

London School of Economics and Political Science

Access and Participation Plan

[2020-21 to 2024-25]

LSE is the world's leading specialist social science institution, founded in 1895 for the betterment of society. The drafting of our five year Access and Participation Plan (APP) coincides with the launch of our new LSE Strategy 2030¹, a collaborative and inclusive long-term plan through which the LSE community signals its commitment to widening access to higher education in general and to LSE specifically; to ensuring an inclusive education; and to equitable outcomes for all students.

We understand that our position as a highly selective Russell Group institution with an international profile places extra responsibility on us to deliver continued improvements in access to, and success within, the School for those groups currently underrepresented at LSE and in the wider HE sector. Our 2030 strategy and our APP recognise that challenge and set out the steps, across all stages of the student lifecycle, to deliver equal opportunities for all.

Our APP aims, objectives and activity are predicated on the findings of our assessment of performance, set out below. This illustrates that while we have driven improvements in the representation, success and progression of certain underrepresented groups in recent years there is still work to be done. The data below should also be viewed in the LSE context. We are a small specialist provider with a central-London campus. We have high-tariff entry requirements, receive an average of 13 applications for every undergraduate place, and enrol a small UK undergraduate student population (averaging 775 UK undergraduate entrants per year over the last five years). On average, 36% of our UK students come from London and 56% come from London and the South East combined. Around 25% of UK undergraduates do not take a place in a hall of residence and are therefore assumed to be commuting to the School from home.

This context is important: it provides both challenges and opportunities to addressing the issues highlighted and informs the approach outlined later in the plan.

1. Assessment of performance

We have used a combination of data sources to assess recent performance and reference the local and national context throughout. Further explanation of our assessment is available upon request.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access

In this section, and all subsequent Access sections, Year 1 is 2013-14 and Year 5 is 2017-18.

Higher education participation (POLAR3 and POLAR4)

POLAR3 has been embedded in LSE's targeting, monitoring, and evaluation processes for access since 2011. Since the introduction of POLAR3 quintile 1 as the flag for low participation in our contextual admissions process (which also includes four other measures of underrepresentation or

¹ <http://www.lse.ac.uk/2030>

disadvantage), the proportion of POLAR3 quintile 1 students increased from 2.6% of entrants in 2011/12 to 6.6% in 2017-18 (peak 7.1% in 2015/16) as evidenced in our HESA KPI data. This represents a 150% increase over the period. Reported in our previous APP, the LSE contextualised admissions policy has been highlighted nationally as an example of good practice². This approach has also been successful in reducing the ratio between quintiles 5 and 1. In 2018, the offer ratio (Q5:Q1) was 3.3:1, and the enrolment ratio was 4:1.

The development of POLAR4 has significantly changed the classification of postcodes nationally, with almost half (45%) being in a different quintile to POLAR3. 35% of postcodes moved up or down by one quintile. Within all quintiles the median young participation rate is higher in POLAR4 than POLAR3. London therefore looks very different to the rest of the country with generally higher participation rates. For every POLAR4 quintile 1 area in London there are 34 quintile 5 areas³. Recent research papers also underline the challenges with using POLAR4 as an accurate measure of disadvantage, particularly in London⁴. Relevant authorities, such as the Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation and the Social Market Foundation, have expressed concern about using POLAR4 as a metric for widening participation.

Table 1: Proportion of POLAR4 entrants at LSE by quintile between 2013-14 and 2017-18 compared to the overall young population and young London population (OfS dataset and HEFCE data)

Measures	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Young population	Young population London
POLAR4 Q1	3	4	6	5	5	18.1	1.9
POLAR4 Q2	7	7	7	8	10	18.8	7.2
POLAR4 Q3	12	14	12	11	10	19.7	18.1
POLAR4 Q4	23	23	21	22	21	20	36.8
POLAR4 Q5	54	52	53	53	54	23.3	36
Gap Q1-Q5	51	48	47	48	49	5.2	34.1
Ratio (Q5:Q1)	18:1	12:1	9:1	11:1	11:1	1.3:1	18.9:1

OfS and HEFCE data, Table 1, above, show that the proportion of LSE enrolments from POLAR4 Q1 (from across the UK, including London) areas has increased from 3% to 5% (peaking at 6% in year 3). The proportion of enrolments from POLAR4 Q5 has been fairly steady over the period (52% to 54%) higher than the sector at around 30% but on par with other similar London institutions. Our absolute gap between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 has decreased slightly over the time, and the ratio of Q5 to Q1 enrolments at LSE in year 5 was 11:1. Our enrolment from Q1 and 2 is, however, 5.9 percentage points higher than the proportion of young London students in these quintiles (final column of Table 1) and our ratio Q5:Q1 entrants is 7.4 points lower, both of which are positive indicators given that 36% of LSE students come from the greater London region.

²[Gaining access: Increasing the participation of disadvantaged students at elite universities](#)
[Joining the elite: How top universities can enhance social mobility](#)

³[POLAR4 classification: A local geography classification for young participation in higher education](#) (HEFCE)

⁴ <https://wonkhe.com/staff/ellen-austin/> and <https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/dece/ContextualisedHEadmissions.pdf>

Comparing the proportion of entrants from POLAR4 Q1 and 2 with Q 3, 4, and 5 we see an absolute gap of 70 percentage points in 2017-18 down from 80 in year 1. This is again lower than the young London population which has a gap of 81.8 percentage points. The proportion of entrants from POLAR4 Q1 and 2 increases from 10% in year 1 to 15% in year 5.

Also of note is the fact that the proportion of Q3 students has declined over this period. This is also true of the POLAR3 area students. We need to be mindful of the ‘squeezed middle’ as we develop policies and processes to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

LSE uses IMD data to target young learners to engage in our outreach work, although we do not currently use the measure as a flag in our contextual admissions processes. The IMD data made available in the OfS dataset show that the proportion of new entrants from IMDQ1 has increased from 9% to 11% and from IMDQ2 from 15% to 18%, from 2013 to 2017. IMDQ5 entrants have declined slightly, from 30% to 28% over the same period. This has resulted in the percentage gap between Q5 and Q1 entrants to LSE reducing over the five years, with a Q5:Q1 ratio in year 5 of 2.5:1.

Acorn data

LSE has begun to use Acorn data in our outreach work, as its granular and specifically categorised postcode-level dataset offers a more detailed classification of socio-economic background, especially in densely populated urban areas.

Acorn groups L (modest means), M (striving families), O (young hardship), P (struggling estates), and Q (difficult circumstances) are used as indicators for disadvantage. For those with known data – there were typically 2 to 3% unknown data from our dataset each year – the proportion of entrants from these Acorn groups is shown in Table 2 below. The proportion of entrants from disadvantaged postcodes has increased from 13% in year 1 to 18% in year 5 over the period and the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged has decreased by ten percentage points.

Table 2: Proportion of entrants from ACORN groups LMOPQ vs other ACORN groups (LSE dataset)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
AcornLMOPQ	13	17	15	14	18
Acorn Other	87	83	85	86	82
Gap	74	66	70	72	64

Combined measures

Finally if we combine the proportion of entrants from either an identified Acorn group and/or IMDQ1/2 and/or POLAR 4 Q1/2 and compare to entrants with no identified indicators (Table 3) we see that the proportion of entrants with one or more measure has increased from 29% to 37% of total UK undergraduate entrants over the period. The gap between the proportion of entrants with a disadvantage indicator and those without has decreased by 16 percentage points from 42% to 26%.

Table 3: Proportion of entrants with no disadvantage measure vs. entrants with at least one disadvantage measure (LSE dataset)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
No disadvantage measures	71	66	69	67	63
At least one disadvantage measure	29	34	31	33	37
Gap	42	32	38	34	26

Student Success

In this section, and all subsequent Student Success sections, continuation rates refer to the HESA indicator of continuation from years 1 to 2. Attainment refers to the achievement of a first or 2:1 degree classification. Tables of data are all taken from the OfS dataset. For Continuation, Year 1 is 2012-13 and Year 5 is 2016-17. For Attainment, Year 1 is 2013-14 and Year 5 is 2017-18.

Continuation

Higher education participation (POLAR4)

While sector level continuation rates are typically higher for students from POLAR4 Q5 compared to those from POLAR4 Q1, at LSE students from POLAR4 Q1 postcodes have continued from years 1 to 2 at a greater rate than those from POLAR4 Q5 in each of the five years.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

Sector level continuation rates are typically higher for students from IMDQ5 postcodes than those from IMDQ1 postcodes by an average of 6% over the five year period. This pattern is reflected within LSE, although the average gap over 5 years between the two groups is slightly lower than the sector at 4%. When IMDQ1_2 is compared to IMDQ3_5 a similar pattern exists with the average gap of 2% between the two groups over the same period.

Attainment

Higher education participation (POLAR4)

At sector level students from POLAR4 Q5 areas typically attain a first or 2:1 degree classification outcome at a higher rate than those from POLAR4Q1 areas by around 10% in each year. In contrast, LSE students from POLAR4Q1 have attained a greater proportion of high classifications than students from POLAR4Q5 in the four most recent years for which data are available.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

Across the sector, students from IMDQ5 areas typically attain top grades more than those from IMDQ1 by around 19% each year.

Whilst at the start of the five year period a substantial gap (15%) did exist at LSE between students from IMDQ5 and IMDQ1, reflecting sector trends, this gap diminished in subsequent years (between -1% and 12%). However, it is worth noting that the low volume of graduating students in IMDQ1 means that a single student can account for a 2% change in the attainment metric.

Progression to employment or further study

In this section, and all subsequent Progression sections, the gaps are examined in relation to highly skilled employment and further study between underrepresented groups and their peers using the DLHE data set supplied by OfS. Year 1 is 2012-13 and Year 5 is 2016-17. All figures used refer to percentage points.

Higher education participation (POLAR)

The absolute gap between POLAR4 Q1_2 and POLAR4 Q5 has fluctuated between years 1 and 5. In year 1 there was no difference in progression but by year 5 the Q1_2 group was outperforming the Q5 group by 3 percentage points. When compared to the sector for POLAR4 Q1_2, LSE students have performed above the average in all years except year 2.

Socio-economic background (IMD)

The absolute gap between IMDQ1 and Q5 has fluctuated over the five year period. In year 1 the gap was +18 but between years 2 and 4 the gap was between -18 and -13. In year 5, however, IMDQ1 outperformed Q5 by 8 percentage points. Some caution needs to be applied to the interpretation of this data given the small cohort size.

Analysis of IMDQ1 and Q2 combined shows that, between years 2 and 5, the gap with Q5 decreases from -13 to -1. The absolute gap between IMDQ1_2 and IMDQ 3_5 has narrowed between years 2 and years 4 from -16 to -1. In year 5 the gap was +3 with IMDQ1_2 outperforming IMDQ 3_5.

When compared against the sector, IMDQ1 students at LSE perform above the sector average in each of the five years apart from year 2 where it was -0.9. From then onwards the difference increases to +22.3 by year 5. When IMDQ1 and 2 are combined the difference is again above the sector, albeit with fluctuations over time ranging from +1.9 in year 2 to a peak of +22.5 in year 1.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

Access of black, Asian and minority ethnic students to LSE is set out in Table 4 below. It is worth noting that, in London, with the exception of young people of Indian ethnicity, young people from ethnic groups other than white are less likely to enter a Russell group university⁵.

Table 4: Proportion of LSE entrants by identified ethnicity over five years (OfS dataset)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Asian	36	29	33	34	36
Black	4	5	5	6	5
Mixed	6	8	9	7	6
Other	2	2	2	3	3
ABMO*	48	45	48	49	50
White	52	55	52	51	50

*Asian, Black, Mixed, Other

⁵ *Equality, diversity and inclusion evidence base for London* (Greater London Authority, 2018)

LSE's UK undergraduate intake of students who identified as Asian has fluctuated slightly over the period. The overall proportion of 36% is higher than the overall local population (19% ONS data) and the young population at large of 8.2% (OfS dataset). HESA data indicates that our Asian entrants are representative of the wider London population, with young Bangladeshi and Pakistani entrants under-represented at LSE, although we have seen increases for these groups over the last four years.

The proportion of UK undergraduate entrants who identified as black, whilst similar to our near peers in London, is 5.5 percentage points below sector average (10.5% OfS dataset). The figure is above the young population at large (3.6% OfS dataset), but below the London population (12% ONS data). HESA data indicate that the number of students who identify as black African increased from 3% of entrants in 2013 to 4% of entrants in 2017 compared to 7% of the London population (census 2011); for those who identify as black Caribbean, the figure is much smaller at c. 1% compared to 4.2% for the London population (census 2011).

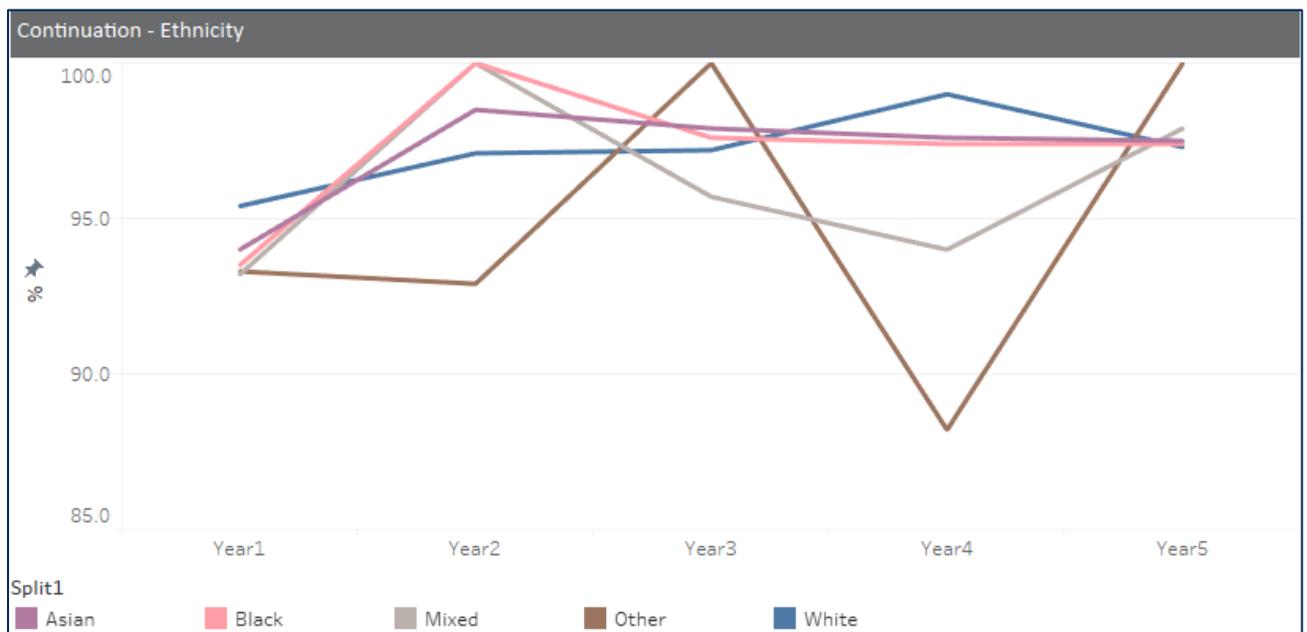
Projections⁶ for the expansion of the 18-24 year-old population in London by 2030 point towards significant increases in Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Black African, and Black other populations.

Student Success

Continuation

Continuation by ethnicity varies substantially across years with no discernible pattern (see Table 5 below). Very low populations in the Other category (15 to 20 students when rounded); Black (30 to 40 students when rounded) and Mixed (45 to 70 when rounded) make these figures particularly volatile.

Table 5: LSE continuation by ethnicity (OfS dataset)

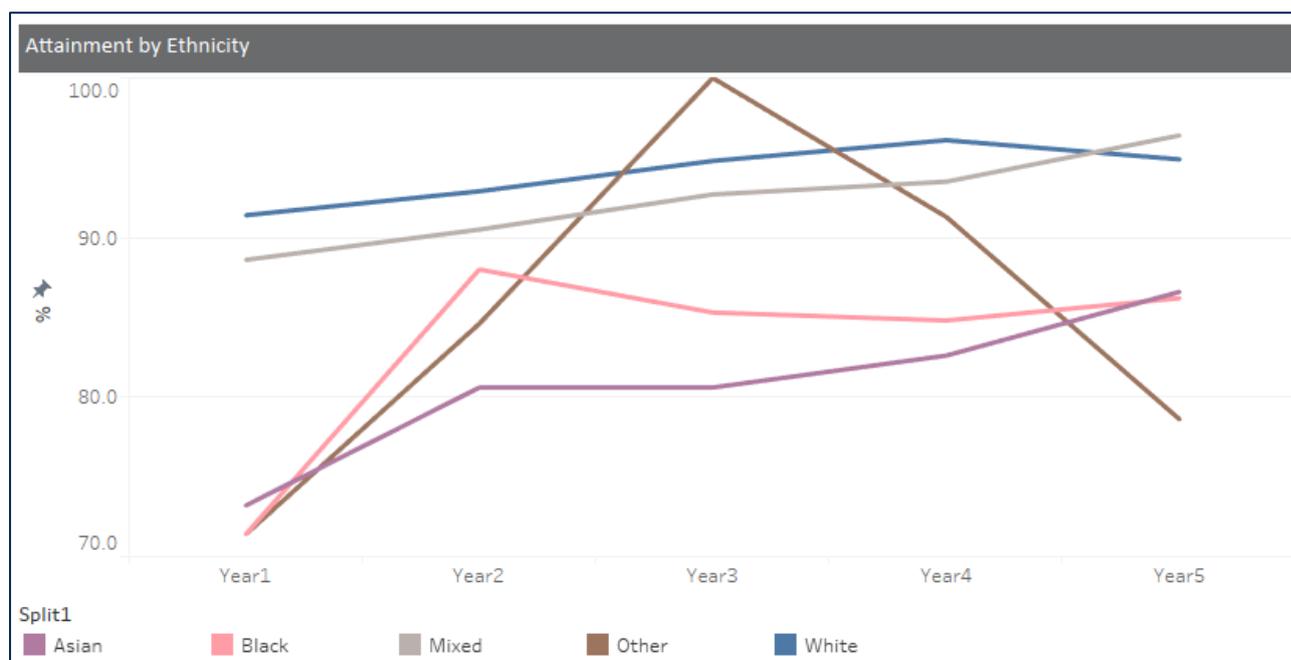


⁶ Preparing for hyper-diversity: London's student population in 2030 (Access HE, 2018)

Attainment

Attainment by ethnicity shows variation across groups with clear attainment gaps between white students and black students and between white and Asian students (Table 6 below). Gaps between Mixed and Other students are variable reflecting small volatile populations (fewer than 60 students in the Mixed population year and fewer than 25 students in the Other population in any given year).

Table 6: LSE attainment by ethnicity (OfS dataset)



Whilst there is a relatively small graduating black population (35 students or fewer in any year) the OfS dataset attainment for this group remains consistently below that of white students at LSE, averaging 10.9% over the five year period (compared with an average gap across the sector of 24.1% over the same period).

The graduating Asian population is larger, at between 230 to 255 (with rounding), and shows a similar gap in attainment throughout the period and, on average, 1% point worse than the sector gap over the 5 year period (LSE average 13.3% versus sector at 12.1%).

In March 2018, LSE undertook its own analysis of the attainment gap which controlled for prior attainment. The analysis of attainment was undertaken using a binary logistic regression with the variable of 2:2/3 or 2:1/1 as per the previous HEFCE work on differential outcomes. The initial analysis grouped five years of UK undergraduate data and the model was developed with support from Professor Jouni Kuha in LSE's Methodology Department. The outcomes of the analysis, reported in LSE's 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan, found that when looking only at ethnicity, significant ethnicity-based attainment gaps existed across the School as a whole as well as in specific departments. At the School level the significance factor was 9.38 - 5.73 for Black students and 9.76 for Asian students. The gaps did not disappear once prior A-level attainment and curriculum studied were controlled for. When the full model was run that held variables such as bursary receipt, disability,

and post-code measures in control, these gaps still existed and were statistically significant at School level at a rate of 4.91 overall - 3.04 for Black students and 4.87 for Asian students.

Progression to employment or further study

For ABMO graduates the absolute gap when compared to white graduates has narrowed from -3 in year 1 to -2 in year 4. In year 5 the gap was reversed with ABMO graduates outperforming white students by +3.

The absolute gap between Asian graduates and white graduates has narrowed from -4 in year 1 to -3 in year 4. By year 5, Asian graduates achieved a positive difference of +4 compared to white students.

Compared to the sector, outcomes for LSE Asian graduates are above the sector average. This difference has narrowed from +20.4 in year 1 to +13.6 in year 5. ABMO graduates overall perform above the sector although the difference has narrowed from +20 to +12.1 between years 1 and 5.

1.3 Mature students

Access

LSE enrolls very low numbers of mature students at undergraduate level. The OfS dataset and our own HESA data show that mature students account for between 1 and 2% of our UK undergraduate population year on year, with the majority in the 21 to 24 age category. This is below the sector average of 2.5%. While we acknowledge access for mature students is important as discussed below, our current priority is to address the existing gaps in our population of young entrants.

Student Success

Given the very low numbers of mature students in the UK undergraduate population, continuation comparison data for mature students only exists in a single year for single group (ages 21 to 24) and there is no data for attainment in any year. As with access we will continue to review our support for these students but the focus on any improvements in continuation and attainment will be focussed on the 'young and under 21' students in other groups identified as under-performing.

Progression to employment or further study

Due to low numbers we are not in a position to confidently report detailed outcomes for mature graduates. However, we are aware that such students are likely to come from lower socio-economic backgrounds, have caring responsibilities or have prior employment, all of which are likely to impact highly skilled graduate employment outcomes.

1.4 Disabled students

Access

The OfS dataset indicates that the proportion of disabled students entering LSE has remained relatively steady over the five year period, between 9% and 11% across years 1 to 5. This is in contrast to the sector which has seen a gradual increase from 11.7% to 14.8% over the five years.

The proportion of disabled students at LSE is on a par with peer institutions but, overall, individuals with a disability are underrepresented in higher education. When looking at specific disability types at LSE, each represents a very low proportion of known entrants.

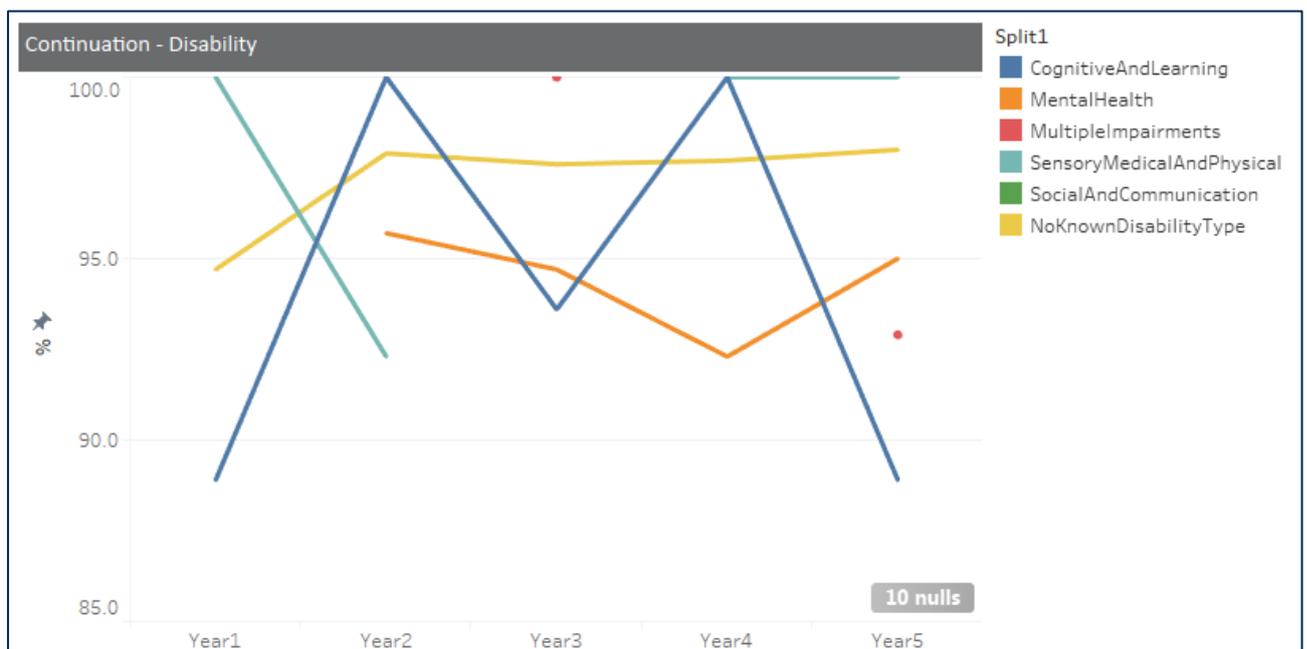
Student Success

Continuation

The starting population for continuation in each disability split is small with no group containing more than 45 students.

This results in substantial variation in continuation rates (see Table 7 below). Despite the variability it appears that students who have declared a mental health disability consistently have a lower continuation rate compared to those students with no known disability (on average by 3.4% lower over the four years for which data are available). This is in line with the sector which has an average gap of 4.6% over the five years for which data are available.

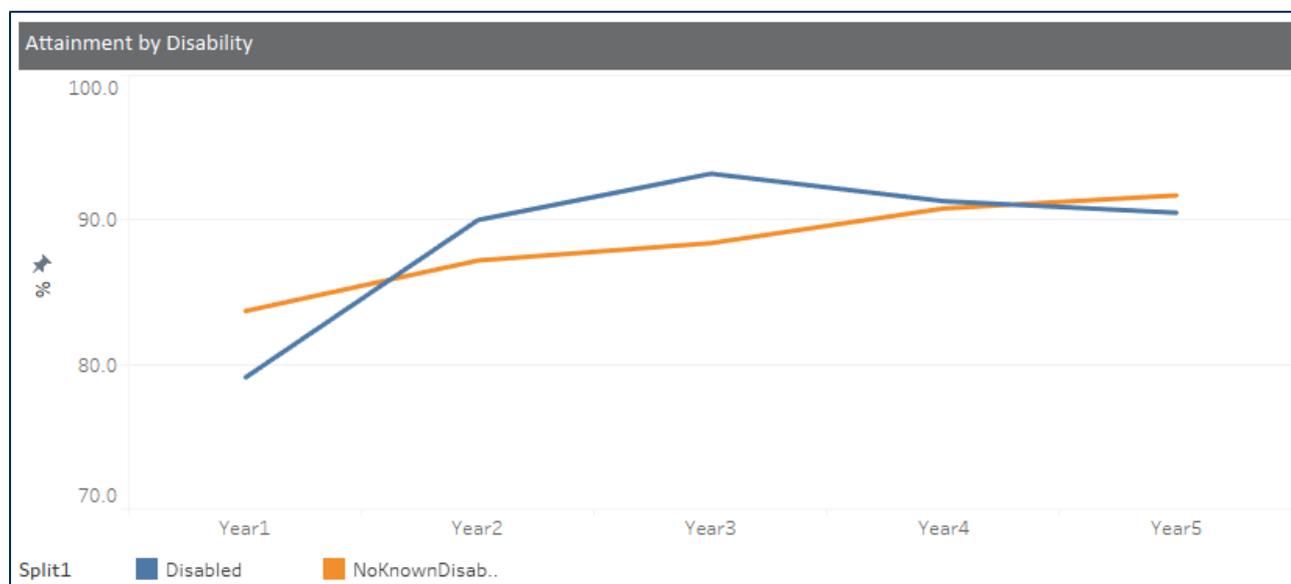
Table 7: LSE continuation rates by disability (OfS dataset)



Attainment

As with continuation the starting population for attainment in each disability split is small. This results in substantial variation in attainment rates (see Table 8, below). There is no discernible pattern to the differences in attainment within individual splits.

Table 8: LSE attainment by disability (OfS dataset)



Progression to employment or further study

The data show a year on year improvement in highly skilled employment for graduates with a declared disability. The absolute gap between graduates with a declared disability and graduates with no known disability has fluctuated, but in year 3 and year 5 graduates with a declared disability achieved higher levels of highly skilled employment than graduates with no known disability. The trend for the sector has also seen an upward trajectory, although the levels achieved by LSE graduates has remained higher than the sector with a peak difference of +12.1 in year 5.

Looking at disaggregated data for graduates with a declared cognitive and learning disability the absolute gap when compared to graduates with no known disability narrows from -11 to -1 in from year 1 to year 3. Between years 4 and 5 these graduates outperform graduates with no known disability from +4 to +2. When compared to the sector, LSE graduates with a cognitive and learning disability have outperformed the sector from +3 in year 1 to +7.5 in year 5.

1.5 Care leavers – Access, Success and Progression to employment or further study

We have very low numbers of applications and enrolments from care leavers. LSE data shows that in the three most recent application cycles, applications from self-declared care leavers have increased from 36 in 2016-17 entry to 50 in 2018-19. Enrolments have increased significantly over this period but the total number of students remains at 10 or below (data suppressed due to very small numbers).

Due to these low numbers we are not in a position to confidently report detailed outcomes for care experienced students. As included in our previous Access and Participation Plan, and outlined further in sections 2 and 3, the recruitment, tracking and monitoring of care leavers is a priority area of work for us.

National data indicate that outcomes for care experienced individuals are on average worse than those who have not been in care. Data for Greater London show that 8% of care leavers now aged 19, 20 and 21, who were looked after for a total of at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday, including some time after their 16th birthday, are known to be in higher education, with 25% in some other form of education. Research by Dr Neil Harrison⁷ has also highlighted that these figures are likely to be under-reported and exclude those who progress to HE at a later point, which is thought to be half of care leavers in higher education. Therefore the total proportion of care-experienced students in higher education is thought to be 12%, but this is still much lower than the HE participation rate for students who are not care experienced. Relying on a linear progression through education with high attainment at 16 and 18 can provide further barriers to access.

Dr Harrison’s research also highlights that once in higher education there is a significant difference in rates of retention for care experienced students versus students who have not experienced the care system. These figures are not widely reported but our work to support care leavers will ensure that we can track continuation and attainment outcomes to ensure these students have the support to succeed.

Our current low numbers also mean that we are not in a position to confidently report detailed outcomes for care experienced graduates. The DoE March 2019 report “Principles to guide higher education providers on improving care leavers access and participation in HE” identifies barriers across the student lifecycle and recommends access to tailored support and internships in progression into graduate level employment and/or higher level study. We will build this into our provision for care leavers over the next five years.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

Access

When intersecting POLAR4, IMD and ACORN groups with ethnicity we find that LSE has increased the proportion of students from Asian, Black, Mixed, and Other (ABMO) ethnicities at a higher rate than white students, which have remained fairly constant (with the exception of a peak in IMDQ12_White students in year 5), Table 9 below.

Table 9: Access and intersecting measures of disadvantage with ethnicity

Indicator	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
POLAR4Q12_ABMO	4	6	6	7	7
POLAR4Q12_White	7	6	8	7	7
POLAR4Q345_ABMO	45	39	43	43	43
POLAR4Q345_White	44	49	44	44	43

⁷ Moving on up: Pathways of care leavers and care-experienced students into and through higher education

Indicator	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
IMDQ12_ABMO	15	18	18	17	20
IMDQ12_White	7	7	9	7	10
IMDQ345_ABMO	35	29	33	33	32
IMDQ345_White	42	46	41	43	39

Indicator	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Acorn LMOPQ_ABMO	8	12	11	10	13
Acorn LMOPQ_White	4	4	3	3	4
Acorn other_ABMO	40	31	36	36	35
Acorn other White	44	48	46	46	44

Within the London population, of the young people who have been eligible for free school meals, young men and young people who are white are less likely to go on to university. Women are, however, less likely than men to enter a Russell group university (GLA).

Student Success

Continuation

The POLAR4 intersection with ethnicity shows little differentiation from the overall pattern for POLAR4, with POLAR4 Q1_2 regularly continuing at a higher rate than POLAR4 Q3_5 in both the ABMO population and the White population. In the POLAR4 Q1_2 splits by ethnicity there is no consistent gap between POLAR4 Q12_ABMO and POLAR4 Q12_White which show regular cross-over between higher and lower performance.

IMDQ12 students are regularly outperforming IMDQ3_5 students in the ABMO population, whereas the opposite is true for IMDQ12 and IMDQ3_5 and the White population with IMDQ3_5 outperforming IMDQ12 by 4.4% on average over the five years. In IMDQ12 splits by ethnicity the IMDQ12_ABMO group outperform the IMDQ12_White population in four of the five years and on average by 2.9% over the five year period. The IMDQ12_White population contains fewer than 60 students in every year (compared to a maximum population of 140 for IMDQ12_ABMO) so is subject to more volatility.

The average gap between POLAR4Q12_Female students and POLAR4Q12_Male students is 0.5% over the five year period, with men marginally under-performing women. In comparison there is an average gap in the sector of 2.0%.

The average gap between IMDQ12_Female and IMDQ12_Male is 0.2% over the five year period, with men marginally under-performing women. In comparison there is an average gap in the sector of 3.6%.

Attainment

Comparison of POLAR4Q12_White and POLAR4Q12_AMBO students shows a gap of on average 11% over the five year period. This is a reflection of the overall gaps in attainment by ethnicity identified in section 1.2.

As per intersections of POLAR4 and ethnicity, the intersections of IMD show a similar gap between Ethnicity within the quintile groups reflective of the overall gaps in ethnicity. IMDQ12 in each ethnicity type also outperform IMDQ345 in three of the five years.

The average gap between POLAR4Q12_Female and POLAR4Q12_Male is 1% over the five year period, with men marginally under-performing women. In comparison there is an average gap in the sector of 5.5%.

The average gap between IMDQ12_Female and IMDQ12_Male is 3.7% over the five year period, with men marginally under-performing women. In comparison there is an average gap in the sector of 4%.

Progression to employment or further study

When comparing IMDQ 1_2 Female and IMDQ1_2 Male, the absolute gaps fluctuate. In years 1, 2 and 4 female graduates outperform male graduates. In years 3 and 5 there are gaps of -6 and -3 respectively.

When comparing IMDQ1_2 Female and IMDQ3_5 Female, in year 1 Q1_2 outperformed IMDQ3_5. In years 2 to 4 a gap developed although this narrowed over time and by year 5 this group outperformed IMD Q3_5 by +8.

With regard to IMDQ1_2 ABMO and IMDQ1_2 White graduates, progression rates cross over, with AMBO graduates progressing at a greater rate than White graduates in years 1, 3 and 5.

Finally, comparing IMDQ1_2 ABMO and IMDQ3_5 ABMO the absolute gaps fluctuate. In year 1 IMDQ1_2 outperformed IMDQ3_5 by +6. Thereafter a gap developed in year 2 of -18 narrowing to -2 in Year 3. In years 4 and 5, the gap was reversed with IMDQ1_2 outperforming IMDQ3_5.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

We have not analysed data on other specific under-represented groups, as currently we have very small population numbers in those groups. Aware of the barriers for students with refugee status or uncertain leave to remain, we have put in place a financial support package for students facing these challenges. Through our developments for care leavers we are also considering the support needed for estranged students. All are target groups for our pre-entry outreach work and in the future we hope to be able to provide more data for these individuals.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

Our APP aims and objectives are grounded in the School's strategic vision for 2030, that *"All that we do will reflect the importance we place on equity, diversity and inclusion, ensuring that LSE is a stimulating and supportive environment for work and study, and recognised as a place for serious debate where diverse viewpoints are respectfully but rigorously contested."*⁸

Equity, diversity and inclusion are central to the School's mission which applies to *all* students, UK, EU and international, studying at all levels across the School, and all LSE staff who make up the School community. The LSE Director chairs the EDI Board which is responsible for implementing our School-wide EDI plan.

This is the context in which our APP is framed. While the APP focuses on equality of opportunity for UK undergraduates across the student lifecycle we aim to develop policies and practice to benefit all students wherever possible (for example, in the inclusive curriculum space), to develop principles which can be universally applied (for example, with regard to financial support at graduate level) and to develop evaluation models which can be used to assess initiatives at all levels of study.

Focusing on our UK undergraduate community, it is clear from our assessment of performance that we have made progress in some areas of access, success and progression on which we can build over the next five years. We have increased the number of low participation neighbourhood, black and care leaver students. Continuation rates for POLAR4 Q1 students exceed those for POLAR4 Q5 students and outperform the sector average. Progression into highly skilled employment and further study is broadly positive for students from the five key underrepresented groups. However, our assessment highlights areas of access where we still lag behind the sector and some unexplained gaps in attainment which we need to address. We will prioritise the target groups where the gaps are largest, with reference to current patterns within the population and within London.

2.1 Target groups

Access

We will prioritise work to increase the proportion of enrolments from the following target groups:

- Students from IMD Q1 and 2 *
- Students from POLAR4 Q1 and 2 *
- Students with a disability *
- Care leavers
- Students from ethnic minorities under-represented at LSE specifically black African/ Caribbean students and Pakistani students.

Whilst we acknowledge the low proportion of mature students attending LSE, we aim to address the ongoing gaps in our young population as a priority whilst we are making other structural changes over the life of LSE 2030. These planned strategic developments should support the diversification of educational provision and a more flexible structure for mature students wishing to study with us.

⁸ <http://www.lse.ac.uk/2030>

Continuation

We will prioritise work to improve continuation rates of students from the following target groups:

- Students from IMD Q1 and 2*
- Students with a declared mental health disability

Attainment

We will prioritise work to reduce the attainment gap between white students and the following target groups:

- Black African and Caribbean students *
- Asian students *

Progression

We have taken a cautious approach to explicit targeting by group as we have some evidence, for attendance at careers activities at least, that it may not be necessary. We will continue to offer targeted career support for:

- Students with a declared disability
- Care leavers
- Students who have attended one of LSE's intensive WP outreach schemes.

We will monitor students from IMDQ1 and 2, POLAR4Q1 and 2, and BAME groups, care leavers, mature students and students with a declared disability using Career Registration data (see 3.1.3 iii) and Graduate Outcomes data. We will respond appropriately to any changes in gaps that are identified, but given their positive performance to date we have not made them target groups.

* Target groups identified with an asterisk are those where we see the largest gaps and which we have therefore included in the Targets and Investment Plan as priority target groups.

Note on POLAR4

OfS has made clear that it expects HE providers with the largest access gaps to include POLAR4 as an access measure in their APPs. We have therefore included a POLAR4 enrolment target in our 2020-25 APP and will look to use this metric in all of our access work, but particularly in our work outside London. Alongside other London HEIs, LSE has reservations about the validity of using POLAR 4 as a widening participation target in the capital. As an institution which typically enrolls over one third of its UK undergraduate student body from London, the POLAR4 measure of underrepresentation is not as effective a tool, in our opinion, as IMD or Free School Meal data for the London region. Also, this is an access and participation strategy with a 20 year outlook. We are concerned that future iterations of the POLAR measure, to which may be tied as a result of this APP, will continue to mask regional demographic issues and as such will represent no better a measure for widening access in London than it does currently.

2.2 Aims and objectives

LSE 2030 AIMS	TARGET GROUPS	OBJECTIVES
Student access		
We will continue to widen access from across the UK as well as globally, to ensure the best students can benefit from an LSE education at all levels, regardless of their means or background.	IMD Q1, Q2 students POLAR4 Q1, Q2 students Disabled students Care leavers Black, Pakistani students	By 2040, to achieve parity of access between IMDQ5 and Q1 students By 2040, to increase the proportion of disabled students at LSE in line with the sector average By 2030, to increase the proportion of care leavers at LSE in by 100%
Student success and progression		
We will ensure exceptional diversity of our student community is reflected in an inclusive curriculum that recognises a variety of perspectives, experiences and cultural norms.	Black students	By 2028, we will eliminate the attainment gap between black and white students
We will deliver a consistently excellent student experience.	Asian students	By 2028, we will eliminate the attainment gap between Asian and white students
We will provide holistic and comprehensive support for every student, through consistently excellent student services and a focus on student wellbeing.	IMD Q1, Q2 students	By 2030, we will eliminate the non-continuation gap between IMDQ1 and Q5 students
We will address systemic differences in student attainment and career progression.	Disabled students	By 2025, we will deliver consistently excellent progression rates across all target groups
	Care leavers	
Continual improvement		
We will continually assess the impact of our processes and procedures to identify and mitigate differential impacts and potential inequalities.	All student groups	By 2020, we will have in place a School-wide evaluation strategy for the monitoring and evaluation of all APP measures and outcomes. From 2020 onwards we will use the evaluation model to monitor and report on progress.

2.3 Targets

We have set out our headline five year targets for achieving these objectives in the Targets and Investment plan. In addition, we have committed to a number of secondary targets to help guide and measure our progress to equality of access and success at LSE.

Student access

- i. By 2025, reduce the gap in access between those from the highest and lowest **IMD quintiles** enrolling at LSE from the baseline of 16.4% to 10.4%.
- ii. By 2025, reduce the gap in access between those from the highest and lowest **POLAR4 quintiles** enrolling at LSE from the baseline of 49% to 41%.
- iii. By 2025, increase the proportion of students with a **declared disability** enrolling at LSE from the baseline of 9% to 13%.
- iv. By 2025, complete research into the access and progression of **care leavers** and increase the number of care leavers enrolling at LSE from the baseline of <10 to 10.
- v. By 2025, increase the proportion of students who identify as **Black African/Caribbean** enrolling at LSE from the baseline of 5% to 6.5%

Student success and progression

- vi. By 2025, reduce the attainment gap between **black and white students** from the baseline of 8.7% to 4%.
- vii. By 2025, reduce the attainment gap between **Asian and white students** from the baseline of 8.4% to 3%.
- viii. By 2025, reduce the gap between **IMDQ1 continuation and IMDQ5 continuation** from the baseline of 6.5% to 2%.
- ix. By 2023, complete research to understand how the continuation gap between students with **declared mental health difficulties and 'no known disability'** can be closed.

Student progression

- x. By 2025, deliver consistently excellent progression into graduate level careers/education for **all student groups**.

Evaluation

- xi. By 2021, embed excellence in evaluation across the School, using evidence to underpin improvements to access, success and progression.

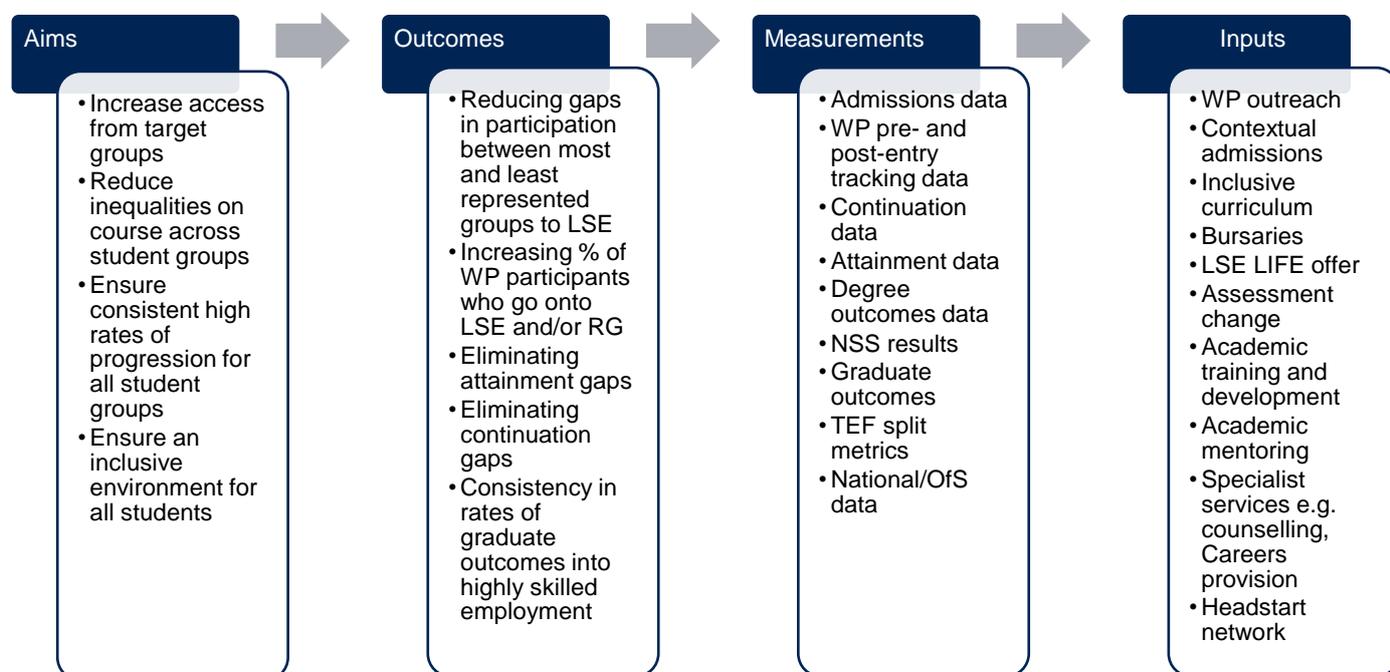
Six of the targets listed above - 2.3 i, ii and iii and 2.3 vi, vii and viii - are included in our Targets and Investment plan with annual milestones attached.

3. Strategic measures

3.1.1 Whole provider strategic approach

We have adopted a collaborative and inclusive approach to the Access and Participation Plan, drawing together colleagues and students with experience and expertise across the School to produce a plan which covers the entire student lifecycle. The strategy has been discussed by student groups and a range of committees including the Widening Participation Steering Group, the EDI working group, Education Committee and Council. This has been the most inclusive approach to an access plan at the School to date.

We have also plugged into relevant policies and strategies, including the new LSE 2030 strategy referenced in the introduction, to ensure a complete strategic approach. The headline aims, outcomes, measurements, and inputs to achieve our ambitions are set out below.



3.1.2 Alignment with other strategies

LSE 2030 is driven by three guiding principles: excellence built from diversity and inclusion; global impact and reach; and ensuring a sustainable future. The APP is fully aligned with the School's mission and strategy and the APP aims and targets form part of the LSE 2030 action plan.

One strand of LSE 2030 is the development of a five-year Inclusive Teaching and Learning Action Plan that will focus on institution-wide change across five major areas of activity. This inclusive teaching and learning approach aims to improve the student experience for *all* students, and in the context of the APP, seeks to address and improve the continuation rates of IMD1 and 2 students, students with declared mental health difficulties and the attainment rates of black and Asian students.

The Inclusive Teaching and Learning Action Plan purposefully moves away from the deficit model, which attempts to 'fix' students to match the existing university culture. Such approaches have been widely criticised across the sector, including by the UUK in their publication offering sector-wide guidance on addressing BME attainment gaps.

Using the guidance offered by the recent UUK Stepchange Framework and sector good practice generally, our Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Steering Group is formulating a new student mental health and wellbeing approach for LSE within the wider LSE 2030. At its heart, it aims to support this theme within our overall staff and student community but it is acknowledged that the enhanced sense of inclusivity that it offers will actively align, and be a part of, our APP.

With regard to progression, the LSE Careers strategy aims to deliver high quality, targeted careers education, skills development and guidance to all students. Specialist provision is created and delivered where appropriate, for example our programme of ring-fenced support to disabled students. We ensure events and services are easily accessible to all groups of students and look to remove barriers to engaging with our support, in line with the commitments set out in our the APP.

As already highlighted equity, diversity and inclusion is a priority for LSE. APP and EDI staff work closely together on developing the EDI deliverable plans which include reference to APP targets around student access and success. They are also focused on developing a School-wide structure to embed and deliver EDI targets and a communications plan to raise awareness of EDI issues.

Section 3.4, Monitoring Progress, also outlines how School committees will input into and ensure oversight of progress against our APP targets, ensuring School-wide responsibility for the plan.

3.1.3 Strategic measures

(i) Access

Our assessment of performance in section 1 and our internal evaluation of outreach and admissions activity indicates some success in the targeting of our widening participation programme and our contextual admissions flagging system, which have delivered an increase in entrants from underrepresented backgrounds at LSE. Also, over the last three years, we have maintained the number of outreach participants progressing to LSE from our intensive schemes (approximately 10% of participants). Of the participants we have been able to track in person after A-level results, an increasing proportion are holding an offer at a Russell Group institution including LSE (64% of tracked participants in 2018). We await our first set of HEAT tracking for a more comprehensive picture of progression.

However, further work is needed if we are to achieve a step change in access from our target groups. Our measures below are designed to increase applications from, offers to and enrolments of undergraduate students from our stated target groups in the greater London region and the rest of the UK.

Our outreach work proposals, below, are informed by evidence which indicates that more intensive, repeat engagements are more effective than one-off, lighter-touch activities. Research conducted by

HEFCE and OFFA in 2013⁹ concluded “outreach is most effective when delivered as a progressive, sustained programme of activity and engagement over time.” In addition, analysis by the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) team¹⁰ suggests that high attaining students from highly disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to progress to HE if they have participated in multiple activities (69%) as opposed to a single light touch activity (59%). LSE’s internal participant tracking exercise indicates that our most sustained initiatives, such as CHOICE, have the highest rates of application and enrolment to LSE. However, this work also identified students with the right A level grades who required additional support to help them make an application to LSE. This work has informed the following outreach measures:

- (a) Developing our programme of **intensive multi-intervention activity** on campus for pupils from year 8 onwards to increase the impact of our work for these age groups. This will include expanding our scheme specifically targeted at young Black African-Caribbean boys, one of our access target groups. [Starting in 2020 and continuing until 2025.]

We will continue to evaluate the impact of individual programmes through our evaluation framework. In addition, we will expand our collection of data from parents/carers and teachers to triangulate with participant self-report data and gain richer insight into student outcomes.

- (b) Redesigning our on-campus **activity for groups between Year 7 and 11** to build the pipeline into our more intensive activity where we have a greater demonstrable impact. [2019-2020]

We will utilise our HEAT database to track participant engagement with our programmes and assess the proportion of student taking part in multiple activities. Once we have sufficient data, we will expand this analysis to explore the relationship between number and type of activities attended and participant outcomes.

- (c) Continuing our work with **two key partnership schools** to raise attainment amongst pupils in Years 7, 10 and 12. We are at an early stages of programme design but we envisage in the first year the Year 7 cohort will undertake a social science project to deliver in groups and our work with Year 10 and 12 will focus specifically on raising attainment of students in Mathematics through a focused tutoring programme and statistics project. [Starting in 2020 and continuing until 2025.]

We will be developing an evaluation framework for the programme of activity delivered to each cohort and this will be based on research in developing students’ academic self-concept and developing confidence across a number of years as they progress through the school. Our evaluation of the activity will include analysing student characteristics associated with increased attainment as well as data on attainment which the partner schools can provide.

⁹ Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) Office for Fair Access (OFFA), corp creators. (2013) *National strategy for access and student success: interim report to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the Office for Fair Access*. <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/17401/> Bristol: HEFCE, OFFA

¹⁰ HEAT paper has not been published externally to the membership. Paper title: HEAT020 HEAT Groups Thematic Paper – Aggregate (October 2018)

We anticipate that we will have access to the results of students' public examinations in 2021 which will enable us to identify meaningful and stretching targets to set in the 2021/22 academic year, if appropriate.

- (d) Work to further support the access of **participants from LSE's own intensive outreach** into LSE undergraduate programmes. [Research in 2020, implementing 2021]

We will evaluate through a combination of participant tracking and analysis of reasons for not applying to LSE and reasons for non-success of applications to LSE.

We have worked positively in recent years with a number of external agencies who support or have links with learners from some of our target groups. We have benefited from their experience and expertise in improving access to HE for these students and this has contributed to the increase in applications from and enrolments of care leavers at LSE. This partnership work has informed the following outreach measure:

- (e) Increasing our **collaborative work** with a range of organisations including IntoUniversity, local authorities, access specialist organisations such as NEON, and other London HEIs to support engagement with some of our key target groups, eg. care experienced students and staff supporting young, looked after learners; white students from disadvantaged background; students with a disability. [Starting in 2020 and continuing until 2025.]

We will work with our collaborative partners to establish strong evaluation and monitoring processes, identifying what additional challenges young people from these specific under-represented groups might face in progressing to LSE, and closely monitor the number that we engage in our pre-entry activities.

We recognise that more needs to be done to attract students from outside London to study at London universities. We have researched the work undertaken by other HEIs to support access of students from underrepresented groups outside their own region. This research has informed the following outreach measures:

- (f) Using recent LSE admissions data together with national IMD and POLAR data, **identify regions and schools outside London** where we could deliver programmes of information and support for students from our target groups, potentially in collaboration with regional partners. [2019-20 for targeting; 2020-25 for programme development and delivery.]
- (g) Building on our Advancing Access work, collaborating with London-based Russell Group HEIs to deliver **workshops for teachers** from schools outside London with high numbers of students from our target groups. [Starting in 2020 and continuing until 2025.]
- (h) Increasing the number of places available on our **Student Shadowing programme** (a scheme for Year 11 and 12 students to shadow an LSE student for a day) for students from our target groups outside London. [2019 to 2025.]
- (i) Offering **travel grants** to cover the cost of travel to open days, visit days and other information events on the LSE campus, for students from our target groups. [Starting 2019-20 and continuing until 2025.]

We will evaluate these new UK-wide initiatives annually, including measuring take-up of and satisfaction with the programmes and assessing impact on overall applications to and enrolment at LSE. We will also continue to explore alternative measures to reach students from underrepresented groups outside London and develop a programme of provision.

We realise that pre-entry outreach alone will not achieve our access objectives, and that this must be combined with further development of our contextualised admissions processes. This reflects the growing body of research which indicates that the sector – and high tariff institutions in particular - will not be able to make significant progress toward narrowing HE participation inequalities without implementing contextualised admissions practices¹¹. This research has informed the following access measures:

- (j) Using national research and internal evaluation, reviewing and expanding our **basket of contextual data** to include IMD, POLAR4 and potentially ACORN and Free School Meal data, to ensure we are considering all potential measures of student disadvantage at admissions stage with a view to increasing offers to students with measures of disadvantage. [Starting 2019-20 for entry in 2021 and beyond.]
- (k) Undertaking **research into contextual offer-making** at LSE and the likely impact on the diversity of the student body. [Starting 2019-20 for entry in 2021 and beyond.]

(ii) Student Success

In addressing the gaps in student success, identified in section 1, we are eager to ensure that, through our work, we do not stigmatise our students from underrepresented groups.

The measures set-out below focus on the major gaps highlighted and are to be developed and delivered alongside the comprehensive student support measures already in place through dedicated services such as LSE LIFE, the Disability and Wellbeing Service, the Student Counselling Service, and the Student Services Centre, in parallel with initiatives within academic departments.

LSE's approach is therefore to change teaching and learning practice across the School for all students, which will ensure that students from diverse backgrounds, regardless of ethnicity or disability, have the opportunity to continue and attain good degrees without unnecessary barriers. The plan has been developed based on two key pieces of research: 1) a benchmarking exercise¹², evidencing different approaches taken by eighteen universities across England to understand the different models being used across the sector, and 2) interviews and focus groups with BME students from ten LSE departments to understand their student experiences and what they recommend the School could do to improve that experience¹³. This has offered evidence of both what works across

¹¹ Boliver, V., S. Gorard & Siddiqui, N. (2019) [Using contextualised admissions to widen access to higher education: A guide to the evidence base](https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/dece/ContextualisedHEadmissions.pdf). Durham: DECE

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/dece/ContextualisedHEadmissions.pdf>

¹² Camacho Felix, S.M. (2018) Report: Addressing BME attainment gaps at key British Universities, London: LSE TLC internal document.

¹³ Camacho Felix, S.M. (2019) Report: Addressing attainment gaps: BME student experience and recommendations for LSE, London: LSE TLC internal document.

the sector while ensuring that the Inclusive Teaching and Learning Action Plan is context-specific and developed in response to student feedback.

The main findings from the research on LSE 'BME student experience and recommendations' highlighted key areas of change that the School could engage in to improve BME attainment. The School has used these findings to create the Action Plan and focus on the following five areas.

- (a) Bolstering **Academic Mentoring**, LSE's personal tutorial scheme. Drawing on three years of research on personal tutoring, the School reformed its previous academic advising system by creating a new set of academic standards for academic mentors, and launching the Academic Mentoring Portal (AMP) for both staff and students to access resources on the role of Academic Mentoring. The School has also introduced Student Academic Mentors across all departments. Starting in 2020-2021, both mentors and mentees will be encouraged to disclose some personal information about themselves (including disability, first generation students, etc.) so that students from similar backgrounds may share more openly the challenges they face when starting university. The next stages include enhanced staff development for Academic Mentors on pedagogies of one-to-one sessions and the links between academic study and mental health. Students have been engaged throughout the process, during the initial research on personal tutoring at LSE and in the development and piloting of the AMP. They will also act as co-creators of the staff development workshops that are based on the student lifecycle.

The Academic Mentoring scheme will be evaluated at key points throughout the next five years, including the impact of Academic Mentoring on students' feeling of community and confidence in their learning. The School aims to have all Academic Mentors trained by 2024.

- (b) Introducing **de-biasing staff development workshops** for all staff. These staff development workshops, to be piloted in the 2020-2021 academic year, would adopt a blended approach – involving both an online, reflective component and an in-class interactive component. The aim is to introduce both an awareness of key areas of bias and how they affect students, focusing on anti-racism and anti-ableism training. The pilot will be evaluated by monitoring changes in staff attitudes as they undergo the training. For the online aspects of the course, the evaluation will look at user analytics to understand staff engagement.
- (c) Introducing **inclusive practice** into annual monitoring of programmes and provide resources for department to embed inclusivity into their teaching practice. This approach draws on [Kingston University's Inclusive Curriculum Framework](#) and [UCL's Inclusive Curriculum Health Check](#). The School has already included questions of inclusion and diversity in relation to learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment in its new course and programme approval procedures. Students will help create the questions for annual departmental monitoring and will also sit in on review processes, as student scrutineers.

The evaluation of this new process will be twofold: 1) analyse the completed inclusive practice questions to see how programmes become more inclusive year-on-year, and 2) capture the student scrutineers' evaluations of the inclusion on programmes. The aim is to have inclusive practice embedded into annual monitoring with student scrutineers by 2022-2023.

- (d) Create **decolonising and diversifying the curriculum frameworks**. During focus groups, BME students reported feeling alienated by a curriculum that did not reflect their own experiences. Therefore, the School aims to encourage a curriculum in which diverse perspectives are embedded. These frameworks will be co-developed by academics and students, and be customized to take into account specific disciplinary contexts. By focusing on a framework that is modifiable, evaluation will be continual. As academics and students involved in new programmes engage with the frameworks, they will be able to evaluate the frameworks, edit them, and use the new versions in their work. This will ensure that evaluation is built in and developmental in design. The aim is that by 2024-2025, twelve departments will have worked with the frameworks to edit key areas of their curriculum.
- (e) Embed **explicit teaching of academic skills and transition into higher education**. Both research on academic literacies¹⁴ and the interviews with BME students show that by embedding academic skills instruction into the curriculum, students from diverse educational backgrounds develop a better understanding of academic expectations, which lowers assessment anxiety. LSE has created digital resources to help students transition into higher education, and six departments at the School have piloted embedded skills instruction into their 1st year programmes. The School aims to use these pilots to create multiple templates of action. These templates will then be rolled out to all undergraduate programmes for each department to develop their own method of embedding academic skills instruction. The aim is for every first-year undergraduate student to have received explicit skills instruction as a part of their disciplinary learning by 2025-2026.

LSE has set key milestones for each of the five areas of activity within the Inclusive Teaching and Learning Action Plan.

(iii) Progression

LSE is committed to ensuring consistently excellent progression rates into employment across all student groups. While we have identified some fluctuation in progression as reported in DLHE data for the five years to 2016-17, we note in particular that LSE students in target groups often outperformed their peers during this period. We now propose using Career Registration¹⁵ and Graduate Outcomes data to monitor progress of all groups, and, more specifically, to introduce targeted careers support where necessary to ensure consistent progression rates.

Our working hypothesis is that, alongside successful completion of studies, the common denominator that most impacts employment outcomes is access to meaningful work experience. We will analyse data from Career Registration to understand levels of work experience and career readiness on commencement at LSE and in subsequent years. In addition, we will analyse the relationship between degree choice, labour market ambitions and outcomes, with particular regard to target groups. This

¹⁴ Wingate, U. (2016) *Academic Literacy and Student Diversity: The case of inclusive practice*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

¹⁵ Career Registration is a census survey which asks new students to self-report career readiness and current levels of work experience. Undergraduates complete the survey each year thus allowing progress to be analysed and groups of students to be compared to each other.

data, together with data from Graduate Outcomes, will allow us to make effective in-time interventions and develop appropriate measures for target groups. Alongside this we will:

- continue to offer dedicated one to one careers support for disabled students;
- pilot, during Lent term 2020, increased provision for Headstart programme students (students who have participated in LSE's own outreach activity) including signposting to a dedicated WP careers consultant and offering one to one appointments;
- monitor impact, take-up and need for further dedicated provision.

During 2019 – 2020 we are implementing a large-scale pilot of the Career Registration questionnaire which will allow us to assess and compare career readiness and levels of work experience across all cohorts and will form the basis of our overall career programme development. If initial analysis of the 2019 – 2020 Career Registration data reveals statistically significant differences in cohorts, we will evaluate further to understand the root causes of the differences, with a view to planning targeted support for roll-out in 2020 – 2021. Measures under consideration will include:

- ring-fenced one to one support;
- expansion of dedicated internship schemes;
- subject-specific interventions.

We are working to embed Career Registration into the School's registration process in readiness for the start of new academic year 2020 – 21.

In Spring 2020 we will receive the first official data release from HESA for Graduate Outcomes. From this date we will complete an analysis of the first iteration of Graduate Outcomes data to:

- compare reported employment outcomes with previous DLHE data;
- confirm the importance of work experience on Graduate Outcomes;
- assess comparative outcomes of target groups, with particular focus on access to work experience during studies and subsequent impact on employment success.

The information will be indicative as alumni surveyed for Graduate Outcomes will not have participated in the Careers Registration surveys. Based on the results of the above analysis, our focus will be on helping target students secure relevant and meaningful work experience during their studies.

From 2021 to 2025 we will continue to:

- gather and analyse Career Registration and Graduate Outcomes data each year;
- assess changes in student career readiness and levels of work experience accessed
- monitor impact of specific targeted interventions;
- adapt careers provision to targeted groups as appropriate and to ensure equivalent high progression rates are maintained.

(iv) A lifecycle approach to supporting care experienced and estranged students

In addition to the work outlined above the School is developing an action plan to specifically provide support for care-experienced and estranged students across the student lifecycle. This will include prioritising access to outreach and pre-enrolment events, transition into LSE for those holding an offer with us, targeted on-course support such as mentoring and tailored support to facilitate progression into graduate level employment and/or higher level study. However, this plan is a work-in-progress and measures will be informed by sector best-practice as well as by our evaluation of initiatives once they are rolled out. Additionally over the coming two years we plan to work towards achievement of both the Care Leavers Covenant and the Standalone Pledge.

(v) Collaboration

LSE is committed to working in partnership to support our WP outreach activity and to address structural inequalities for students in HE. Examples of ongoing effective collaborations include:

Working with multiple partners, including employers, to facilitate progress to specific HE courses and careers: LSE has successfully run Pathways to Law in London and is now working on the Pathways to Banking and Finance Scheme. LSE works closely with HEI partners, the Sutton Trust, and employers to deliver these schemes. The Sutton Trust applies broad widening participation eligibility criteria for the Pathways to Law and Pathways to Banking and Finance programmes; from this pool of applicants we will prioritise students belonging to our target groups.

Working strategically with other higher education institutions: We play an active role in the Russell Group Widening Participation Association, the University of London Widening Participation Group, Access HE, including formal input to the London National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP), and run a flagship annual disability event with Imperial College. Our Student Marketing and Recruitment team works closely with UCL, KCL and Imperial on recruitment events and plans to expand this activity into WP activity outside London, working with schools in areas with high proportions of underrepresented students.

Providing input to staff in schools/college: LSE is a partner in Advancing Access, a national collaboration of 24 selective universities. We continue to work with schools and colleges to develop and deliver CPD for teachers and advisers that supports student progression to selective universities. Advancing Access has a focus on schools with low levels of progression to such universities.

Engagement with specialist agencies and dedicated social mobility organisations: We plan to extend our pilot partnership with IntoUniversity's Brent Centre focusing on supporting students on their primary focus scheme as a way of engaging early in a structured and long-lasting way. IntoUniversity conducts a comprehensive feasibility study of the local area when determining where to open a centre, in addition to monitoring a number of deprivation measures, including IMD, to ensure they reach the students who are most in need. LSE has had ongoing representation on the AGCAS Disability Task Group which works sector-wide to improve provision and outcomes for disabled students.

The LSE Students' Union and student societies: The WP team offers support and advice to student societies and representatives of the LSE Students' Union who undertake activity relating to fair access and widening participation. Where feasible we will encourage SU projects with schools and students from our target groups.

(vi) Additional funding sources including student premium

We receive external funding from the Sutton Trust to deliver the Pathways to Law and Pathways to Banking and Finance, which benefit from the input of colleagues across the School.

To-date our contribution to NCOP activity has been delivered via in-kind support and funded from our own access funds. This has been strategically appropriate to date and we will review this when further information is available from our London partners about the funding and model for Phase 2 of NCOP and the outreach hubs developments.

Compared to the sector, LSE receives a relatively small amount of student premium allocation each year. The majority of our allocation is for supporting students with disabilities and this is currently used, alongside direct School funding, to support our Disability and Wellbeing Service. These services offer expertise to students, including the provision of individual Inclusion Plans and Individual Examinations Adjustments, in parallel with general advice and support.

(vii) Financial support

We regard financial support for students from low-income backgrounds to be a key plank of our access and student success strategy. We have reported in previous monitoring returns how the research undertaken by Dr Gill Wyness, of LSE's Centre for Economic Performance, indicated that bursaries had an overall positive impact on degree performance. We have also undertaken a small piece of research with parents/carers of prospective LSE applicants which indicated high levels of parental concern over the cost of living in London and that our financial support package alleviated some of these concerns for parental influencers. Furthermore, we have collected qualitative evidence from students indicating that they would not have been able to take up their place at LSE without a financial support package. All of these pieces of research were undertaken pre-September 2016.

In light of the research undertaken to date we plan to continue our current LSE bursary package for UK undergraduate students. Eligibility is based on the household residual income of the student and assessment is undertaken by SFE. Bursary values/household income are set out below in Table 10.

Table 10: LSE Bursary package, 2020

Students' household income	LSE award per annum
£0 - £18,000	£4,000
£18001 - £25,000	£3,500
£25,001 - £30,000	£2,750
£30,001 - £35,000	£1,750
£35,001 - £40,000	£1,000
£40,001 - £42,611	£750

LSE also provides three Access to Education scholarships for undergraduate students with the following status:

- Asylum seeker;
- Refugee;
- Person with humanitarian protection;
- Person who is resident in the UK and has been granted Discretionary/Limited Leave to Remain in the UK.

The award value is dependent on need and ranges from £9,250 to £21,000 per year.

We plan to make a small reduction in the proportion of HFI which we devote to the LSE bursary package, reallocating this to support student success measures. This bursary shortfall will be made up by funding from philanthropic giving. We also plan to undertake further research into the impact of financial support on access and success at LSE now that grants have been phased out and the total available to borrow through maintenance loans increased. The evaluation will take place in Autumn 2019 and the findings discussed with stakeholders and relevant School committees in Spring 2020. If the evaluation indicates the need to make changes to the LSE bursary package we will seek approval from OfS to amend our APP by June 2020 with a view to new arrangements being published in July 2020 for 2021 entry.

Addendum – October 2020

LSE has completed its evaluation of the Undergraduate bursary package using the OfS evaluation toolkit. The statistical analysis, which looked at the impact of bursaries on student outcomes, did not point to any definitive conclusions regarding the efficacy of the LSE Bursary provision. There were very few differences in education outcomes between the four student income groups. This could indicate that the financial support is levelling the playing field or there is no impact of financial disadvantage on education outcomes. The student survey evaluation indicated that a higher proportion of students in receipt of the top value awards rated the bursaries as very important for their experience and that they were aware that they would be eligible for an award prior to enrolling at the School. We therefore propose to retain the higher-level awards for 2021 entry but adjust the lower-level bursaries where the impact on student experience and outcome is less clear.

The 'saved' HFI funding will be redirected to support the Student Success work outlined in 3.1.3 (ii). In particular, we will use the resource to build on the evaluation of the Inclusive Education Action Plan which we are beginning to implement this year and to develop and promote good practice interventions at departmental level, identified through evaluation, to address attainment gaps. We have already earmarked funding for this work in 2020 and beyond but the movement of bursary funding will allow us to devote more resource to evaluation and good practice dissemination than hitherto planned. We also plan to step up our research into the continuation gap between students with declared mental health difficulties and no known disability.

The revised LSE Bursary package, 2021 is set out below in Table 11.

Table 11: LSE Bursary package, 2021

Students' household income	LSE award per annum
£0 - £18,000	£4,000
£18001 - £25,000	£3,500
£25,001 - £30,000	£2,250
£30,001 - £35,000	£1,500
£35,001 - £42,875	£500

(viii) Headline investment

LSE will continue to invest 50% of the higher fee on access and participation measures.

3.2 Student consultation

Students routinely provide feedback and input to shape the development of activity which forms part of our APP commitments. LSE Students' Union representatives are invited to comment on the content and purpose of our WP programme, alongside our WP Student Ambassador representatives who sit on the Access HE Student Advisory Group. The Widening Participation Operational Group, which focuses on the development of our specific outreach initiatives, includes four student members who have input into our APP developments. Section 3.1.2 highlights how the plans for teaching developments to address attainment gaps have been built with student input.

With the election in October 2017 of a new Social Mobility and Class Officer role in the LSESU, the Students' Union has continued to undertake its own work to further understand the experience of different groups of students within LSE. We remain in dialogue with LSESU representatives to support their work and explore how we can learn from this and utilise their findings to inform our future developments for all students.

Furthermore, students are full members of the Widening Participation Steering Group (to be reconstituted as the APP Steering Group), Education Committee, and Council, which are the key School bodies that have contributed to the development and sign-off of this Plan.

Additionally we convened a pilot APP Student Forum. A group of eight undergraduate students, and the LSE SU General Secretary, met in early May to discuss and comment on the draft APP, the proposed target groups and the measures outlined to support access, success and progression. The students raised a number of points, including:

- The importance of financial support to students' decision to choose a London university and in helping with living costs while studying in London. Our planned evaluation of financial support (in 3.1.3 vii) will include quantitative feedback from a larger group of bursary-holders.
- Suggestions to improve tutoring and mentoring for students preparing for university and for students enrolled at the School. This feedback will help inform our strategic access measures detailed in 3.1.3 i points (c) and (h) and in strategic success measures in 3.1.3 ii (a).

- Suggestions to improve the transition of students into LSE which will be incorporated into the development of strategic success measures in 3.1.3 ii (e).

Students will continue to be involved in the oversight and monitoring of the APP through their roles in the formal School bodies detailed in section 3.4 and through the research and feedback sought by the teams responsible for delivering all aspects of the APP.

Addendum – October 2020

We have considered the Student Forum feedback, as well as the qualitative student feedback from the bursary evaluation, in the 2020 reconfiguration of our bursary package. We have protected the higher bursary values for the students from the lowest income backgrounds, while adjusting downwards the higher value bursaries.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

LSE has committed in its LSE 2030 strategy to continually assess the impact of our processes and procedures to identify and mitigate differential impacts and potential inequalities. We recognise the importance of ensuring that policies and measures deliver the intended outcomes and of gathering evidence to inform future programme design. Equally, it is key that all services and teams responsible for elements of the APP evaluate consistently, regularly and to the same standard.

We have undertaken a high-level assessment of our evaluation practice in key areas of the student lifecycle using the OfS evaluation self-assessment framework. The assessment found that evaluation culture is inconsistently embedded across the School. Key findings include:

- Programme design: variation in demonstrable use of evidence in the development of measures; inconsistent use of objectives frameworks and Theories of Change.
- Designing evaluations: most evaluations in the narrative stage; some empirical approaches in development; some research projects using more advanced statistical techniques
- Learnings: some mechanisms/committees disseminating and reviewing evaluation; no central body.

It is clear from our self-assessment that we need to develop a School-wide evaluation strategy over the coming year, which encompasses a more consistent approach to evaluation and builds on some of the good practice already taking place in the School. We have an evaluation strategy in place for our Widening Participation programme which comprises a set of high-level aims and objectives for the programme of activity; specific outcomes on each project relating to the high-level aims and objectives; theories of change for our intensive projects; project-appropriate evaluation tools; strategic oversight of evaluation; dedicated analyst resource and dissemination of findings and feedback. This approach will be expanded to cover measures delivered across the whole School.

In light of our self-assessment, our evaluation strategy will deliver:

- Increased capacity in specialist evaluation and analysis in key areas responsible for delivering APP measures and a coordinated approach to evaluation across this cadre of staff. We have

committed to increase spend on evaluation and this is articulated in our five year financial plan.

- Training for non-specialist staff in the skills to design evaluations, analyse data, and effectively utilise findings;
- Drawing on the expertise of external organisations where appropriate for intensive activity
- A framework for the evaluation of all measures designed to deliver our APP targets;
- A robust theoretical basis for all APP activities through developing and testing programme-level Theories of Change;
- The use of quantitative as well as qualitative data to evaluate activity and assess impact on student behaviour;
- The use of more sophisticated quasi-experimental and experimental methods in the evaluation of specific programmes;
- Strengthening our self-report data collection through undertaking cognitive pre-testing of questionnaires and employing greater use of validated and standardised measures;
- Developing new mechanisms for dissemination of our evaluation findings, such as
 - an annual evaluation workshop for reflection on and discussion of evaluation findings;
 - making 'evaluation' a standing item on the APP Steering Group agenda;
 - establishing an evaluation library for all completed evaluations;
 - publishing the findings of evaluations of key programmes, building on the widening participation annual report;
 - contributing to the body of knowledge held by The Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO).

We have included in section 3.1.3 how we plan to evaluate our access and student success measures, demonstrating that our evaluation practice is already taking shape.

For the areas where we are investing most heavily, such as financial support, we will make use of the OfS toolkit where possible, in collaboration with academic colleagues, to ensure the evaluation is wide-ranging and robust and builds upon the research we have already undertaken in this area. Findings from the evaluation will be discussed at the School's Education and Planning Committees, before any changes resulting from the findings are implemented.

We will have completed our School-wide evaluation strategy by Spring 2020 in time to roll out and underpin all of our 2020-25 APP activity.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The APP commitments will be monitored through the existing governance structure of the School.

1. The Widening Participation Steering Group will transition into the APP Steering Group with membership drawn from professional services, academic departments and the student body. This group will be responsible for the operational oversight of the APP, considering OfS guidance and new data as it is made available, monitoring progress against targets, and making recommendations to the Education Committee.
2. Education Committee, a committee of Academic Board, is responsible for the LSE academic strategy and comprises senior members of the professional services and academic

community, as well as Students' Union representation. This group will monitor progress against the APP aims and offer cross-School guidance/ support in delivering to target.

3. Council will receive twice yearly reports on APP progress to-date and key issues, to ensure the very highest level of oversight of the work. Council will also receive updates on the Strategy 2030 Action Plan, which includes the APP targets as key measures of progress.
4. The School Management Committee, EDI Board, TEF sub-committee and the Inclusive Education Action Plan Advisory Group will all consider elements of the plan as it relates to their business on an ongoing basis.
5. The Annual Monitoring process, which reviews academic department performance, is being revised to ensure that APP measures relating to continuation and attainment are included.
6. The Student Panel, referenced in 3.2, will become a permanent student group charged with monitoring delivery of measures and progress to APP targets.

Concerns and issues raised by these groups, regarding delivery or progress to target, can be directed to the APP Steering Group for consideration and, if necessary, review of measures. In the event that regular monitoring of progress identifies that access, success or progression is deteriorating Council will request an audit of measures related to the area of concern and request that the APP Steering Committee makes recommendations on how improvements should be made.

4. Provision of information to students

We publish clear, accessible and timely information for applicants and students on our undergraduate fees and financial support arrangements. We do this through a range of media, including:

Digital: LSE website programme pages and financial support content; LSE undergraduate prospectus; financial support brochure; email bulletins for schools and colleges; emails for prospective applicants/ applicants; emails for students; UCAS entry profiles; social media content; videos.

Print: LSE undergraduate prospectus; financial support brochure; LSE WP brochure/materials; offer-holder booklet.

In person: LSE open days; offer-holder days; conference for schools advisers; school visits; recruitment events; one-to-one guidance.

The Access and Participation Plan will be published on the undergraduate pages of the LSE website. We also provide relevant information to UCAS and the SLC in a timely fashion. We undertake regular reviews and continually check practice to ensure compliance with consumer law.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1: OfS template - Targets and Investment Plan

Appendix 2: OfS template - Fee Information

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		£9,250
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years		£1,385
Other	*	*

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

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

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
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: The London School of Economics and Political Science

Provider UKPRN: 10004063

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 (£)	£1,342,806.00	£1,372,147.00	£1,398,649.00	£1,420,677.00	£1,420,677.00
Access (pre-16)	£332,908.00	£340,440.00	£346,905.00	£351,690.00	£351,690.00
Access (post-16)	£825,361.00	£842,830.00	£858,848.00	£872,535.00	£872,535.00
Access (adults and the community)	£98,013.00	£100,364.00	£102,619.00	£104,725.00	£104,725.00
Access (other)	£86,524.00	£88,513.00	£90,277.00	£91,727.00	£91,727.00
Financial support (£)	£3,755,346.00	£3,856,742.00	£3,922,314.00	£3,940,616.00	£3,942,616.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£169,530.00	£204,446.00	£239,056.00	£273,250.00	£273,250.00

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)	£9,503,365.00	£9,716,230.00	£9,895,160.00	£10,027,815.00	£10,027,815.00
Access investment	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%
Financial support	34.0%	34.3%	34.0%	33.7%	33.7%
Research and evaluation	0.9%	1.2%	1.5%	1.8%	1.8%
Total investment (as %HFI)	44.0%	44.6%	44.6%	44.6%	44.6%

