

University of Northampton

Access and Participation Plan 2025/26 to 2028/29

1. Introduction and Strategic Aim

Our strategic mission

The University of Northampton (UON) has a clear and inclusive strategic mission; to support aspiration, create equal opportunities and deliver impact. This mission underpins our 2023 – 2027 Strategy and is central to this Access and Participation Plan (APP) which has been designed to transform our students' lives through the enhancement of their student experience, align with our Learning and Teaching Strategy and seamlessly integrate with our campus, place and community.

Our purpose is social impact and our work in this arena is globally recognised. From 2021 - 2023, UON has appeared in the top 30 universities in the Times Higher Education Impact Awards for our work in reducing inequalities. Our 2022/2023 Social Impact Report evidences our creation of over £21 million worth of impact for our students, staff and communities, with a significant proportion of this due to work with students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Established as a university in 2005, we are a widening participation institution. We are immensely proud of, celebrate and nurture our unique and richly diverse student community. We endeavour to foster a culture of inclusivity for all students, supporting them to realise their aspirations in a learning environment that provides equal access to equality of opportunity and values student collaboration.

Our student cohort

UON is home to c.14,400 students (2021/22), two-thirds are undergraduates and a third postgraduates. Many of our home students follow a three-year, full-time undergraduate route with c.280 enrolling annually on our integrated foundation year, plus a growing provision of degree apprenticeships (c.80 per year rising to 200+ students in the next three years). This combined with our menu of 20 credit modules for professionals, reflects our commitment to broaden our range of course type and delivery, providing access to those who wish to gain additional university level qualifications. A further 6,100 students study with us off campus in the UK and internationally at partner institutions.

Our diverse undergraduate student cohort has the following characteristics:

- 40% from Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) backgrounds (*sector average 34.8%*)
- 49% from IMD Quintiles 1/2 (*sector average 44%*)
- 66% female (*sector average 57%*)
- 13% with a declared disability (*sector average 17%*)
- 38% have a parent with a higher education qualification (*sector average of 50%*)
- 40% commute more than 7km to Waterside campus
- Most students enter with a mix of level 3 qualifications including A Levels and BTECs

A significant proportion of our students combine learning with family, work and other caring responsibilities. A large proportion of our home students are from the Midlands and Greater London areas, alongside our international cohort creating a diverse learning community. We celebrate our diversity and champion the cultural, social and economic value it brings to our institution and county as a whole as figure 1 shows.

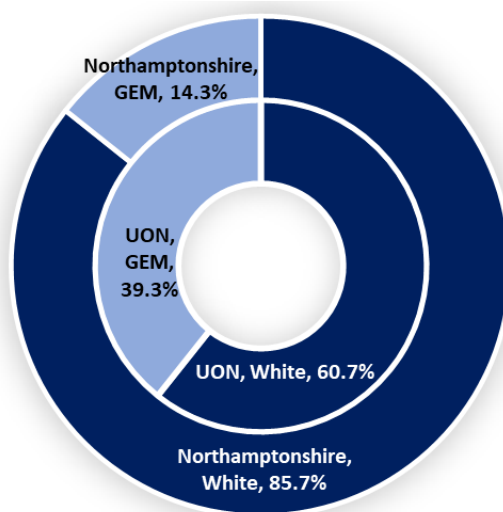


Figure 1: UON compared to Northamptonshire: Population by Ethnicity. (Census 2021)

Place and community

Graduate retention levels are lower in the East Midlands than any other region¹ therefore, we are a lead partner in the Northamptonshire Anchor Institutions Network (comprised of the region's largest employers and contributors) to improve this outcome as a collaborative partnership. Additionally, in 2016 our Widening Access Team pioneered the launch of a County Head of 6th Form Network, a community of practice, hosted on campus three times a year to facilitate collaboration, develop knowledge of routes into Higher Education and share best practice to the benefit of Northamptonshire pupils' perceptions of Higher Education. To support these networks, we leverage our status as a university to bring high profile speakers to the platform, ensuring we add value and enrichment to our local community.

Student support

Student support is central to our purpose as an institution and our intention is for our students to have a Higher Education experience which develops them academically and socially to be the best they can be. Latest data from AdvanceHE² indicates that mental health declarations are the fastest growing disability in the sector and increasing. This is corroborated by our own data. Therefore, whilst we acknowledge our successes in this area, we also highlight mental health as a risk to equality of opportunity that will be addressed in this Plan. We have a well-established student support provision which complements our Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) offer, designed to enhance the student experience. In 2022, the University celebrated 25 years of our Student Mental Health and Counselling Service - the first such dedicated service at a UK university, demonstrating our forward-thinking leadership, considering the holistic needs of our students.

Evidence from across the sector demonstrates the importance of developing a sense of belonging when students are involved in shaping their own learning experiences and support offers³. Our successes working with students to deliver a Black Student Advocates programme, Student Equality Consultants and an APP Award Gap Working Group (co-chaired by a student), illustrate our commitment to supporting students in an engaging way that empowers them with agency to co-create a positive experience.

¹ [Universities Improving Graduate Employment: Case Studies, Universities UK, pp. 18](#)

² [AdvanceHE Equality Report 2023](#)

³ [OfS: Conversations about Race](#)

Learning and teaching

Our academic provision is organised into three faculties: Arts, Science and Technology, Business and Law, and Health, Education and Society. Our active and blended learning approach enables students to study in the ways and at the times that suit them best, without sacrificing peer group learning and support. Active and blended learning is underpinned by a belief that the best way to teach is through small, interactive, face-to-face group teaching with teamwork that promotes experimentation, creativity, problem solving and feedback. While digital components are critical to learning, face-to-face interactions remain predominant and essential, alongside PATs that support students learning and wellbeing. This pedagogy is inherent in our course development, review processes, and academic staff development. We have therefore built a state-of-the-art campus, optimised for the best virtual and in-person relationships.

Our pedagogic approach is complemented by our Integrated Learner Support (ILS) model. Many of our students find navigating a university support offer difficult. ILS therefore aims to create a proactive multi-agency approach that supports learning including, employability and academic skills as well as wellbeing opportunities situated throughout the student journey. Students should then be met with the support they need when and where they need it, without having to contact multiple departments.⁴

Our most recent Teaching Excellence Framework award was silver, with most areas of our student outcomes and experience being of high quality. This APP represents our route back to TEF Gold through a process of continuous reflection and improvement underpinned by our Learning and Teaching Strategy.

2. Whole provider approach

The delivery of our 2020-25 APP demonstrated a step change in our whole provider approach. APP as a concept is now embedded within the University. It is driven by our Vice Chancellor and is central to the work of our faculties and professional services. UON is committed to a strategic approach to strengthen the equality of opportunity for our students. Our University Strategy (2023-2027) informs all we do as a widening participation provider, setting out our commitments to our students:

Priorities: student experience; learning and teaching; research and staff.

Our purpose: social impact.

Foundations of success: our campus; place and communities; how we work; finance and resourcing.

Our values: inclusivity, sustainability, aspiration and trust.

Our strategy-led priorities, purpose and values make clear our commitment to access and participation and enable us to directly address our identified risks to equality of opportunity. Sub-strategies have been designed to support this work within the larger contextual frame, including our Learning and Teaching Strategy, our People Strategy and our Estate Development Framework. Each strategy is managed by members of our University Leadership Team (ULT) and this model has been effective in ensuring successful delivery and oversight. In line with this approach, each intervention strategy in this Plan is sponsored by a member of ULT who will ensure the intervention is effectively led, delivers specified outcomes, meets the needs of our APP target cohorts and is monitored through our APP governance structure, with clear leadership and accountability.

⁴ [UON TEF Submission 2023](#)

Whole provider staff engagement

In August 2023, our Vice Chancellor combined our Equality and Access teams to create a core department with a whole provider mandate: to prioritise equality of opportunity for all underrepresented students. This team led the development of this APP and reports to the APP Steering Group, chaired by the Vice Chancellor, which ultimately reports to ULT. Our Steering Group consists of a range of stakeholders from across the University including student representatives with a diversity of life experience. It has been vital for this group to govern the development of the APP, managing the objectives, inputs, outcomes, and evaluation. With the support of ULT, our Steering Group has endorsed the APP as a standing item on the agenda of all institutional committees, ensuring a platform exists for key progress updates.

Our APP engages all staff by critically informing our institutional approach to training, research and pedagogical innovation. Our Learning and Teaching Innovation Bids, URB@N (Undergraduate Research Bursaries at Northampton) Projects and APP Ambassador roles, all contain APP objectives in their selection criteria and the recommendations and outcomes from these projects are presented at collaborative staff development days and captured in our Learning and Teaching Enhancement Hub to inform future policy, practice and training. In addition, while our newly designed series of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion themed learning and teaching workshops are part of our AdvanceHE accredited programme of academic practice, they also complement our APP practice by focusing on an inclusive curriculum, which supports all students with protected characteristics.

Whole provider student engagement

As outlined in our Student Consultation, students have been extensively involved in the development of this APP through regular engagement with our Students' Union and the creation of a bespoke Student Equality Consultants panel. Our pool of Student Equality Consultants consists of students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds that had not previously engaged with formal student voice work. This means that their insights are often unique and innovative, encouraging us to reflect on our practice. A success in this space was the development of Trust Guidelines which advocate for a whole provider approach to building trust. These guidelines feature as part of our personal support intervention strategy, demonstrating our constructive approach to student voice.

By virtue of this consultation process, there is a student-centred thread throughout our Plan which spans the whole student lifecycle. Moving forward, our Student Equality Consultants will form part of our APP Steering Group and hold us to account on the commitments within this APP and our broader work, moving us closer to the intentions outlined in our UON Strategy:

*"We will achieve the best possible student experience by fostering a culture of collaboration with students. We will capture the student voice and feedback combined with other forms of evidence and data to adapt and improve our students' experiences of studying at the University."*⁵

The importance of the whole students' lifecycle

Our Widening Access Team works with young people from Key Stage 2 upwards and our Student Futures Team is dedicated to assisting our undergraduates into highly skilled employment or postgraduate study. As an institution, we do this by punctuating students' time here with interventions, offering advice and guidance and implementing strategies to support those who experience barriers to equality of opportunity. We are passionate about our offer of careers support for life and reward our alumni with discounted postgraduate study. At each stage of the students' lifecycle, we have support teams positioned and strategies in place which put the student at the heart of our delivery as an institution. This approach has

⁵ [UON Strategy 2023- 2027 p14](#)

been strengthened by a restructure initiated by our Vice Chancellor, creating new directorates as highlighted in bold below (figure 2).

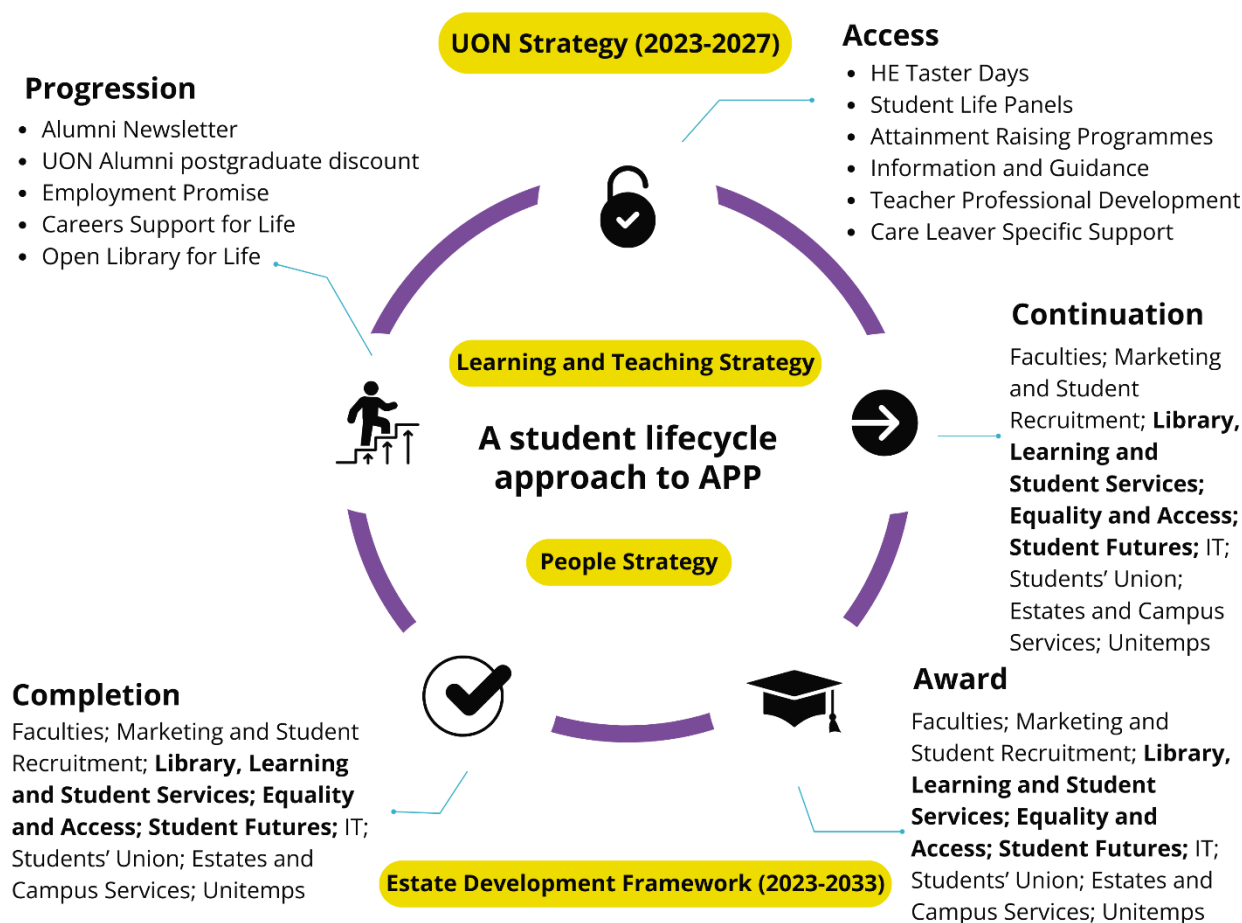


Figure 2: A student lifecycle approach to APP

How the plan aligns with other strategies

Our APP is underpinned by our Learning and Teaching Strategy, highlighting our commitment to ‘develop a truly inclusive academic community of staff and students that co-creates learning at the University’ (pp.1) and overcome the award gaps identified in this Plan. The Learning and Teaching Strategy embeds an inclusive toolkit to enhance our Integrated Learner Support (ILS) model and overall sense of belonging, referenced within our academic support intervention strategy, demonstrating the synergies between the two.

Similarly, our Estate Development Framework (2023-2033) has a key focus on identity and belonging, realising the pivotal role that our physical estate plays in our students’ ability to access their learning and its impact on their wider experience.

Overall, this Plan has been informed by our new strategic vision and adheres to the Equality Act 2010. Our inherent collaborative and consultation-based approach means that this APP has been constructed alongside teams across UON over two years and contains an immovable commitment to eliminate discrimination, increase equality of opportunity and improve student experience and outcomes. We pledge to address challenges faced by students from underrepresented groups and support them as they progress through Higher Education.

3. Risks to Equality of Opportunity

We have identified seven risks to equality of opportunity (figure 3), through analysis of data from the Office for Students' APP dashboard, National Student Survey and our internal data, while also considering the sector risks identified in the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR). We have worked closely with our County Head of 6th Form Network, APP Steering Group, APP Operations Group and student representatives in the analysis of our performance and subsequent EORR development (Annex A). All internal and external stakeholders agree that our risks are proportionate and realistic.

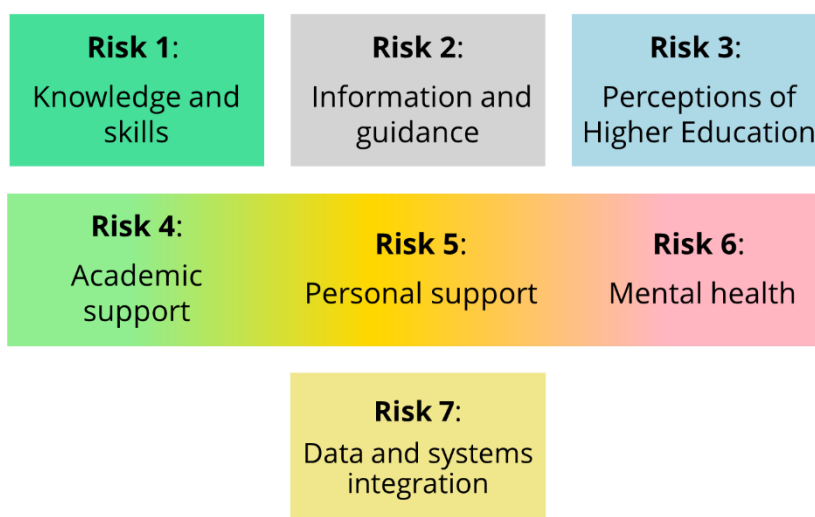


Figure 3: UON's seven risks to equality of opportunity

Access stage of the students' lifecycle

Risk 1: Knowledge and Skills - *Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to be accepted onto Higher Education courses that match their expectations and ambitions.*

While we do not recruit solely from Northamptonshire, as the only university in the county, we have a responsibility to collaborate with our partner schools through attainment-raising initiatives enabling pupils to achieve their ambitions. In Northamptonshire, 45.5% of year 11s achieve grade 5+ GCSE in English and maths (national average: 49.8%⁶) with girls out-performing boys. Attainment 8 for Northamptonshire is 47.2%, compared to the national average of 48.9%⁷. Our County Head of 6th Form Network colleagues also suggest that a recruitment and retention crisis of teachers in secondary education is impacting students' knowledge and skills development due to in part the increase in non-specialist cover lessons⁸. These indicators suggest there may be knowledge and skill barriers to accessing Higher Education in Northamptonshire.

Applications, offers and acceptance rates across APP target cohorts are similar, except our male and female application rates, where the latter submit almost double the number of applications. This is an indicator of a knowledge and skills risk for our male students. However, we also observe a knowledge and skills risk manifesting for students from all our target cohorts via on-course gaps, particularly evident at continuation. Evidence from academic subject areas and sector research⁹ suggests that a large proportion of our students

⁶ 2021/22 data: gov.uk: GCSE English and maths results

⁷ [Key Stage 4 Performance Statistics](#)

⁸ [Schools Week: Extent of classes taught by non-specialist teachers revealed.](#)

⁹ See: [Veldman et al., 2019](#)

struggle to make the adjustment into UON due to not having the opportunity to acquire the prerequisite knowledge and skills related to the HE curriculum. Literature suggests the presence and impact of the hidden curriculum¹⁰ presents tacit barriers to equal opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This is supported by internal data sets, which highlight male students accessing academic support less than females.

While our focus has been on knowledge and skills, many of the indicators of risk also suggest the presence of information and guidance and perceptions of Higher Education risks which we explain below.

Risk 2: Information and Guidance - *Students may not have equal opportunity to receive the information and guidance that will enable them to develop ambition and expectations, or to make informed choice about their Higher Education options.*

In response to a central Government cut in Connexions funding¹¹, our Widening Access Team developed a programme with South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) outlining the various routes into Higher Education and careers. This programme has been successful in serving 35% of our local schools and colleges, although, our HESA track report identifies that, of the pupils we engaged with, fewer attended university immediately after 6th form compared to the sector. Interestingly, students transition in greater numbers within two years rather than immediately (figure 28, Annex A). We believe this is in-part due to the inconsistent use of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) across the institution, meaning we do not capture all students fully and are therefore, unable to articulate our total impact. We have addressed this within our APP. Given that we are a national recruiter of students, the work we do in our local area doesn't completely mitigate our exposure to an information and guidance risk. Our experience is that information and guidance risks typically manifest on-course for male, GEM and students from IMD Q1/2.

One of our objectives at access is to increase the proportion of Asian students as their continuation rates fell from 91.7% to 31.5% in 2020/21 with a four-year average of 66.5%. Statistical analysis in our [financial support package evaluation](#) demonstrates that this drop in continuation was mostly concentrated in Pakistani and Bangladeshi student groups who were less likely to continue than their White counterparts, whereas all other GEM groups were more likely to continue into their second year than White students, suggesting an information and guidance risk for our Asian cohorts.

On-course continuation rates in 2020/21 show a 17.2pp gap between students from IMD Q1/2 compared to IMD Q3/4/5, with a similar gap between male and female students. When reflecting on this data, it is important to consider how COVID-19 may have prevented those from underrepresented groups accessing information and guidance, as evidence suggests it did present barriers¹².

During consultation, our County Head of 6th Form Network suggested that low male student engagement with information and guidance, negatively impacts their application rates to Higher Education¹³ due to a lack of understanding of the application process. Our staff consultation process, Learning Development records and sector evidence¹⁴ support this assertion, indicating that male students are less likely to ask for help or engage with academic support. Therefore, we believe this evidence is also symptomatic of an

¹⁰ [Addressing the hidden curriculum during transition to HE](#) (pp. 59)

¹¹ [Government cuts to careers guidance](#)

¹² [Covid's impact on young people's post18 plans and access to higher education outreach](#)

¹³ [UCAS data on admissions to higher education in the UK](#)

¹⁴ [Male students: engagement with academic and pastoral support services](#)

information and guidance risk that we will address through our intervention strategies.

Risk 3: Perceptions of Higher Education - *Students may not feel able to apply to Higher Education, or certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified.*

Applicant data suggests (Annex A, table 7) that there may be a difference in the way male and female students perceive the academic portfolio offer at UON, resulting in different application rates. This varies across faculties and subjects.

Our Widening Access Team collaborate with faculty colleagues, partner schools and our Aspire Higher Uni Connect partnership, to reduce the differences in participation between the most and least represented groups, particularly working to improve perceptions of Higher Education. However, their reach is local. Feedback from our County Head of 6th Form Network on our EORR, highlights that Muslim students face funding barriers to Higher Education due to perceived conflicts between the funding model and Sharia Law. Muslim Census found that, nationally, over 6000 Muslims choose not to attain higher education due to interest-bearing loans¹⁵. With 68% of Muslims from Asian descent¹⁶, it is reasonable to attribute some of the explanation for our low application rates of Asian students to their perception of affordability. Since learning this, we have updated [our webpages](#) and are working with our Students' Union to reassure Muslim students that Student Finance is permissible, as per British Fatwa Council¹⁷ highlighting available alternative funding.

On course stages of the students' lifecycle

Our analysis of performance has highlighted that the indicators of risks for academic support, personal support and mental health are intrinsically linked as illustrated in figure 3. We have outlined a symbiotic relationship between each risk below.

Risk 4: Academic Support - *Students may not receive sufficient personalised academic support to achieve a positive outcome.*

A sense of belonging is a key contributing factor of student success at university¹⁸ and effective academic support for students is central to belonging. A key method of delivering this is through our PAT policy which we recognise is not uniformly implemented. Data shows a gap between GEM students and White students, with fewer GEM students passing Level 5 with a Grade B-, a metric we track to indicate the potential achievement of a good degree. National Student Survey data shows that GEM students and those from IMD Q1/2 respond less favourably to targeted questions on academic support than comparable groups (figures 31/32, Annex A). Students with a disability at UON report a lower positivity measure (75.5%) on academic support than those with no disability reported (79.1%). This data could indicate a barrier to accessing personalised academic support for students with a disability that needs to be addressed. As stated previously, the Learning Development Team's monthly records show fewer male students, regardless of ethnicity, attend academic support sessions compared to female students. While our empirical data focuses on academic support sessions, staff consultation¹⁹ revealed a difference in general engagement between males and females. Therefore, we have work to do to provide an academic support model that is barrier-

¹⁵ (2021) [Muslim Census: Unequal Access to University Education](#)

¹⁶ Muslim Council of Britain. (2015). Retrieved from.

¹⁷ The Arabic word fatwa can mean "explanation" or "clarification." For the ruling on Student Finance, please [see](#).

¹⁸ [Building Belonging in Higher Education \(2022\)](#)

¹⁹ Quantitative and qualitative staff consultation took place throughout 2022/23 and 2023/24 via the APP Operations Group, online and face to face opportunities. It was specifically focussed on the appropriateness of draft risks and objectives.

free for all students.

Risk 5: Personal Support - *Students may not receive sufficient personalised non-academic support or have sufficient access to extracurricular activities to achieve a positive outcome.*

Personal support, like academic support, has an unquestionable impact on a students' sense of belonging and is a key factor of student success at university. Similarly, our student support teams, Integrated Learner Support model and Personal Academic Tutor role are key systems which support our students across their lifecycle. We are clear from our consultation with staff and students that these systems need a higher profile and fine tuning to ensure the support they offer is better known by students and easier to access. Our [financial support annual evaluation](#) has revealed that students in need of financial support will often choose not to apply as they have a perception that their application would not be successful and will take too long to process. With 50% of students coming from homes where the household income is below £30,000, the scale of support needed is clear. However, we do know that those in receipt of UON funds are more likely to continue with their studies, so this is a success we will build on.

Internal continuation data identifies that students who enrol on our integrated foundation year continue at a lesser rate onto the next stage, compared to students who start at level 4. Additionally, our GEM students, specifically Asian students, students from IMD Q1/2 and male students continue at a lesser rate compared to their counterparts and this could suggest that they experience insufficient personal and academic support. Our ambition to reach 90% continuation for all student cohorts is central to this APP and reflected in the associated intervention strategies.

Risk 6: Mental Health - *Students may not experience an environment that is conducive to good mental health and wellbeing.*

Poor mental health is having a growing impact on students within the HE sector. Our Mental Health and Counselling Team has seen an increasing number of student referrals, more appointments booked, and more drop-ins attended. In 2022/23, they saw a 127% increase in applicants requesting mental health transition support, illustrating the scale of the challenge.

National Student Survey responses identify that students rate the communication of our mental health services at 67% compared to the sector average of 76%. This corroborates our thinking that there are barriers to students accessing personal and academic support due to being unaware of support services, suggesting that mental health is a risk to equality of opportunity, partly due to communication challenges.

Data from our Mental Health and Counselling Team identifies that White students are overrepresented and female students are more likely to book and attend an appointment than male students, indicating there may be a barrier for GEM students and male students in accessing our mental health support. Student Life Pulse survey data indicates that over 50% of students surveyed across the last three academic years have concerns about their mental health and wellbeing (figure 29, Annex A). 44% of students responded that their mental health was impacting their ability to continue their studies. Combined with a fivefold increase in applications for mitigating circumstances since pre-pandemic years, there is a clear mental health risk for us to address.

Risk 7: Integration of Data and Systems - *Many of our systems are not integrated to be able to "talk" to each other constricting our capacity to deliver a joined-up approach.*

In developing this APP, it has become apparent that there is a culture of siloed working on local databases. This fragmented approach reduces our capacity for direct student support and integrated data analysis,

preventing our services from identifying a student who has accessed multiple services. Ultimately, this gap is critical as the lack of integration hinders our ability to provide early, and consistent support offers. This risk is evident throughout the student lifecycle, particularly at continuation and award, where policies such as our PAT policy and ILS policy are most disrupted by inconsistent approaches to data and systems.

From a student's perspective, the necessity to complete separate requests for each personal support service can be cumbersome and problematic. Evidence suggests that students with disabilities face significant barriers when they need to self-advocate repeatedly to access various support services²⁰. Additionally, our staff consultation revealed that access to timely and relevant student data would empower staff to better support our APP. The current disconnected systems not only slow down decision-making processes but also increase the risk of errors, as there is no single source of truth for all data. This misalignment most impacts students on-course as it impedes our ability to effectively communicate with students and deliver a cohesive student experience, explaining why some students may be exposed to academic and personal support risks.

As a result of our in-depth analysis, we have designed objectives to support the following groups:

- Students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, measured using IMD Q1/2.
- Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) in particular Asian students.
- Male students.
- Students with a disability.

4. Objectives

Our objectives apply to full-time, undergraduate, home students in line with our analysis of performance in Annex A. Time bound targets for each objective (except the ones we are monitoring) can be found in Annex C. We are confident that these objectives will also support part-time students and apprentices, as the changes in practice that our intervention strategies will deliver will have a positive impact on all our students.

²⁰ Disability and Self-Advocacy Experiences in University

Stage	Risk	APP Objective
Access	Knowledge and skills Information and guidance Perceptions of HE Data and systems integration	Objective 1 (PTA1) - Increase and maintain the % of Asian students (6.8% UON) such that by 2028/29 we have an annual figure that is within 5 percentage points (pp) of the sector 4-year average (4YA) (15%).
		Objective 2 - Commitment to annually <u>monitor</u> the level of GEM access at UON and maintain it at >25% (42.5% 4YA).
		Objective 3 (PTA2) - Increase the proportion of students from socio-economically deprived backgrounds (UON: 48% 4YA) to at least 55% of the UON cohort, measured using IMD Q1/2 postcodes. To be achieved by 2028/29.
		Objective 4 (PTA3) - Reduce the gap (31.6pp) between male (34.2%) and female (65.8%) students at access so that it is within at least 8pp of the sector average (14pp) by 2028/29.
Continuation	Knowledge and skills Information and guidance Perceptions of HE Academic support Personal support Mental health Data and systems integration	Objective 5 (PTS1) - Reduce the GEM (65.2%): White (71.5%) continuation gap (6.3pp) by increasing Asian continuation to levels (31.5%) to be in line with the rest of GEM cohorts by 2028/29.
		Objective 6 - Annually <u>monitor</u> the gap (17.2pp, 7.6pp 4YA) in continuation between students from the most socio-economically deprived backgrounds (59.9%) compared to those from the least socio-economically deprived backgrounds (77.1%) measured using IMD Q1/2 compared to IMD Q3/4/5 - intervening if it grows to become >3pp of the sector 4YA (5.3pp).
		Objective 7 (PTS2) - Reduce the gap (20.3pp) in continuation between male (55.8%) and female (76.2%) students to be within 5pp of the sector 4YA (3pp) by 2028/29.
		Objective 8 (PTS3) - UON to achieve a target of 90% continuation (82.6% 4YA) by 2028/29.
Award	Academic support Personal support Mental health Data and systems integration	Objective 9 (PTS4) - Reduce the gap (25pp) between White (78.3%) and GEM (53.4%) students to at least 5pp below sector 4YA (11.3pp) by 2028/29.
		Objective 10 - Annually <u>monitor</u> the gap (14.5pp, 14.4pp 4YA) in award between students from the most socio-economically deprived backgrounds (58.9%) compared to those from the least socio-economically deprived backgrounds (73.4%) measured using IMD Q1/2 compared to IMD Q3/4/5 - intervening if it grows to become >5pp of the sector 4YA (11.3pp).
Progression	Academic support Personal support Mental health Data and systems integration	Objective 11 (PTP1) - To at least <u>maintain</u> the positive graduate outcomes of GEM (71.9%) and White (75%) students but increase the positive graduate outcomes of Asian (65.8%) to be in line with the rest of GEM by 2028/29.
All stages	Perceptions of HE Academic support Personal support Mental health Data and systems integration	Objective 12 (PTA4) - Reduce the barriers to declaration of disabilities at all stages of the student lifecycle (UON current rate of declaration 13%, sector is 17%). To be achieved by 2026/27.

Data identified within our objectives is sourced from the [OfS APP Data Dashboard](#).

5. Intervention Strategies

Intervention Strategy 1 - Knowledge and Skills

This intervention strategy addresses the following objectives: PTA1, PTA2, PTA3, PTA4, PTS1, PTS2, PTS3 as set out in the objectives table above.

Indicators of risk: Local school GCSE rates, Attainment 8; applications rates; on-course outcomes; uptake of academic support.

Target: To ensure our male, GEM, IMD Q1/2 and Asian students have the opportunity to receive sufficient Knowledge and Skills at access and on-course to achieve a positive outcome.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Primary Risk: **Knowledge and Skills**; Secondary Risks: **Information and Guidance** and **Perceptions of Higher Education**.

Who owns this Intervention Strategy? Widening Access Manager, sponsored by Vice Chancellor.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention	Methods of evaluation
<p>1. UNI Club – existing activity. Subject focused attainment and skills 8-week programme.</p>	<p>Led by: Widening Access Manager</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassador costs Resources School travel</p>	<p>Pupil academic growth through the development of research skills. Pupil personal growth by receiving a UNI Club certificate.</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE</p>	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader in collaboration with Institute of Social Innovation and Impact (SII), using the Widening Access Theory of Change. Dissemination: Annual Widening Access report.</p>
<p>2. Reading Warriors – existing activity. Raising attainment literacy programme within primary and secondary partner schools.</p>	<p>Led by: Widening Access Manager (and Uni Connect team dependent on OfS funding)</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassador costs Resources School travel School 6th form training Higher Education vouchers</p>	<p>Pupil academic growth due to peer reading relationships. Pupil personal growth through developing confidence in reading and feelings of pride. Pupil mobility due to improvements in reading age of our APP target cohorts: Male, GEM, IMD Q1/2.</p>		<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leaders, in collaboration with ISII, using the Widening Access Theory of Change. Dissemination: Annual ongoing Widening Access report.</p>

<p>3. National Saturday Club – new activity. Collaboration between Northampton Film Festival and The British Film Institute developing a Film and Screen Club.</p>	<p>Led by: Widening Access Manager (and Uni Connect team dependent on OfS funding)</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassador costs Resources School travel</p>	<p>Pupil academic growth due to developing subject knowledge. Pupil personal growth developing confidence Pupil mobility due to improvements in attainment. Improved perceptions of Higher Education.</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE Information and guidance</p>	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leaders, in collaboration with ISII, using the Widening Access Theory of Change. Dissemination: Annual Widening Access report.</p>
<p>4. Lego Coding Club – existing activity. A skill development programme in collaboration with Cummins Engineering.</p>	<p>Led by: Widening Access Manager</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassador costs Resources School travel</p>	<p>Pupil personal growth higher confidence working with others. Pupil mobility due to improvements in coding skill and improved employability knowledge. Increased social capital through working with positive role models in industry and Higher Education.</p>	<p>Information and guidance Perceptions of HE</p>	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII, using the Widening Access Theory of Change. Dissemination: Annual Widening Access report.</p>
<p>5. Revision Boost - new activity. Multiple interventions in collaboration with external partners, to boost male student's GCSE maths grades from 3 to 4 and 4 to 5.</p>	<p>Led by: Widening Access Manager</p> <p>Staff costs School travel</p>	<p>Pupil academic growth through improvement in GCSE grades (based upon predicted grades). Pupil mobility by increased attainment and ability to progress through education.</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE</p>	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII, using the Widening Access Theory of Change. Dissemination: Annual Widening Access report.</p>
<p>6. Primary SPARK Award – existing activity. Social impact skill</p>	<p>Led by: Widening Access Manager</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassador costs Resources</p>	<p>Pupil personal growth through developing confidence and feelings of pride. Pupil academic growth</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE</p>	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII, using the Widening Access Theory of Change.</p>

development programme.	School travel	developed through a sense of belonging and developing social relationships.		Dissemination: Annual Widening Access report. Celebration event with schools
7. Primary School Oracy Programme – existing activity. Development of enhanced oracy and debating skills.	Led by: Widening Access Manager Staff costs Student ambassador costs Resources School travel	Pupil personal growth through development of presentation skills and confidence working with others. Pupil mobility through improved attainment.	Perceptions of HE	This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII, using the Widening Access Theory of Change. Dissemination: Annual Widening Access report.
8. Widening Access design, delivery and evaluation workshop – new activity. A training workshop for staff on how to design and develop a Widening Access programme.	Led by: Widening Access Manager Staff costs Resources	Improve institutional knowledge sharing. Quality assure Widening Access programme delivery and impact.	Information and guidance Perceptions of HE	This is a spotlight ²¹ activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leader. Dissemination: Annual Widening Access report APP Steering Group Conference proceedings
9. Primary Law Taskmaster – new activity. In collaboration with Warwick University. Primary Law knowledge development workshops.	Led by: Dean of Faculty of Business and Law in collaboration with Widening Access Manager Staff costs Student ambassador costs Resources School travel	Pupil mobility due to improvements in pupils' knowledge of Law and enhanced employability knowledge. Pupil personal growth due to the positive role modelling of our student ambassadors. Improved perceptions of Higher Education.	Information and guidance Perceptions of HE	This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leaders and consortium partners. Dissemination: Annual Widening Access report APP Steering Group Conference proceedings

<p>10. Drama in Action – existing activity. Professional development programme to develop staff and student attainment and skills.</p>	<p>Led by: Dean of the Faculty of Art, Science and Technology in collaboration with Widening Access Manager</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassador costs Resources School travel</p>	<p>Pupil personal growth through development of confidence and higher ambition. Pupil academic growth through stronger social relationships with UON staff and students. Pupil mobility through improved careers knowledge and improved attainment.</p>	<p>Information and guidance Perceptions of HE</p>	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leaders, in collaboration with ISII, using the Widening Access Theory of Change. Dissemination: Annual Widening Access report.</p>
<p>11. Project Party – existing activity. Development of project management skills programme.</p>	<p>Led by: Dean of Faculty of Business and Law in collaboration with Widening Access Manager.</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassador costs Resources</p>	<p>Pupil personal growth through higher ambition and feelings of pride. Student mobility through improved career knowledge and improved employability skills.</p>	<p>Information and guidance</p>	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leaders, in collaboration with ISII, using the Widening Access Theory of Change. Dissemination: Annual Widening Access report.</p>
<p>Total cost of activities and evaluation for this intervention strategy is: £173,000. You can find our thorough justification and evidence base for this intervention strategy in Annex B.</p>				

²¹ Spotlight activities are key activities within each intervention strategy which are either new activities or will significantly add to the knowledge base of research.

Intervention Strategy 2 – Information and Guidance

This intervention strategy addresses the following objectives: PTA1, PTA2, PTA3, PTS1, PTS2, PTS3.

Indicators of risk: Central government funding; application patterns; progression rate to HEIs; on-course outcomes; continuation rates.

Target: To ensure our male, GEM, IMD Q1/2 and Asian students have equal opportunity to receive accurate and timely Information and Guidance, that will allow them to develop ambition and expectations as well as make informed choices about their path through Higher Education.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Primary Risk: **Information and Guidance**; Secondary Risks: **Knowledge and Skills** and **Perceptions of Higher Education**.

Who owns this Intervention Strategy? Senior Marketing Officer, UK Recruitment sponsored by Director or Marketing and Student Recruitment.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention	Methods of evaluation
<p>1. UCAS/UKUS Fair – new activity. A multi-HE institutional and employer fair based at UON.</p>	<p>Led by: Assistant Director Marketing and Recruitment Events Staff costs Student ambassadors Resources</p>	<p>Improved pupil mobility through improved career knowledge. Develop pupil personal growth through increased ambition. An improved understanding of Higher Education. Increased applications to universities from target cohorts.</p>	Perceptions of HE	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII. ISII suggests collecting data from the Marketing Team to see if there is an increase in applications from those who attended an event. Survey data can be collected from students who attended. We will contribute to the evidence base for the impact of UCAS fairs on the information and guidance risk Dissemination: APP Steering Group.</p>
<p>2. Living Room Lectures webinar programme – existing activity. An annual programme of webinars to support an improved understanding of Higher Education.</p>	<p>Led by: Assistant Director Marketing and Recruitment Events Staff costs Resources</p>	<p>Develop pupil mobility through increased careers knowledge. Improve perceptions of Higher Education.</p>	Perceptions of HE	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII. ISII suggests data be collected from exit surveys and attendance records. Dissemination: APP Steering Group.</p>
<p>3. Annually review EDI considerations and reasonable adjustments for events - new activity. Event communication, web</p>	<p>Led by: Assistant Director Marketing and Recruitment Events</p>	<p>Improve perceptions of Higher Education. Improved pupil personal growth.</p>	Perceptions of HE	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII using responses from student recruitment post-event surveys and the acceptors and decliners survey which we administer annually. We will</p>

content and student experience annual review.	Staff costs Resources			report the impact of our changes and subsequent EDI considerations. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group. Conference proceedings.
4. Careers in STEAM Northants – existing activity. An annual science, technology, engineering, arts and maths careers exhibition with external speakers based at UON.	Led by: Widening Access Manager (and Uni Connect team dependent on OfS funding) Staff costs Student ambassadors Resources School travel	Improved pupil personal growth through encouraging higher ambition. Develop pupil mobility through improved career knowledge. Improved perceptions of Higher Education.	Knowledge and skills Perceptions of HE	This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leaders, in collaboration with ISII. ISII suggests continuing the research design that has been used in previous years, with the use of on-the-day collection methods (i.e. the post-it note wall), exhibitor survey, and follow up emails. Dissemination: APP Steering Group. Widening Access Report. Practitioner toolkits.
5. First Generation to University workshops – existing activity. Information and guidance specifically targeted towards students who are first generation to university.	Led by: Senior Marketing Officer, UK Recruitment in partnership with the Widening Access Team Staff costs Student ambassadors Resources School travel	Improved pupil personal growth through encouraging higher ambition. Improve perceptions of Higher Education for first generation pupil. Increased applications to universities for participants.	Perceptions of HE	This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leaders. The evaluation will collect pre and post survey data, ambassador interviews, student interviews, and focus groups with pupils who did not go to university. Data will be collected through HEAT, including student demographics and HEI applications. Further to this, results from the accept and decline survey will be beneficial. Dissemination: APP Steering Group Conference proceedings Academic papers.
6. Annual review of University Taster Day	Led by: Senior Marketing Officer, UK Recruitment	Increased applications to universities for pupils with a disability and/or from a care experienced background to	Perceptions of HE	This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII. ISII suggests collecting post surveys for events as well as collecting feedback on the day (i.e. post-it

<p>student experience – existing activity.</p> <p>Inclusive and accessible pre-event communications and booking processes.</p>	<p>Staff costs Resources</p>	<p>university anywhere as reported on HEAT. Pupil personal growth through increased confidence in applications to Higher Education.</p>		<p>note wall; Plickers). Student voice will be embedded in this review Dissemination: The APP Steering Group. Annual Widening Access report.</p>
<p>7. School teaching staff continued professional development (CPD) - existing activity.</p> <p>7(i) Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) School Lead Network.</p> <p>Teacher network to support the attainment and skill development of EPQ pupils.</p>	<p>Led by: Learning Development Specialist</p> <p>Staff costs Resources</p>	<p>Improved pupil academic growth through a wider sense of belonging. Improved pupil mobility through improved attainment. Improved knowledge sharing. Lead teachers' development of key knowledge and expertise surrounding EPQ.</p>	<p>Knowledge and skills</p>	<p>This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leader, combined with the County Head of 6th Form Network. The evaluation will focus on teachers who take part in the EPQ days and how their practice evolves. This will be collected through surveys, interviews, and data on teacher engagement. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group Conference proceedings</p>
<p>7(ii) County Head of 6th Form Network - existing activity.</p> <p>Teacher professional development network in collaboration with Local Authority and UCAS.</p>	<p>Led by: Head of Access and Participation</p> <p>Staff costs Resources Keynote speakers</p>	<p>Pupil personal growth through awareness and confidence in Higher Education opportunities. Improved perceptions of Higher Education. Pupil mobility through increased careers and employability knowledge.</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE</p>	
<p>8. Care Leavers programme</p> <p>8(i). Care Leavers Higher Education Experience Day - existing activity.</p> <p>Tailored advice and on</p>	<p>Led by: Widening Access Manager</p> <p>Led by: Senior Marketing Officer, UK Recruitment</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassadors</p>	<p>Pupil personal growth through higher ambition. Improved pupil mobility through improved careers and progression routes information. Increased applications to universities for pupils from a</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE</p>	<p>This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leader. The evaluation will collect surveys, data, and conducted interviews with care leavers to build a longitudinal evaluation over the next APP with annual reports building on each other. Dissemination:</p>

campus support for care leavers.	Resources Travel	care leaver background to university.		APP Steering Group Conference proceedings Journal papers Practitioner toolkits
8(ii). Bridging Futures programme for Care Leavers – new activity. Collaborating with the Northamptonshire Virtual School and Northampton College to support an improved understanding of Higher Education.	Led by: Widening Access Manager Staff costs Student ambassadors Resources Travel	Improved pupil personal growth developing confidence and higher ambition. Develop pupil academic growth through a wider sense of belonging and stronger social relationships. Increased applications to universities for pupils from a care leaver background to university anywhere as reported on HEAT.	Perceptions of HE	Sharing our updates with Leicestershire Cares <u>who we consulted</u> to discuss our provision for Care Experienced students.
8(iii). Care Leavers and Estranged students’ arrival and support package – new activity. Single point of contact at UON and support package to welcome care leavers to campus.	Led by: Residential Services Manager and Head of Student Services Staff costs Resources	Pupils feel welcome and informed about services available to them at UON. Development of a wider sense of belonging.	Perceptions of HE	
Total cost of activities and evaluation for this intervention strategy is: £216,000 . You can find our thorough justification and evidence base for this intervention strategy in Annex B.				

Intervention Strategy 3 – Perceptions of Higher Education

This intervention strategy addresses the following objectives: PTA1, PTA2, PTA3, PTA 4.

Indicators of Risk: Application rates by subject; progression rate to HEIs; progression rate to highly selective HEIs; accept rate.

Target: To ensure our male, GEM, IMD Q1/2 and Asian students feel able, confident and informed to apply to Higher Education institutions.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Primary Risk: **Perceptions of Higher Education**; Secondary Risks: **Information and Guidance, Knowledge and Skills and Personal Support.**

Who owns this Intervention Strategy? Widening Access Manager, sponsored by Vice Chancellor.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention	Methods of evaluation
<p>1. Care Leavers “Adversity to University” programme – new activity. Collaborating with University of Chichester and the UPP Foundation.</p>	<p>Led by: Head of Access and Participation</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassadors Resources Travel</p>	<p>Increase the number of care leavers applying and enrolling at UON. Work collaboratively with UoC sharing best practice and research outcomes. Pupils academic growth of care leavers so that they see themselves belonging in Higher Education.</p>	<p>Information and guidance</p>	<p>This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leader as part of the wider care leavers evaluation project identified in the Information and Guidance intervention strategy.</p>
<p>2.Tackling Futures - Key Stage 3 Focused Boys Project – new activity. Collaborating with University of Bedfordshire to develop self-efficacy and effective study practice.</p>	<p>Led by: Widening Access Manager (and Uni Connect team dependent on OfS funding)</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassadors Resources School travel</p>	<p>Pupil personal growth, increased confidence and ambition. Pupils academic growth and wider sense of belonging. Student mobility through improved career knowledge and improved attainment. Improved perceptions of Higher Education.</p>	<p>Knowledge and skills Information and guidance</p>	<p>This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leaders. The evaluation will take a mixed methods approach conducting surveys, focus groups and interviews with male students, as well as collecting data on predicted grades and applications to HEIs. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group Conference proceedings Academic publications</p>
<p>3. Primary Ignite Your Future Programme – existing activity. Development of insights into the progression to</p>	<p>Led by: Widening Access Manager</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassadors</p>	<p>Pupil personal growth through higher ambition. Pupil academic growth through a wider sense of belonging to their community.</p>	<p>Information and guidance</p>	<p>This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leader. This evaluation will collect surveys, interview data, and institutional data to understand the impact of the program. It will also be built into the APP ambassador</p>

Higher Education and potential careers for pupils.	Resources School travel	Improved perceptions of Higher Education.		intervention to understand the impact on students. Dissemination: APP Steering Group Conference proceedings Academic publications as part of the wider ambassador evaluation.
4. Black Leaders Programme – new activity. A workshop that explores of concepts of community, identity, and leadership to cultivate a sense of belonging.	Led by: Access and Participation Manager In collaboration with Student Experience Lead in Foundation Stage Staff costs Resources	Students personal and academic growth to positively impact their undergraduate experience and that of other Black students. A developed sense of belonging and purpose at University. Student mobility through improved leadership skills.	Personal support	This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leaders. The evaluation will take a mixed methods approach conducting surveys and focus groups or interviews with students, as well as collecting and analysing engagement data. Dissemination: APP Steering Group Conference proceedings Academic publications Podcast with Black Leaders to promote programme
5. Representative Student Ambassador Programme - new activity. The development and recruitment of a student ambassador team that represents the University's population.	Led by: Assistant Director Marketing and Recruitment Events in collaboration with Widening Access Team Staff costs Resources	Student academic growth - stronger social relationships, stronger sense of belonging. Student personal growth - improved employability skills, confidence and pride. Institutional outcomes - improved perceptions of UON. Student ambassadors to be representative of the APP target cohorts - See Annex B.	Personal support	This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leaders. This intervention will be tied into the wider ambassador evaluation. Dissemination: APP Steering Group Conference proceedings Academic publications as part of the wider ambassador evaluation.
Total cost of activities and evaluation for this intervention strategy is: £69,000 . You can find our thorough justification and evidence base for this intervention strategy in Annex B.				

Intervention Strategy 4 - Academic Support

This intervention strategy addresses the following objectives: PTA4, PTS1, PTS2, PTS3, PTS4, PTP1.

Indicators of risk: Uptake of academic support for male students; on-course outcomes of GEM students compared to White students; NSS responses of GEM students NSS responses of IMD Q1/2 students; NSS responses of students with a disability; continuation rates of GEM, Asian, IMD Q1/2 and male students; reporting of mitigating circumstances; uptake of welfare support, disclosure of disability (inc. mental health).

Target: To ensure our male, GEM, IMD Q1/2 and Asian students have the opportunity to receive sufficient personalised academic support to achieve a positive outcome.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Primary Risk: **Academic Support**; Secondary Risks: **All other risks**.

Who owns this Intervention Strategy? Dean of Faculty of Business and Law and sponsored by Vice Chancellor.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention	Methods of evaluation
<p>1. Enhancement of the Integrated Foundation Year (IFY) - existing activity.</p> <p>An ongoing activity that will be collaborative across the University with a variety of stakeholders including students.</p>	<p>Led by: UON Deanery</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassadors</p>	<p>Development of an improved sense of belonging.</p> <p>Development of resilience skills and confidence.</p> <p>Long term impact on continuation from IFY into level 4.</p>		<p>This intervention is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leaders.</p> <p>It will take a mixed methods approach utilising student surveys, focus groups with the target cohorts, and combined with institutional data.</p> <p>Dissemination: The APP Steering Group. Conference proceedings Practitioner toolkits.</p>
<p>2. Enhancing Integrated Learner Support Model – existing activity.</p> <p>Proactive support across all stages of undergraduate study to develop effective study skills and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Led by: Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassadors Resources</p>	<p>Development of student confidence and resilience.</p> <p>Improved student continuation outcomes.</p> <p>Reduced student withdrawal due to academic failure.</p>		<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leaders, in collaboration with ISII.</p> <p>ISII suggests collecting data on student engagement with ILS services, along with HESA data on continuation whilst tracking them for future reporting on degree completion and degree outcomes.</p> <p>Dissemination: The APP Steering Group.</p>

<p>3. Enhancing and embedding our quality assurance and engagement processes – new activity. Supplementing our existing QA with APP and NSS data to ensure a joined-up approach to quality enhancement that supports institutional, TEF and APP objectives.</p>	<p>Led by: Vice Chancellor Staff costs Student ambassadors</p>	<p>Reduced award gap between White and GEM students. Reduced academic failure. Reduce levels of academic misconduct Institutional knowledge sharing.</p>	<p>Data and systems integration</p>	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader in collaboration with ISII. ISII suggests including data from our student record system and MyEngagement looking at assignment submission rates, assignment achievement, and reporting on how student demographics, such as IMD Quintile mediate results. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group.</p>
<p>4. Development of GRIT through Targeted Workshops - new activity. Annual enrolment questionnaire to identify levels of confidence, resilience and self-efficacy with a subsequent student workshop.</p>	<p>Led by: Head of Learning Development Staff costs Resources</p>	<p>Development of student confidence and resilience. Improved student continuation outcomes.</p>	<p>Knowledge and skills Information and guidance Perceptions of HE Personal support Data and systems integration</p>	<p>This intervention will be reported on by the activity leader. ISII suggests recording data on students engaging with support services or intervention workshops, combined with BIMl data. Survey data can also be provided by ISII to support its evaluation. Dissemination: APP Steering Group. Conference proceedings. Journal publications.</p>
<p>5. Timetabling Optimisation – new activity. Block timetabling to be more responsive to our student demographics enabling them to better engage in their learning.</p>	<p>Led by: Director of Estates and Campus Services Staff costs</p>	<p>Improved perceptions of HE. Improved student engagement measured through MyEngagement. Improved continuation and award. Improved uptake of personal and academic support.</p>	<p>Personal support Perceptions of HE Data and systems integration</p>	<p>This intervention will be reported on by the activity leader. ISII suggests collecting data from MyEngagement to note any changes in engagement with other academic services, and changes in applications from mature students and those from further distance to see the impact of this intervention. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group.</p>

<p>6. Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) Steering Group – new activity. Develop the management, impact and evolution of the existing PAT model.</p>	<p>Led By: Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement Staff costs Student ambassadors Resources</p>	<p>Improvements in students' sense of belonging. Improved institutional knowledge sharing of support methods for diverse students. Improve continuation with progression.</p>	<p>Personal support Mental health Data and systems integration</p>	<p>This intervention will be a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leader. It will adopt a mixed methods research design using surveys and interviews with PATs to understand the impact of the intervention on themselves and their students. Additional measures may include monitoring MyEngagement scores and continuation. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group. Practitioner guidance or toolkits. Conference proceedings e.g. BERA, TASO and UON's APP Conference.</p>
<p>7. Implementation of Universal Design for Learning Model – new activity. Optimise teaching and learning for students based on scientific insights into how humans learn.</p>	<p>Led By: Director of Learning, Library and Student Services Staff costs Student ambassadors</p>	<p>Improved institutional knowledge sharing of support methods for diverse students. Improved continuation and award for APP target cohorts. Reduced academic failure.</p>	<p>Personal support Mental health Perceptions of HE</p>	<p>This intervention can be reported on by the activity leader. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group.</p>
<p>8. Targeted Student Mentoring – new activity. Professional and Peer-to-Peer mentoring opportunities for APP target cohorts.</p>	<p>Led By: Director of Student Futures Staff costs (1.0 FTE) Resources</p>	<p>Increased student sense of belonging. Improved continuation and award outcomes for APP target cohorts. Students working to support their peers successfully.</p>	<p>Personal support Perceptions of HE</p>	<p>This intervention will be a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leader. This will adopt a mixed methods evaluation utilising surveys, interviews with mentors, and institutional datasets to understand what aspects of mentorship are effective for different student groups. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group. Conference proceedings. Journal publications.</p>

<p>9. Whole Provider Approach: Continued Professional Development Days – new activity. Up to 5 days across the academic year to engage all colleagues with training and information on the Access and Participation Plan.</p>	<p>Led by: Vice Chancellor</p> <p>Staff costs Resources (£50,000)</p>	<p>Capacity building to ensure institutional knowledge sharing is in place to improve all APP outcomes.</p>	<p>Personal support</p> <p>Mental health</p> <p>Data and systems integration</p>	<p>This intervention form part of a combined evaluation led by ISII in partnership with the activity leader. The evaluation will take a mixed methods approach grouping intervention strategies which focus on staff to evaluation how the APP is improving knowledge, skills, confidence, and interactions with APP target cohorts.</p> <p>Dissemination: The APP Steering Group Conference proceedings Practitioner toolkits.</p>
<p>10. APP Advocates and Ambassadors Programmes - existing activity. Our Advocates programme supports staff to understand and apply the APP in their role. Our Ambassador programme funds staff-time to research or deliver a micro-intervention that enhances our learning of what works in APP at UON.</p>	<p>Led by: Head of Access and Participation</p> <p>Staff costs Resources (£80,000)</p>	<p>Institutional knowledge sharing by developing an understanding of what works with research and evaluation.</p>	<p>All intervention strategies within this APP submission</p>	<p>This intervention will form part of a combined evaluation led by ISII in partnership with project stakeholders and consortium partners. The APP Advocates Programme has been previously evaluated using semi-structured interviews with the participants.</p> <p>Dissemination: APP Steering Group. University’s website. Linkedin posts from Advocates and Ambassadors.</p>
<p>11. Robust Communications Plan – new activity. Development of a clear communications plan, that engages all stakeholders impacted by this APP.</p>	<p>Led by: Deputy Director PR and Corporate Communication</p> <p>Staff costs</p>	<p>Increased engagement with personal and academic support through heightened student and staff awareness of interventions and opportunities.</p>	<p>All intervention strategies within this APP submission</p>	<p>This will be evaluated in conjunction with other interventions.</p> <p>Dissemination: End of Year APP report. APP Financial Support report. Conferences proceedings such as BERA and TASO.</p>
<p>Total cost of activities and evaluation for this intervention strategy is: £336,000. You can find our thorough justification and evidence base for this intervention strategy in Annex B.</p>				

Intervention Strategy 5 – Personal Support

This intervention strategy addresses the following objectives: PTA4, PTS1, PTS2, PTS3, PTS4, PTP1.

Indicators of risk: Uptake of academic support for male students; on-course outcomes of GEM students compared to White students; NSS responses of GEM students; NSS responses of IMD Q1/2 students; NSS responses of students with a disability; continuation rates of GEM, Asian, IMD Q1/2 and male students; reporting of mitigating circumstances; uptake of welfare support.

Target: To ensure our male, GEM, IMD Q1/2 and Asian students have the opportunity to receive sufficient personal support to achieve a positive outcome.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Primary Risk: **Personal Support**; Secondary Risks: **Perceptions of Higher Education, Academic Support, Mental Health and Data and Systems Integration**

Who owns this Intervention Strategy? Director of Student Futures and sponsored by Director of Library, Learning and Student Services.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention	Methods of evaluation
<p>1. Embed Student Voice into University Strategy and Decision-Making Practices – existing activity . A UON student voice strategy to improve student outcomes. As reflected in the UON Strategy 2023-27.</p>	<p>Led by: CEO of the Northampton Students’ Union</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassadors (£8000) Resources</p>	<p>See an improvement in: community cohesion, resilience and confidence, academic engagement and Institutional knowledge sharing. See a reduction in student withdrawal due to academic failure.</p>	Academic support	<p>This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leader. The evaluation will utilise the NSS survey results and complete interviews with students to capture whether communications have been effective and whether it has led to an uptake of support. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group.</p>
<p>2. Trust Guidelines – new activity. Implementing Trust as a core tenet of our staff and student interactions, in response to student feedback and in line with our UON Strategy 2023-27.</p>	<p>Led by: Access and Participation Manager</p> <p>Staff costs Student ambassadors Resources</p>	<p>Improved institutional knowledge sharing. Improved community cohesion. Improved engagement with personal and academic support.</p>		<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII. ISII suggests an evaluation of successful applications and financial support offered to ensure that support is appropriately distributed. Additionally, focus groups with paid students is suggested. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group.</p>

<p>3. Profile Development of Personal Support Services – existing activity. Profile development activities to highlight the positive impact UON personal support services provide.</p>	<p>Led by: Head of Student Services Staff costs Student ambassadors Resources</p>	<p>Improved engagement with personal support. Improved continuation with progression. Improved in resilience and confidence. Institutional knowledge sharing.</p>		<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII. ISII suggests an evaluation of successful applications and financial support offered to ensure that support is appropriately distributed. Additionally, focus groups with students is suggested. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group.</p>
<p>4. Student Career Coaches – new activity. Frontline student career and employability coaches targeting APP target cohorts to remove barriers to engagement.</p>	<p>Led by: Director of Student Future Staff costs (0.8 FTE) Student Career Coaches (£55,000)</p>	<p>Improved confidence in careers choice and graduate outcomes for Asian students. Students involved in supporting their peers through a tailored peer-led career development framework. Greater sense of belonging, connectedness and relevance.</p>	<p>Data and systems integration</p>	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII. ISII suggests collecting data on the number of sessions led by employers and the Careers Team, combined with data in BIMi to see how student characteristics mediate the impact. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group. Conference proceedings. Academic journals.</p>
<p>5. Care Leavers Employability Support - new activity. Supporting care leavers to obtain a job to support their life at UON, complemented by employability skill development through 1-2-1 appointments.</p>	<p>Led by: Director of Student Futures Staff costs Resources</p>	<p>Reduce the withdrawal rate for care leavers. Improved confidence in careers choice. Students experience personal growth due to bespoke support.</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE Mental health</p>	<p>This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leader. Dissemination: This evaluation will form part of the wider care leavers evaluation.</p>

<p>6. Diversifying Work Experience Opportunities - new activity. Diversify our provision of work experience opportunities outside of standard course requirements to provide paid opportunities funded by employers or our Opportunities Fund.</p>	<p>Led by: Director of Student Futures Staff costs</p>	<p>Increase in graduate outcome for Asian students. Improved confidence in career choice. Students experience personal growth due to accessing opportunities that were previously unavailable due to financial constraints.</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE</p>	<p>This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leader. The evaluation will be co-designed with project leaders but will look at job and placement opportunities for students, and the impact of diversifying work experience opportunities, through interviews, surveys, and employer engagement. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group. Practitioner toolkits.</p>
<p>7. Career Registration Survey - new activity. Understanding the career intentions and progression for all students.</p>	<p>Led by: Director of Student Futures Staff costs</p>	<p>Improved graduate outcomes through targeted relevant interventions. Improved engagement with personal support. Students experience personal growth.</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE Data and systems integration</p>	<p>This intervention will be an ongoing evaluation led by the activity leader, in collaboration with ISII. ISII suggests collecting data on the student engagement with employers. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group. Blog featuring Student Futures' reflections of using the survey after one year.</p>
<p>8. Student Ambassador Programme Evaluation – new activity. A collaboration with University of Bedfordshire to evaluate our Student Ambassador programme.</p>	<p>Led by: ISII in collaboration with the Widening Access Team Staff costs</p>	<p>Improved continuation with progression. Students experience personal growth due to reduced academic failure.</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE Academic support Mental health</p>	<p>This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leaders. The evaluation will adopt a mixed-method approach, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, primarily through the OfS financial support evaluation kit. Dissemination: The APP Steering Group. University collaborative conference/journal</p>

<p>9. Financial Support Package – new activity. Targeted funds to support all our APP target cohorts at each stage of their student lifecycle.</p>	<p>Led by: APP Team 10.9% of Higher Fee Income</p>	<p>Improved continuation with progression. Improved student wellbeing. Improved engagement with personal and academic support.</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE Academic support Mental health</p>	<p>This is a spotlight activity evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leaders. The evaluation will adopt a mixed-method approach, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, primarily through the OfS financial support evaluation kit. Dissemination: APP Steering Group FSP Evaluation Report</p>
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Total cost of activities and evaluation for this intervention strategy is: £216,000.
You can find our thorough justification and evidence base for this intervention strategy in Annex B.

Intervention Strategy 6 - Mental Health

This intervention strategy addresses the following objectives: PTA4, PTS1, PTS2, PTS3, PTS4, PTP1.

Indicators for risk: Uptake of academic support for male students; on-course outcomes of GEM students compared to White students; NSS responses of GEM students; NSS responses of IMD Q1/2 students; NSS responses of students with a disability; continuation rates of GEM, Asian, IMD Q1/2 and male students; reporting of mitigating circumstances; uptake of welfare support for male students, disclosure of disability.

Target: To ensure all students have the opportunity to experience an environment that is conducive to good mental health and wellbeing.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Primary Risk: **Mental Health**; Secondary Risks: **Information and Guidance, Perceptions of Higher Education, Personal Support, Academic Support.**

Who owns this Intervention Strategy? Head of Student Services, sponsored by Director of Library, Learning and Student Services.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention	Methods of evaluation
<p>1. Achievement of the Mental Health Charter Status – new activity. Embedding a whole provider approach to mental health and wellbeing, working with Student Minds.</p>	<p>Led by: Director of Library, Learning and Student Services</p> <p>Staff costs (1.0 FTE) Student ambassadors Resources</p>	<p>Institutional knowledge sharing through whole provider approach CPD days. Improved wellbeing through an environment that is conducive to good mental health. Improved graduate outcomes.</p>	<p>Academic support Personal support</p>	<p>This evaluation will be co-designed with APP stakeholders, activity leaders, and ISII as part of an all-encompassing evaluation of the Mental Health interventions. Dissemination: Due to considerations of privacy dissemination will be limited to the APP Steering Group and publication of</p>
<p>2. Mental Health and ASSIST level 3 to 4 Transition Support – new activity. Development of a transition support offer to students transitioning to university.</p>	<p>Led by: Additional Needs Manager</p> <p>Staff costs (1.0 FTE) Resources</p>	<p>Improved engagement with personal and academic support due to timely intervention. Student personal growth through higher confidence and increased ambition. Reduce student withdrawal due to mental health.</p>	<p>Perceptions of HE Information and guidance</p>	
<p>3. Operationalise the Suicide Safer Framework – new activity. In line with UUK Guidance for Prevention, Intervention and Postvention.</p>	<p>Led by: Head of Student Services</p> <p>Staff costs</p>	<p>Institutional knowledge sharing through whole provider approach CPD days. Improved wellbeing through an environment that is conducive to good mental health.</p>	<p>Personal support</p>	

<p>4. Developing Learnings from 'Manspace' - existing activity. Using evaluation of 'Manspace' to inform the development of our counselling and mental health support and improve access to services.</p>	<p>Led by: Head of Counselling and Mental Health Staff costs Resources</p>	<p>Improved wellbeing through the creation of mental health spaces tailored to different demographics. Reduced stigma around mental health leading to improved engagement with personal and academic support due to timely intervention. Reduce student withdrawal due to mental health.</p>	<p>Personal support</p>	<p>the Mental Health Charter Status.</p>
<p>5. Proactive 'Check In' - new activity Follow up with students applying for mitigating circumstances to ensure that their wellbeing is in a good place.</p>	<p>Led by: Student Support and Advice Manager Staff costs (5.0 FTE)</p>	<p>Improved engagement with personal support through awareness building of mental health resources and services. Reduced academic failure through regular check ins. Strengthened trust and communication between students and staff, fostering a more supportive academic environment. Improved continuation rates, award, and graduate outcomes.</p>	<p>Personal support</p>	
<p>Total cost of activities and evaluation for this intervention strategy is: £312,000. You can find our thorough justification and evidence base for this intervention strategy in Annex B.</p>				

Intervention Strategy 7 - Data and Systems Integration:

This intervention strategy impacts the ability of UON to be able to effectively track, deliver and report on all our objectives.

Indicators of risk: Use of HEAT; siloed working; disconnected spreadsheets; lack of proactive interventions; excessive time on manual processes; duplication of staff resources; low data analysis within teams.

Target: To ensure UON has a robust data and systems infrastructure that enables and supports a whole provider approach to positive student outcomes.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Primary Risk: **Data and Systems Integration**; Secondary Risks: **Knowledge and Skills, Information and Guidance, Perceptions of Higher Education, Academic Support, Personal Support and Mental Health.**

Who owns this Intervention Strategy? Academic Registrar, sponsored by Chief Operating Officer.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention	Methods of evaluation
<p>1. APP Integration into our IT Strategy Board - existing activity. Ensuring the needs of APP target cohorts is a priority at all key decision-making points within our IT governance board.</p>	<p>Led by: Director of IT Staff costs</p>	<p>Improved institutional knowledge sharing due to an established centre for all data needs. Renewed thinking on how best to deliver a joined-up approach leading to improved engagement with personal and academic support. Reduced administrative burden on students having to re-tell their story leading to improved wellbeing.</p>	All intervention strategies within this APP submission.	This intervention will be a spotlight activity as part of an all-encompassing evaluation of the data and systems integration intervention strategy. This will be evaluated by ISII in partnership with the activity leaders. The evaluation will be co-designed to ensure that the needs of the APP are met whilst ensuring that data governance is appropriate.
<p>2. Data Governance Working Group – existing activity. Supporting staff with the effective collection, analysis and use of relevant data to ensure a positive impact on student experience and outcomes.</p>	<p>Led by: Head of Planning Staff costs</p>	<p>Improved institutional knowledge sharing due to support with data. Improved engagement with personal and academic support due to timely intervention. Improved continuation rates, award, and graduate outcomes.</p>		
<p>3. SITS Implementation and Roll Out – new activity. New student records system will function as the single point of truth about UON students.</p>	<p>Led by: Academic Registrar Staff costs</p>	<p>Renewed thinking on how best to deliver a joined-up approach leading to improved engagement with personal and academic support. Improved engagement with personal and academic support due to timely intervention. Institutional knowledge and information sharing to support students with additional and accessibility needs.</p>	<p>Personal support Academic support Mental health</p>	<p>Dissemination:</p>

			Perceptions of HE	The APP Steering Group Conference proceedings Blogs sharing learning.
<p>4. Value Added Platform - new activity. In partnership with University of Hertfordshire our value added platform will benchmark our programme outcomes against sector averages, improving our quality assurance and enhancement.</p>	<p>Led by: Head of Planning</p> <p>Staff costs Resources</p>	<p>Reduce the award gap between White and GEM students. Reduce the award gap between IMDQ1/2 and IMD Q3/4/5. Institutional knowledge sharing through the sharing of best practice.</p>	<p>Academic support</p> <p>Personal support</p>	
<p>Total cost of activities and evaluation for this intervention strategy is: £93,000. You can find our thorough justification and evidence base for this intervention strategy in Annex B.</p>				

6. Student consultation

Engaging with students and their representatives has been a consistent feature in the development of this APP. From its inception, the Northampton Students' Union (NSU) President, Vice President Education and Vice President Welfare have been core members of our APP Operations Group. This group reports to our APP Steering Group which also includes the NSU Chief Executive and President. Their engagement has been vital in providing key insights into the student experience and their monthly Student Life Pulse Survey data has helped identify our risks, create our objectives and the develop subsequent intervention strategies.

In addition to this student representation within the governance structure, in academic year 23/24 we recruited a Student Equality Consultants Panel which consisted of 10 paid students from underrepresented backgrounds in Higher Education. This group continues to be supported by our Access and Participation Manager and is sponsored by NSU. Current Student Equality Consultants were given in-depth training on the Access and Participation Plan's components including; the Theory of Change, student lifecycle data and the experiences of those who are underrepresented in Higher Education which also supported their student submission.

Interactions with the panel have mostly been in a group setting but Student Equality Consultants were also offered the opportunity to provide feedback on a 1:1 basis to ensure that all needs were catered for. The main methods of communication with the consultants was via a WhatsApp group, a platform they were familiar with that supported interactive messaging, voice notes and polls. Additionally, meetings were held both online and in person on different days and at different times to accommodate their academic and personal commitments.

As the APP has been developed, the consultants' learning has progressed in tandem. They were introduced to the EORR, asked for their insights with their feedback delivered to the APP Steering Group. During this process, it has been critical for us to consistently close the loop on feedback provided by students. Consequently, over time, an effective and mature consultative relationship has evolved, developing student's trust in our intentions for collecting their voices.

The Student Equality Consultants Panel has been well received by the wider University community having led a Student Feedback Panel alongside our Black Student Advocates on "*Why Student Voice is Critical for the APP*". This not only demonstrated the students' grasp of the APP but also illustrated how their involvement was both integral and went beyond the development of this new Plan. A consistent feature of the discussions between staff and students was the concept of trust. Subsequently, the Student Equality Consultants developed Trust Guidelines which feature as part of our intervention strategy for personal support within this APP submission.

The Student Equality Consultants panel will continue beyond the development of this Access and Participation Plan and we will harness their expertise to coach and recruit future Student Equality Consultants. This way students will have a key role to play in the evaluation of the Plan and can provide feedback on initiatives that go beyond the APP. Additionally, the students have indicated that they would like to engage in targeted recruitment to ensure we have a panel that is representative of the whole student body. We will support them with this so that we co-create a student feedback experience that meaningfully meets their needs.

7. Evaluation of the plan

The University's Institute of Social Innovation and Impact (ISII) are leading the independent evaluation of the Plan. The team are experienced and published social impact researchers and have been fully involved in the development of the Plan to ensure a robust and continuous cycle of evaluation.

The work to evaluate the impact of our APP will take a whole provider approach across all stages of the student lifecycle. This evaluation process is built upon an overarching Theory of Change (Annex A) with input from institutional stakeholders and intervention activity leads. Our goal is not only to demonstrate the impact of our work, but also to consistently highlight areas in need of improvement, opportunities for growth, and to uncover any hidden needs amongst our students²², using both internal reflective practices and the OfS self-assessment tool.

UON's Theory of Change has been integrated into the data output collection, evaluation and report writing phases of the APP. Our model was first developed in 2019, as part of a University of Northampton PhD thesis and since has undergone revision and adaptation to accommodate our new objectives and intervention strategies. The evaluation team has also delivered a Theory of Change workshop with the Widening Access Team to create a tailored Widening Access Theory of Change model, which draws from the larger framework. This approach encourages knowledge sharing and aids more responsive interventions and evaluation measures.

Reflecting on our OfS self-assessment, it is clear we consistently use the following types of evaluation, as outlined in TASO's approach to classifying evidence:

- **Type 1 (narrative)** - research based on existing APP literature alongside our existing evaluation results. This allows for interventions to be placed within the theoretical space of what is assumed to work, supported by local evaluation results.
- **Type 2 (empirical enquiry)** - The evaluation team design and deliver pre and post surveys for students who participate in spotlight activities²³ to understand the changes that occurred, which may not have happened otherwise. This is supported by qualitative data from different stakeholders to provide in-depth research, triangulated results, and rigorous conclusions. Thematic analysis is employed to analyse semi-structured interviews.

However, within the past year we have introduced a substantial move toward:

- **Type 3 (causality)** - longitudinal quantitative data collection as the first step toward a stringent and rigorous approach to causal evaluation. This process will continue to evolve and strengthen over this APP evaluation period, to highlight the specific impacts that activities have on students. We will also be developing greater opportunities for student engagement ensuring we are reflective and centring the student experience.

As an evaluation team we have developed bespoke tools such as our postcode calculator, which has been utilised to help schools and colleges identify students within IMD quintiles more easily. Once identified, we

²² For example, in 2022-23, it was highlighted that students who were neurodivergent were often not taken into consideration when generalised employability support was designed. Since our report, this has been resolved.

²³ A spotlight activity is an activity which is presumed to have a substantive impact on the students, with longer periods of engagement or more interactions with delivery partners.

use the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) to track and report on our Widening Access activities. Our aim is to ensure that the HEAT tool is consistently utilised to enable all colleagues to effectively capture and monitor the impact of outreach activities. As National Steering Group members, it is important for us to lead by example ensuring that all pupils we interact with are recorded within our evaluation processes.

To understand the student experience, we utilise statistics, survey and interview tools. Statistical data is gathered from HESA, the OfS, and internal data sources. We collect survey data through our own survey design and the OfS tool for the annual financial evaluation. Interviews are conducted with a selection of current APP students to understand their experiences of financial support. As part of APP research, we also conduct interviews with staff, to understand best practice at the University and present these as case studies in our end of year reports. This work shapes our Theory of Change approach and aids our understanding of effective strategies tailored to specific target cohorts, showing us clearly what has worked and what has not. To monitor and assess the impact of the intervention strategies in this Plan, we will continuously reflect on, enhance and develop our evaluation methods to ensure we meet our overall APP objectives.

The OfS self-assessment tool indicated that our dissemination could be stronger. Consequently, our aim is to share findings more clearly with the University community, supporting staff to participate through research and journal contributions with dissemination across different networks including our annual APP conference. Ultimately, we aim to develop an evaluation culture within the University which contributes to both internal knowledge building, and the national APP context, through academic outputs²⁴, conference proceedings, and practitioner support²⁵.

Another area of improvement from the self-assessment tool, is to ensure that the findings of the evaluation are fed into our decision-making processes and utilised in the development of future interventions. This will be achieved by integrating the evidence collected into all initiatives and, ensuring that this evidence is disseminated and accessible to all stakeholders and key decision-makers via our APP Steering Group and Learning and Teaching Enhancement Hub. This process will continue to evolve during the life of this APP to support a culture of evaluation, breaking siloed working.

To engage with our whole provider approach, two crucial steps moving forward are:

- To ensure that our evaluation findings are fed into our APP governance structure, with specific members of our University Leadership Team taking responsibility for each of our evaluation findings and recommendations.
- To ensure the continuous improvement of our evaluation, by engaging working groups to act as critical friends allowing for institutional scrutiny of our evaluation approaches.

²⁴ Maher, M., and Karlıdağ-Dennis, E., 2022. "If I wasn't a project manager, I'd look at it differently': the impact of formality and accountability on entrepreneurial action within educational outreach programmes", *Journal of Education and Work*. 35 (3) pp.1-13

²⁵ ISII has developed and delivered Theory of Change workshops to internal University of Northampton staff to aid the development of their interventions.

8. Provision of information to students

Our fee information is included on every course page on our website and our [Access and Participation](#) webpages, alongside a downloadable copy of our APP. Additionally, information related to the financial support we offer is available on the UON website, student intranet and is presented to applicants at open days and subject talks. Overall, our financial support and fees information is promoted to applicants prior to their application, at key points throughout the application, offer, enrolment processes and throughout a students' time studying at UON. For instance, information on fees is communicated by our Finance Team to new students and returning students at the start of each academic year.

Our Financial Guidance Team have a strong presence on social media and host events to highlight their services throughout the year e.g. National Student Money Week. The expert team provide support, advice and [interest-free loans](#) to support students during their time with us. In addition, Student Money Mentors provide peer advice, working in partnership with Citizens Advice to support students experiencing financial hardship.

Our Hardship Fund is positioned to support all home students, regardless of their qualifying status for our financial support package. To support all students with the cost of living, our institutional project has provided for example free cereal, sustainable sanitary products and a pop-up pantry. These initiatives are reviewed regularly with students to ensure that they are appropriate. If these initiatives change, students are communicated via a regular student newsletter and through our [webpages](#).

We offer a range of student bursaries, awards and scholarships with specific eligibility criteria clearly displayed on [our website](#). Through our financial support package, we offer a range of funds designed to support underrepresented cohorts identified within this APP. Our financial support package is a contractual entitlement we provide to UON APP qualifying students whether studying at Waterside Campus, or in our partner institutions for the period of their undergraduate study. Our partner institutions' support packages may differ but will reflect the needs of the students in that location.

A student qualifying for financial support is a:

- Full-time
- Home
- Undergraduate student paying £9,250 tuition fees

AND

identifies as one of our APP target cohorts experiencing barriers to equality of opportunity:

- A student from an area of high socio-economic deprivation (IMD Q1/2)
- GEM students
- Male students
- A student with a declared disability
- A care leaver (previously named Looked after Child)
- A student who is estranged from their family or classed as independent.

Financial Support Package Funds:

UON Fund: For students with a home postcode in IMD Q1/2.	ASSIST Fund: For students with a declared disability.	Care Leavers and Estranged Student Fund: For students identified as care leavers or estranged students by the Student Loans Company.	Opportunities Fund: For ALL UON APP target cohorts in level 5 and 6 of their study.
a. £500 of in-kind support ²⁶ for students studying at level 4 either: i. £500 accommodation discount; or ii. £500 on-campus catering voucher; or iii. A £500 laptop that is yours to keep. AND b. £500 for students in the second semester of their level 6 study.	a. £350 contribution toward the cost of a diagnostic assessment for a learning difficulty before applying for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). AND b. An award of £200 for students who are eligible to receive Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) as a contribution toward the cost of a computer and/or software to assist learning.	a. £500 automatic deposit into qualifying students' bank accounts once enrolled on each year of their undergraduate course. AND b. A further £500 is available to be applied for each year to support planned spending and emergencies across the academic year. Applications will be supported by the named Care Leaver key contact in Student Services Team.	a. An award of up to £500 to help students who would otherwise be unable, for financial reasons, to access extracurricular professional development opportunities offered by the University or external organisations, including but not limited to: travel, internship stipends, conference attendance costs, smart clothing.

The funds within this financial support package are subject to ongoing review and may be amended in consultation with the Office for Students and our student body.

²⁶ *for full terms and conditions, please see our [website](#).

Annex A: Further information and analysis relating to the identification and prioritisation of key risks to equality of opportunity

Note:

At UON, we take language seriously and have intentionally chosen words that may differ from those used by other institutions. For clarity, we would like to explain our choices:

When referring to people labelled as BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic), we use the term GEM (Global Ethnic Majority). This change is based on feedback from our GEM Staff Network and students who find GEM more empowering.

Similarly, we refer to degree outcome gaps as 'award gaps' rather than 'attainment gaps.' The term 'attainment' places responsibility on the students, while we believe it is our duty to close these gaps. Therefore, throughout this document, you will see the term 'award' used when referring to gaps or data.

Introduction

Data across the student lifecycle has been analysed in relation to several indicators including age, sex, ethnicity, disability, Index of Multiple Deprivation Quintiles (IMD), and eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM). All data is for home, full-time undergraduate students unless otherwise stated, as full-time students represent 95% of all home undergraduates at UON. The OfS Access and Participation Dashboard¹ has been interrogated, showing trend data for the last six years from 2016/17 to the most recent available year 2021/22 (for access). Data has been compared to the sector average for each year, and in relation to the four-year average (4YA) at UON and across the sector. Analysis of this OfS AAP Dashboard data is detailed below under the headings Access, Continuation, Completion, Attainment and Progression. In addition to this, internal and external student data such as National Student Survey (NSS), Student Life Pulse Survey, and Department for Education (DfE) data has supplemented the analysis to add context and to inform the Equality of Risk Register. This additional supportive information is detailed further below in the section.

Access

Access Objectives:

Ethnicity Socio-economic Sex Disability All students		
Lifecycle stage	EORR risk	APP objective
Access	Knowledge and skills	Objective 1 (PTA1) - Increase and maintain the % of Asian students (6.8% UON) such that by 2028/29 we have an annual figure that is within 5 percentage points (pp) of the sector 4-year average (4YA) (15%).
	Information and guidance	Objective 2 - Commitment to annually <u>monitor</u> the level of GEM access at UON to maintain it at >25% (42.5% 4YA).
	Perceptions of HE	Objective 3 (PTA2) - Increase the proportion of students from socio-economically deprived backgrounds (UON: 48% 4YA) to at

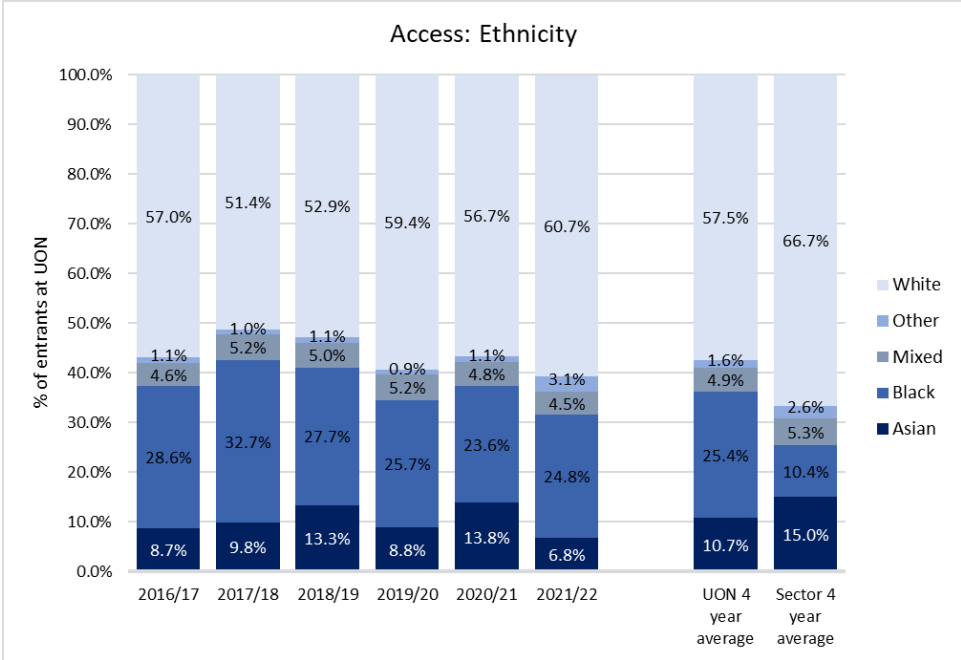
¹ [Access and participation data dashboard - Office for Students](#)

	Data and systems integration	<p>least 55% of the UON cohort, measured using IMD Q1/2 postcodes. To be achieved by 2028/29.</p> <p>Objective 4 (PTA3) - Reduce the gap (31.6pp) between male (34.2%) and female (65.8%) students at access so that it is within at least 8pp of the sector average (14pp) by 2028/29.</p>
All stages	Perceptions of HE Academic support Personal support Mental health Data and systems integration	<p>Objective 12 (PTA4) - Reduce the barriers to declaration of disabilities at all stages of the student lifecycle (UON current rate of declaration 13%, sector is 17%). To be achieved by 2026/27.</p>

Access Data Analysis

The University of Northampton (UON) has a mixed population of students, from rich and diverse backgrounds. Approximately 40% of students at UON are from Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) ethnic groups. UON recruits a higher proportion of GEM students than the sector average (33.3% 4-year average), although the proportion at UON has fallen from a high of 48.6% in 2017/18. Compared to the sector, UON has a higher proportion of Black students (25.4% 4YA compared to the sector of 10.4%), and a lower proportion of Asian students (10.7% 4YA compared to the sector of 15%).

Figure 1: Access: Ethnicity Breakdown, 2016/17 - 2021/22



Over the last six years, UON has seen an increasing proportion of students from IMD Q1/2, with a 4-year average of 48%; this is higher than the sector average of 42.8%. Intersectional data looking at ethnicity and IMD, shows that the proportion of White students from IMD Q1/2 has grown over the last 5 years, from 15.2% in 2017/18 to 22.8% in 2021/22. This is now similar to the sector wide figure of 21.4% (4YA). By contrast, at UON, the proportion of GEM students from IMD Q1/2 has declined from a high of 34.1% in 2017/18 to 25.9% in 2021/22 (although this is still higher than the sector 4YA of 21.3%).

Figure 2 Access: Index of Multiple Deprivation Breakdown, 2016/17 - 2021/22

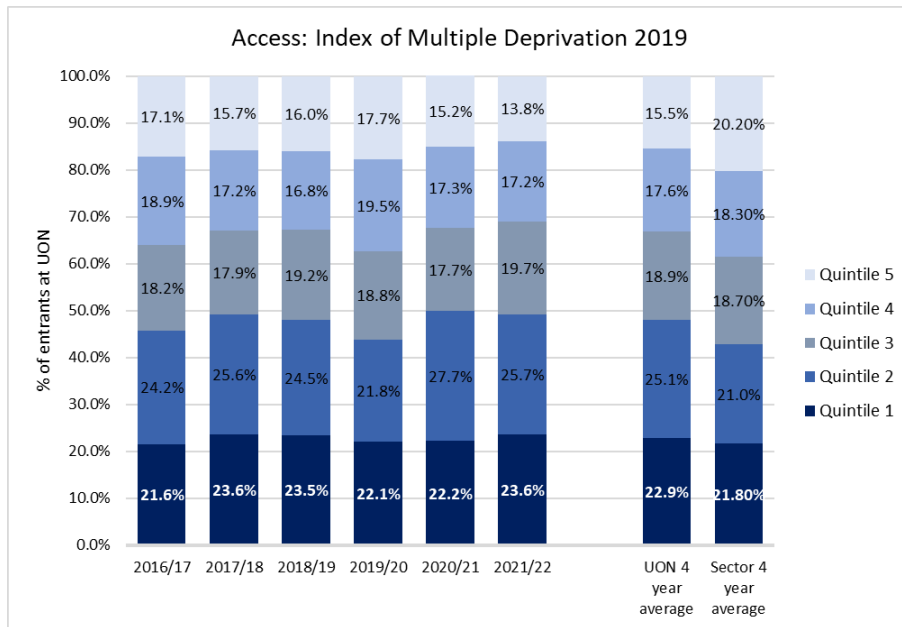
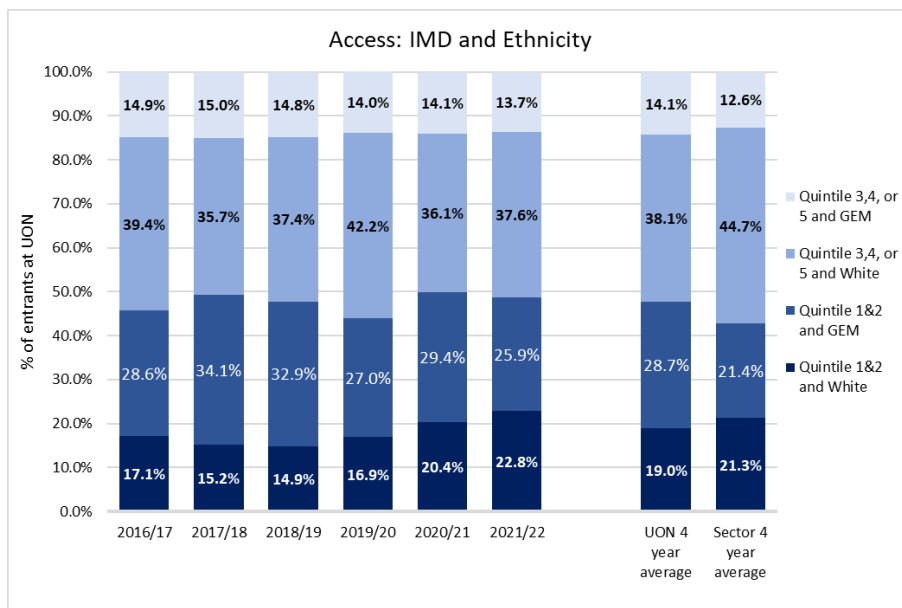
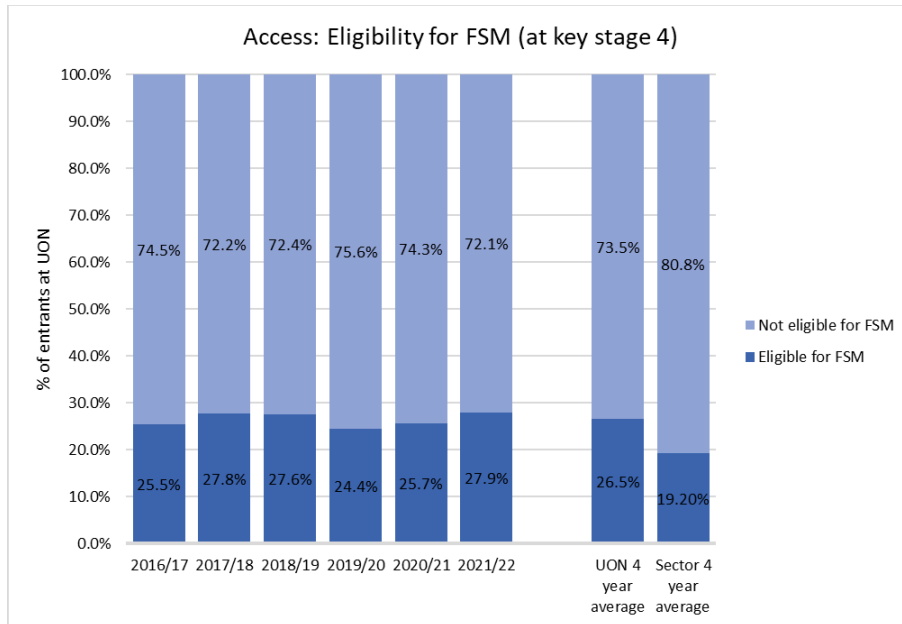


Figure 3 Access: Index of Multiple Deprivation and Ethnicity Breakdown, 2016/17 - 2021/22



Our diverse background is also reflected by the proportion of students eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), which at 27.9% is considerably above the sector average of 18.4%. At UON, of those UG students eligible for FSM 70% are from IMD Q1/2 areas, which is reflected in our decision to focus on students from IMD Q1/2 areas.

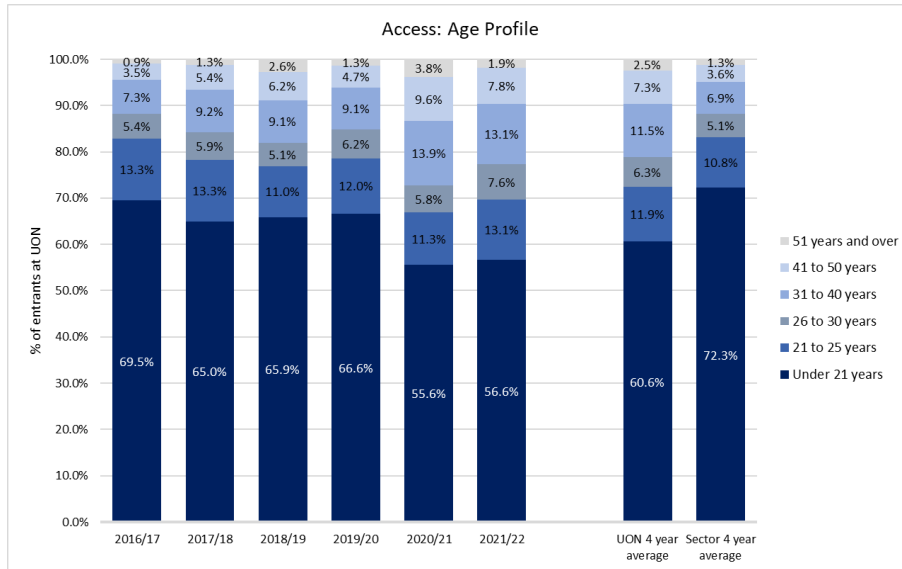
Figure 4 Access: Eligibility for Free School Meals (at key stage 4) breakdown, 2016/17 - 2021/22



Compared to the sector average, UON has a higher proportion of female students, with a 4-year average of 64.4% (sector average of 57%). This profile at UON has remained mostly unchanged over the last six years. The intersection of IMD and sex also shows a high proportion of female students, with 31.7% of students being females from IMD Q1/2, compared to a sector average of 25.3%. Males from Q3/4/5 are under-represented at only 16.6% at UON, compared to 24.4% in the sector.

The age profile of the University shows a growing proportion of mature undergraduate students over the last six years, rising by 12.9% points to 42.4% in 2021/22. By contrast, across the sector, mature students represent 27.7% of the undergraduate population (4YA). In comparison with the sector, the biggest difference in age groups at UON are those aged 31-40 years (+4.6pp) and those aged 41-50 years (+3.7pp).

Figure 5 Access: Age Profile breakdown, 2016/17 - 2021/22



Overall, in 2021/22, 13.5% of students at UON had a declared disability; the 4-year average is 13%. Of those, 4.8% had a cognitive or learning disability and a further 4% had a mental health condition. By contrast the sector average for students with disabilities is 16.7% over 4-years.

Table 1 Access: Students with a declared disability, disability breakdown, 2016/17 - 2021/22

Disability Type	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	UON 4-year average	Sector 4-year average
No disability reported	88.0%	87.9%	87.5%	85.4%	88.5%	86.5%	87.0%	83.3%
Disability reported	12.0%	12.1%	12.5%	14.6%	11.5%	13.5%	13.0%	16.7%
Disability Type:								
Cognitive or learning difficulties	5.1%	5.0%	3.9%	4.0%	3.4%	4.8%	4.0%	5.7%
Mental health condition	2.3%	2.7%	3.5%	5.1%	3.6%	4.0%	4.0%	4.8%
Multiple impairments	1.6%	2.1%	2.3%	2.1%	2.3%	1.7%	2.1%	2.8%
Sensory, medical or physical impairment	1.8%	1.5%	2.0%	2.2%	1.3%	1.9%	1.8%	2.3%
Social or communication impairment	1.2%	0.9%	0.9%	1.2%	0.9%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%

Continuation

Continuation Objectives:

Ethnicity Socio-economic Sex Disability All students

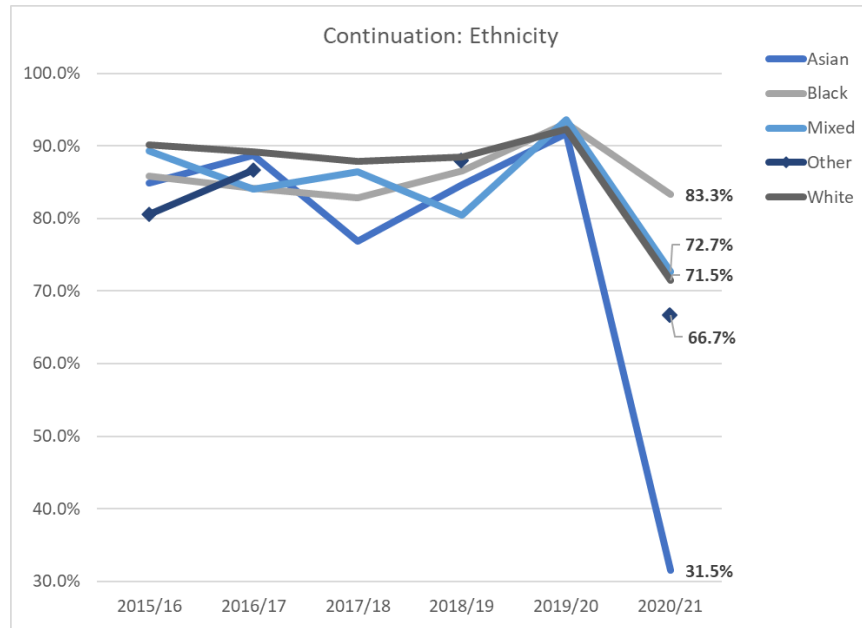
Lifecycle stage	EORR risk	APP objective
Continuation	Knowledge and skills	Objective 5 (PTS1) - Reduce the GEM (65.2%): White (71.5%) continuation gap (6.3pp) by increasing Asian continuation to levels (31.5%) to be in line with the rest of GEM cohorts by 2028/29.
	Information and guidance	
	Perceptions of HE	Objective 6 - Annually <u>monitor</u> the gap (17.2pp, 7.6pp 4YA) in continuation between students from the most socio-economically deprived backgrounds compared to those from the least socio-economically deprived backgrounds, intervening if it grows to become >3pp of the sector 4YA (5.3pp) measured using IMD Q1/2 compared to IMD Q3/4/5 .
	Academic support	
	Personal support	Objective 7 (PTS2) - Reduce the gap (20.3pp) in continuation between male (55.8%) and female (76.2%) students to be within 5pp of the sector 4YA (3pp) by 2028/29.
Mental health	Objective 8 (PTS3) - UON to achieve a target of 90% continuation (82.6% 4YA) by 2028/29.	
Data and systems integration		

Continuation Data Analysis

Continuation data looks at the proportion of students continuing their studies in Higher Education one year and 15 days after they started their course. The 4-year average overall continuation rate at UON is 82.6%, compared to 90% for the sector. In 2020/21 the continuation rate at UON decreased significantly from a high of 92.5% in 2019/20 to 68.8%. This is particularly reflected in the Asian, IMD Q1/2, male and mature profiles. Recent internal continuation data from 2022/23 shows an improvement in continuation rates across the University, and especially for mature students, who outperform young students.

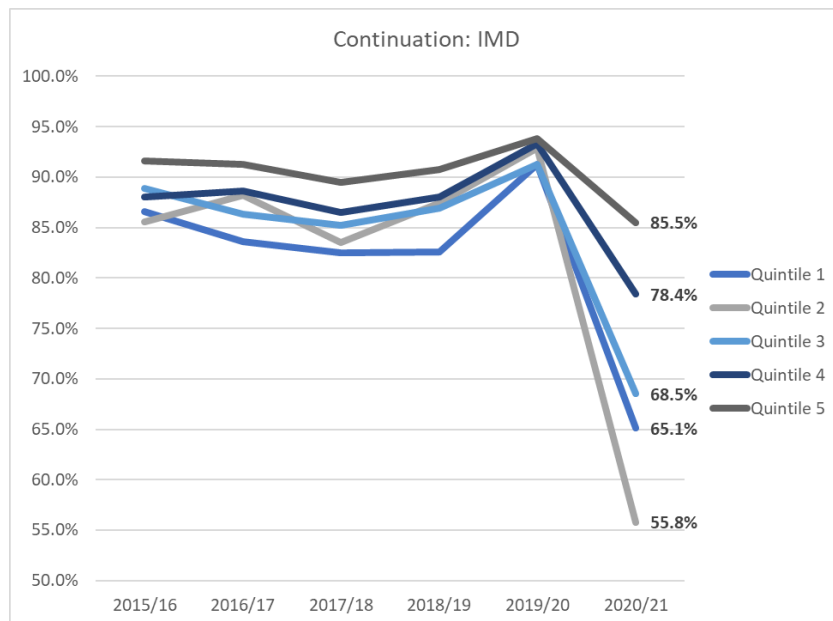
At UON, continuation rates across all ethnicity groups have decreased; the largest decrease is for Asian students where rates have fallen from 91.7% in 2019/20 to 31.5% in 2020/21. The gap between White and GEM students has increased to 6.2pp, with a 4YA of 3.7pp (sector wide 4YA of 2.6pp). However, the gap between White and Asian students has increased to 40pp, with a 4YA of 17.8pp (sector wide 4YA of 0.7pp). Further analysis of our data shows that this drop is almost entirely down to a partner institution, and restricting the data to UON only reveals the non-continuation rate for Asian students to be 81.5% for 2020 entrants.

Figure 6 Continuation: Ethnicity Breakdown, 2015/16 - 2020/21



From 2015/16 to 2019/20, at UON, continuation rates remained above 80% in all IMD Quintiles. In 2020/21 rates dropped across all quintiles, most notably in Q2 (to 55.8%) and Q1 (to 65.1%). UON Students in IMD Q5 had a continuation rate of 85.5%; below the sector average of 93.5%. At UON, the gap between IMD Q1/2 and IMD Q3/4/5 grew from 3.4pp in 2015/16 to 17.2pp in 2020/21.

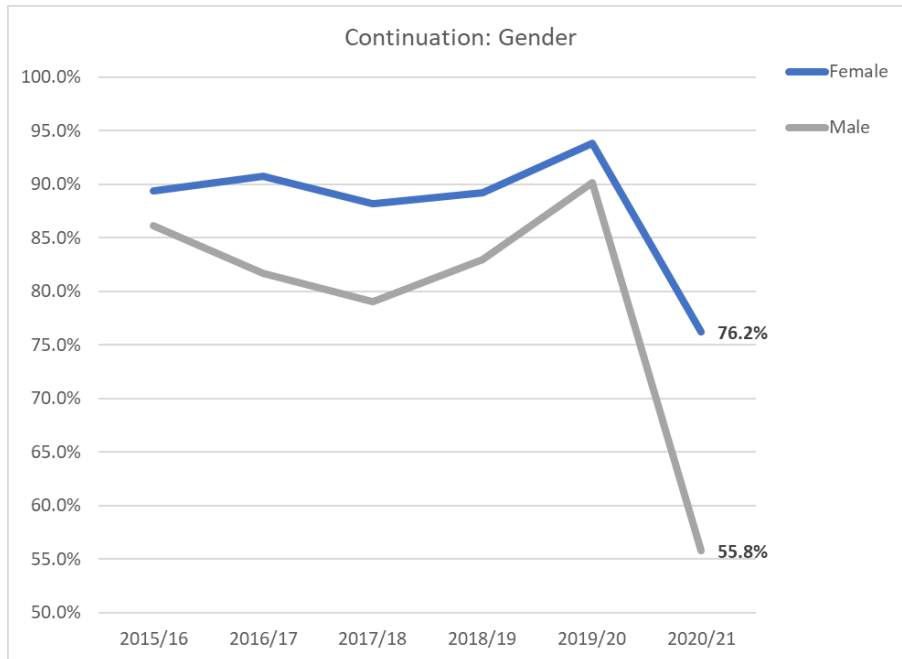
Figure 7 Continuation: IMD Breakdown, 2015/16 - 2020/21



Females continue to have higher continuation rates than males at UON; the gap widened in 2020/21 to 20.3pp with male continuation rates at 55.8% and female rates at 76.2%. These are below the sector average of 86.9% for males and 90.5% for females. The sector gap between males and females is 3pp

(4YA). Specifically, males from IMD Q1/2 have a low continuation rate at 45.3%. In 2020/21 the gap between males from IMD Q1/2 and IMD Q3/4/5 has increased to 22.6pp. By contrast the gap for females from the same groups is 12.2pp.

Figure 8 Continuation: Gender Breakdown, 2015/16 - 2020/21



Completion

Completion Objectives

Following data analysis on our completion metrics, our APP Steering Group has decided not to include an objective focused on completion within this APP. While our data sets do show some student cohorts below the 75% B3 threshold we are confident that the work we have planned through our intervention strategies targeted at level 4, and the impact these will have on the continuation stage of the students' lifecycle, will have a positive impact on **all** student cohorts completing their degree. Internal data shows that the highest withdrawal rates are from level 4 to Level 5 and so therefore increasing continuation from level 4 to 5 would bring us above the B3 threshold for completion. By embedding inclusive academic practice across the whole undergraduate degree programme, developing the interaction between our student recording systems, supporting students to make more confident and effective choices through enhanced personal support and further developing a sense of belonging we will impact positively on our continuation and completion gaps.

Completion Data Analysis

Completion refers to the proportion of students who received their qualification four years and 15 days from the course start. As a result, completion data is lagged and the most recent data available is for those that started in the 2017/18 academic year (and finished in or before 2020/21); trend data is available from 2012/13 onwards.

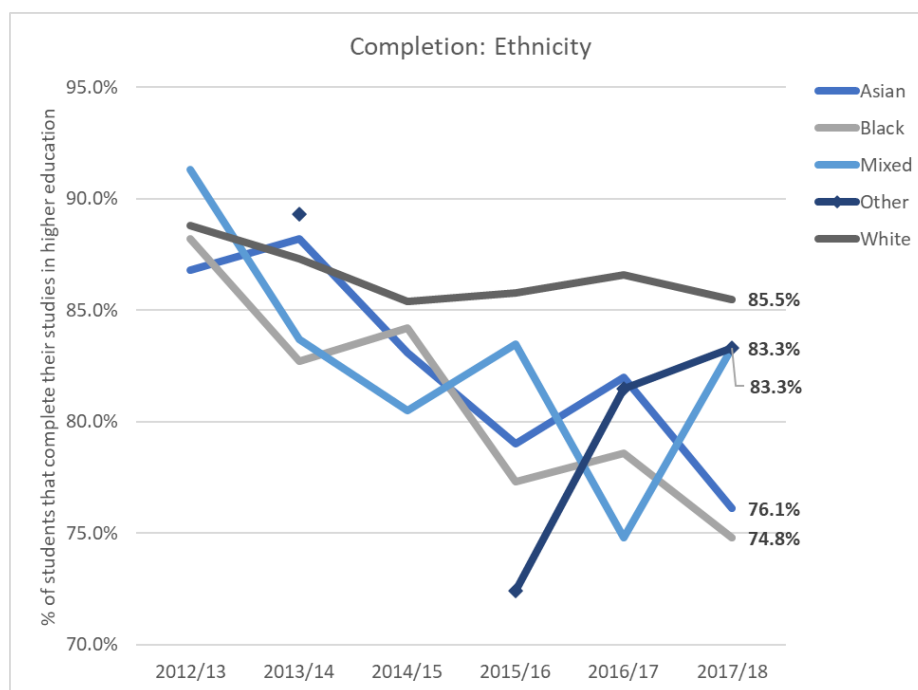
The latest completion rate at UON (2017/18) is 81.2%, which has declined from a high of 88.4% in 2012/13. By comparison the completion rates for the sector in 2017/18 were 87.2%, meaning the latest UON rates are 6% points below the sector average.

Completion rates across different ethnic groups at UON have decreased since 2012/13. For GEM students, completion rates have decreased by 11.7pp from 87.9% in 2012/13 to 76.2% in 2017/18. Across the sector, GEM completion rates have decreased at a much slower rate by 2.1pp to 84.5% in 2017/18.

The decrease at UON is most notable for Black students where there has been a 13.4pp decrease in completion rates to 74.8% in 2017/18. Asian students have seen a decrease of 10.7pp to 76.1%. The completion rate for White students has decreased from 88.8% to 85.5%, which is now 3% points below the sector average of 88.5%. Compared to the sector average the biggest difference is for Asian students with a completion rate of 76.1% at UON, compared to the sector average of 86.8%.

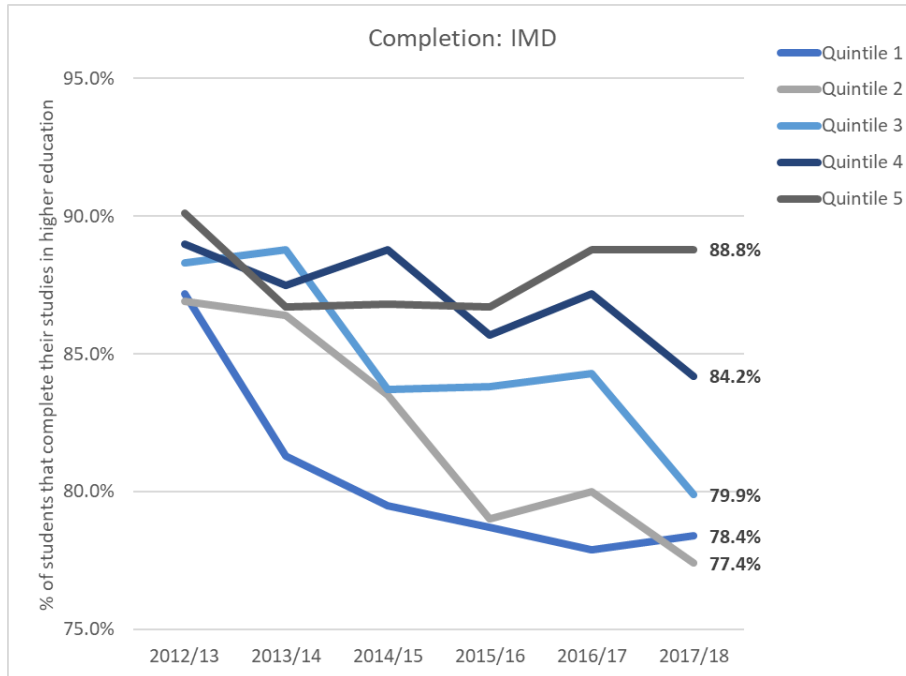
The decrease in completion rates for GEM students is seen across all IMD quintiles, and the rate is only slightly higher for Q3/4/5 (77%) compared to Q1/2 (75.8%).

Figure 9 Completion: Ethnicity Breakdown, 2012/13 - 2017/18



In 2017/18 the completion rate for all IMD quintiles at UON are below sector average; the biggest difference is in IMD Q3 and Q2. At UON the gap between IMD Q1/2 and IMD Q3/4/5 has increased over the last six years to 6.3% points in 2017/18. The sector wide gap is 7.2% points. Whilst completion rates are dropping across all 5 IMD Quintiles, this is most pronounced in IMD Q1/2 (a drop of 8.8pp for Q1 and 9.5pp for Q2, compared to 1.3pp for Q5).

Figure 10 Completion: IMD Breakdown, 2012/13 - 2017/18



Females at UON have a much higher completion rate than males (86.5% compared to 70.6%). The gap between males and females has increased from 8.8pp in 2012/13 to 15.9pp in 2017/18. Across the sector the gap is 5.7pp (4.3pp in 2012/13).

Intersectional data in the table below shows the biggest decline in completion rates is for males from IMD Q1/2. Compared to their female counterparts the completion rate for males from IMD Q1/2 is 66.4%, compared to 83.4% for females from IMD Q1/2 (a 17pp gap). When comparing those from IMD Q3/4/5 the difference between males and females is 14.5pp.

Table 2 Completion: IMD and Gender Intersectional Breakdown, 2012/13 - 2017/18

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	UON 4-year average	Sector 4-year average
Quintiles 1/2 and female	91.9%	86.9%	85.9%	84.2%	85.2%	83.4%	84.7%	86.4%
Quintiles 1/2 and male	78.9%	79.5%	73.8%	69.5%	67.9%	66.4%	69.4%	78.8%
Quintiles 3/4/5 and female	91.2%	89.9%	89.7%	88.1%	91.5%	89.0%	89.6%	92.0%
Quintiles 3/4/5 and male	85.4%	83.5%	80.7%	80.6%	78.0%	74.5%	78.8%	88.1%

Award

Award Objectives

Ethnicity | Socio-economic | Sex | Disability | All students

Lifecycle stage	EORR risk	APP objective
Award	Academic support Personal support	Objective 9 (PTS4) - Reduce the gap (25pp) between White (78.3%) and GEM (53.4%) students to at least 5pp below sector 4YA (11.3pp) by 2028/29.
	Mental health Data and systems integration	Objective 10 - Annually <u>monitor</u> the gap (14.5pp, 14.4pp 4YA) in award between students from the most socio-economically deprived backgrounds compared to those from the least socio-economically deprived backgrounds, intervening if it grows to become >5pp of the sector 4YA (11.3pp) measured using IMD Q1/2 (58.9%) compared to IMD Q3/4/5 (73.4%).

Award Data analysis

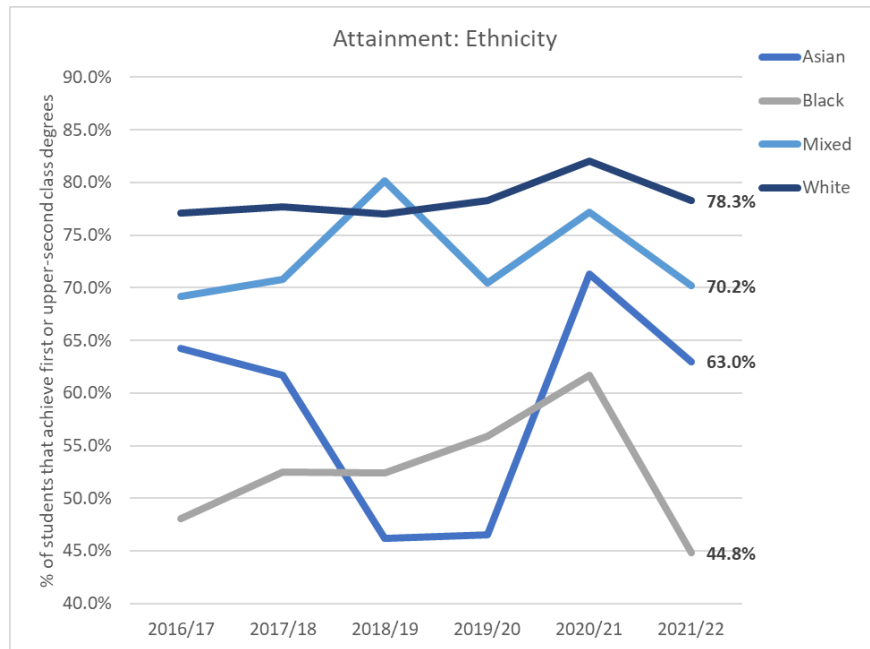
The award indicator measures the percentage of students that achieve a first or upper-second class degree (“good degree”). The proportion of students attaining a good degree at UON fell from 70.1% in 2016/17 to 67.4% in 2021/22. The good degree rate at UON is 11.6pp below the sector average of 79% (2021/22).

The largest gap for good degrees at UON is in relation to ethnicity. While good degree rates for White students is at 78.3% (2021/22), for GEM students the rate is 53.4%. The 4YA gap for UON is 21.7pp, compared to the sector average of 11.3pp.

Across the different GEM ethnicities, the biggest concern is for Black students, where the good degree rate for 2021/22 was 44.8%, and the 4YA is 54.5%. This is below the sector average of 63.1% for 2021/22. This puts the White-Black Good Degree gap at UON at 33.5pp in 2021/22, an increase from 20.4pp in 2020/21. The sector average 4YA gap is 20.2pp.

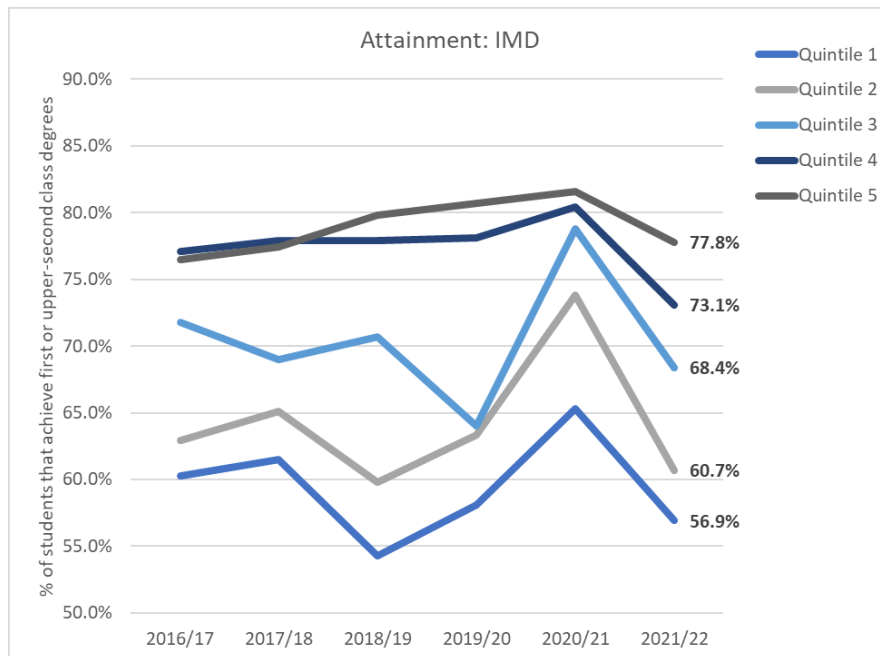
This ethnicity difference is also apparent when looking at the intersectional data between IMD and Ethnicity, with GEM students having a much lower Good Degree Rate than White students in IMD Q1/2 and IMD Q3/4/5.

Figure 11 Award: Ethnicity Breakdown, 2016/17 - 2021/22



At UON good degree rates are lower for those in IMD Q1/2 than those in IMD Q3/4/5, with a gap of 14.5pp. However, this gap has closed since a high of 19pp in 2018/19. The UON rate for those in IMD Q1/2 at 58.9%, is lower than the rate of 71.5% across the sector (difference of 12.6pp). By contrast the difference for those from IMD Q3/4/5 is 10pp (73.4% for UON, 83.4% for Sector).

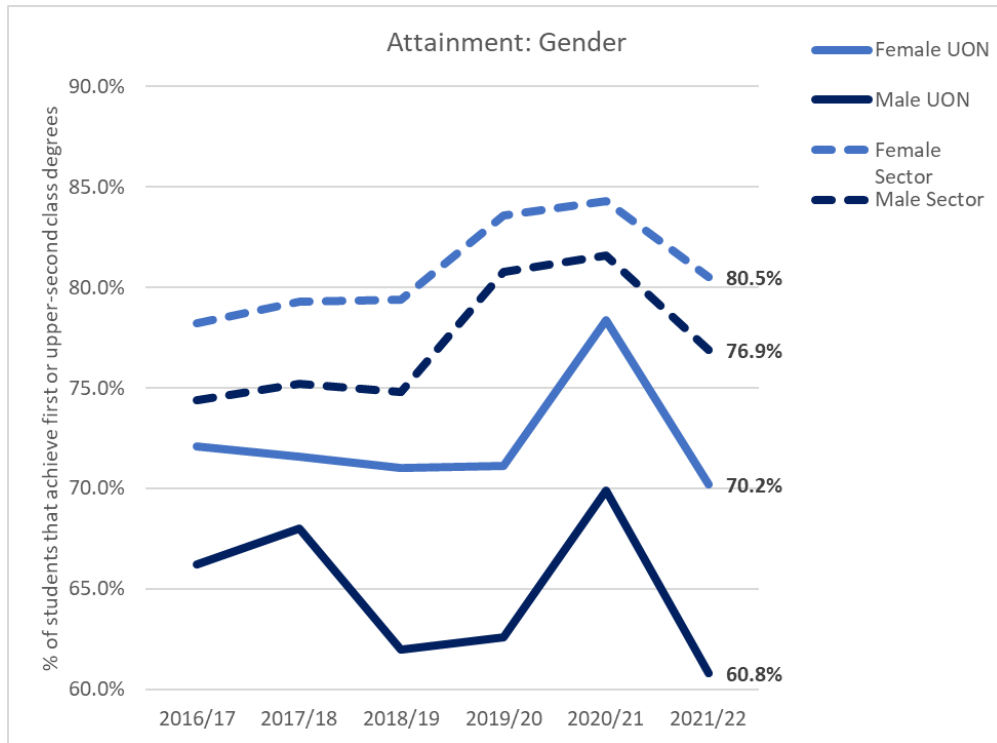
Figure 12 Award: IMD Breakdown, 2016/17 - 2021/22



Good degree rates at UON are consistently higher for females than males. The 4YA rate for females is 72.7%, compared to 63.8% for males. There is a 14.7pp difference between UON males and sector-wide

males, and a 9.2pp difference for females. The good degree gap between males and females at UON is at 8.9pp (4-year average), compared to a sector average of 3.4pp.

Figure 13 Award: Gender Breakdown, 2016/17 - 2021/22



Intersectional data shows that GEM students from IMD groups consistently perform below White students. There is an 11.6pp difference between GEM students from IMD Q1/2 and IMD Q3/4/5, compared to a 4.5pp difference for White students from IMD Q1/2 and IMD Q3/4/5.

Table 3 Award: IMD and Ethnicity Intersectionality Breakdown, 2016/17 - 2021/22

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	UON 4-year average	Sector 4-year average
Quintiles 1/2 and GEM	53.0%	53.3%	49.5%	54.5%	64.4%	49.3%	54.8%	69.1%
Quintiles 1/2 and White	70.3%	74.7%	68.5%	72.3%	78.0%	75.6%	73.4%	78.3%
Quintiles 3/4/5 and GEM	58.1%	61.3%	61.5%	55.5%	69.5%	60.9%	61.9%	78.5%
Quintiles 3/4/5 and White	79.6%	79.2%	80.7%	80.6%	83.5%	80.1%	81.2%	86.5%

Progression

Progression Objectives:

Ethnicity Socio-economic Sex Disability All students		
Lifecycle stage	EORR risk	APP objective
Progression	Academic support Personal support Mental health Data and systems integration	Objective 11 (PTP1) - To at least <u>maintain</u> the positive graduate outcomes of GEM (71.9%) and White (75%) students but increase the graduate outcomes of Asian (65.8%) to be in line with the rest of GEM by 2028/29.

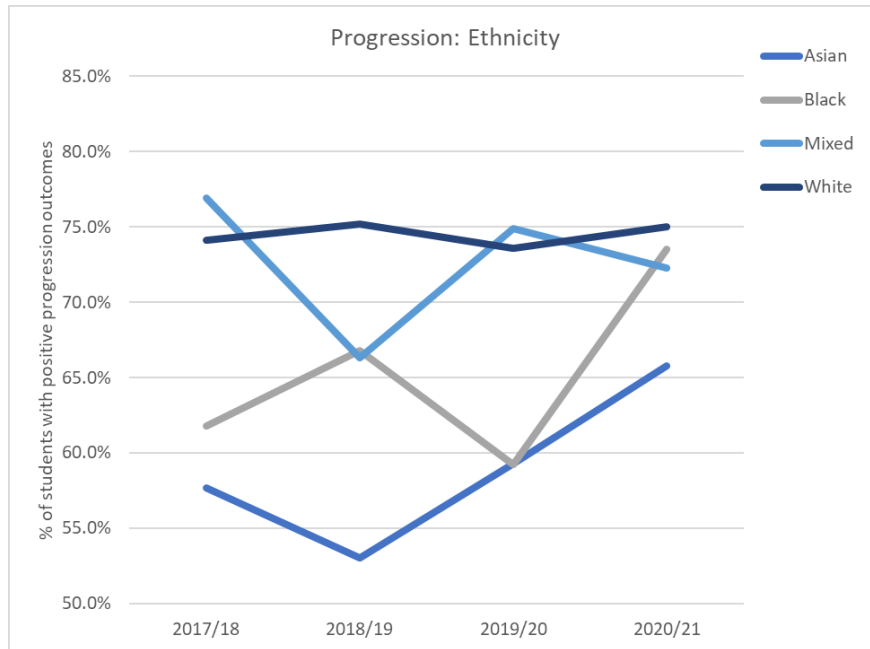
Progression Data Analysis

Graduate Outcomes Progression data measures the percentage of graduates progressing into professional or managerial employment, further study, or other positive outcomes from the Graduate Outcomes Survey. The Graduate Outcomes survey takes place around 15 months after students complete their studies and there is currently 4-years of data available from 2017/18 to 2020/21.

The overall progression rate for UON for 2020/21 was 73.9%, with a 4YA of 71%. This compares favourably with the sector average of 74.2% for 2020/21 and a 4YA of 72.6%.

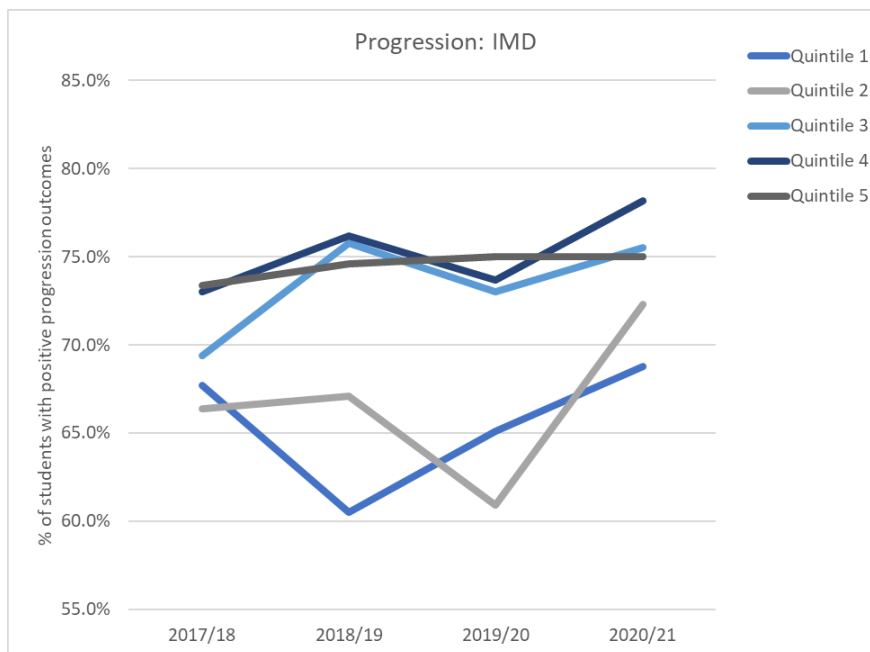
At UON, the GEM progression rate increased in 2020/21 to 71.9%, which is on a par with the sector average of 72.3%. The progression rate for White students at UON (75%) is also on a par with the sector average (74.9%). The gap between GEM and White students at UON in 2020/21 was 3.1pp.

Progression rates have increased for White, Asian, and Black students. However, the biggest gap remains between White and Asian students, with the progression rate for Asian students at 65.8%, creating a 9.2pp gap. This gap has decreased from 22.1pp in 2018/19.



The progression rate for those in IMD Q1 (68.8%) and IMD Q2 (72.3%) sit above the sector averages (67.7% and 70.7% respectively). The gap between IMD Q1/2 and IMD Q3/4/5 is closing and sits at just 5.6pp in 2020/21. This gap is smaller than the sector average at 7.6pp.

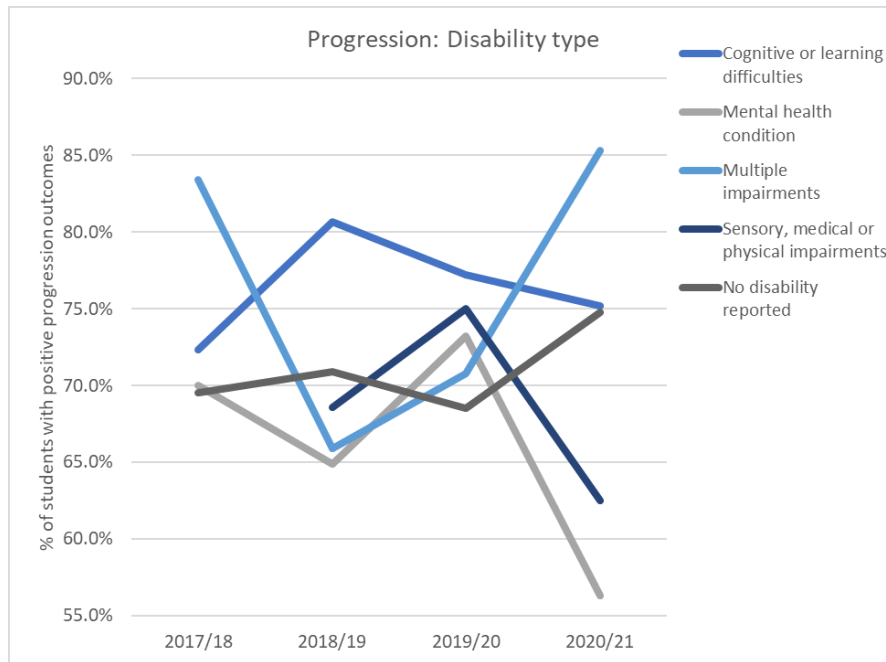
Figure 15 Progression: IMD Breakdown, 2017/18 - 2020/21



There is a fluctuating trend for those with a reported disability. In previous years, rates have been higher than those with no disability reported, however, in the most recent years data (2020/21) those with a disability have lower progression rates (68.5%) than those without (74.8%). This results in a gap of 6.3pp. Across the sector the gap is 2.1pp.

When looking at disability types, at UON those with a mental health condition have the lowest progression rate at 56.3% in 2020/21. This is lower than the sector average of 70.4%. The gap between those with no disability and those with a mental health condition has increased to 18.6pp. Those with a sensory, medical or physical impairment also have a lower progression rate at 62.5%, compared to 72.5% for the sector. However, there are small numbers of students in both of these disability groups at UON.

Figure 16 Progression: Disability type Breakdown, 2017/18 - 2020/21



Additional Supportive Information

This section contains additional data analysis to support the development of the APP.

Applications

We have analysed applications data at UON from the last 4-years since 2020/21 in relation to ethnicity, IMD quintile, sex, age, and disability.

Overall, 75% of our applicants are given offers (offer rate), and of those offers, 30.9% chose UON as a firm acceptance (acceptance rate). Of those that accepted, 85.5% subsequently enrol on their programme (enrolment rate). These offer rates, acceptance rates and enrolment rates do vary across certain characteristics and across the faculties and subjects at UON as shown in the table below. The Faculty of Business and Law (FBL) has the highest offer rate and the lowest acceptance rate. The Faculty of Health, Education and Society (FHES) has the lowest offer rate, but highest acceptance rate.

Table 4 Applications: Offer rate, Acceptance rate and Enrolment rate by Faculty, 2020/21 - 2023/24

	Offer Rate	Acceptance Rate	Enrolment Rate
UON	75%	30.9%	85.5%
Faculty of Arts, Science and Technology (FAST)	83%	29.2%	85.4%
Faculty of Business and Law (FBL)	89.6%	27.5%	82.1%
Faculty of Health, Education and Society (FHES)	57.1%	38.0%	88.5%

Of those, where ethnicity is known for the applicant, 52.5% of applicants are White and 47.5% are from GEM ethnic groups. The offer rate for GEM and White students is broadly similar. There is a higher acceptance rate for GEM students (62.4%) than White students (57.6%). However, the enrolment rate is higher for White students (87.8%) than GEM students (83.8%).

Table 5 Applications: Offer rate, Acceptance rate and Enrolment rate by broad Ethnic Group, 2020/21 - 2023/24

	Offer Rate	Acceptance Rate	Enrolment Rate
White Students	83.4%	57.6%	87.8%
GEM Students	82.3%	62.4%	83.8%

The Faculty of Arts, Science and Technology (FAST) has the lowest proportion of applications from GEM ethnic groups, at 42%; FBL has the highest proportion at 56.8%. The biggest difference in offer rates is in FHES where the offer rate is 72% for White students and 66.8% for GEM students. The biggest difference in acceptance rates is in FBL, with a higher acceptance rate from GEM students (62.4%) compared to White students (52.6%).

Figure 17 Applications: Offer rate by Faculty and broad Ethnic Group, 2020/21 - 2023/24

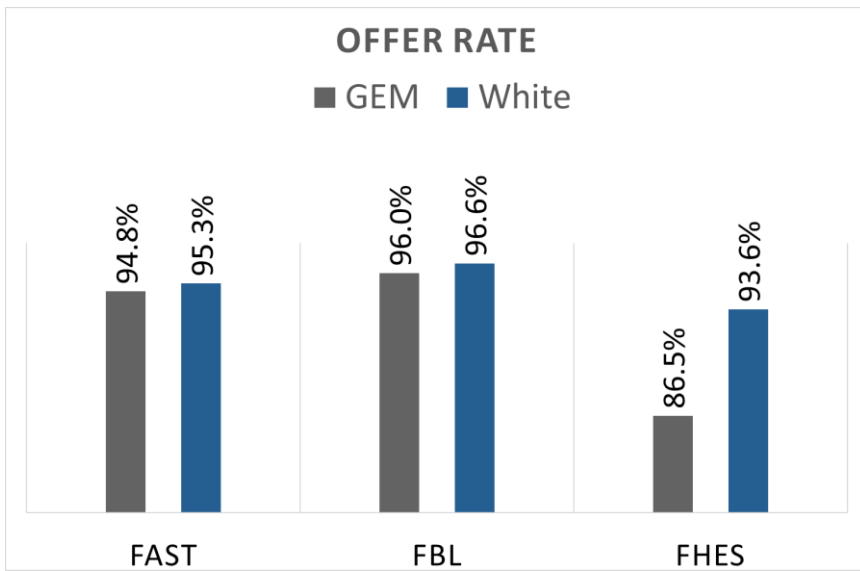
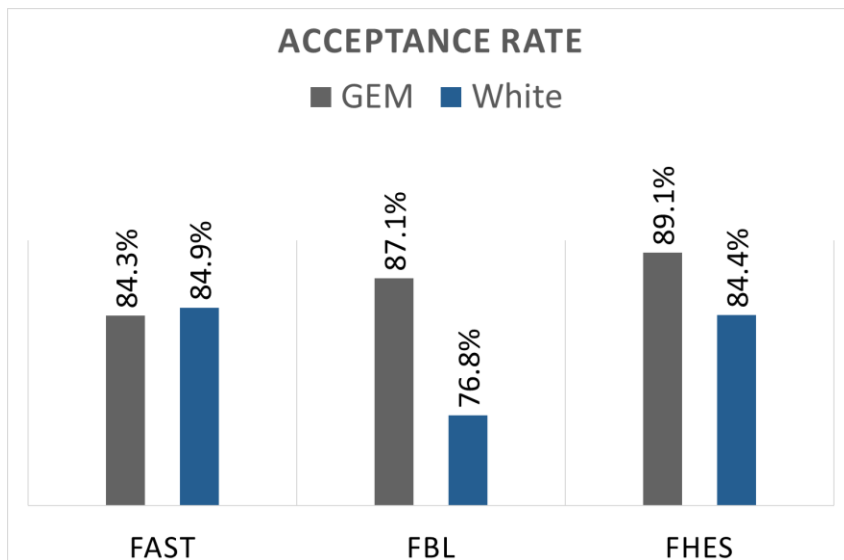


Figure 18 Applications: Acceptance rate by Faculty and broad Ethnic Group, 2020/21 - 2023/24



In relation to more detailed ethnic groups, just 9.4% of our applicants are Asian students, 31.7% of applicants are Black, and 5.3% are from mixed ethnic groups. Acceptance rates are higher for Black students (65.2%) than Asian (56.1%) and White students (57.6%). Of those that subsequently enrol, the rate is higher for White students (87.8%) than Asian (81.5%) and Black (83.8%) students.

Figure 19 Applications: Acceptance rate by Faculty and detailed Ethnic Group, 2020/21 - 2023/24

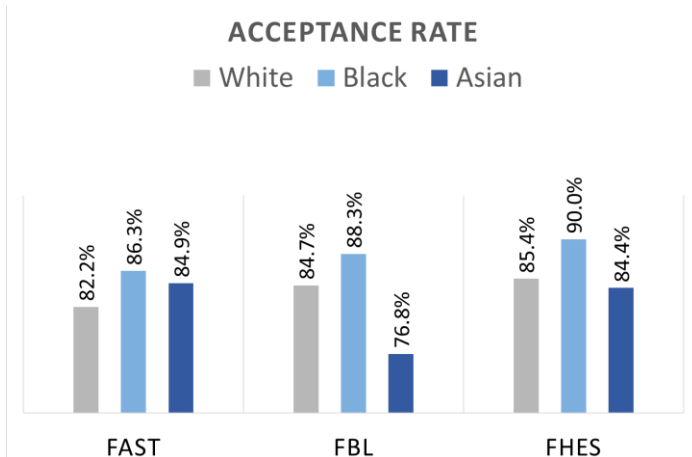
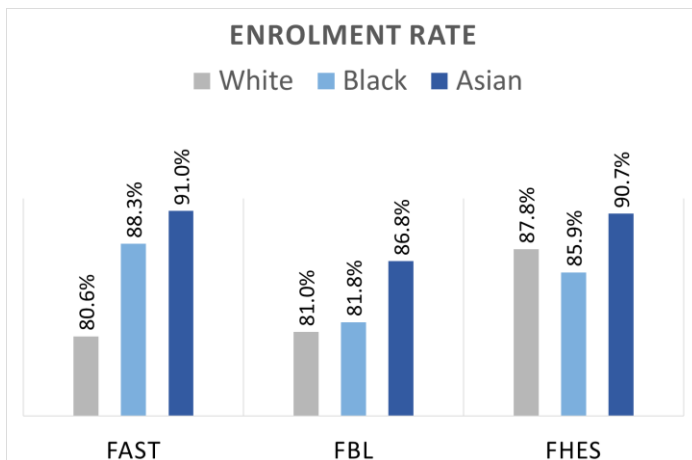


Figure 20 Applications: Enrolment rate by Faculty and detailed Ethnic Group, 2020/21 - 2023/24



Of those where the IMD Quintile is known, 46.3% of applications are from students from IMD Q1/2, and 53.7% are from students from IMD Q3/4/5. There is little difference between the two quintile groups for offer rates, acceptance rates and enrolment rates.

Table 6 Applications: Offer rate, Acceptance rate and Enrolment rate by IMD Quintile, 2020/21 - 2023/24

	Offer Rate	Acceptance Rate	Enrolment Rate
IMD Q1/2	77.5%	43.0%	89.9%
IMD Q3/4/5	80.4%	41.0%	90.6%

Across the 4-years, 65% of applications are from female students. The offer rate is higher for males than females. However, the acceptance rate and enrolment rates are broadly similar.

Table 7 Applications: Offer rate, Acceptance rate and Enrolment rate by Gender, 2020/21 - 2023/24

	Offer Rate	Acceptance Rate	Enrolment Rate
Male Students	80.7%	29.4%	85.2%
Female Students	72.2%	31.8%	85.7%

The sex split in applications varies across the UON faculties. FAST is the only faculty to have a higher proportion of male applicants than female applicants (54.6% males, compared to 45.4% females). This is mainly due to the high number of male applications in the Technology subject area (84.9%). FHES has, by far, the highest proportion of female applications at 87.2%. This is particularly high in the subject areas Childhood, Youth & Family (90.4%), Health Professions (91.9%) and Social, Therapies & Communities (88.4%).

76.8% of our Home UG applications are from young students. The offer rate is higher for young students than mature students. However, the acceptance rate is higher for mature students than young students. In addition, a higher proportion of mature students subsequently enrol than young students.

Table 8 Applications: Offer rate, Acceptance rate and Enrolment rate by broad age group, 2020/21 - 2023/24

	Offer Rate	Acceptance Rate	Enrolment Rate
Young Students (Under 21)	81.3%	27.5%	83.8%
Mature Students (21 and over)	54.1%	47.8%	90.4%

15.1% of applicants have a declared disability. Offer rates are broadly similar for those without a declared disability (74.9%) compared to those with a declared disability (76.7%). However, those with a declared disability have a higher acceptance rate (35.1%) and enrolment rate (89%) than those without a declared disability (acceptance rate of 30.1% and enrolment rate of 84.7%).

Table 9 Applications: Offer rate, Acceptance rate and Enrolment rate by broad disability group, 2020/21 - 2023/24

	Offer Rate	Acceptance Rate	Enrolment Rate
Students with a declared disability	76.7%	35.1%	89.0%
Students without a declared disability	74.95	30.1%	84.7%

There have been 506 applications from students that are care leavers over the last 4-years. Offer rates are lower for care leavers, at 69%, compared to 75.1% for those that are not a care leaver. However, acceptance rates are higher for care leavers at 34.4%. Enrolment rates are broadly similar for both groups. There is minimal data available for students that are carers and estranged students, with 26 applications from students that are carers and 19 applications from estranged students over the last 4-years.

Table 10 Applications: Offer rate, Acceptance rate and Enrolment rate by Care Leaver status, 2020/21 - 2023/24

	Offer Rate	Acceptance Rate	Enrolment Rate
Care Leavers	69.0%	34.4%	85.0%
Non Care Leavers	75.1%	30.9%	85.5%

Entry Qualifications

Data from 2021/22, shows that 70% of our students arrive at UON with non-traditional qualifications such as BTECs and others. The majority of our students enter with a mix of level 3 qualifications.

Figure 21 Entry Qualifications: UON FT UG Student Stage 1

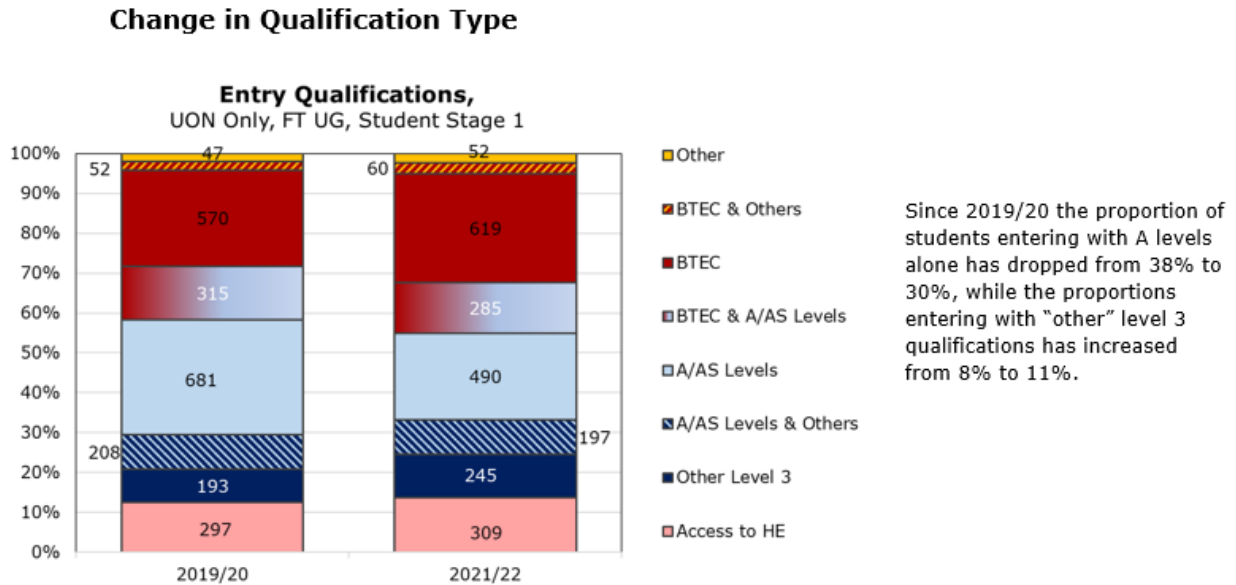
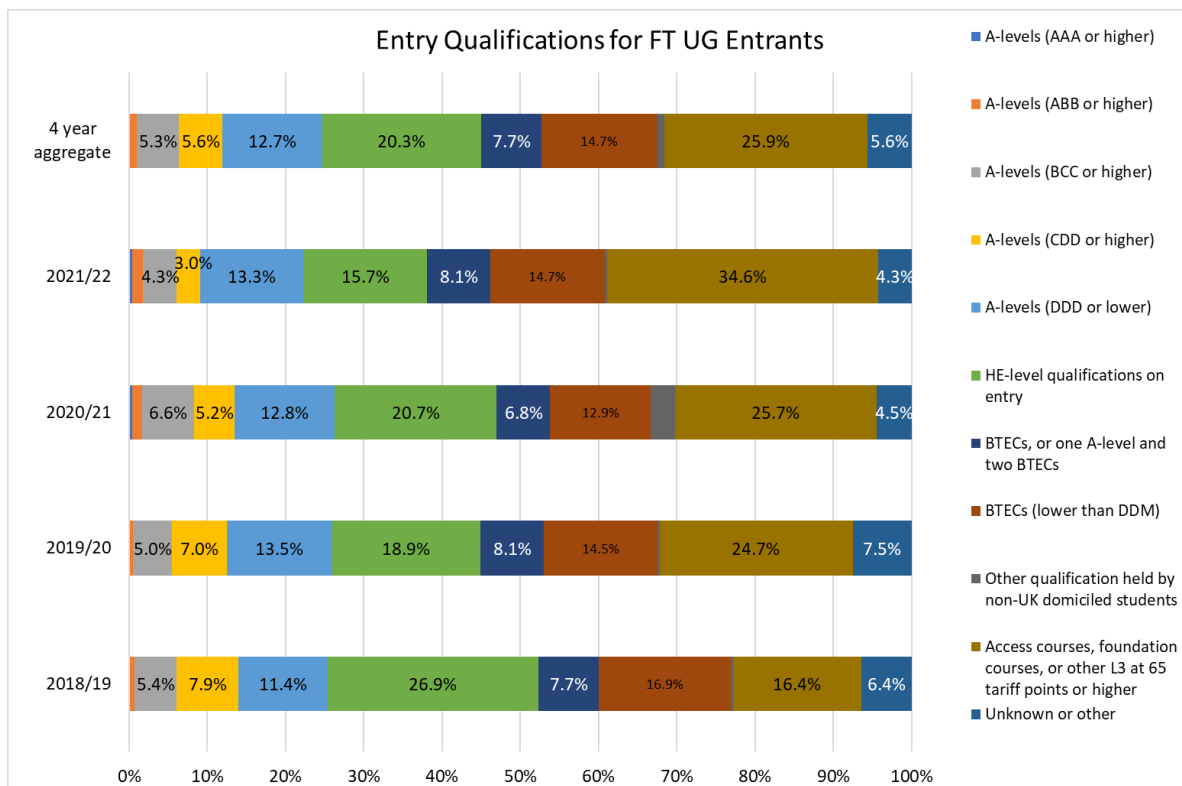


Figure 22 Entry Qualifications: % of FT UG Entrants with types of entry qualifications

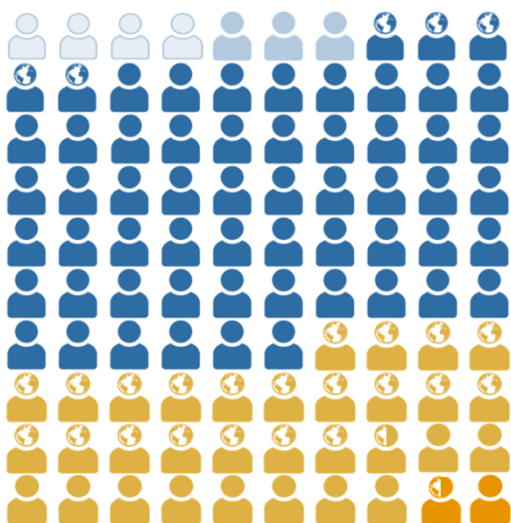


Access







UON population

UON is home to c.14,400 students (undergraduates, postgraduates taught and postgraduate research). The following graphic represents our student population, both undergraduate and postgraduate studying at UON on campus.

The Student Body 21/22: On Campus



There were around 14,400 on-campus students in 21/22. One icon here = 1% of students.

-  Overseas student
Higher fees, but greater regulatory burden and support requirements.
-  Stand-alone module
Typically professional development courses for Health.
-  Foundation degrees, HNDs &c.
Typically two year programmes
-  Bachelors
Mainly traditional three year courses, but includes one year Top Ups.
-  Taught postgraduate
Typically one year programmes; includes MBAs, which have higher fees.
-  Research postgraduate
PhD and Doctor of Business Administration

Small groups

We have undertaken some additional analysis around small groups including estranged students, care leavers, and commuters, where the data is known.

Estranged students

UON has approximately 250 estranged students studying across all years each year. However, there are issues with specifically identifying and therefore targeting these students.

Care leavers

Since 2018/19, a total of 110 care leaver students have enrolled at UON on undergraduate courses, with 35 new entrants in 2021/22. At UON, care leavers represent approximately 1.2% of UK FT UG entrants (2021/22); this is on a par with the sector average (1.2% across the sector). At UON, 40% of care leaver enrolments are in FHES, 30% in FAST, 22% in FBL, and 8% study Joint Honours subjects. The largest subject groups with enrolments are Nursing (15.5%) and Social, Therapies and Communities (14.5%).

Out of the 110 enrolled care leavers since 2018/19, 38 (34.5%) have withdrawn, and 26 of these withdrew in their first year (23.6% of new entrants). Where reasons for leaving are known, more than half (52.6%) of care leaver students leave because of academic failure.

Table 11 Access Small Groups: Care Leaver entrants, 2018/19 to 2021/22

	Entrants 2018/19	Entrants 2019/20	Entrants 2020/21	Entrants 2021/22	Total Entrants
Number of care leavers	18	20	37	35	110
Number still enrolled	1	1	9	21	32
Number Completing Programme	10 (55.6%)	9 (45%)	19 (51.4%)	2	40
Number withdrawn from programme	7 (38.9%)	10 (50%)	9 (24.3%)	12 (34.3%)	38 (34.5%)

The following table shows the degree class achieved by care leavers since 2018/19. In total, 38 care leaver students (50.7%) completed their studies and achieved an award, of either a degree or an intermediate award. 27 care leaver students were awarded a degree. Of those that did complete their full degree, 14 out of 27 (51.9%) achieved a Good Degree (1st or 2i). An additional 11 students (26.3%), received an Intermediate award, meaning they only partially completed their programme of study but were still awarded an award.

Table 12 Access Small Groups: Care Leaver awards, 2018/19 to 2020/21

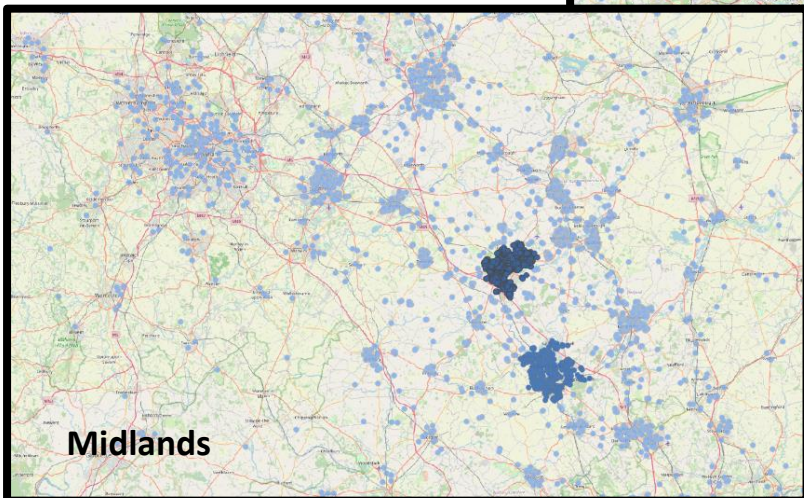
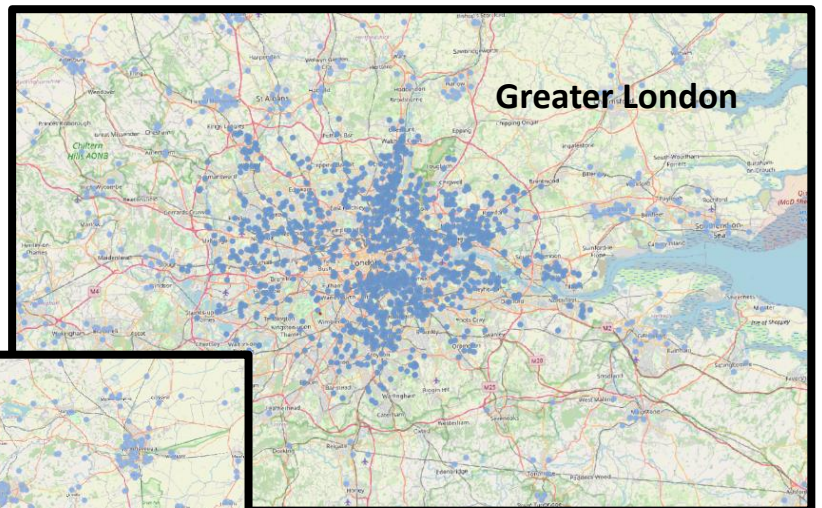
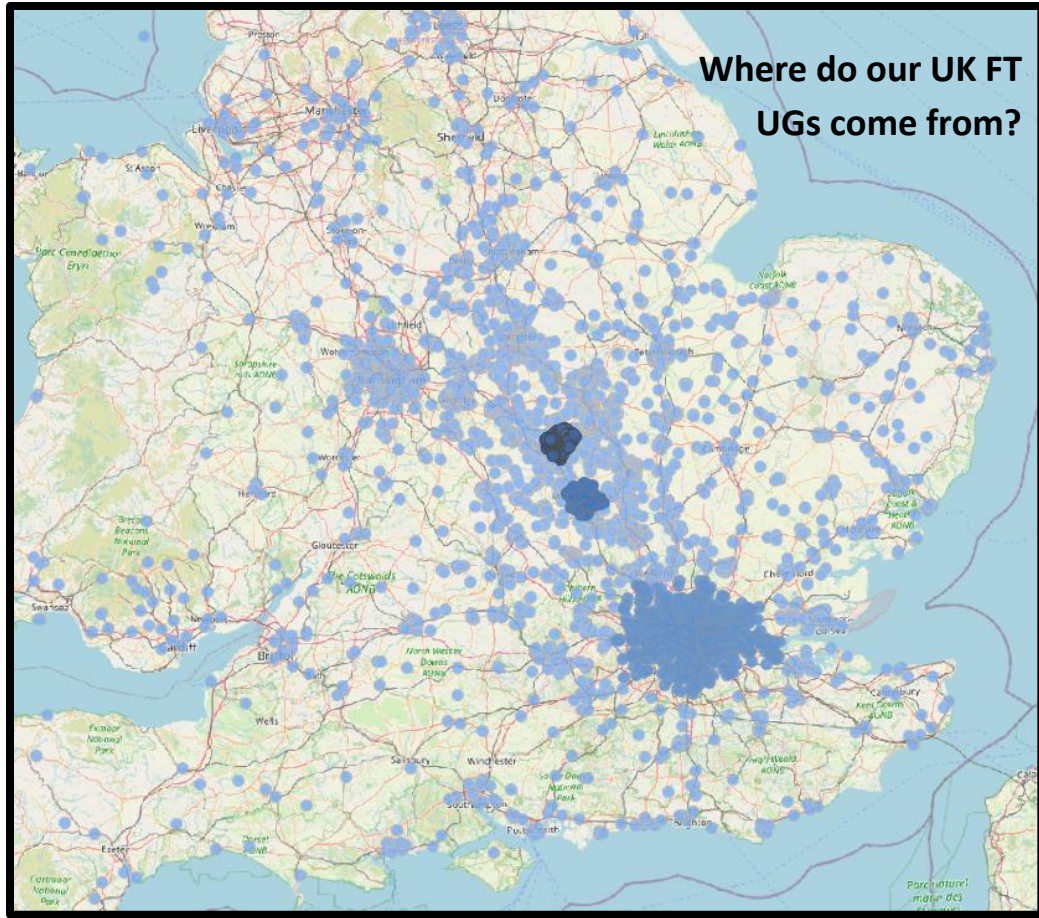
Entry Year	Numbers Enrolled	Number Completing Programme	Degree Class			Intermediate Award	
			1 st	2i	2ii	Merit	Pass
2018/19	18	10 (55.6%)	1	2	3	2	2
2019/20	20	9 (45%)	2	2	2	2	1
2020/21	37	19 (51.4%)	1	6	8		4

Commuter Students

We attract students from across the UK, but predominantly from the Midlands and the Greater London areas (M1, M6 corridors). Nearly a third of our full-time UK undergraduates come from Northamptonshire.

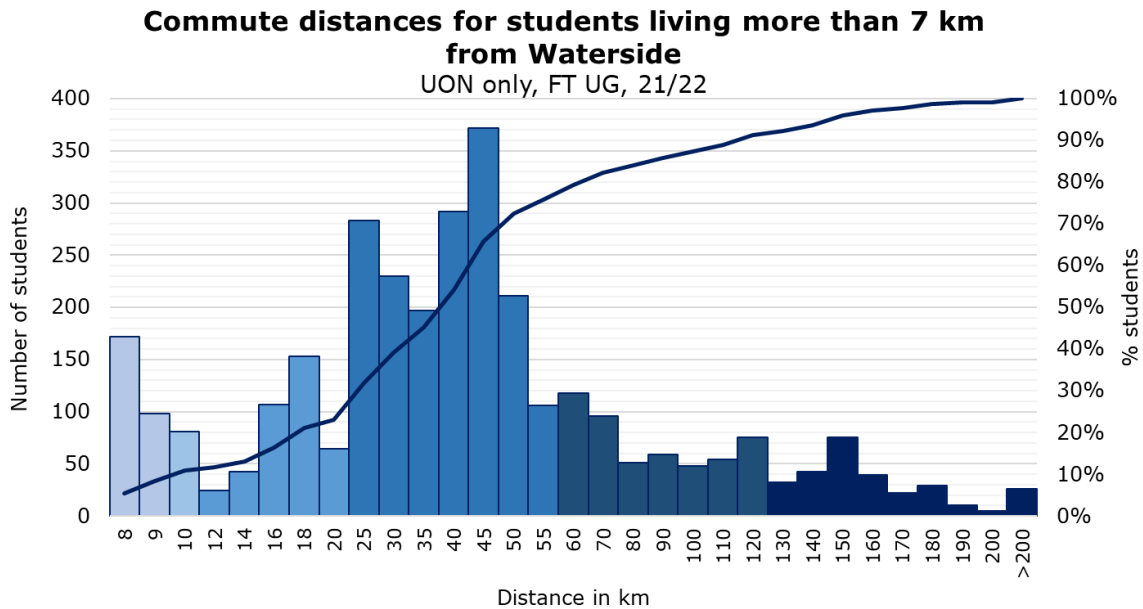
The following graphic shows where our UK full-time undergraduate students come from (data from 2021/22). Each dot represents a student's home postcode location – the darker dots show the cluster of those students from Northampton local authority area. There is also a visible cluster of students from London and Milton Keynes area:

Figure 23 Access Small Groups: Commuters: Where do our UK FT UG students come from?



Commuter students are defined at UON as those living more than 7km of our Waterside campus. Approximately 60% of our students live within 7km of our Waterside campus, meaning a significant number commute onto campus regularly for their studies.

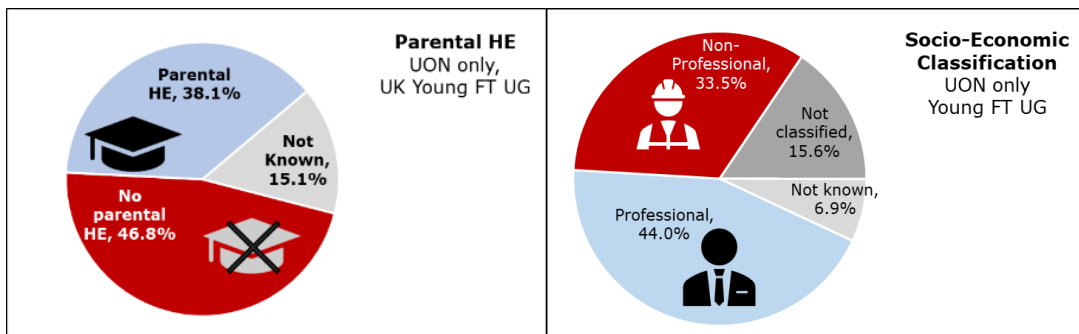
Figure 24 Access Small Groups: Commuters: Commute distances for students living more than 7 km from Waterside



Family background of students

The family background of our students is also important, in terms of our students’ parental educational background, just 38% of our young full-time undergraduates have at least one parent with a higher education qualification. The socio-economic classification of our young students’ parent or guardian is represented in the graph below – with 44% in professional occupations, and 33.5% in non-professional occupations.

Figure 25 Access Small Groups: Family Background of Students



Local Schools Attainment

The following table details the percentage of pupils that got a grade 5 or above in GCSE English and Maths, comparing scores across West and North Northamptonshire for boys and girls, with the national average (2021/22).

Table 13 Local Schools Attainment: Percentage of Pupils that got Grade 5 or above in GCSE English and Maths

	Boys	Girls	All Students
North Northamptonshire	38.4%	47.7%	43%
West Northamptonshire	45.6%	51.1%	48.3%
England	47%	52.7%	50%

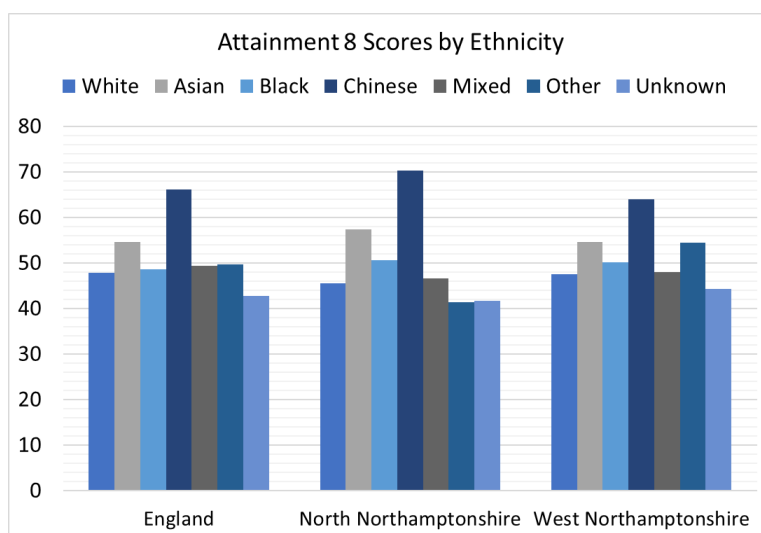
The following table shows the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils² in both local authority areas and the sector average.

Table 14 Local Schools Attainment: Average Attainment 8 Scores

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
North Northamptonshire	48.1	46.2	44.2
West Northamptonshire	51.1	48.2	45.2
England	50.9	48.9	46.4

Attainment 8 scores by ethnicity³ shows that Chinese and Asian students consistently perform above other ethnicities in England and in North and West Northamptonshire. Attainment 8 scores for Black students at just over 50 for North and West Northamptonshire, are higher than for White students (45.5 for North Northamptonshire and 47.5 for West Northamptonshire).

Figure 26 Local Schools Attainment: Average Attainment 8 Scores by Ethnicity



² <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-catalogue/key-stage-4-performance/2022-23>

³ [GCSE results \(Attainment 8\) - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures \(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gcse-results-attainment-8-ethnicity-facts-and-figures)

Access to HE data from UON HESA track report

UON subscribes to the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) as a means of recording, monitoring and analysing school pupil interactions with the widening access team. This allows us to understand the impact of our interventions on school pupils who engage with our opportunities. Specifically, the number and percentage of students who transition to higher education immediately or within 2 years of engagement. Access to Higher Education data, as shown in the table below, identifies lower than sector transition to any tariff university and high tariff universities for students who engaged with UON (Fig 25) with students transitioning in greater numbers within two years rather than immediately. While those students from IMD Q1/2 have a lower rate of access to higher education than those from IMD Q3/4/5, we do not have sector data to compare to.

Figure 27 UON HESA Track Report: Access to Higher Education

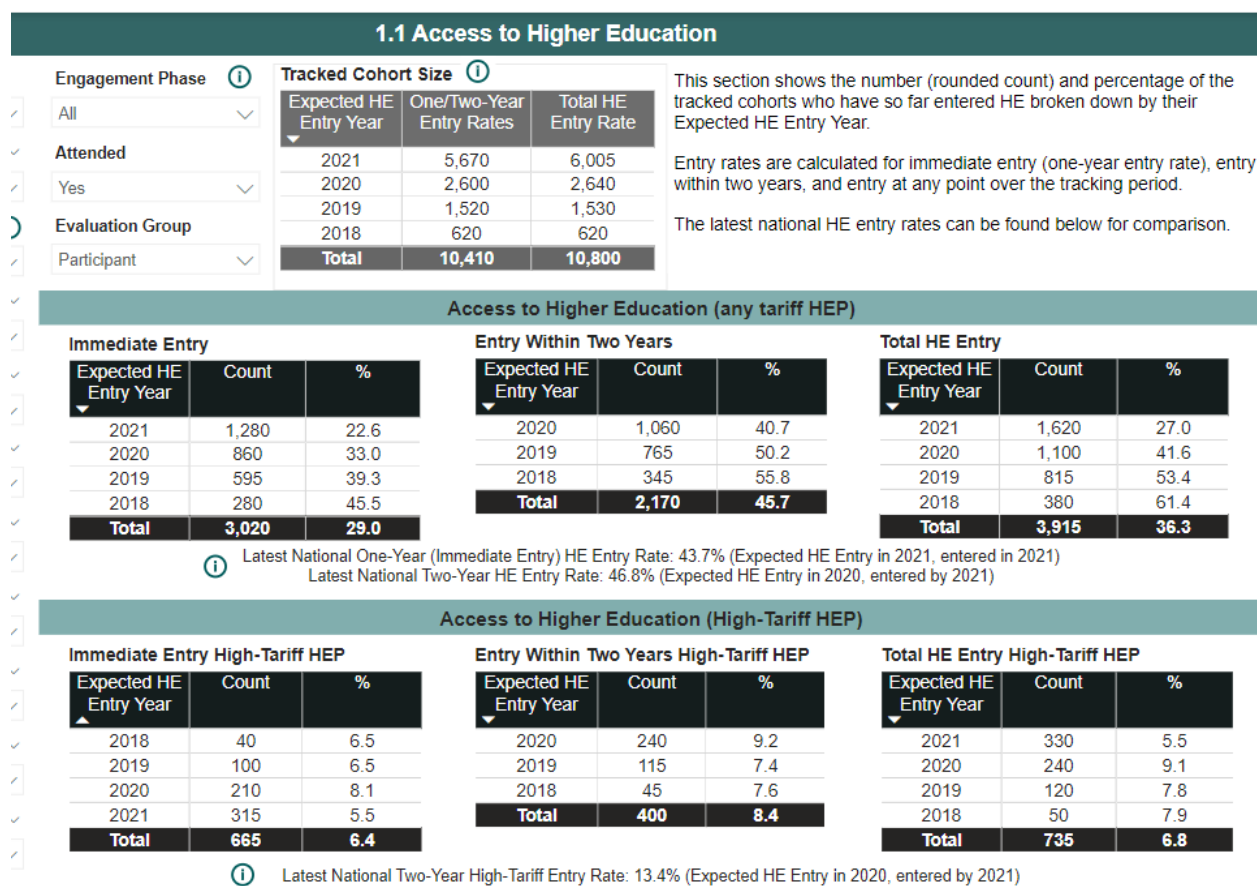


Figure 28 UON HESA Track Report: Access to Higher Education by IMD Quintile

Access to Higher Education by IMD Quintile

IMD Tracked Cohort Size			IMD Immediate Entry			IMD Entry Within Two Years			IMD Total HE Entry		
Q	One/Two-Year Entry Rates	Total HE Entry Rate	Quintile	Count	%	Quintile	Count	%	Quintile	Count	%
1	1,070	1,090	1	355	33.1	1	455	42.7	1	490	45.0
2	1,105	1,115	2	395	35.9	2	480	43.6	2	510	45.8
3	865	870	3	325	37.6	3	405	46.9	3	425	49.0
4	930	930	4	350	37.9	4	440	47.3	4	455	49.0
5	740	745	5	300	40.9	5	375	50.9	5	400	53.5

Counselling and Mental Health Data

Access to UON Counselling Services

The following table details the usage of the UON counselling service by ethnicity, highlighting the increased usage over the years. Since 2020/21 there has been a 17% increase in the number of students using the UON Counselling service. Over the last 3 years, 61.9% of service users are White, 20.6% are Black and 9.5% are Asian. The majority of service users are female, accounting for 77% of users over the last two years.

Table 15 Counselling & Mental Health Data: Number of students attending sessions at UON Counselling service by ethnicity: (source: UON counselling team)

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	% of Total over 3 years
Asian or Asian British	24	24	25	9.5%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	48	49	61	20.6%
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	19	12	12	5.6%
White	139	169	166	61.9%
Other Ethnic Group	4	3	3	1.3%
Not Answered	0	2	6	1.0%
Total	234	259	273	766

Table 16 Counselling & Mental Health Data: Number of students attending sessions at to UON Counselling service by sex (source: UON counselling team)

	2021/22	2022/23	% of Total over 2 years
Female	206	205	77.3%
Agender	0	1	0.2%
Gender Queer/Non-binary	0	1	0.2%
Male	47	41	16.5%
Non-Binary	2	4	1.1%
None	1	0	0.2%
Not Answered	1	16	3.2%
Trans Female	0	2	0.4%
Trans Male	2	1	0.6%
Trans Male / non-binary / demiguy	0	1	0.2%
Transgender	0	1	0.2%
Grand Total	259	273	532

Mitigating Circumstances

The Student Support and Advice Team processed over 3700 mitigating circumstances applications in 21/22 and over 3300 in 22/23. This is similar to the 20/21 academic year yet shows a marked and significant increase from pre-pandemic numbers, with total applications standing at 653 in the 19/ 20 Academic Year up until March 2020. This increase is being seen sector-wide. Most applicants have

applied for mitigating circumstances only once (2133) with a further 635 twice and two students have applied more than 10 times. It seems that a one-off application is sufficient for most students with short-term difficulties and that lesser numbers of students could benefit from ongoing support to manage their studies. The most common reasons students applied for mitigating circumstances were: -

- Illness, accident, or severe trauma (664)
- Acute personal or emotional issues (625)

Qualitative analysis shows that students are disclosing high numbers of mental health conditions, falling into each of the above categories.

Student Life Pulse Survey Results

Our Students' Union monthly Student Life Pulse Survey has identified just over 50% of students surveyed across the last three academic years have concerns about their mental health and wellbeing. 44% of students surveyed across three years responded that their mental health was a potential factor in their ability to continue their studies.

Figure 29 Student Pulse Survey: Concern about "Mental Health and Wellbeing" in the last two weeks, by year

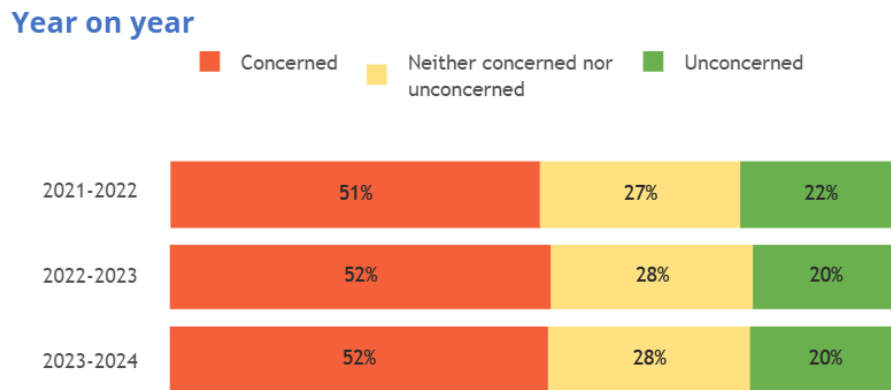


Figure 30 Student Pulse Survey: For which of the following did you consider leaving University?

Reasons for non-continuance

'For which of the following reasons did you consider leaving University' this year to date.

Base: Respondents who have considered leaving University (307)



Internal Continuation Data 2022/23

Internal continuation data for 2022/23 measures the proportion of students continuing and progressing from one level of a programme to the next level, and the proportion withdrawing. This measure is a different definition to that used on the OfS APP data dashboards but is a useful measure to use in addition to the OfS data. Data from the academic year 2022/23 shows that overall internal continuation levels have increased from 2021/22 at every level. The biggest increase is seen at Foundation Level, with an increase of 12.2% points to levels of 55.8% in 2022/23. In addition, withdrawal levels have decreased from last year at every level, with the biggest decrease at level 4, from 19.2% (2021/22) to 16.8% (2022/23).

The table below shows level 4 to Level 5 Internal continuation and withdrawal rates for UON over the last five years*. Internal continuation rates have increased to 73.3%, however they are still not at the same level as previously seen in 2018/19. Withdrawal rates at 16.8% for UON have decreased since 2021/22.

Table 17 Internal Continuation Data, Level 4 to 5

Level 4 to 5	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Internal continuation Rates	74.2%	76.3%	70.5%	68.9%	73.3%
Withdrawal Rates	18.6%	11.7%	13.6%	20.6%	16.8%

*These do not add up to 100% as there are other students that continue without progression, Intercalate, and take an Intermediate Award.

The GEM-White Internal Continuation gap has decreased from 10.2% in 2021/22 to 5.9% in 2022/23 (internal continuation rates of 70.1% for GEM students and 75.9% for White students). Internal continuation rates are higher for females (75.8%), than males (69%). The female-male gap has decreased from 7.3% points in 2021/22 to 6.8% points in 2022/23. Internal continuation rates are higher for mature students (77.1%) and withdrawal rates are lower (12.2%) than young (73% continuation and 17.5% continuation).

Table 18 Internal Continuation Data, Level 4 to 5 by age

Age Group	Stage 1 Starters	Progression	Stage 1 Withdrawals
University	2705	73.9%	16.3%
Young Students	2106	73.0%	17.5%
Mature Students	599	77.1%	12.2%

Overall internal continuation for Level 5 to Level 6 students at UON is 79%, which is an increase from 77.6% in 2021/22. Withdrawal levels are 8.7%, a slight decrease from 9.1% last year. Internal continuation rates are more than 10% points higher for White students than GEM students (84.3% and 73.9% respectively). This gap has decreased from last year (16.2% point gap). Internal continuation rates are higher for females (81.1%), than males (75.3%). The internal continuation rate sex gap has decreased from 9.4% points in 2021/22 to 5.8% points in 2022/23.

Overall internal continuation for Foundation Stage to level 4 Students at UON is 55.8%, an increase from 43.6% in 2021/22. Despite a slight decrease, withdrawal levels for foundation students are still the highest across all years at 33.3%. Internal continuation rates are higher for White students (65.8%), compared to GEM students (51.6%), this is a difference of 14.1% points compared to 28.2% points last year.

Table 19 Internal Continuation Data, Foundation Year to Level 4

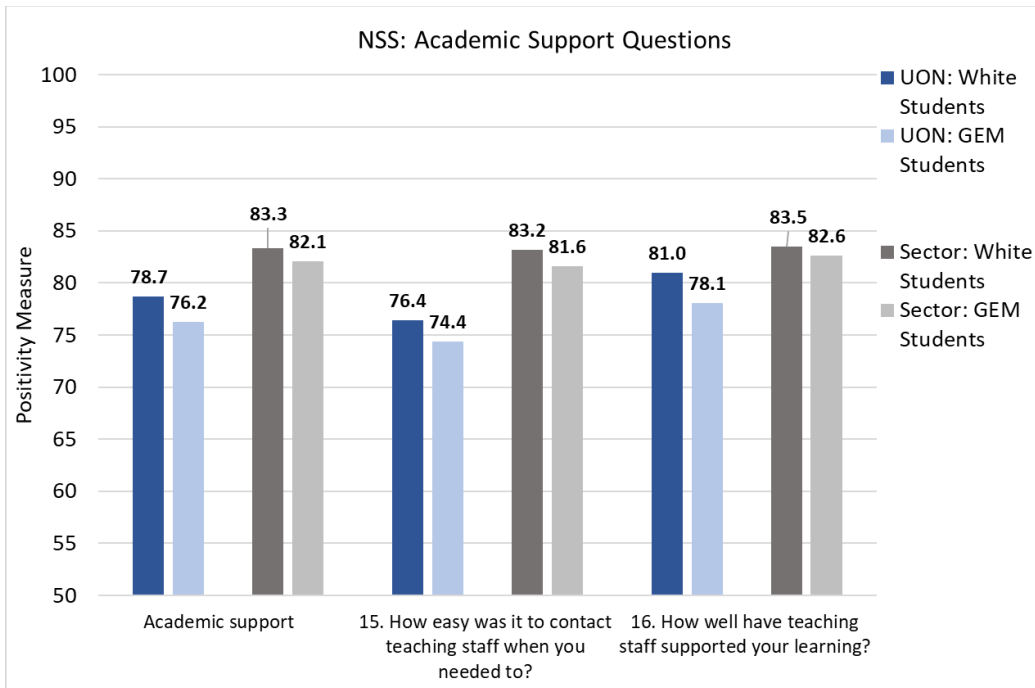
Foundation year to Level 4	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Internal continuation Rates	63.2%	61.8%	46.7%	43.6%	55.8%
Withdrawal Rates	28.0%	14.5%	19.6%	34.4%	33.3%

National Student Survey Data

The NSS survey is a national survey, which gathers opinions from final year undergraduates on the quality of their courses, data is available from the 2023 survey. The survey asks final year students to provide feedback on their academic experience relating to the following aspects: Teaching on my Course, Learning Opportunities, Assessment and Feedback, Academic Support, Organisation and Management, Learning Resources and Student Voice.

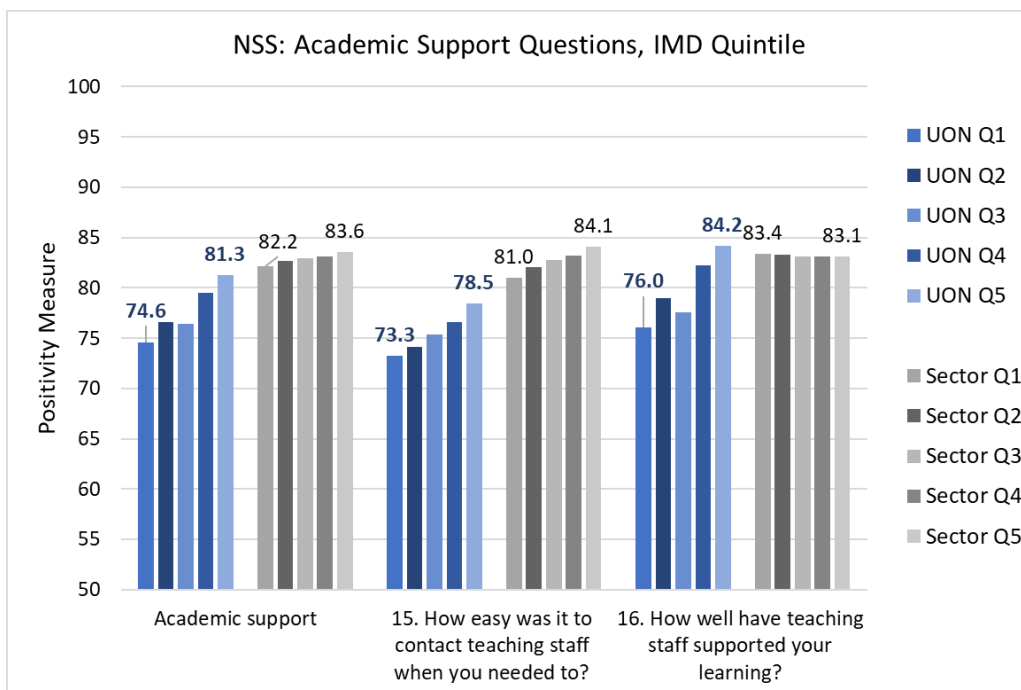
Analysis of academic support questions shows that GEM students feel 2.5% less favourable about academic support compared to their white counterparts and with a positivity measure of 76.2%, this puts them below the 81.5% sector benchmark.

Figure 31 NSS Data: Academic Support Questions by Ethnicity



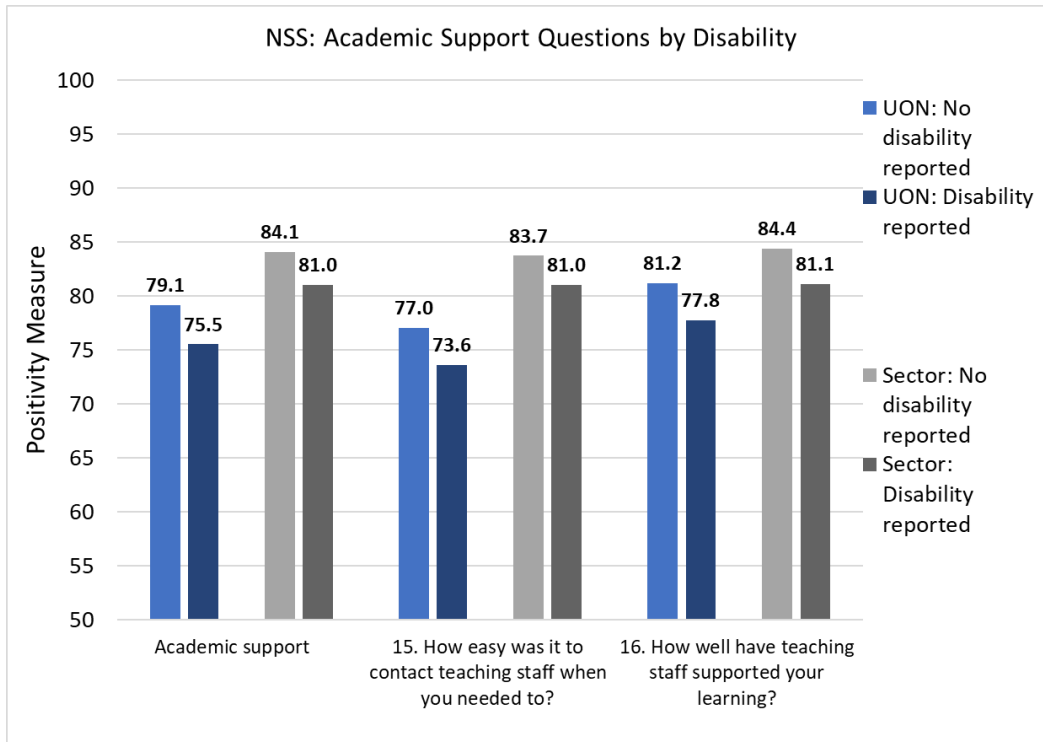
When looking at students from different IMD quintiles, students from IMD Q2 have the lowest positivity measure compared to other IMD Quintiles at UON. The positivity measure for those in IMD Q1 for Academic Support is 74.6%, compared to 78.6% for UON as a whole and 82.2% for those in IMD Q1 sector-wide.

Figure 32 NSS Data: Academic Support Questions by IMD Quintile



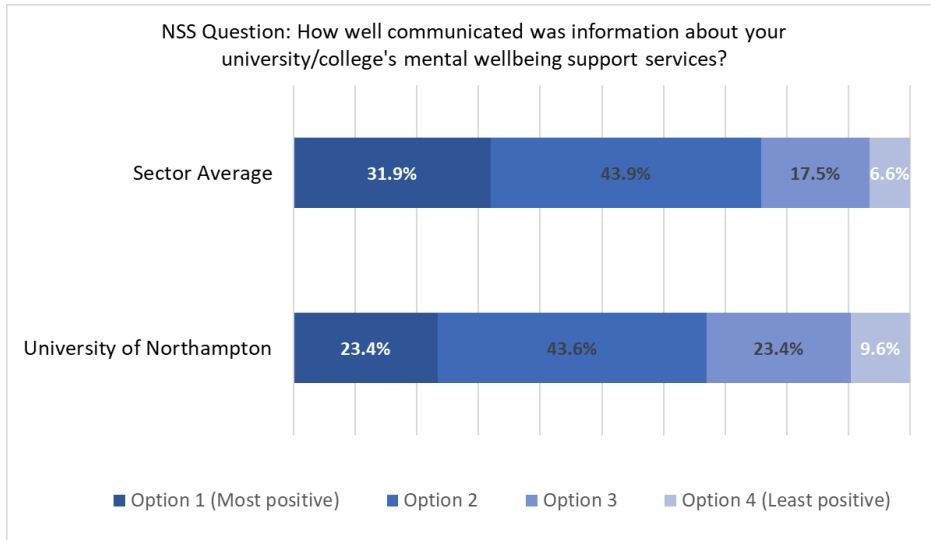
Students with a disability at UON report a lower positivity measure (75.5%) with academic support than those with no disability reported (79.1%). This difference is also seen within the sector. The difference is most notably seen in the question “How easy was it to contact teaching staff when you needed to?”, with a positivity measure of 73.6% for those with a disability, compared to 77% for those with no disability reported.

Figure 33 NSS Data: Academic Support Questions by Disability



NSS responses identifies that students at UON rate the communication of our mental health services to students at 67% compared to the sector average of 76%.

Figure 34 NSS: How well communicated was information about your university's mental wellbeing support services?



On-course Performance

Our Theory of Change dashboard shows internal data for assignment results at Levels 4,5 and 6. This shows us there is a gap between Black students and White students of 24.7pp, with fewer Black students passing Level 5 with a Grade B-, a metric we track to assess who is on track for a good degree.

Figure 35 UON APP Dashboard example: % of assignments passed first time with Grade B- or above.

APP Dashboard 22/23 - Level 5 Grade B- or Above

CLEAR < >

University

All Students: **2,273**

% Level 5 Grade B- or Above: **43.8%**

Black - White Gap: **-24.7%**

Asian - White Gap: **-15.2%**

University only

Undergraduate only

UK Domiciled only

First attempt assignments only

Select metric:

- Non-Submissions
- Level 4 Grade C or Above
- Level 5 Grade B- or Above
- Level 6 Grade B- or Above

Select dimension:

- Five-way Ethnicity Split
- Two-way Ethnicity Split
- Disability
- Gender
- IMD Quintile (England Only)

Five-way Ethnicity Split

Percentage of assignments passed first time with Grade B- or above at Level 5

Ethnicity 5-way Split	Student Count	Assignment Total	Grade B- or Above	% Grade B- or Above	Grade B- or Above Gap
Asian	199	1,831	707	38.6%	-15.2%
Black	759	5,843	1,697	29.0%	-24.7%
Mixed	99	859	319	37.1%	-16.6%
Other	24	209	79	37.8%	-16.0%
White	1,164	10,312	5,546	53.8%	
Not known	28	191	73	38.2%	-15.6%

Access, Continuation, Award and Graduate Outcomes Theory of Change Model

Stage	APP Target Cohorts	Risks/Intervention Strategies	Whole Provider Approach	Indicative Outputs	Indicative Outcomes	Indicative Impacts
Access	Male students	Knowledge and Skills	Knowledge and Skills Development	Attendees of Living Room Lectures	Higher confidence in pupils	Higher academic attainment
	IMD Q1/2	Information and Guidance	Aspiration Raising	Students attending Information and Guidance	Higher ambition in pupils	Higher HE enrolment
	Asian students	Perceptions of Higher Education	School Partnerships	Students receiving financial advice/guidance	Inspire feelings of pride	Better degree outcomes
	Maintain GEM students (Over 25%)	Data and systems integration	HEI Partnerships	Targeted student engagement	Wider sense of belonging in HE	Improved school attendance
	Students with a disability		Third Sector Partnerships	Students attending campus (UCAS/UKUS - STEAM - Taster days)	Stronger social relationship	Students making informed choices
	Care leavers		Learning Resources	Students attending a course specific workshop/activity	Improved academic attainment	Positive economic impact
			Transition Support	Teachers taking part in CPD	Pupils experience personal growth	Reduced NEET population
			Information and guidance	Schools involved in Post-16 Network	Improved career knowledge	Creating innovative thinkers
			Outreach programme development	First Generation students supported	Improved employability	Effective use of community spaces
			Perceptions of HE	Number of course change requests	Improved student success	Better connected society
				Care Leavers engaged and attending campus	Improved perceptions of HE	Better local community cohesiveness
				Financial Support Funds	Continuation metrics	Improved institutional knowledge sharing
					Improved enrolment of Asian and Male students as well as students from IMD Q1/2	Improved employer networks
					Access for GEM students is stabilised	Improved school relationships
					Improved data and systems integration	

Stage	APP Target Cohorts	Risks/Intervention Strategies	Whole Provider Approach	Indicative Outputs	Indicative Outcomes	Indicative Impacts
Continuation	IMD Q1/2	Knowledge and skills	Mental health	Experiences of the Integrated Foundation Year students	Improved sense of belonging	Students have improved knowledge of their chosen subject
	Male students	Academic support	Financial support funds	NSS survey results	Improved community cohesion	Students more likely to complete degree
	All students (target of 90% across the institution)	Personal support	Academic Support	Continuation metrics	Improved wellbeing	Students more prepared for graduate job market
	Asian students	Mental health	Personal Academic Tutors	Student engagement with GRIT and resilience workshops	Improve general self-efficacy	Stronger sense of community and belonging
	GEM students	Data and systems integration	Personal Support	Student attendance	Improved resilience and confidence	Positive classroom communities
	Students with a disability		Student Union Partnership	Student assignment submissions	Student involvement in supporting their peers	Stronger student-staff community
	Care leavers		Student Voice	Personal Academic Tutor engagements	Improved engagement with personal and academic support	Equitable outcomes for all students
			APP Steering Group Governance	Students engaging with support services	Improve trust	Broader social and cultural capital
			Intervention Strategies	Students engaging with mentoring	The continuation gap between students from IMDQ1/2 and IMDQ3/4/5 is stabilised.	Greater alumni sense of belonging
			Communication Strategy	Number of staff engaging with APP Advocates and Ambassador programmes	Reduce the continuation gap between White and GEM students	Continuous and cyclical institutional learning
		Data Integration Steering Group	Targeted student engagement	Reduce the continuation gap between male and female students		
		Continued Professional Development (Staff and Students)	Number of course change requests	Reduced student withdrawal due to academic failure		
				Reduced student withdrawal for financial reasons		
				Improved perceptions of HE		
				Institutional knowledge sharing		
				Improved data and systems integration		

Stage	APP Target Cohorts	Risks/Intervention Strategies	Whole Provider Approach	Indicative Outputs	Indicative Outcomes	Indicative Impacts
Award	GEM students	Academic support	Mental Health	Students engaging with academic services	Improved academic achievement	Improved institutional reputation
	IMD Q1/2	Personal support	Financial Support Funds	Academic assignment achievement	Improved trust in relations	Improved university rankings
	Students with a disability	Mental health	Academic Support	Engagement with Integrated Learner Support (potentially aggregated)	Improved sense of belonging	Improved good degree outcomes for all students
	Care leavers	Data and systems integration	Personal Academic Tutors	Personal Academic Tutor engagements	Improved academic engagement	Better than sector average value-added
			Personal Support	Increased Learning and Development Tutor appointments	Reduced academic failure	Becoming 'first choice' university for underrepresented groups
			Student Union Partnership	Targeted student engagement	Reduce levels of academic misconduct	Reputation as 'best-practice' APP university
			Student Voice	Reduction in negative Academic Integrity Office outcomes	Reduce the award gap between White and GEM students	Stronger alumni networks
			APP Steering Group Governance	Longitudinal grades changes	The award gap between students from IMDQ1/2 and IMDQ3/4/5 is stabilised	Improved social and cultural capital
			Intervention Strategies	Academic self-efficacy	Improved wellbeing	
			Communication Strategy	NNS survey results	Improved data and systems integration	
		Data Integration Steering Group	Increased assignment submission rate			
		Continued Professional Development (Staff and Students)				
Stage	APP Target Cohorts	Risks/Intervention Strategies	Whole Provider Approach	Indicative Outputs	Indicative Outcomes	Indicative Impacts
Graduate Outcomes	GEM students	Academic support	Continued Professional Development (Staff and Students)	Students given work experience or placements	Improved confidence in career choice	Broadened social and cultural capital
	Asian students	Personal support	Alumni Network	Students engaged with employer activities	Student involvement in supporting their peers	Experienced alumni role models
	Students with a disability	Mental health	Student Union partnership	Students engaged with Student Futures Directorate	Improved graduate outcomes for Asian students	Alumni contributing to curriculum
	Care leavers	Data and systems integration	Personal Support	Students engaged with Student Career Coaches	Students experience personal growth	Sustained graduate success
			Career Readiness Strategy	Modules with integrated employability offer	Improved engagement with personal support	Improved positive destinations
			Work experience opportunities/funds	Results from careers registration survey	Improve trust	Innovative graduates
				Improved data and systems integration		

How we developed our institutional EORR

The development of our institutional EORR reflects how we have developed the whole Access and Participation Plan at UON. We have an inherently collaborative approach and consult widely with our staff, students and external stakeholders.

Our APP Steering Group led this process, identifying which faculties and directorates could provide data on the indicators of risks identified in the [OfS' risk register](#). Among others, we collected data from:

- Business Intelligence Management Information Unit
- Mental Health and Counselling
- Learning Development
- Admissions and Enrolment
- Financial Guidance
- Student Support and
- Accommodation

We analysed this data to identify which student cohorts may be most at risk from an inequality of opportunity. Alongside this process, each academic subject area and professional service directorate completed an EORR outlining their experiences of each risk. Their qualitative comments and the quantitative data were consolidated into a University EORR, allowing the APP Steering Group to triangulate this information with the APP Data Dashboard to confirm our institutional risks:

- Knowledge and skills
- Information and guidance
- Perceptions of Higher Education
- Academic support
- Personal support
- Mental health

The inclusion of a seventh risk 'Data and systems integration' was deemed necessary by the APP Steering Group, recognising that our data systems sometimes hindered a thorough triangulation analysis of our students due to their lack of integration with one another.

Since 2023, we have hosted staff drop-ins and ran surveys to inform our consultation process. Additionally, we have delivered workshops to our University Leadership Team, all three faculties and directorates to gather feedback and reflect on challenges raised by colleagues across the University. As a result of this comprehensive process, we feel confident that our seven identified risks are appropriate, and our APP will address them through a whole provider approach.

Externally, our County Head of 6th Form Network were also consulted on our access risks. Their feedback confirmed the risks we had identified through our University EORR analysis.

The Northampton Students' Union (NSU) is a close partner in our work on access and participation. They sponsor our Student Equality Consultant panel, led by our APP Manager. This group has been instrumental in providing an authentic student voice throughout our APP development and constructed the Student Submission that accompanies this APP. Further information surrounding our student consultation is set out in section **6. Student Consultation** within this Plan. Additionally, NSU's monthly

Student Life Pulse Survey has provided an important insight into the scale of the mental health risk to equality of opportunity at UON, highlighting its intrinsic link to academic and personal support.

The focus of our analysis is on full-time, undergraduate, home students. We have considered part-time and apprenticeship students in our analysis; however, the number of these students is either small or they are making expected progress with little or no gap existing between them and comparator groups. However, we believe that continuing to adopt a whole provider approach will positively benefit all students, including those studying part-time and on apprenticeships.

Annex B: Further information that sets out the rationale, assumptions and evidence base for each intervention strategy included in the access and participation plan.

Intervention Strategy 1: Knowledge and Skills		
Several activities within this knowledge and skills intervention strategy are delivered in collaboration with Aspire Higher Uni Connect, utilising their attainment raising funding. Should the Uni Connect funding end, our capacity to deliver this intervention strategy will be reduced.		
Activity descriptor	Rationale / Justification	Evidence Base
<p>1. UNI Club. An eight-week year 9 attainment raising programme, led by UON postgraduate students additionally developing HE skills including; research, study skills and independent learning.</p> <p>2. Reading Warriors - Two work streams. (i) A literacy programme with our partner primary and secondary schools to develop pupils' reading age. This is an education phase programme to improve attainment and develop a sense of community with older pupils supporting younger pupils. (ii) Year 12's are trained as Reading Warriors to work with year 8 and 9 pupils to develop reading age, oracy and improve educational access through improvements in literacy.</p> <p>3. Saturday Club. Collaborating with local arts practitioners including Northampton Film Festival and national partners The British Film Institute, to deliver a 20-week programme to Key Stage 4 pupils, including</p>	<p>The activities within this intervention strategy (targeted towards IMDQ1/2, male, GEM and Asian pupils) were designed to make the most of our partnership working, including schools, other HEIs and third sector organisations, as well as provide long-term multi-touch point activities to support attainment raising.</p> <p>Additionally, they will directly address the risk of knowledge and skills by familiarising pupils with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Career routes - University environment - Exploring aspirations - Creating expectations - Develop a sense of belonging 	<p>Previous evaluations have identified that longer and more in-depth programmes such as The National Saturday Club, Lego Club, Project Party, UNI Club and Reading Warriors result in higher levels of skill development as well as better transition to HE either immediately or within two years of engagement.</p> <p>Educational attainment of boys - House of Commons Library https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2024-0043/CDP-2024-0043.pdf</p> <p>Annex A – Girls outperform boys in key stage 2 and key stage 4 exams, this is reflected in Northamptonshire with the gap between girls and boys being bigger than the national average.</p> <p>Gap between cohorts at GCSE - Department for Education – https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-4-performance</p> <p>1000 disadvantaged pupils miss out on top grades – Sutton Trust https://www.suttontrust.com/news-opinion/all-news-opinion/1000-disadvantaged-pupils-miss-out-on-top-grades/</p> <p>Disadvantage gap - The Education Policy Institute</p>

two visits to London museums and art galleries to enhance the cultural capital and awareness of opportunities in the sector with participants.

4. Lego Club.

Working with Key Stage three pupils, focusing on skill development and a greater depth of knowledge surrounding careers in engineering. Funding has previously been precured from Cummins Engineering Ltd's community fund and enabled the purchase of Lego robots and engineer expertise through their staff input into the club.

5. Revision Boost.

Multiple interventions in collaboration with external partners, to boost male pupil's GCSE maths grades from 3 to 4 and 4 to 5. Targeted at schools with low Progress and Attainment 8 scores. GCSE maths learning resources developed by the Widening Access Team will support this project.

6. Primary SPARK Award.

A six-month social impact programme to develop self-efficacy including teamwork, communication, empathy, project planning and presentation skills. Ten target IMD Q1/2 primary schools year 1 – 6 pupils.

7. Primary School Oracy Programme.

Working in collaboration with Noisy Classroom in

https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Covid19_2021_Disadvantage_Gaps_in_England.pdf/

Key qualitative responses from the county Head of 6th Form Network indicate that aspiration and attainment, are lacking amongst their young people. The increasing number of non-specialist and cover teachers delivering lessons within schools is leading to a knowledge and skills gap in areas of disadvantage across our county which the activities within this intervention strategy will address.

<p>the development of enhanced oracy and debating skills programme for Key Stage 2 pupils.</p> <p>9. Primary Law Taskmaster. In collaboration with Warwick University who have developed this train the trainer programme. UON law students will be trained to deliver a series of workshops to year 5 pupils to develop knowledge in law, understand career and progression opportunities as well as self-efficacy skills in 4 partner primary schools.</p> <p>11. Project Party. Collaboration with the UON Events, Tourism and Hospitality subject area, working in partner schools to develop event management skills over a three-month period (project planning, communication and teamwork) during the development of end of year prom celebrations.</p>		
<p>8. Widening Access design, delivery and evaluation workshop. Delivered across the academic year, workshops designed to support academic colleagues design, deliver and evaluate targeted widening access programmes effectively.</p>	<p>This activity is designed to develop the delivery of quality interventions through our widening access design, delivery and evaluation workshops. This will not only help develop capacity but also develop advocates within our academic and professional teams to enable our offer of quality skills and knowledge-based interventions to be expanded beyond the Access and Participation Plan commitments, impacting positively on the regularity of interventions our schools are offered.</p>	<p>Activities led by academic and professional services colleagues currently require significant support from the Widening Access Team to quality assure and deliver impactful outcomes.</p>

<p>10. Drama in Action. UON lecturer and students model teaching practices in the performing arts subjects to targeted schools. School teaching staff gain continued professional development (CPD) and year 11 pupils are supported in learning new drama techniques mapped to GCSE curriculum, focused on raising pupil attainment at GCSE.</p>	<p>The impact of this high quality CPD opportunity for specialist and non-specialist staff in schools was requested by our partner schools to develop staff knowledge and skills which will directly impact on those of the secondary school pupils.</p>	<p>Northamptonshire school subject specialist staff request Subject GCSE grades in academic year 2023/24 The effects of high-quality professional development on teachers and students - Education Policy Institute – https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/the-effects-of-high-quality-professional-development-on-teachers-and-students/</p>
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Intervention Strategy 2 - Information and Guidance		
Activity descriptor	Rationale / Justification	Evidence Base

<p>1. UCAS/UKUS Fair. A multi-HE institution fair based at UON. Keynote speakers and HE conference hall gives 2500 pupils a chance to understand routes into Higher Education.</p>	<p>Providing post 16 pupils with the opportunity to access a UCAS fair at a central geographical position within the county, allowing for greater access and attendance from pupils within the county of Northamptonshire. This will enable pupils to attend that have never had the opportunity before.</p>	<p>UCAS discovery exhibitions data - https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/what-and-where-study/university-events-and-open-days/ucas-discovery-exhibitions</p> <p>What are UCAS fairs and why should you go – WhatUni - https://www.whatuni.com/advice/applying-to-uni/what-are-ucas-fairs-why-should-you-go/54477/</p>
<p>2. Living Room Lectures webinar programme. An annual programme of webinars to support an improved understanding of Higher Education including; student finance, accommodation, student life, Counselling and Mental Health Team, subject tasters, employability, how clearing works and enrolment.</p>	<p>Living room lecture webinars are a keyway to engage with pupils in this cost-of-living crisis, but specifically for UON with its traditional widening access cohorts from low socio-economic areas of the country. Enabling pupils who may be first-generation to university, with their family members, access at no cost to a series of webinars which enable students to have an insight into university life that suits their financial needs.</p>	<p>All-Party Parliamentary Group for Students – Cost of Living inquiry: UCAS submission https://www.ucas.com/file/709801/download?toKen=FKOek9oY#:~:text=on%20open%20days-,Almost%20two%20in%20five%20prospective%20applicants%20domiciled%20in%20the%20UK,open%20days%20due%20to%20cost.</p>
<p>3. Annually review and monitor EDI considerations and reasonable adjustments for open days and discovery days. A review of event communications and web content specifically highlighting our support for APP target cohorts.</p> <p>6. Annual review of university Taster Days. A review of pre-event communications and booking information with specific consideration</p>	<p>To align with our disability objective of encouraging students to disclose any additional needs they may have, these opportunities clearly highlight key HE transition and student success information as well as taster opportunities to experience HE with limited barriers for those students with additional needs. We want to be able to provide opportunities for all</p>	<p>Enhancing the disabled student experience – Advance HE- https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/disabled-students-commission-annual-report-2020-2021-enhancing-disabled-student</p> <p>Reflections from within the UON marketing and admissions teams identified a need to improve the existing information used to support students</p>

<p>given to how we support visiting students with additional needs such as neurodiversity and physical disabilities and highlighting specific support services for students from underrepresented cohorts that may provide barriers to HE.</p>	<p>pupils so that they get the best experience out of open/taster/discovery days as well as through communications we provide to them prior to these experiences.</p>	<p>with disabilities make decisions about when and how to attend taster days at the University.</p>
<p>4. Careers in STEAM Northants. An annual science, technology, engineering, arts and maths focused careers exhibition based at UON. Workshops, keynote speakers, experiences and careers conference give 2500 partner school pupils from year 6-13 a chance to see the impact of STEAM subjects on the world and understand routes into and out of Higher Education.</p>	<p>Qualitative and contextual feedback from our partner school's points to low aspirations and awareness of HE in pupils in both primary and secondary schools in the county. Our Careers in STEAM Fair, is an opportunity for our IMD partners schools to engage in a STEAM careers show case fair that they would not have the opportunity to attend if it was not delivered by UON. As part of our previous APP this opportunity is ongoing and has grown exponentially with school bookings filling in one afternoon annually. 3,000 external visitors 42 schools (primary and secondary) 50 external companies exhibited or presented 28 UON STEAM subjects represented Schools commentary about this opportunity centres round its relevance, communication and quality, impact and follow-up activities to embed career awareness.</p>	<p>Big Bang STEM Careers Fair - https://www.thebigbang.org.uk/news/raising-aspirations-in-stem/</p> <p>The importance of STEM outreach – Enginuity.org - https://enginuity.org/news-events/the-importance-of-stem-outreach</p> <p>Career Events, what works? - CEC - https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/media/u0yf5btt/careers-enterprise-what-works-report-careers-events.pdf p.19 specifically</p>
<p>5. First-Generation to university. Introduction and delivery of Student Life Sessions delivered in schools and colleges by current</p>	<p>A significant proportion of our students are from the most socio-economically disadvantaged</p>	<p>Supporting first-generation students into Higher Education - THE -</p>

<p>student ambassadors that are first generation into Higher Education sharing their experiences and journey to Higher Education. Review current sessions to ensure all language and content is inclusive to those that may come from this group. Sessions are also included on UON campus visits.</p>	<p>backgrounds and are also first generation to university. With the limited social capital that students from these backgrounds have this activity is key to the development of students' confidence and awareness as well as the intention of demystifying HE for them. To better support pupils at access, we are developing a bespoke first-generation workshop in schools and colleges led by student that are themselves first-generation to university. It is key to provide information and guidance from someone who has been through the process themselves with UON and enable school pupils to identify someone like them as successful in HE.</p>	<p>https://www.timeshighereducation.com/campus/spotlight/supporting-firstgeneration-students-higher-education</p>
<p>7. School teaching staff continued professional development (CPD).</p> <p>7(i) Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) School Lead Network. The development of best practice, knowledge development and shared resources to support the attainment and skill development of EPQ pupil cohorts in schools.</p> <p>7(ii) County Head of 6th Form Network. In collaboration with UCAS and The Widening Access Team</p>	<p>Our EPQ and County Head of 6th Form Network are two key CPD opportunities for colleagues in the county. Both offer regular opportunities to meet and share best practice as well as engage in workshops led by sector professionals including professional bodies (Ofsted/ASCL/school improvement partner) local authority colleagues or charities. The impact of these high quality CPD opportunities on specialist staff in schools is apparent by their regular attendance and engagement</p>	<p>This has been requested from Northamptonshire school subject specialist staff Subject GCSE grades in academic year 2023/24</p> <p>The effects of High-quality professional development on teachers and students - Education Policy Institute – https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/the-effects-of-high-quality-professional-development-on-teachers-and-students/</p>

<p>Head of 6th form teaching staff continued professional development network.</p>	<p>as well as their changed practice. Information and guidance provided by UCAS and exam boards is key to the information and guidance that is provided to staff which directly impacts on secondary school pupils.</p>	
<p>8(i) Care Leavers Higher Education Experience Day. Providing care leavers with the opportunity to spend a day visiting campus to receive tailored advice and support. Sessions include HE Life talks by current students, financial guidance and support and application guidance.</p> <p>8(ii) Bridging Futures programme for Care Leavers. An annual programme of interventions collaborating with the Northamptonshire Virtual Schools, Northampton College and the Widening Access Team to develop and support an improved understanding of Higher Education for up to 50 care leavers. This will include Higher Education life workshops, employability skill development, visits to campus and interactions with UON undergraduate students to develop familiarity with Higher Education.</p> <p>8(iii) Care Leavers and Estranged students' arrival support package. Single point of contact at UON for all care leavers and support package of resources in place to welcome care leavers and estranged students onto campus during welcome weekend.</p>	<p>This is a priority for UON and the Office for Students. 6% of care leavers are in Higher Education aged 19 and at UON care leavers represent 1.2% of our level 4 undergraduate cohort. They have low continuation metrics/high withdrawal rates in the HE sector and at UON and this programme seeks to address this. Imposter syndrome is common in care experienced students and lack of family networks and social capital is a barrier to accessing Higher Education. Pupils from a care background also have a lower sense of belonging. This three-point programme helps care leavers from our largest further education college understand Higher Education, experience a day on campus and be supported in their transition to UON with the identification of a UON key contact for Care leavers to support them throughout their undergraduate study with us.</p>	<p>Care Experienced students and looked after children - Office for students - https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/effective-practice/care-experienced/</p> <p>Encouraging Care leavers into Higher Education https://wonkhe.com/blogs/encouraging-care-leavers-into-higher-education/</p> <p>6 times less likely – UPP Foundation https://upp-foundation.org/six-times-less-likely/</p> <p>Building belonging - Advance HE - https://wonkhe.com/wp-content/wonkhe-uploads/2022/10/Building-Belonging-October-2022.pdf</p> <p>Arrival day is a milestone that's complicated for care leavers – WonkHE https://wonkhe.com/blogs/arrival-day-is-a-milestone-thats-complicated-for-care-leavers-2/</p> <p>Cotton, D. R., Nash, T., & Kneale, P. (2017). Supporting the retention of non-traditional students in Higher Education using a resilience framework. <i>European Educational Research</i></p>

		Journal, 16(1), 62-79. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904116652629
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Intervention Strategy 3 - Perceptions of Higher Education		
Activity descriptor	Rationale / Justification	Evidence Base
<p>1. Care Leavers “Adversity to University” programme.</p> <p>In collaboration with University of Chichester and the UPP Foundation, this programme seeks to work with care leavers through an existing module created and tested by University of Chichester to help them consider university as an educational route.</p>	<p>This is a priority for UON and the Office for Students.</p> <p>6% of care leavers are in Higher Education aged 19 and at UON care leavers represent 1.2% of our level 4 undergraduate cohort. They have low continuation metrics/high withdrawal rates in the HE sector and at UON and this programme addresses this.</p> <p>Imposter syndrome is common in care experienced students and lack of family networks and social capital is a barrier to accessing Higher Education. Students from a care background also have a lower sense of belonging.</p>	<p>From Adversity to University – University of Chichester - https://upp-foundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Bridging-module-toolkit-UofC-and-UPP.pdf</p> <p>Care Experienced students and looked after children - Office for students - https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/effective-practice/care-experienced/</p> <p>Encouraging Care leavers into Higher Education https://wonkhe.com/blogs/encouraging-care-leavers-into-higher-education/</p>

	<p>The programme will be delivered in collaboration with University of Chichester and The UPP foundation and seeks to address care leavers sense of belonging throughout the programme</p>	<p>6 times less likely – UPP Foundation https://upp-foundation.org/six-times-less-likely/</p> <p>Building belonging - Advance HE - https://wonkhe.com/wp-content/wonkhe-uploads/2022/10/Building-Belonging-October-2022.pdf</p> <p>Cotton, D. R., Nash, T., & Kneale, P. (2017). Supporting the retention of non-traditional students in Higher Education using a resilience framework. <i>European Educational Research Journal</i>, 16(1), 62-79. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904116652629</p>
<p>2. Tackling Futures - Key Stage 3 Focused Boys Project. Working in collaboration with University of Bedfordshire to compare the inputs, outcomes and impacts of a bespoke project for boys in year 7 and 8 to develop self-efficacy and effective study practices.</p>	<p>Males are less represented in HE than females. At UON male students make up 36% of our cohort compared to 64% female cohort as a 4-year average. Fear of failure for male students is an ongoing issue for us at UON and one that manifest in our male students being less likely to ask for help from our learning development teams and all other student support services. Resolving these issues in a key stage 3 setting, pre-access point, is crucial to the development of patterns of behaviour for our male students. This project focuses specifically on boys, working collaboratively with University of Bedfordshire to address self-efficacy and confidence will</p>	<p>Working-Class Boys and Progression to Higher Education Dr Alex Blower https://heprofessional.co.uk/edition/dancing-with-the-elephant-in-the-room-working-class-boys-and-progression-to-higher-education</p> <p>Educational attainment of boys - House of Commons Library https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2024-0043/CDP-2024-0043.pdf</p> <p>Exploring learning development from the perspective of black males - UON Learning Development team - https://pure.northampton.ac.uk/en/publications/exploring-learning-development-from-the-perspectives-of-black-stu</p>

	<p>identify and share best practice through its evaluation.</p>	
<p>3. Primary Ignite Your Future Programme. A year 6 programme of multiple interventions across the academic year, delivered by a diverse range of student ambassadors, focuses on providing information on progression to Higher Education and an insight into careers, including workshops in school and on campus.</p>	<p>Early engagement with children in primary schools is essential to personal growth, the avoidance of misconceptions surrounding HE and supports aspiration. Our multiple intervention programme, delivered by Student Ambassadors, addresses the various progression routes to HE, insights into careers and highlights student life. The diversity of our student ambassadors within this programme supports the children to identify themselves as someone who can aspire to and be successful within Higher Education.</p>	<p>Why we start working with students from age 7 – IntoUniversity - https://intouniversity.org/why-we-exist/why-we-start-working-with-students-from-age-seven/</p> <p>What influences the decisions school leavers make? UCAS - https://www.ucas.com/file/435551/download?to-ken=VUdIDVFh</p> <p>I saw myself - Yuki Hazlewood https://equaliteach.co.uk/i-saw-myself/</p>
<p>4. Black Leaders Programme. A programme of workshops during the first semester led by Black trainers. This programme examines concepts of community, identity, and leadership from the viewpoints of racialised students encouraging them to explore how to leverage their personal power to foster supportive relationships that cultivate a sense of belonging and community.</p>	<p>To empower Black undergraduate students early on in their transition to level 4 courses with the confidence, sense of belonging and mattering to become resilient leaders and role models to other Black students at UON within a safe space which the literature identifies as crucial. The programme is designed to promote an improved sense of belonging and confidence in approaching student services at UON to impact on their outcomes and award and support the closure of our award gap.</p>	<p>Grit Future leaders programme - DANCOP https://www.teamdancop.co.uk/case-studies/future-leaders/</p> <p>Exploring learning development from the perspective of black males - UON Learning Development team - https://pure.northampton.ac.uk/en/publications/exploring-learning-development-from-the-perspectives-of-black-stu</p> <p>The Grit Effect: Frontiers in Psychology - Eskreis-Winkler, L., Shulman, E. P., Beal, S. A., & Duckworth, A. L. (2014). The grit effect: Predicting retention in the military, the workplace, school and marriage. Frontiers in Psychology, 5(36), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00036.</p>

<p>5. Representative Student Ambassador Programme.</p> <p>The development and recruitment of a student ambassador team that represents the university population inclusive of underrepresented cohorts.</p>	<p>The development of a wider cohort of student ambassadors that reflect our student cohort at UON is key. Being seen, is essential to encourage underrepresented cohorts into HE from our widening access partner schools, whether in the county or further afield. Currently male students within our Student Ambassador Team are underrepresented and we can develop this to support increased male post 16 students accessing university at UON.</p>	<p>I saw myself - Yuki Hazlewood https://equaliteach.co.uk/i-saw-myself/</p> <p>Diverse students need bespoke personal tutoring - WonkHE https://wonkhe.com/blogs/diverse-students-need-bespoke-personal-tutoring/</p> <p>Ten actions lecturers can take to boost black students' belonging – Dr Patrice Seuwou - https://www.timeshighereducation.com/campus/ten-actions-lecturers-can-take-boost-black-students-belonging</p>
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Intervention Strategy 4: Academic Support

Activity descriptor	Rationale / Justification	Evidence Base
<p>1. Enhancement of the Integrated Foundation Year (IFY).</p> <p>Our IFY currently supports 280 students with their transition into Higher Education. The majority of the IFY cohort form part of our APP target cohorts. As the IFY is not a new feature of our delivery, the enhancement of it is an ongoing activity that will be collaborative across the university with a variety of stakeholders including students.</p>	<p>The Integrated Foundation Year (IFY) serves as a critical bridge for students transitioning into Higher Education at UON. Enhancing the IFY is vital for several reasons, especially considering the demographic it supports, including a significant number of students from APP target cohorts who tend to have a lower sense of belonging. As it stands, students who enrol via our IFY, continue at a lesser rate compared to those who start at level 4 and this is a gap we are addressing. The enhancement aims to improve the sense of belonging, deliver a connected experience, develop resilience and confidence, and ensure long-term positive outcomes for our IFY students.</p>	<p>Sense of belonging as a predictor of intentions to persist among African American and White first-year college students' - Hausmann, L. R. M., Schofield, J. W. and Woods, R. L. (2007), - Research in Higher Education, Vol. 48(7)</p> <p>Supporting student success: strategies for institutional change, What Works? Student Retention & Success programme' - Thomas, L., Hill, M., O'Mahony, J. and Yorke, M. (2017) , Paul Hamlyn Foundation report. Available at - https://lizthomasassociates.co.uk/downloads/2017/Summary%20report.pdf</p> <p>Supporting resilience in first year of university: Curriculum, consideration and cooperation - Woolf, Zemits, B., Janssen, A., & Knight, S. (2019) . Journal of Academic Language and Learning, 13(1), A108-A123. Available at - https://journal.aall.org.au/index.php/jall/article/view/505</p>

		<p>Curtis, E. et al., 2017. Open to critique: predictive effects of academic outcomes from a bridging/foundation programme on first-year degree-level study. <i>Assessment and evaluation in higher education</i>, 42(1), pp.151–167.</p> <p>Dampier, G et al. Avoiding the Deficit Model and Defining Student Success: Perspectives from a New Foundation Year Context. <i>Journal of the Foundation Year Network</i>, Volume 2(2019), pp. 41-52</p> <p>Parks, S & Seal M. Pedagogy as Transition: Student Directed Tutor Groups on Foundation Year. <i>Journal of the Foundation Year Network</i>, Volume 2 (2019), pp. 7-20.</p> <p>Sanders, L. & Daly, A., 2013. Building a successful foundation?: The role of Foundation Year courses in preparing students for their degree. <i>Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning</i>, 14(1), pp.42–56.</p> <p>Sanders, L.D., Daly, A.P. & Fitzgerald, K., 2016. Predicting Retention, Understanding Attrition: A Prospective Study of Foundation Year Students. <i>Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning</i>, 18(2), pp.50–83.</p>
<p>2. Enhancing the Integrated Learner Support Model. Proactive support across all stages of undergraduate study to develop effective study skills and wellbeing. This is the development of an</p>	<p>Integrated Learner Support delivers a supportive student experience by ensuring that all our taught students are aware of and can access the full range of support services that the</p>	<p>Improving student retention through enhanced academic and pastoral support: A Case Study - Sharp, E., Wray, R., & Maxwell, R. (2020). <i>Innovative Practice in Higher Education</i>, 4(1), 39-56 -</p>

<p>existing intervention as a collaboration across faculties and professional service teams.</p>	<p>University provides. This is achieved by delivering in-curriculum introductions to these support areas and meeting the students where they are, reducing barriers to having to seek them out when they are needed. We are expanding this activity to enable level 4 students to access support within their halls of residence accommodation to ensure that there are multiple access points to this support for the students.</p>	<p>http://journals.staffs.ac.uk/index.php/ipihe/article/view/196</p> <p>Our explanation of the ILS offer - https://mypad.northampton.ac.uk/lte/integrated-learner-support/</p>
<p>3. Enhancing and Embedding our Quality Assurance (QA) and Engagement Processes. Enhancing our existing QA process to include APP demographic data in conjunction with NSS and student outcome data to identify courses where quality improvements are needed to ensure a joined-up approach to interventions that supports institutional, TEF and APP objectives.</p>	<p>The enhancement and embedding of quality assurance (QA) processes are crucial for maintaining and improving the educational standards and student outcomes at UON. This will include better representation within internal quality assurance processes. Currently, different sets of data are looked at in isolation leading to disconnected action plans. By incorporating APP demographic data alongside National Student Survey, Teaching Excellence Framework and student outcome data, we can adopt a more joined-up approach to quality assurance resulting in holistic action plans that provide a robust response to any areas of improvement affecting outcomes for students.</p>	
<p>4. Development of resilience and GRIT¹⁸ through tutorial development and delivery.</p>	<p>Progression and continuation rates are a challenge for all HE institutions.</p>	<p>Eskreis-Winkler, L., Shulman, E. P., Beal, S. A., & Duckworth, A. L. (2014). The grit effect:</p>

<p>An annual enrolment questionnaire to identify each students' levels of confidence, resilience and self-efficacy.</p> <p>Subsequent development and delivery of student workshops targeted at programmes with accumulative scores below our threshold.</p>	<p>Duckworth et al's (2007) seminal research relating to retention found that grit was positively correlated with academic success and retention. Grit is described as a non-cognitive trait of passion and perseverance for long term goals (Duckworth et al. 2007). As an institution, we propose to use the 5-minute self-reported survey to calculate individual grit scores which then can be used to offer interventions to students.</p> <p>Research conducted by UON's Learning Development Team has shown that attending a Learning Development tutorial can increase the retention rates of students with low grit by 6% and those with high grit 10%. Actively targeting students with Learning Development tutorials has demonstrated a link with continuation and retention.</p>	<p>Predicting retention in the military, the workplace, school and marriage. <i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>, 5(36), 1-12.</p> <p>https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00036.</p> <p>Grit: Perseverance and passion for long-term goals - Duckworth, A. L., Peterson, C., Matthews, M.D. & Kelly, D.R. (2007). <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 92(6), 1087- 1101 - http://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.92.6.1087</p> <p>The impact of grit scores and interventions upon retention and progression - Mansfield, S., Rice, P. Cramphorn, I & Coulson, K (2024) - In European First Year Experience Conference, Copenhagen 2024</p> <p>Cotton, D. R., Nash, T., & Kneale, P. (2017). Supporting the retention of non-traditional students in Higher Education using a resilience framework. <i>European Educational Research Journal</i>, 16(1), 62-79. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904116652629</p>
<p>5. Timetabling optimisation.</p> <p>Introduction of block timetabling to be more responsive to our student demographics and needs will enable them to better engage in their learning.</p>	<p>Introducing block timetabling at UON aligns with feedback received from students indicating that a condensed scheduling of timetables will better meet student needs, improve engagement and allow them to balance study, work, and personal commitments. This approach attracts students with a variety of obligations, making Higher Education more</p>	<p>'Timetabling Proposal' - Iter Consulting (2024) , University of Northampton. [Internal Document].</p>

	<p>accessible and affordable by reducing travel costs. Sector consultants at Iter Consulting have shared with us that predictable schedules enhance student satisfaction, particularly for those with disabilities and our justification is that it will lead to better continuation rates, and overall student success. This initiative demonstrates UON's commitment to flexible, inclusive education.</p>	
<p>6. Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) Steering Group. A new development led by our Head of Learning and Teaching enhancement, in collaboration with faculty executives and learning and teaching professionals to develop management, impact and evolution of the existing PAT model.</p>	<p>We have a Personal Academic Tutoring Policy that we are proud of but, we accept through reflection that the implementation of a consistent approach to Personal and Academic Tutoring is needed. To achieve this, a Steering Group focuses on the enhancement of the process is necessary. It will seek to embed minimum standards of personal tutoring and provide guidance on how to deliver a model that is responsive to diverse student needs as we seek to address the complex and multifaceted underlying factors that contribute to the gaps we see across the student life cycle. This includes looking at the diversity of our PTs, their training needs, and how that mechanism is informed by our wider system integration work. (Gabi et al. 2024)</p>	<p>“An intentional transformation of PT is needed to align tutoring practice with contemporary principles of equity and racial literacy. For PT to be effective, it must be proactive, inclusive and responsive to diverse student groups' unique needs and experiences” pp.16 (Gabi et al., 2024). Can the role of a personal tutor contribute to reducing the undergraduate degree awarding gap for racially minoritised students? - British Educational Research Journal. Gabi, J., Braddock, A., Brown, C., Miller, D., Mynott, G., Jacobi, M., Banerjee, P., Kenny, K. & Rawson, A. (2024). Can the role of a personal tutor contribute to reducing the undergraduate degree awarding gap for racially minoritised students? <i>British Educational Research Journal</i>, 00, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3999</p> <p>Lochtie, D., McIntosh, E., Stork, A. and Walker, B. (2018) <i>Effective personal tutoring in higher education</i>. London: Critical Publishing.</p>

	<p>The PAT Steering Group will also consider implementation of recommendations from research and project outcomes recommendations for the PAT system and community of practice</p>	<p>McFarlane, K. (2016) Tutoring the tutors: Supporting effective personal tutoring. <i>Active Learning in Higher Education</i>. 17(1), pp.77–89.</p> <p>McIntosh, E. (2018) The 4 step tutorial pathway – A model of early intervention and transitional support to facilitate resilience and partnership working in personal tutoring. In: <i>UK advising and tutoring (UKAT) conference</i>, Derby, 27 March 2018.</p> <p>Tett, L., Cree, V., Mullins, E. and Christie, H. (2017) Narratives of care amongst undergraduate students. <i>Pastoral Care in Education</i>. 35 (3), pp.166-178</p> <p>Thomas, L. (2012) <i>Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: Final report from the What Works? Student retention and success programme</i>. London: Paul Hamlyn Foundation.</p> <p>Walker, B. W. (2022). Tackling the personal tutoring conundrum: A qualitative study on the impact of developmental support for tutors. <i>Active Learning in Higher Education</i>. 23(1), pp.65-77.</p>
<p>7. Implementation of Universal Design for Learning Model. Reflected within our Learning and Teaching Strategy. This will improve and optimise teaching and learning for students based on scientific insights into how humans learn.</p>	<p>Universal Design for Learning (UDL) recognises, celebrates and accommodates diversity in learning & teaching through the key principles of <i>Representation</i> (presenting information and content in a variety of ways), <i>Engagement</i> (ensuring learners’</p>	<p>AHEAD (n.d) - The UDL Framework Explained - AHEAD</p> <p>Developing Teaching Practice with Universal Design for Learning Educational Developments Issue 19.3: 16-19 - Merry, K. L (2018) -</p>

	<p>interests and learning preferences are captured through multiple ways of engaging with the materials) and <i>Action and Expression</i> (enabling learners to demonstrate their learning through a range of assessment experiences) (Merry, 2018). Learning & Teaching at UON will celebrate accessibility and inclusivity through the adoption of UDL. UDL can be regarded, in addition to widening access and participation in learning and assessment activities for all, as pivotal in addressing digital poverty (e.g. by providing a variety of ways to access materials) (Merry, 2021) as well as supporting students with disabilities (through its flexibility) (AHEAD, nd).</p>	<p>publications_240_Educational-Developments-19.3-CORRECTED.pdf (seda.ac.uk)</p> <p>Universal Design for Learning: an antidote to digital poverty - Merry, K. L (2021) - Universal Design for Learning: an antidote to digital poverty Advance HE (advance-he.ac.uk)</p>
<p>8. Targeted student Mentoring. Professional and Peer-to-Peer mentoring opportunities inclusive of an alignment to our Empowering Black Professionals Working Group.</p>	<p>We have a long history of delivering successful peer mentoring initiatives at the University of Northampton as evidenced by the substantial amount of literature. This activity represents an evolution of this work to include professional mentors and provide a central Community of Practice within which these various schemes will be managed and coordinated as we know they positively impact on student outcomes.</p> <p>A key focus with both the peer and professional mentoring options is that there will be a diverse pool of mentors. This work is an action from our</p>	<p>Working outside the box: breaking down barriers with a Learning Development Peer Mentor scheme - Thomas, S., & Mansfield, S. (2022). <i>Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education</i>, 25. - https://doi.org/10.47408/jldhe.vi25.971, https://doi.org/10.47408/jldhe.vi25.971</p> <p>Mentoring at the University of Northampton. Abstract from Northampton Learning and Teaching Conference 2015, Northampton - Swinton, K. (2015). Available - https://pure.northampton.ac.uk/en/publications/mentoring-at-the-university-of-northampton</p>

	<p>Empowering Black Professionals Working Group being led by our Vice Chancellor in conjunction with our APP Award Gap Working Group being led by our Head of APP co-chaired by one of our Black Student Advocates.</p>	<p>Exchanging experience: a peer-assisted learning approach to mentoring - Shepherd, L. (2019). Available at - https://pure.northampton.ac.uk/en/publications/exchanging-experience-a-peer-assisted-learning-approach-to-mentor</p> <p>Peer mentoring during the transition to university: assessing the usage of a formal scheme within the UK - Collings, R. M., Swanson, V., & Watkins, R. (2016) - Studies in Higher Education, 41(11), 1995-2010. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2015.1007939</p> <p>The impact of peer mentoring on levels of student wellbeing, integration and retention: a controlled comparative evaluation of residential students in UK Higher Education - Collings, R. M., Swanson, V., & Watkins, R. (2014). Higher Education, 68(6), 927–942. Article 6. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-014-9752-y</p>
<p>9. Whole provider approach continued professional development days. Up to 5 days across the academic year to engage all colleagues with training and information.</p>	<p>This is a means by which we will share both information and training opportunities for all university staff, leading to better outcomes for our students. Sharing information, best practice, research outcomes and training is a challenge for any large institution, however through this new activity we aim to address this with support from our digital and communications teams.</p>	<p>How to create an APP – WonkHE - https://wonkhe.com/blogs/how-to-create-an-access-and-participation-plan/</p> <p>Regularly share data that speaks to our current position and practice that moves us closer to our desired outcomes while celebrating staff efforts.</p>

		<p>Nadya Zhexembayeva for Harvard Business Review in June 2024 states that “Reports such as the World Uncertainty Index, the Pulse of Change, the WEF Global Risk Report, and others can facilitate the necessary transition from the “change is rare” mindset to the “continuous reinvention” mindset. Even better: Reports are spaced out throughout the year, so you have a perfect reason to come back to the conversation on a regular basis to assure sustainability.</p> <p>Our goal is to utilise this approach with our communications about the APP.</p>
<p>10. APP Advocates and Ambassadors programmes. To encourage engagement in the APP.</p> <p>(i) Our Advocates programme supports staff with an interest in EDI in understanding the purpose of the APP and their role in delivering a successful whole provider approach.</p> <p>(ii) Our Ambassador programme supports staff to deliver an APP project by funding their time to research or deliver a micro-intervention that enhances our learning of what works in APP at UON.</p>	<p>Our APP Advocates Programme has transformed almost 40 staff members from various departments across the University into influencers, bringing the APP to life. This initiative has enhanced the internal profile of the APP and highlighted cross-institutional expertise, thereby increasing our capacity to research, understand, and deliver on equality of opportunity.</p> <p>Our Advocates Programme supports staff with a keen interest in EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) and coaches them to develop specialist knowledge in the APP. Participants gain a clear understanding of how they can use their roles to positively influence the progress of the APP both locally and institutionally. They share their learnings with their wider teams and</p>	<p>“The interviews with the participants (n=7) indicated that the APP Advocates sessions were very successful and also very beneficial for the staff who took part. The participants were impressed by how well prepared and organised each session was, and they learnt from each session and gave feedback to their own departments/service areas. There were some improvements suggested by the participants but they mainly about having more time to discuss after each presentation or whether to have lunch or not instead of the content of the sessions. All the participants who took part in the interviews asked the researcher if these sessions were going to continue as they stated that they would like there to be more sessions in future. As can be seen from the quotes all in all the sessions were welcomed by the staff at the University of Northampton.”</p> <p>Karlidag-Dennis, E. (2023). A review of the 2023 APP Advocates Series. Institute for Social</p>

	<p>participate in special interest groups and conferences, creating a tangible ripple effect that fosters a whole-provider approach.</p> <p>We have expanded this model to include our APP Ambassador Programme. It was developed in response to common feedback from staff, who indicated they had ideas that could contribute to our APP but lacked the time to implement them. To address this, we created the APP Ambassador Programme, to act as a catalyst by providing staff with the time and resources to deliver a micro-intervention that informs our institutional innovation in equality of opportunity - effectively purchasing 225 hours (30 days) of their time to plan, deliver and evaluate their projects.</p> <p>A key criterion of this work is the commitment to develop an evaluation plan for each project and present findings at both external and internal forums, including our APP Conference.</p>	<p>Innovation and Impact, University of Northampton.</p>
<p>11. Robust Communications Plan. Development of a clear communication plan, that enables all stakeholders to engage, react to and impact on the outcomes of targeted students within this intervention strategy.</p>	<p>A robust communications plan is essential in ensuring the effectiveness of any intervention strategy aimed at improving the outcomes of APP targeted cohorts. Essentially, intervention strategies are change</p>	<p>Gilani, D. (2024). Student attitudes and preferences towards communications from their university – A meta-analysis of student communications research within UK Higher Education institutions. <i>Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management</i>.</p>

	<p>plans and we are taking a change approach that facilitates clear, consistent, and purposeful communication among all stakeholders, including students, university staff, and external partners. Effective communication ensures that all parties are informed, engaged, and able to contribute to the success of the interventions.</p> <p>Improved Student Outcomes: Clear communication helps students understand the interventions available to them, how to access resources, and the benefits they offer. This awareness is crucial for students to fully engage with and utilise the support mechanisms provided, thereby enhancing their access to academic support.</p> <p>University staff play a critical role in the implementation of intervention strategies. A well-defined communications plan ensures that staff members are fully informed about the interventions, understand their roles, and can effectively support targeted students.</p> <p>Feedback Mechanism:</p>	<p>https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2024.2344234</p>
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	<p>A robust communications plan incorporates mechanisms for feedback from students and staff. This feedback is invaluable in assessing the effectiveness of interventions, identifying areas for improvement, and making necessary adjustments to better meet the needs of targeted students.</p>	
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Intervention Strategy 5 – Personal Support		
Activity descriptor	Rationale / Justification	Evidence Base
<p>1. Embed student voice further into university strategy, policy decision making practices. Northampton Students' Union will lead this development of</p>	<p>Our UON Strategy states: <i>“We will achieve the best possible student experience by fostering a culture of collaboration with students. We will capture the student voice and feedback combined with other forms of evidence and data to adapt and improve our</i></p>	<p>UON Strategy: https://www.northampton.ac.uk/about-us/governance-and-management/our-strategy/</p> <p>Conversations about race - Office for Students - https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/effective-practice/conversations-about-race/</p>

<p>a UON student voice strategy that encourages the proactive collection of information and a clear response to student voice to effectively improve student outcomes. As reflected in the UON Strategy 2023-27.</p>	<p><i>students' experiences of studying at the University.” (pp.14)</i></p> <p>The rationale is that we cannot create a meaningful Personal Support intervention strategy without those for whom the support is personal, being in the room. Students feel their most empowered and greatest sense of belonging when they see their contributions shape their experiences in real-time (OfS), that’s why this activity is imperative for us. By virtue of the APP being a whole-provider approach, that means students must be represented at all layers of the organisation including strategically and operationally.</p>	
<p>2. Trust Guidelines.</p> <p>Implementing Trust as a core</p>	<p>This activity was created directly with student representatives. Trust is not inherent in Higher Education (Sybing, 2019) and low engagement</p>	<p>Trust Gap in Higher Education - https://www.insidehighered.com/opinion/blogs/higher-ed-gamma/2023/06/02/trust-gap-higher-education</p> <p>Yeager, D. S., Purdie-Vaughns, V., Garcia, J., Apfel, N., Brzustoski, P., Master, A., Hessert, W. T., Williams, M. E., & Cohen, G. L. (2013). Breaking the cycle of mistrust: Wise interventions to</p>

<p>tenet of our staff and student interactions, in response to student feedback and in line with our UON Strategy 2023-27.</p>	<p>from students, particularly, male students could be attributed to mistrust. Student Equality Consultants created Trust Guidelines as a how-to-guide for staff on building trust with students during the development of this APP. The guidelines outline core principles of trust including transparency, accountability, integrity, compassion and respect and provide clear examples of where and how trust has been built so this can be replicated. Additionally, the document advocates for the creation of a Trust Champion who can maintain the standard of practice that promotes trust and ultimately the guidelines serve as the foundation for Personal Support because with trust comes engagement.</p>	<p>provide critical feedback across the racial divide. <i>Journal of Experimental Psychology: General</i>. doi: 10.1037/a0033906</p> <p>Sybing, R. (2019) "Making Connections: Student-Teacher Rapport in Higher Education Classrooms: Student-teacher rapport in Higher Education classrooms", <i>Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning</i>, 19(5).</p> <p>Lambrinidis, G. (2014). Supporting online, non-traditional students through the introduction of effective e-learning tools in a pre-university tertiary enabling programme. <i>Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management</i>, 36(3), 257–267. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2014.899053</p> <p>Ghosh, A.K., Whipple, T.W. and Bryan, G.A., 2001. Student Trust and Its Antecedents in Higher Education. <i>Journal of Higher Education</i>, 72(2), pp.113-134.</p> <p>Lambrinidis, G. (2014). Supporting online, non-traditional students through the introduction of effective e-learning tools in a pre-university tertiary enabling programme. <i>Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management</i>, 36(3), 257–267. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2014.899053</p> <p>Sako, M (2008) <i>Price, quality and trust inter-firm relations in Britain and Japan</i>. Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Payne, A. L., Stone, C., & Bennett, R. (2023). Conceptualising and Building Trust to Enhance the Engagement and Achievement of Under-Served Students. <i>The Journal of Continuing Higher Education</i>, 71(2), 134–151.</p>
<p>3. Profile development of personal</p>	<p>We believe in our professional services offering and are</p>	<p>Becoming a professional (services) influencer. Toogood, C. (2024) - Wonkhe - https://wonkhe.com/blogs/becoming-a-professional-services-influencer/</p>

<p>support services. Profile development activities to highlight the positive impact UON personal support services can provide to students. This activity compliments the development of a communication strategy with students which is outlined in the academic support intervention strategy.</p>	<p>confident that most of the building blocks for effective Personal Support are in place but our Financial Support Evaluations have shown us that there is work to do in raising the profile of what is on offer here so students know the support that is available and appropriate for them, and are confident in when and how to access it.</p> <p>“Professional services staff play an essential role in supporting learner success, both during students’ time at university and following graduation. Yet if teams do not have sufficient institutional influence, there is a risk that their work will go unrecognised or fail to have meaningful impact.” (Toogood, 2024)</p>	<p>Financial Support Evaluation Access and Participation Plans - Karlidag-Dennis, E, Maher, M, and Hazenberg, R. (2024). https://www.northampton.ac.uk/about-us/governance-and-management/management/equality-and-diversity/access-and-participation-plans/</p>
<p>4. Student Career Coaches. Frontline</p>	<p>This new development of student career coaches is in response to the</p>	<p>Examples of successful implementation: University of Nevada</p>

<p>student career and employability coaches targeting APP target cohorts to remove barriers to engagement and support better progression into graduate roles.</p>	<p>personal experiences, student feedback and research of the Director of Student Futures at several UK universities (Staffordshire, Gloucestershire and Liverpool) Originating in the University of Nevada, USA the programme shows how peer education helps students on both sides of the coaching relationship, giving both the opportunity to learn collaboration and problem-solving skills. Students can be incredible resources for one another when it comes to making career plans and decisions. This is especially true for formative professional experiences, such as internships and part-time jobs. Students will support other students to source and secure these experiences through existing on-campus know-how and coaching techniques.</p>	<p>https://www.unr.edu/career/about/career-mentors</p> <p>Liverpool University Careers Coaches https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/careers/career-support/</p>
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	<p>Moving to a peer to peer drop in model is designed to meet students' needs on their own terms. Drop-in conversations with other students are far more casual and accessible than appointments in offices with professional Careers Advisors.</p>	
<p>5. Care Leavers Employability Support. New initiative to support care leavers (CL). In collaboration with our Unitemps franchise team and careers consultants. We will support CL's to obtain a sustainable job to support their life while at UON, complimented by employability skill</p>	<p>This opportunity is a key aspect of the wrap-around support model we have in place to support Care Experienced students across the students' lifecycle to remove their barriers to access and participation within Higher Education. We are guided by leading national body, NNECL who advocate for: "Preferential access to work experience/employability initiatives" "Named careers contact and regular engagement throughout programme of study".</p>	<p>EORR and Care Experience - NNECL -https://hubble-live-assets.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/nnecl/file_asset/file/899/NNECL_mapping_EORR_and_Care_Experience.pdf</p> <p>Cotton, D. R., Nash, T., & Kneale, P. (2017). Supporting the retention of non-traditional students in Higher Education using a resilience framework. <i>European Educational Research Journal</i>, 16(1), 62-79. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904116652629</p>

<p>development through 1-1 appointments.</p>		
<p>6. Diversifying work experience opportunities. Diversify our provision of work experience opportunities outside standard course requirements. These would meet the needs of our diverse range of students, and we commit to these being paid opportunities that would be funded by external organisations or our</p>	<p>We have always been an advocate of paid work experience opportunities at UON, which will continue with this activity. Our students need opportunities from a variety of paid work experiences, to enable them to develop their CVs as well as expand their social, cultural and economic capital, allowing them to be more successful when applying for graduate roles. By diversifying our work experience opportunities our APP target cohorts will benefit within the jobs market through increased knowledge development, self-efficacy and awareness.</p>	<p>Applying Diverse Work Experiences in the Job Search – Bravanti - https://bravanti.com/been-there-done-that-putting-diverse-experiences-to-work-in-the-job-search/</p> <p>Diverse Work Experience vs. Highly Specialized: The Pros and Cons https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/diverse-work-experience-vs-highly-specialized-pros-withrow-msf/</p>

<p>Opportunities Fund.</p>		
<p>7. Development and implementation of a Career Registration Survey. Administered annually at student enrolment point to understand the career intention and progress for all students with particular focus on APP target cohorts.</p>	<p>Administered to all undergraduate students at the start of each academic year, the careers registration survey will support the alignment and focus of employability input across the institution, impacting positively on continuation and graduate outcomes. Understanding the career intention for our students is crucial to be able to support them well into appropriate and quality graduate roles. Career registration data will be visible to our new student career coaches on our data platform, providing the context for drop-in conversations.</p>	<p>Where are you right now? Using careers registration to support employability in Higher Education - Advance HE https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/where-are-you-right-now-using-careers-registration-support-employability-higher</p> <p>First Year Student Career Readiness Survey, Research Report - AGCAS https://www.agcas.org.uk/knowledge-centre/b671b272-c0fe-40b4-85dd-1c19b529ddd6</p>

<p>8. Student Ambassador (SA) Programme evaluation. A collaborative evaluation of our Student Ambassador Programme with the University of Bedfordshire.</p>	<p>Working with the University of Bedfordshire this partner collaboration evaluation programme is designed to discover if working as a SA impacts positively on self-efficacy, mental health, continuation and award for our undergraduate students. This links into the development of our diverse SA pool of students (Intervention strategy – Perceptions of HE). By working collaboratively as two universities the pool of students will be larger and enable us to show more robust and significant results, which we can use to adapt practice and target communication and cohorts to future recruitment cycles. The collaboration also allows us to compare and identify best practice within the two programmes and develop best practice to</p>	<p>Impact of Engineering Ambassador Programs on Student Development – Oregon State University - https://www.jmu.edu/stemcenter/files/publication-3.pdf</p>
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	<p>impact the SA programmes outcomes.</p>	
<p>9. Financial Support Package. Our financial support package supports APP target cohorts, identified as having the largest barriers to equality of opportunity at UON.</p>	<p>Qualifying students can apply for financial support that is designed to support their access, continuation and award at specific times across their student lifecycle. Automatic allocation of funds is a key development for us within this APP and one which is designed to ensure our support is proactive. Our Opportunities Fund is designed to be responsive to the needs of all qualifying students so that they can ask for funding support that will enhance their continuation, award and graduate outcomes. While there will be specific examples of what students can apply for to give context to the fund, the adaptable nature of the fund is key to its success.</p>	<p>Our APP Financial Support Evaluation 2022/23 by the Institute of Social Innovation and Impact demonstrates the impact of our current financial support package and evidence informed recommendations for enhancement. https://www.northampton.ac.uk/about-us/governance-and-management/management/equality-and-diversity/access-and-participation-plans/</p> <p>Research suggests that combining financial support with close monitoring of educational engagement can help reduce withdrawals (Newman-Ford et al., 2010). Bursaries alone have been found to enhance retention of low-income students (Carson, 2010; Harrison and Hatt, 2012) [cited in Cotton et al (2017)]</p> <p>Financial Support – Office for Students - https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/f13b11cb-3eb7-4594-b272-bba4fc4c82fe/topic-briefing-financial-support.pdf</p>

Intervention Strategy 6 – Mental Health

Activity descriptor	Rationale / Justification	Evidence Base
<p>1. Achievement of the Mental Health Charter Status.</p> <p>Embedding a whole provider approach to mental health and wellbeing, working with Student Minds to implement the Student Minds 'Principles for Good Practice', create lasting cultural change to become a place that promotes the mental health and wellbeing of all members of the University community.</p> <p>Developing an increased whole provider understanding of students who may face additional challenges due to structural, personal or cultural inequalities and formulate tailored interventions to accelerate their success.</p>	<p>The University Mental Health Charter will enable us to adopt a whole provider approach to mental health and wellbeing. Following the development of our EORR this is a key area for focus within this APP. The Charter becomes a framework under which wellbeing is a vehicle for continuous improvement across the students' lifecycle. With referrals to our mental health and counselling services increasing year on year (Annex A) and reflected across the sector, working hand in hand with our students to achieve and deliver this charter is crucial to its success.</p>	<p>University Mental Health Charter - Student Minds - https://hub.studentminds.org.uk/university-mental-health-charter/</p> <p>Step change: Mentally Healthy Universities - whole university approach – UUK - https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/what-we-do/policy-and-research/publications/features/stepchange-mentally-healthy-universities/whole-university-approach#:~:text=A%20whole%20university%20approach%20recommends,the%20core%20mission%20of%20universities.</p>

2. Mental Health and ASSIST level 3 to 4 transition support.

This activity is a combination of new and existing activities.

New:

Development of a clearly defined and communicated transition support offer to students transitioning to university with declared needs.

Support level 3 – level 4 transition with a wellbeing passport identifying key support workers and an induction into university services.

Transition workers will work closely with the Schools and Colleges Liaison Team to ensure year 13 students in Northamptonshire are aware of the support available at UON.

Existing:

We host Autism Taster Days for students who share a diagnosis of a social/communication difficulty prior to arrival; the Taster Day provides an opportunity for new students to experience the campus environment; receive familiarisation and orientation with the teaching spaces, including quiet routes and areas; understand timetables; tours of halls of residence; meet with Autism Specialist Mentors; receive introductions to other Student Services teams as well as the Student's Union and associated sports and societies. Online

Student transition between all educational stages presents various challenges. The transition from a post 16 setting to Higher Education is one of these especially when you add the need of mental health and wellbeing support. Enabling a student from a post-16 setting to bring a mental health passport with them, containing their existing wellbeing support network and effective strategies, will enable us to understand, support, and react to the needs of individual students in a more timely manner. This activity will give confidence to students transitioning to UON that we are aware of their needs and requirements, enabling them to start and continue their studies with us more smoothly.

Student mental health and transitions into, through and out of university: student and staff perspectives - Journal of Further and Higher Education -

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1875203>

Supporting disabled students: a blueprint for transition support – TASO -

<https://taso.org.uk/research/current-projects/what-works-to-reduce-equality-gaps-for-disabled-students-in-higher-education-he/supporting-disabled-students-a-blueprint-for-transition-support/>

<p>alternatives to the Autism Taster Day for students unable to attend are available.</p> <p>Applicant visits and appointments with ASSIST for students disclosing complex or multiple conditions, typically including members of the course team and Residential Life (if residing in Halls); the appointment includes the creation of Academic Inclusion Reports (AIRs), which outline the reasonable adjustments required to support the student, and guidance on how to apply for Disabled Student's Allowances (DSA) - if applicable.</p> <p>Applicant visits and/or online appointments arranged for applicants disclosing a mental health difficulty, to discuss concerns about transition, and to consider any reasonable adjustments that might be required to enable study. These can then feed into AIR's.</p> <p>UON's Mental Health Service endeavours to link with current health care providers to try and ensure continuity of care, and medical evidence to support DSA applications.</p>		
<p>3. Operationalise the Suicide Safer Framework. In line with UUK Guidance for Prevention, Intervention and Postvention</p>	<p>The Suicide Safer Framework is an important aspect of our Learning, Library and Student Services Operational Plan. It is imperative for us, as part of the HE sector, to do all we can to reduce the number of</p>	<p>Suicide Safer Universities – UUK - https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/field/downloads/2021-07/guidance-for-sector-practitioners-on-preventing-student-suicides.PDF</p>

	<p>student suicides every year whilst at university. We are engaging fully with UUK resources to ensure that we have processes and understanding in place across the whole institution to support students when they need us most.</p>	
<p>4. Developing learnings from ManSpace. Since academic year 2023/24, we have developed, delivered and evaluated ManSpace – a space for men to talk. Aimed at removing the stigma around male mental health, we will use this evaluative work to inform the development of our counselling and mental health support and improve access to services.</p>	<p>ManSpace is a talking and listening club designed specifically for male-identifying students at UON. It is a safe space for open conversations, where participants can share their thoughts, experiences, and challenges, facilitated by our professional counselling team. University life can be overwhelming, and sometimes just having someone to talk to can make all the difference. Whether it is academic stress, personal challenges, or simply wanting to connect with like-minded peers, ManSpace has the space for male students to express themselves.</p> <p>We recognise that there are other APP target cohorts that may benefit from their own dedicated safe space and we will take our learnings from ManSpace to develop them with the guidance of our student representatives.</p>	<p>Ruqia Osman - WonkHE - A manifesto for Black mental health should matter to HE</p> <p>The importance of informal safe spaces - THE - https://www.timeshighereducation.com/campus/how-create-sense-belonging-black-students-majority-white-academy</p> <p>Blog on why culturally competent mental health support is vital for black students in London – we have used this as a lens to view ManSpace. It is clear that there is a need for culturally competent mental health support and we will seek to learn more about how we can apply this effectively at UON. https://www.good-thinking.uk/blog/why-culturally-competent-mental-health-support-is-vital-for-black-students-in-london</p>

<p>5. Proactive Check-In.</p> <p>To follow up with students applying for Mitigating Circumstances to ensure that their wellbeing is in a good place and that they are getting the support they need.</p>	<p>This activity is a direct response to UON research that showed us that:</p> <p>“Students want to feel supported – need to offer more support/scaffolding than currently – including proactively reaching out to students.” (Curtis et al)</p> <p>We know that mitigating circumstances may be symptomatic of a wellbeing issue for students so staging these check-ins will allow us to support students in their time of need.</p>	<p>Tell me what you want, what you really, really want: What students want from their university experience - Curtis, T., Loddick, A, King, S. (2023) - PURE, University of Northampton.</p> <p>https://pure.northampton.ac.uk/en/activities/tell-me-what-you-want-what-you-really-really-want-what-students-w</p>
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Activity descriptor	Rationale / Justification	Evidence Base
<p>1. APP integration into our IT Strategy Board.</p> <p>Ensuring the needs of APP target cohorts is a priority at all key decision points with representation from key stakeholders across the University. Objectives will include:</p> <p>Establishing itself as the only data strategy board across the organisation.</p> <p>Gate keeping which processes should be supported by which platforms.</p> <p>Agree universal mechanisms to capture data.</p> <p>Development communication across the institution for clarity and consistency.</p>	<p>Our staff consultation has shown the need for an established centre for all data needs in the organisation which serves as an authority to streamline our processes as this would increase staff confidence in the data that is available.</p> <p>Student feedback has highlighted the need for systems to act as a facilitator on how best to deliver a joined-up approach across our services for an efficient experience, so students don't have to retell their story each time they encounter a support service. This can be particularly problematic for students with disabilities.</p>	<p>A study on disabled students' experiences of self-advocating at university: Bruce, C. and Aylward, M.L., 2021. Disability and Self-Advocacy Experiences in University Learning Contexts. <i>Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research</i>, 23(1). https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/4c50/39904ff99540dce6730a8693beffec42a2b3.pdf</p> <p>Disabled students' views on how they are expected to self-advocate, and the ableism surrounding this: Woolf, E. and de Bie, A., 2022. Politicizing self-advocacy: Disabled students navigating ableist expectations in postsecondary education. <i>Disability Studies Quarterly</i>, 42(1). https://bhacjournal.org/index.php/dsq/article/view/8062</p> <p>This study specifically looked at autistic students' experiences with self-advocacy and how students with social and communication differences may find self-advocacy more challenging: Santhanam, S.P. and Wilson, K., 2024. A Comparison of Autistic and Non-Autistic College Students' Perceived Challenges and Engagement in Self-Advocacy. <i>American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology</i>, pp.1-14. https://pubs.asha.org/doi/abs/10.1044/2024_AJSLP-22-00381</p> <p>Self-advocacy difficulties from a mental health perspective, specifically focusing on anxiety: Hasman, A. and Matlock, C., 2021. Students with Anxiety Disorders: Self-Advocacy, Daily Life Activities, and Meaningfulness of the College Experience. <i>Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability</i>, 34(4), pp.331-348. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1342736</p>
<p>2. Develop the Data Governance Working Group.</p>	<p>We have identified an inconsistent approach to collection, analysis and</p>	<p>The role of students information systems in HE – Cluster.com https://www.classter.com/blog/edtech/the-role-of-student-information-systems-in-higher-education/</p>

<p>The group’s aim is to improve data use processes through the addition of: The assignment of a member of the BIMl unit to support all services with APP data needs. Triangulating data on who our APP target cohorts are and the risks they are exposed to. Representation from the SU to ensure Student Pulse insights are captured effectively.</p>	<p>use of data within departments across the organisation and this culminates in avoidable challenges when trying to investigate the risks our APP target cohorts are exposed to. Therefore, this activity will seek to resolve these inconsistencies by providing support, guidance and training for teams on central processes that support our whole provider approach to APP data collection, analysis and use.</p>	<p>Data Transformation Strategy – Office for Students – Our approach will be similar to the OfS: “At the OfS, we recognise the importance of harnessing the power of data to drive our strategic initiatives and achieve our digital and corporate vision. Unfortunately, due to the outdated tools and technology we have limited capacity to adopt advanced data practices such as data science, management of big data, machine learning or artificial intelligence.”</p> <p>https://ofsleaders.officeforstudents.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/129/2024/01/Data-Transformation-Strategy-V2.0-1.pdf</p> <p>aims to address these issues by reducing data processing time, eliminating duplication, and enabling easier access to accurate, up-to-date information. By implementing a unified data governance framework and enhancing data sharing capabilities, we can support our strategic initiatives more effectively and ensure continuity of service, ultimately improving the student experience.</p> <p>Supporting student success: strategies for institutional change. Professor Liz Thomas et al (2017)</p> <p>“While suitable data needs to be available, it is also necessary for staff to be supported to use this data to improve student retention and success. It is recommended that a process of change is deliberately designed, taking account of structures, roles and ways of working, and proactively engaging staff, students and managers at all levels, drawing on the enthusiasm of champions.” pp. 20</p>
<p>3. SITS Implementation and Roll Out. SITS is our new student records system and will function as the single point of truth</p>	<p>What is the new student record system (SRS) and why are we changing?</p> <p>The current SRS, (QL) is no longer suitable. The</p>	<p>HESA Data Steering Group - https://www.hesa.ac.uk/innovation/data-landscape</p>

<p>concerning UON students. SITS will be integrated with our different systems so the information they hold on students will be consistent across platforms.</p>	<p>information the University holds about our students and their journey isn't just held in one system, there are many systems in use. The new SRS is one system which replaces the others, making it a much smoother experience for our students and staff. Called SITS, and used by many universities in England, the system replaces QL - combining a database and a student portal where students can access information and support.</p> <p>SITS will bring other benefits as well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future-proofed – helping everyone to operate more efficiently.• Enhances the student experience and enable self-serve.	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More efficient administration of student life. • Quicker processes - supporting staff in their daily activities. • Automation of key functions. • Improve student engagement with the University. • Support student retention. 	
<p>4. Value Added Platform Development.</p> <p>We will develop a new value-added platform, supported with advice and guidance from University of Hertfordshire who developed a similar platform several years ago. This will ensure that we are able to effectively capture the value added by UON courses, benchmarking</p>	<p>Value added (VA) is an approach to closing the award gap that has worked at several institutions and has been celebrated by the OfS.</p> <p>Through the monitoring of student progress, we can identify and articulate the value we add clearly. The platform will enable us to have conversations with staff at programme level about student progress that will be key to student success, aligning with our quality</p>	<p>Value added tracking - Office for students - https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/effective-practice/case-study-kingston-university/</p> <p>Using the Value-Added Score to challenge the BME attainment gap – Office for students - https://closingtheattainmentgap.co.uk/value-added/</p>

ourselves against the sector.	assurance processes to embed accountable planning for quality enhancement.	
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Black studentUON Access and Participation Glossary

Office for Students [Access and Participation glossary](#) resource.

Term	Definition
Academic Self-Efficacy	Academic self-efficacy refers to a learner’s beliefs and attitudes towards their capabilities to achieve academic success, as well as their belief in their ability to fulfil academic tasks. Learners with high academic self-efficacy are less likely to attribute failures to their own lack of ability and are more likely to have higher self-belief when faced with complex tasks.
Access	Access refers to a learner’s transition point into Higher Education up until the end of their first semester.
Access and Participation Plan (APP)	An Access and Participation Plan (APP) sets out how Higher Education institutions will support underrepresented groups get into and through university while addressing any barriers to equality to opportunity that they may face. An APP also demonstrates how a provider intends to reduce any gaps between different groups at access and student success stages of the student lifecycle.
APP Governance Structure	The APP is governed by the APP Steering Group, which is chaired by our Vice Chancellor and features representation from key internal stakeholders. It is the role of this group to monitor the development, delivery and impact of the APP. Additionally, intervention strategy owners are expected to report updates on their intervention strategies to this group throughout the year and will be supported by a strategy sponsor, who is a member of ULT.
Active and Blended learning	Active and blended learning enables students to study in the ways and times that suit them best, without sacrificing peer group learning and support. It is underpinned by a belief that the best way to teach is through small, interactive, face to face group teaching and teamwork that promote experimentation, creativity, problem solving and feedback.
AdvanceHE	Advance HE is a British charity and professional membership organisation promoting excellence in Higher Education. It advocates evidence-based teaching methods and awards fellowships as professional recognition for university lecturers.
Alumni	A graduate or former student of UON.

APP Award Gap Working Group	An academic, professional service and student working group focused on reducing the good degree award gap between White and GEM students, co-chaired with a UON undergraduate student
APP Operations Group	A group of staff representatives from all faculties and professional services who were instrumental to the development of our Access and Participation Plan.
APP Priority Groups	The students that will be specifically targeted with support by this Access and Participation Plan, they include the following groups and must be home, full-time, undergraduate students: GEM students A student from an area of high socio-economic deprivation (IMD Q1/2) Male students A student with a declared disability A care leaver (previously named Looked after Child) also known as Care Experienced A student who is estranged from their family or classed as independent.
APP Steering Group	This is a cross-university working group that has overall responsibility for the development, operationalisation, embedding and governance of the APP at UON, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor.
Apprenticeships (Higher or Degree)	A degree or higher apprenticeship is a particular type of job which combines work with higher-level learning which can be at a university, and which leads to an undergraduate or postgraduate degree.
Aspire Higher	A partnership between the Universities of Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, and Northampton that connects local schools and colleges with universities and employers.
Assessment of Performance	A review of our data focused on home, full-time, undergraduate students' access, continuation, completion, degree outcomes, and progression. These data are from several sources including the Office for Student's Access and Participation Data Dashboard and National Student Survey (NSS).
Attainment	Attainment refers to the academic outcomes that a student achieves at school or college. In a university context, it is sometimes called award and refers to the academic outcomes that a student achieves in Higher Education. In the data annex, the award indicator measures the percentage of students that achieve a first or upper-second class degree (sometimes called a good degree).
Attainment 8	The average score of an individual pupil's progress across their 8 best performing subjects taken at GCSE. A student's Attainment 8 score is used to help calculate a school's overall Progress 8 score.
Attainment/Award Gap	This refers to a difference in the academic outcomes that different students achieve. When referring to students at university, we may also use the term degree outcome gap or degree awarding gap.

Award	Refers to the academic outcomes that a student achieves in Higher Education. In the data annex, the award indicator measures the percentage of students that achieve a first or upper-second class degree (“good degree”).
BIMI	Business Intelligence Management Information Unit. They lead on our institutional data and provide reports for faculties, directorates, and the University Leadership Team.
Black Student Advocates	An APP funded initiative in collaboration with our Students' Union to highlight Black students' voice and support as well as advancing Black students' outcomes at UON.
C.	Shorthand for circa, which means approximately.
Connexions	Was a government funded careers service that supported schools and their pupils with relevant and up-to-date careers information and guidance.
Continuation	These measures show whether students continue their studies or not. The OfS definition measures the proportion of students continuing their studies in Higher Education one year and 15 days after they started their course. UON internal continuation data measures students <u>continuing with progression</u> from one level of study to the next (e.g. Foundation to Level 4, Level 4 to Level 5, and Level 5 to Level 6) within UON.
Completion	These measures track students through later stages of their studies to see whether they have qualified or remain studying. Completion refers to the proportion of students who received their qualification four years and 15 days from the course start.
CPD	Continued Professional Development. Opportunities for staff and students to develop their skills and knowledge through training.
Cross Intervention Strategy	Identifies if a specific activity within an intervention strategy also impacts an additional intervention strategy.
Declared Disability	A student can declare a disability via UCAS or to the University via the Additional Student Support and Inclusion Services Team (ASSIST), either pre-entry or while on-course.
Disabled Student Allowance (DSA)	A grant to help with any extra essential costs students may have as a direct result of their disability. For more information see: https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa .
Dissemination	Outlines how the evaluation outcomes of our interventions will be distributed, usually ranging from our APP Steering Group to journal publications and conference proceedings.

EDI	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, a pillar to all our activities as a University.
Equality of Opportunity	In the context of Higher Education, equality of opportunity means ensuring that no individuals are hindered in accessing and succeeding in Higher Education because of their background or circumstances.
Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR)	A list of national risks to equality of opportunity identified by the Office for Students. This risk register sets out the greatest sector-wide risks to equality of opportunity in English Higher Education.
FAST	Our Faculty of Arts, Science, and Technology – often referred to as FAST.
FBL	Our Faculty of Business and Law – often referred to as FBL.
FHES	Our Faculty of Health, Education, and Society – often referred to as FHES.
First-generation	This means neither of your parents went to university. Even if a sibling went to university before you, you are still a first-generation student.
First in Family	The first person in your family to go to university.
FIT Document	This document records all the fees, APP investment, and targets that are key to this Access and Participation Plan.
Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility	Whether or not a student has been eligible to receive free school meals in the six years prior to the end of year 11. This eligibility criterion can be used as an indication of students' disadvantage.
GEM	Global Ethnic Majority is the term we use instead of BAME when referring to those from Black, Asian, and other majority ethnic groups.
Good Degree	The award indicator measures the percentage of students that achieve a first or upper-second class degree ("good degree").
Graduate Outcomes	A student getting a graduate-level job or going onto further Post Graduate study. You may also hear Graduate Outcomes referred to as Progression in the sector.
Graduate Outcomes Survey	A national survey of students 15 months after they have graduated from university to see what type of employment or further study they are in. For more information, see: www.graduateoutcomes.ac.uk
GRIT	Grit, a term developed by Angela Duckworth, refers to passion and perseverance for long-term goals. It is not talent or luck. Instead, grit involves a true commitment to a concern, a deeply valued goal that gives meaning to one's actions despite setbacks or slow progress.

HE	Higher Education. Education that comes after secondary and further education, leading to a qualification or credit awarded by a degree-awarding body.
County Head of 6th Form Network	The network is made up of Heads of 6th forms in the county of Northamptonshire who meet three times a year for continued professional development and to share best practices. The network was developed by and is led by the Head of Access and Participation and supports the outcomes of post-16-year-old students in the county.
HEAT Tracker	The Higher Education Access Tracker helps widening access teams across England monitor and evaluate their outreach activity in schools and colleges.
HESA	The Higher Education Statistical Agency are experts in Higher Education statistics and data. They assure and distribute data about Higher Education in the UK.
Higher Fee Income	Any income to a university from student fees that is above the basic fee of £6165. For example, if a provider charges £9250 for a year of study, the higher fee income per student would be £3085.
Home Student	Home students are those living in England, Wales, Scotland, or Northern Ireland, who meet certain criteria related to residency and immigration status and have 'home' fee status. Typically, this means they are funded by the Student Loans Company.
Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	The Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 5 (least deprived area). The Index is based on seven domains: income, employment, education, skills and training, health and disability, crime, barriers to housing services, and the living environment.
Impact	The extent to which an intervention strategy achieves the overall aim to reduce or eliminate the specific gap as well as the magnitude of this gap.
Inclusion	Where people feel valued and respected. In an inclusive environment, everyone has equal access to opportunities and resources.
Indicator of Risk	An indicator of risk is the term used by the OfS to refer to a potential impact of a risk to equality of opportunity in relation to Higher Education. For example, lower continuation rates for a specific student group may be a potential indication of 'risk of insufficient academic support' (a risk to equality of opportunity). May also be known as a Risk Indicator.
ISII	The Institute for Social Innovation and Impact (ISII) at the UON evaluates and measures the social impact of social innovations in the UK and around the world, as well as exploring the financing of,

	and policy support for, social innovation. The Institute is leading the evaluation and research of this APP.
Integrated Learner Support Model	Delivers a student experience by ensuring that all our taught students are aware of, and able to access the full range of support services that the University provides.
Intervention Strategy	A targeted approach designed to impact risks to equality of opportunity that manifest in a performance gap (or gaps) outlined within our Access and Participation Plan. Each intervention strategy will have an overall aim to reduce or eliminate the specific gap as well as intended outcomes and a theory of change.
Intervention Strategy Owner	A member of our University team who is linked to the intervention strategy and is responsible for the delivery and coordination of the intervention strategy.
Intervention Strategy Sponsor	A member of our University Leadership Team who is ultimately responsible for the success and impact of an intervention strategy. Their role is to ensure that, the work is governed effectively, delivers objectives and meets specified needs. The sponsor provides leadership from a strategic perspective, setting goals and direction making key go or no-go decisions and providing a link within ULT to support the owner.
Key Stage 2	Years 3 to 6 in English primary schools.
Key Stage 3	Years 7 to 9 in English primary schools.
Learning and Teaching Enhancement Hub	Is an umbrella term for our Skills Hub which is an open access resource containing videos, guides, interactive tutorials and blog posts covering core academic skills areas at different levels. It is used by students, schools, researchers and the community.
Learning Development Team	Is a support service available at UON to support students with their academic development needs and goals.
Learning, Library and Student Services (LLSS)	One of our directorates dedicated to student academic and personal support. It contains a variety of teams including our Learning Development and Counselling and Mental Health teams.

Level Three Qualifications	Qualifications which are equivalent to an A Level. A full list can be seen here .
Methods of Evaluation	Our plan for how we intend to evaluate the activities within our intervention strategies, completed by the Institute for Social Innovation and Impact (ISII).
MyEngagement	MyEngagement is a student-facing dashboard that shows how well students are engaging with their academic studies, available via the Student Hub for all undergraduate students.
National Student Survey (NSS)	The National Student Survey (NSS) is a national survey, which gathers opinions from mainly final year undergraduates on the quality of their courses. It covers all publicly funded universities in the UK and has been running since 2005. With over 350,000 participants it is the 3rd largest survey in the UK. It is funded by the Office for Students and run by Ipsos-MORI. For more information, see: www.thestudentsurvey.com
NEON	The National Education Opportunities Network - founded in 2012 is the professional organisation that supports those working in widening access to higher education (HE) and social mobility.
NSU	Northampton Students' Union. The NSU is the primary student representation body associated with UON. They are a registered charity, completely independent from the University, based in the Learning Hub on Waterside Campus. They are led by students, underpinned by volunteers and staff, and seek to ensure that students' time at the University of Northampton is rewarding, fulfilling, and memorable.
Office for Students (OfS)	The independent regulator for all English Higher Education Institutions.
OfS APP Data Dashboard	The data dashboard is a data platform which the Office for Students and UON use to track progress across the student lifecycle for a wide range of student cohorts.
On-Course	The stages of the lifecycle that include continuation and award. Effectively, it is the time students are studying on their programme.
Outcome indicator	An outcome indicator is data that represents the presence of an outcome.

Outcome	An outcome is the change that we want to see having undertaken an activity. An outcome may represent a change in a group of people, organisations, or places.
Outputs	An output is something that is directly produced having undertaken an activity.
Personal Academic Tutor (PAT)	A PAT is a member of staff who will usually be from your main subject area and may teach you in one or more of your modules. They are there to provide an extra layer of academic and personal support.
Pedagogy	Refers to the methods and practices of a teacher.
Progression	Progression measures report on whether students are in highly skilled employment, further study or have other positive outcomes 15 months after leaving higher education. This data represents the results of the Graduate Outcomes (GO) survey from 2017-18 onwards.
Q1 – 5 (IMD)	IMD (see: Indices of Multiple Deprivation) is indicator of socio-economic status. It is measured in quintiles with 1 being the most deprived and 5 being the least deprived. English postcodes are used to identify which quintile a student is within.
Risk Indicator	A risk indicator is the term used by the OfS to refer to a potential impact of a risk to equality of opportunity in relation to Higher Education. For example, lower continuation rates for a specific student group may be a potential indication of ‘risk of insufficient academic support’ (a risk to equality of opportunity). May also be known as an Indicator of Risk .
Risk Register	This is the OfS risk register that sets out the greatest sector-wide risks to equality of opportunity in English Higher Education.
Sandwich Courses	Higher Education courses that include a one-year placement in industry.
Self-Efficacy	Self-efficacy is essentially what a student can see themselves doing/achieving. For more, see Academic Self-Efficacy .
Semester	A half-year term at university, typically lasting twelve weeks.

SEMLEP	South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership is an organisation we have worked with to develop a programme outlining the variety of routes into higher education and careers.
SITS	The University's Students record system to help manage all aspects of the students' journey.
Spotlight Activity	These are key activities within each intervention strategy which are either new activities or will significantly add to the knowledge base of research.
Stipend	Is a form of lump sum payment that is paid to an individual for work completed or while they receive training instead of a regular monthly wage.
Student Equality Consultants	A paid group of students from underrepresented groups that have developed their knowledge about the APP, helped to consult during the development of the APP, wrote the University's student submission and will work closely with the APP Steering Group to deliver a successful APP.
Student Outcomes	The grades and achievements of students while on their programme of study.
Student Life Pulse Survey	A monthly survey administered over 9 months by our Students' Union to monitor key aspects of student life and experience at UON. Each month a 9 th of the whole student cohort are surveyed resulting in a complete data set each year.
Student Success	Is a stage of the student lifecycle that starts from 1 st term to the completion of a degree. Student success includes student Continuation and Award .
Student Lifecycle	There are 5 stages to an undergraduate student's lifecycle; access, continuation, completion, award and graduate outcomes.
SU	Students Union. See: NSU .
Target Cohorts	Groups of students supported within our APP. They are: Students from area of high socio-economic deprivation (IMD Q1/2) GEM students Male students A student with a declared disability A care leaver (previously named Looked after Child) A student who is estranged from their family or classed as independent.

TASO	Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education, is an independent organisation providing Higher Education professionals access to research, toolkits and evaluation guidance to help improve equality. For more information, see: www.taso.org.uk
TEF	The Teaching Excellence Framework is a national graded award (bronze, silver and gold) that Higher Education institutions apply for to outline the quality of their student experience and outcomes. For more information, see: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/quality-and-standards/about-the-tef
Theory of Change	A theory of change is a visual representation of a programme’s inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and underlying causal mechanisms.
Times Higher Education Impact Awards	Identify and celebrate universities that excel across multiple United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Universities showcase their commitment to addressing the world's most pressing challenges, including environmental sustainability, reducing inequalities and economic growth and partnerships. For more information, see: www.timeshighereducation.com/impactrankings
Type 1, 2 and 3 Evaluations	<p>Is an approach to classifying evaluation evidence into three categories:</p> <p>Type 1 – Narrative: there is a clear narrative for why we might expect an activity to be effective. This narrative is normally based on the findings of other research or evaluation.</p> <p>Type 2 – Empirical Enquiry: there is data which suggests that an activity is associated with better outcomes for students.</p> <p>Type 3 – Causality: a method is used which demonstrates that an activity has a ‘causal impact’ on outcomes for students.</p>
Underrepresented Groups	<p>Groups of students who share the following particular characteristics where data shows gaps in equality of opportunity in relation to access, student success or progression:</p> <p>Students from areas of low Higher Education participation, low household income or low socioeconomic status</p> <p>Some global ethnic majority (GEM) students</p> <p>Mature students</p> <p>Disabled students</p> <p>Care leavers.</p>

	<p>National data indicates that there are additional groups of students with particular equality gaps and support needs that can be addressed in an Access and Participation Plan. These are also included in our definition of underrepresented groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers People estranged from their families People from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities Refugees Children from military families.
Uni Connect	<p>A national collaborative outreach programme targeting and supporting school children from underrepresented areas transitioning into Higher Education. For more information, see: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/equality-of-opportunity/uni-connect</p>
University Leadership Team	<p>This team consists of the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Finance Officer, The Students' Union CEO, Students' Union President, Faculty Deans and Professional Services Directors as well as other senior members of the University, although this may vary from university to university.</p>
UON Deanery	<p>The academic leadership group consisting of The Deans, Deputy Deans and Associate Deans situated within each of the faculties; FAST, FBL and FHES.</p>
Value Added	<p>The difference between the expected grade from a student's entry tariff at the beginning of their course and the grade they actually achieve.</p>
Widening Access	<p>Widening access is the process by which universities work to support learners from underrepresented cohorts into Higher Education.</p>

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: University of Northampton, The

Provider UKPRN: 10007138

Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

We will not raise fees annually for new entrants
Based on maximum allowable tuition fees, there is no plan for an increase at this stage to cover the length and duration of this plan

Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	9250
First degree	Top Up Courses	N/A	9250
Foundation degree		N/A	9250
Foundation year/Year 0		N/A	9250
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE		N/A	9250
Postgraduate ITT		N/A	9250
Accelerated degree		N/A	9250
Sandwich year		N/A	1200
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2025-26

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	Bedford College - Top Up Courses	10000610	9000
First degree	LCA Education Limited	10089266	9250
First degree	Liverpool Media Academy Limited	10031239	9250
First degree	Newbury College	10004596	8000
First degree	Stella Mann College of Performing Arts Limited - Top Up Courses	10047049	9250
First degree	Virtual Alliance Limited	10026108	9250
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	LCA Education Limited	10089266	9250
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	St Andrew's Healthcare	10067466	800
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	6930
First degree	Previously BCNH Partnership students	N/A	6000
Foundation degree		N/A	6930
Foundation year/Year 0		N/A	6930
HNC/HND		N/A	6930
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2025-26

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

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: University of Northampton, The

Provider UKPRN: 10007138

Investment summary

A provider is expected to submit information about its forecasted investment to achieve the objectives of its access and participation plan in respect of the following areas: access, financial support and research and evaluation. Note that this does not necessarily represent the total amount spent by a provider in these areas. Table 6b provides a summary of the forecasted investment, across the four academic years covered by the plan, and Table 6d gives a more detailed breakdown.

Notes about the data:

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.

Yellow shading indicates data that was calculated rather than input directly by the provider.

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

"Total access investment funded from HFI" refers to income from charging fees above the basic fee limit.

"Total access investment from other funding (as specified)" refers to other funding, including OFS funding (but excluding Uni Connect), other public funding and funding from other sources such as philanthropic giving and private sector sources and/or partners.

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£415,000	£417,000	£427,000	£440,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£2,825,000	£2,839,000	£2,907,000	£2,997,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£130,000	£130,000	£133,000	£137,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£282,000	£283,000	£290,000	£299,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£133,000	£134,000	£137,000	£141,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	Total access investment (£)	£415,000	£417,000	£427,000	£440,000
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment (as % of HFI)</i>	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment funded from HFI (£)</i>	£415,000	£417,000	£427,000	£440,000
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)</i>	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£2,825,000	£2,839,000	£2,907,000	£2,997,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (£)	£2,825,000	£2,839,000	£2,907,000	£2,997,000
Financial support investment	<i>Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)</i>	10.9%	10.9%	10.9%	10.9%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£130,000	£130,000	£133,000	£137,000
Research and evaluation investment	<i>Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)</i>	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%

