made to strengthen the student voice through implementation of a module evaluation system. This enables TU to capture and analyse the student voice as part of the continual monitoring and enhancement process.

The mechanisms detailed above have been employed across a wide range of policy areas including access and participation, ensuring that the student voice is fully reflected in our access and participation activities. For many years, TU has employed Student Ambassadors to support its recruitment and engagement activities. These ambassadors have been integral to delivering access and participation activity across Tees Valley. As part of this process TU regularly gathers feedback from the ambassadors to sense check whether interventions are fit for purpose and shape future activity.

In developing the latest iteration of the APP, TU has collated feedback from the ambassadors, module evaluation and various committee discussions. Given the composition of TU's student population, this has enabled the University to involve students from all backgrounds in the development of the APP. In addition, Students' Union representatives are members of the APP Working Group and through this partnership they have been actively involved in discussions that have shaped the APP. In particular, they identified carers as having specific needs, and encouraged a collaborative approach to providing specialist support to these students. They have also informed the development of the Student Life building and shaped this from delivering just services to having a proactive approach to wellbeing.

Going forward, it is the intention that the mechanisms detailed above will be deployed to ensure that students will be involved in delivering and monitoring the activities set out in the APP. Furthermore, as members of various focus groups, working groups and committees, student representatives will be asked to provide feedback on TU's access and participation activity, and will be actively involved in the evaluation of these interventions. Where possible, TU's Students as Researchers group will evaluate interventions. As members of the APP working group, student representatives will be expected to be involved in monitoring the APP, regularly reviewing status reports and cross-referencing activity against the APP action plan. Regular monitoring reports will be sent to the Student Experience Sub Committee and Student Learning and Experience Committee for discussion and action.

"Our Students' Union have been involved throughout the development of the APP and we believe it captures what is best about TU and the Students' Union, a shared commitment to success for our hyper-diverse student population. The plan matches the high-quality academic experience with the support and opportunities needed for all students to feel at home here. The peer support and friendships gained through our many student communities support and motivate their studies and bring life skills for their graduate careers.

We believe this plan recognises the top priorities for TU and we will be part of the monitoring team for this plan to ensure it delivers for all of the students involved." (Andrew Richardson, President Activities and Sophie Bennett, President Welfare).

3.3 Evaluation strategy

Strategic Context

TU welcomes the emphasis from the OfS on evidence and evaluation and has developed a robust institutional wide approach to drive forward improvements in access and participation. TU is committed to reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of all APP activities to inform progress and evaluate success. This will take place for all stages of the student lifecycle to ensure TU is delivering comprehensive and evidence-informed solutions.

In 2018, TU introduced a university wide Programme Management Framework (PMF) which includes a benefits mapping approach to project planning and evaluation. An evaluation framework (which is part of the PMF) provides a rigorous institutional approach to measuring the impact of interventions relating to the student experience. The framework utilises a Theory of Change model, providing clarity in establishing the relationships between enabling factors, activities and outcomes, therefore allowing the identification of key measurement points throughout the lifetime of a project and beyond. Where a desired outcome has not been achieved, the model allows the specific factors contributing to the failure to be identified and explored.

Programme Design

TU's evaluation framework is intended to be flexible and can be used for initiatives across all Schools and Service Departments. To further support the importance TU places on evaluation activity, the PMF has been designed to ensure that evaluation activity is incorporated throughout all stages of a project.

The institutional evaluation framework is curated by the Strategic Transformation & Change (STC) team, with reporting via the STC Board chaired by the Vice-Chancellor.

Evaluation Design

The APP Steering Group is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching) and provides a key forum for the planning and review of associated evaluative activities, ensuring that subsequent actions are identified, and findings are shared with key stakeholders, including the Students' Union. The APP, and subsequent updates on progress, are reviewed by the Board of Governors.

Three key stages and tools make up TU's evaluation framework. It should also be noted that the development of the framework has included learning and input from other organisations to guarantee the sharing of best practice.

Stage 1: Benefits Mapping and Developing a Benefits Exploration Map (BEM)

Stage 2: Developing a Measurable Benefits Data Plan

Stage 3: Benefits Realisation Table

Following the conclusion of Stage 3, evaluation outcomes are shared widely across TU. This includes the development of individual case studies for specific initiatives, promoted to key stakeholders through cross-University communications.

Evaluation Implementation

Supporting documents and online resources have been developed outlining TU's guiding principles for designing and implementing evaluation activity. A number of tools and templates are available to staff undertaking evaluations. The Strategic Transformation & Change team also provide support and training where needed.

Learning to shape improvements

TU will strive to continuously enhance monitoring and evaluation methods. Adopting TU's project evaluation framework encourages consistent reporting of what is achieved from specific initiatives, helping to embed a benefits driven culture and ultimately making reporting a simpler and more accurate process.

TU has well-established processes for sharing and learning from evaluation outcomes, which form an integral element of the institutional evaluation framework. Where evaluation outcomes identify tools and techniques worthy of broader scaling across the University's provision, these are captured as part of the Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement (CME) process curated by Academic Registry, and coordinated through inclusion within appropriate mechanisms, including CME action plans at institutional, school and departmental levels. In this manner, innovative approaches can be swiftly implemented through a structured process. The outcomes of the CME process, including compliance and progress with associated action plans, are monitored by the Academic Board, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor.

Where appropriate, Academic Registry embeds key evaluation findings within relevant elements of the professional development offer for staff, ensuring that academic practice across the University is informed by robust evidence and evaluation. The professional development offer includes the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, workshops on specific topics, and coaching and mentoring for individual members of staff. In addition, specialist resources based on evaluation outcomes can be disseminated through online support sites for teaching staff. Twice-yearly learning and teaching conferences provide a forum through which innovative evidence-informed practices can be shared with practitioners. Evaluation outcomes will be disseminated through external networks, events and publications where appropriate to do so.

Future plans for this area include the establishment of a database where all benefits realisation data can be collated within one central place. This will further contribute to university-wide reporting by providing a quick reference on benefits realised and how they were measured.

TU will also evaluate the success of the outreach activities through the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) and monitoring the number of students enrolled on courses from the under-represented groups. In addition, TU will evaluate activities at the point of delivery from participants in schools and colleges, and through focus groups with target groups of students on campus.

NECOP and NERAP activity is evaluated through a combination of external consultants and the HEAT database. TU will also collate qualitative evidence to support this.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

Strategic responsibility for access and participation lies with the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Learning and Teaching and nominated officers have been appointed to lead on specific areas of the plan. Utilising TU's university wide project management framework, key deliverables and outcomes have been identified for each strategic measure contained within the APP. These have been incorporated into a single action plan to ensure overarching aims and objectives of the APP are achieved.

As previously noted, TU has an APP Working Group which meets bi-monthly to measure progress against identified targets and inform future activity. In line with the PMF, nominated officers will be responsible for producing monthly status reports which includes an update on current activity and identifies any major issues and priorities for future activities.

This framework will enable the APP working group to easily identify any slippage in progress of our APP activities. Where slippage does occur, nominated officers will be expected to provide both details of why this has occurred and possible solutions to resolve the issue. This will be fully discussed at the APP working group and a SMART action plan developed.

The Board of Governors considered provisions contained in the APP and approved key interventions and targets. Access and participation has been incorporated into the Board of Governors work schedule; a quarterly monitoring report will be prepared by the APP Working Group for their scrutiny. The APP Working Group reports to the Student Learning and Experience Committee and Academic Board, regular progress reports will be incorporated into the agendas for these meetings for discussion and action.

As mentioned previously students play a fundamental role in shaping policy across TU and as such have been intrinsically involved in the development of the APP. Going forward students will be actively involved in monitoring of the APP through their participation in the APP Working Group, the Student Experience sub-committee and SLEC.

4.0 Provision of information to students

TU's commitment to access and participation will be articulated in the access statement, which will be made available to students through the TU website. TU is committed to publishing clear and accessible information on fees and financial support.

Prospective Students

TU communicates with, and supports, prospective students from initial brand awareness and aspiration raising through to enquiry and application. Course and financial information is provided via a number of mediums including online and hard copy materials. Staff from Student Recruitment and Marketing (SRM) and Student and Library Services (SLS) coordinate a range of activities for prospective students, collaborating where appropriate with schools and partner colleges.

Where individuals require more specific pre-entry support, they will be referred to SLS, who can advise on the various options and support prospective students may require. TU has a dedicated team of welfare and finance advisers who can advise both prospective and current students on a range of issues. Such support may include benefit information, applications for student funding, financial hardship, student loans, the financial implications of suspensions and withdrawals, childcare issues, and TU's Student Support Fund.

Current Students

As noted above, SLS has a highly experienced team of advisers who provide ongoing support to students throughout their time at university. They are able to advise on a range of matters including information on fees, loans and benefits, such as TU's Student Support Fund. TU Students' Union also plays an active part in both open days and initial orientation of new students. Professional advisors who are part of Students' Union Student Support (SUSS) cover the full range of academic and welfare topics, specialising in the independent advice and representation sought by many students. The Students' Union growing outreach programme visits most academic buildings and halls of residents in order to intervene at an early stage, answering students' queries and signposting to Students' Union and TU support.

TU is fully cognisant of its responsibilities under consumer protection laws, including the need to provide accurate and timely information and to consult with students on any proposed major changes to provision. TU is committed to providing timely, accurate information to UCAS (for courses that receive applications through UCAS) and the Student Loans Company, so they can populate their course databases in good time to inform applications.

Financial Support for Students

As part of TU's offer, students receive £100 credit at the start of each academic year to spend on key course texts through the John Smith's online bookshop. Recognising that a significant proportion of TU students are APP countable, this provision of credit for course texts provides a financial stimulus to engage with relevant study materials. Thus removing potential for financial challenges to limit the ability of students to deepen their engagement in learning beyond the resources available within the library. This is supported by the NUS 2018 Poverty Commission report, which recommends reduction or removal in reading list costs. This form of credit for study texts is viewed as an innovative approach to student support. This is one element of the wider 'Teesside University Advance Scheme' which supports students' digital skills and is evidenced in section 3.1 - Digital Transformation Strategic Measure.

Overseen by a Project Board chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching), the Advance Scheme is subject to a robust evaluation strategy throughout the lifetime of the project. The evaluation strategy takes a mixed methods, longitudinal approach, underpinned by a robust Theory of Change. Through measuring the impact of the scheme on the learning experience throughout the entire student journey, the evaluation is specifically designed to provide a holistic picture of project benefits and outcomes from the broadest possible perspective. Evaluative processes are mapped against the OfS Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit, and delivered in partnership with the student body by the provision of funded placements through the institutional Student as Researcher scheme. Annual reports will be presented to the Project Board ahead of the final evaluation, to ensure that emerging evaluative outcomes can be shared and acted upon in a timely manner.

Eligibility criteria for the Teesside Advance Scheme

To be eligible for the Scheme, a student must be a new entrant enrolling on year 0 or 1, or a direct entrant onto year 2 (excluding direct entrants onto year 3 or students repeating any year) as a full time undergraduate degree student on a Teesside University course leading to an award of at least 360 credits delivered on Teesside University's Middlesbrough or Darlington Campus.

The Scheme is available to Home/EU and International students that meet the eligibility criteria.

The Scheme is not available to:

- students studying at one of the University's Collaborative Partner Institutions;
- students studying a Higher Degree Apprenticeship; or
- students studying on a health funded course.

Students will be eligible for £100 a year for up to three years as long as they progress each year.

5.0 Appendix

The OfS will append the following items from the fees and targets and investment documents when an access and participation plan is published:

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)
2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)
3. Fee summary (tables 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

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

Provider name: Teesside University

Provider UKPRN: 10007161

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

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	2017/18 and later years entry: All first degree students	£9,250
First degree	2017/18 and later years entry: Extended Programmes All Yrs	£9,250
First degree	2017/18 and later years entry: Integrated Masters yrs 1-3	£9,250
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	2017/18 and later years entry	£6,150
CertHE/DipHE	2020/21 and later years entry Health Sciences only	£9,250
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	2019/20 and later years entry: All accelerated degree students	£11,100
Sandwich year	2015/16 and later years entry: Placement year	£0
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	East Durham College 10002111 - 2017/18 and later years entry: All first degree students	£9,250
First degree	East Durham College 10002111 - 2017/18 and later years entry: Extended Programmes All Yrs	£9,250
First degree	Stockton Riverside College 10006341 - 2017/18 and later years entry: All first degree students	£9,250
Foundation degree	Darlington College 10001850 - 2017/18 and later years entry	£6,150
Foundation degree	Hartlepool College of Further Education 10002917 - 2017/18 and later years entry	£6,150
Foundation degree	Stockton Riverside College 10006341 - 2017/18 and later years entry	£6,150
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	Hartlepool College of Further Education 10002917 - 2017/18 and later years entry	£6,150
CertHE/DipHE	Redcar & Cleveland College 10005414 - 2017/18 and later years entry	£6,150
CertHE/DipHE	Stockton Riverside College 10006341 - 2017/18 and later years entry	£6,150
Postgraduate ITT	Darlington College 10001850 - 2017/18 and later years entry	£6,150
Postgraduate ITT	Stockton Riverside College 10006341 - 2017/18 and later years entry	£6,150
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	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Teesside University

Provider UKPRN: 10007161

Investment summary

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

Note about the data:

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£2,721,357.00	£2,762,178.00	£2,803,611.00	£2,845,665.00	£2,888,350.00
Access (pre-16)	£580,269.00	£588,973.00	£597,808.00	£606,775.00	£615,877.00
Access (post-16)	£2,067,109.00	£2,098,116.00	£2,129,588.00	£2,161,531.00	£2,193,954.00
Access (adults and the community)	£73,979.00	£75,089.00	£76,215.00	£77,359.00	£78,519.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£657,300.00	£694,000.00	£694,000.00	£694,000.00	£694,000.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£44,184.00	£44,846.00	£45,519.00	£46,202.00	£46,895.00

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)	£27,596,095.00	£28,399,115.00	£28,748,470.00	£28,924,315.00	£28,970,590.00
Access investment	4.9%	4.8%	4.8%	4.9%	4.9%
Financial support	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%
Research and evaluation	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Total investment (as %HFI)	7.3%	7.3%	7.3%	7.3%	7.4%

