

The London Interdisciplinary School

Access and Participation Plan

Dates for which this plan applies: 2021-22 to 2025-26

1. Assessment of performance

The London Interdisciplinary School (LIS) is a new higher education provider. Our mission is to enable our students to tackle the most important and complex social problems. We will achieve this through delivering an interdisciplinary programme structured around tackling “wicked problems”, such as climate change, pandemics and obesity. We will receive our first intake of 120 students in Autumn 2021.

Given our newness, we do not have any historic data to evaluate our access and participation performance. In determining a baseline against which to set objectives and targets, we will use both sector data and data from comparable providers. We are selecting London higher tariff providers (i.e., London Russell Group universities) as our comparable providers because:

- Our interdisciplinary course will be academically challenging, and we will be looking to select students with excellent academic ability, similar to that set by high tariff providers;
- We are based in London, which, as we explore below, gives rise to different kinds of access and participation gaps versus the sector as a whole; this is particularly true of higher tariff London providers.

Given our radical contextual admissions process, inclusive strategic measures for success and progression, and institutional ambitions, we would expect to outperform the sector and London higher tariff providers on their current performance from the outset of our operation, and have taken this into account in setting our year 1 targets.

We understand that once we have our first cohort of students, we will likely have to re-baseline using our actual LIS first year performance, and consequently revisit our targets to ensure that they are sufficiently stretching and realistic. The School has been instructed not to set success and progression targets at the time of submission. Targets in these areas will be added following the admission of the first cohort of LIS students.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access

Significant access gaps, especially at higher tariff providers

For 18 and 19-year olds, the gap in participation between the most and least represented groups at higher tariff providers is significant: pupils in POLAR4 quintile 5 are 5.27 times more likely to enter than those from quintile 1.¹ At London Russell Group universities, this ratio increases to 13:1, with a median of 4% of students from quintile 1 and 50% from quintile 5.²

¹ UCAS End of Cycle Report 2019.

² LIS analysis of OFS Access and Participation Dataset, 2018/19 (first degree, full time and apprenticeship). Includes Imperial College, King's College, LSE, Queen Mary, and UCL.

For London providers, there are widely acknowledged limitations in using POLAR4 as a single metric of disadvantage. HESA figures show that only 0.9% of London students are from low participation neighbourhoods as measured by POLAR4.³ In order to create an effective basket of metrics to assess disadvantage, we will include analysis of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Free School Meals (FSM) data.

Using IMD, the gap in participation between the highest and lowest deprivation quintiles for London Russell Group universities stands at 2.4:1—whereas across all English providers, the proportion of IMD quintile 1 students entering higher education marginally exceeds the proportion of IMD quintile 5 students (21.7% vs. 21.1%).⁴ For FSM, London performs better than any other region in England: however, in 2017/18, the gap in progression to HE between those eligible for FSM at age 16 versus those not eligible was still 10 percentage points in Inner London and 15 percentage points in Outer London.⁵ Using this additional data alongside POLAR4 allows us to see a fuller baseline picture and will enable us to set more ambitious targets, as they reflect the fact that London providers are performing better on access for these underrepresented groups than the POLAR4 data suggests.

Success

Significant ongoing gaps in continuation and attainment of least represented groups

Non-continuation

Across England, there is a gap in continuation rate between students from the highest and lowest participation areas (based on POLAR4) and the least and most deprived areas (based on IMD):

- 4 percentage points gap between the continuation rate of POLAR4 quintile 5 versus quintile 1 (94% vs. 90%).⁶
- 7 percentage points gap between the continuation rate of IMD quintile 5 versus quintile 1 (94% vs. 87%) across all English HE providers.⁷

Attainment

The gap between the most and least represented students gaining a first or upper-second class degree stands at roughly 10 percentage points (83.3% of POLAR4 quintile 5, versus 73.7% of quintile 1 students).⁸ The gap between the least deprived and most deprived students gaining a first or uppersecond class degree has been closing over the past five years but remains very high at 18 percentage points (84.5% of IMD quintile 5 versus 66.3% of quintile 1 students).⁹

Progression to employment or further study

³ HESA, Performance Indicators - Widening Participation, Table 1 - Percentage of under-represented groups by Government Office region of domicile (UK domiciled young full-time first degree entrants who did not leave within 50 days of commencement at HE providers), academic year of entry 2018/19

⁴ LIS analysis of OfS dataset; all English HE providers, first degree, full-time and apprenticeship, 2018/19.

⁵ This is much lower than the gap in progression to HE in the South East (26 percentage points), the North East (25 percentage points), and South West (21 percentage points). DfE, *Widening Participation in Higher Education, England, 2017/18*.

⁶ OfS dataset; all English HE providers, first degree, full-time and apprenticeship, 2017/18.

⁷ OfS dataset, all English HE providers, first degree, full-time and apprenticeship, 2017/18.

⁸ OfS dataset, all English providers, first degree, full time and apprenticeship, 2018/19.

⁹ OfS dataset, all English providers, first degree, full time and apprenticeship, 2018/19.

Significant progression gaps for least represented groups

Across England, the rate of progression to employment or further study is:

- 73.0% for most represented groups and 68.5% for least represented groups (a 4.5 percentage points gap).¹⁰
- 74.7% for the least deprived groups and 67.7% for the most deprived groups (a 7 percentage points gap).¹¹ This gap is smaller at London Russell Group universities (an average 2.8 percentage points gap over the past 5 years).^{12,13} We will use the London Russell Group data in determining our baseline, to allow for more stretching 5-year targets.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

High overall participation of BAME students, but access issues for black students at London Russell Group universities

BAME students currently have higher HE participation rates overall compared to their white peers, and relative to the BAME populations of England and Wales.¹³ This is also generally true for high tariff institutions.¹⁴ However, analysis of the London Russell Group universities shows a different picture. In 2018/19, median figures show that whilst Asian students were over-indexed versus the local population (34% of students, versus 18.4% of the general London population), black students were significantly under-indexed (5% of students, versus 13.4% of the general London population).¹⁵ We will use the London Russell Group data in determining our baseline to gain a truer picture of our likely starting point.

Success

Non-continuation

Higher non-continuation rate for black students vs. white students

Although the access picture for BAME students is generally encouraging, disparities and inequalities continue to exist in terms of their success and progression. The non-continuation rate for black students across the sector is 15%, versus 9% for white students.¹⁶ Meanwhile, mixed ethnicity students have a non-continuation rate of 11%, and Asian students of 10%.¹⁷ Over time, the gap between the noncontinuation rate of each BAME group and the non-continuation rate of white students has widened, with the most

¹⁰ OfS dataset, all English HE providers, first degree, full-time and apprenticeship, 2016/17.

¹¹ OfS dataset, all English providers, first degree, full-time and apprenticeship, 2016/17.

¹² OfS dataset, median rolling average of London Russell Group providers, 2012/13 to 2016/17, first degree, full-time and apprenticeship.

¹³ % of the student population is Asian, versus 7.5% of the general population. 9% of the student population is Black, versus 3.3% of the general population; 7% of the student population is "Other (incl. mixed), versus 3.1% of the general population. Student population numbers from Social Market Foundation analysis of HESA data, 2013/14-2015/16 and HESA 2016/17 for England, from *Building on Success: Increasing Student Retention in London*, March 2019; general population data is for England and Wales from the UK Census.

¹⁴ BIS (2015) Socio-economic, ethnic and gender differences in HE participation, and UCAS (2015 and 2019) End of Cycle reports.

¹⁵ OfS dataset, first degree, full-time, median of London Russell Group universities, 2018/19. Mixed and other ethnicity students made up 13% of students at these universities (measured on a median basis), whilst white students made up 47% (measured on a median basis).

¹⁶ OfS dataset, 2017/18, all English providers, first degree, full time and apprenticeship.

¹⁷ OfS dataset, 2017/18, all English providers, first degree, full-time and apprenticeship.

acute increase in the gap between black and white students (from 4 percentage points in 2013/14 to 6 percentage points in 2017/18).¹⁸

Black students have the highest non-continuation rate in London, at 13% (versus 8% for white students). However, at high and medium tariff London institutions, when controlling for other factors such as living

accommodation and entry route, there is no significant difference between the non-continuation rates of black and white students.¹⁹ This suggests that the continuation gap between black and white students at London higher tariff providers is largely structural.

Attainment

Acute attainment gap between black and white students

There is an acute gap of 23 percentage points between black and white students gaining a first or uppersecond class degree (59% of black students, versus 82% of white students).²⁰ The gap is less acute but still significant for BAME Other graduates (15 percentage points) and Asian graduates (12 percentage points).²¹

London faces particular issues. The region has the largest attainment gap between BAME and white students: 15.6 percentage points. When viewed at a subject level, combined subjects have the second highest attainment gap at 18.6 percentage points.²² London Russell Group universities perform better than their London peers, however the attainment gap between black and white students is still significant at a median 9 percentage points.²³ This suggests that LIS will need to be particularly proactive in addressing the black attainment gap.

Progression to employment or further study

Lower rate of progression for BAME students relative to white students.

Across England, the progression gap between white and black students remains significant at 5 percentage points.²⁴ The progression gap between Asian graduates and white graduates is wider still: 6

percentage points.²⁵ The progression gap for BAME students has a clear link to the attainment gap, given the finding that approximately two-thirds of graduate recruiters set an upper-second degree classification as a minimum requirement for a graduate job.²⁶

¹⁸ OfS dataset, 2013/14-2017/18, all English providers, first degree, full-time.

¹⁹ Social Market Foundation, *Building on Success: Increasing higher education retention in London*, March 2019.

²⁰ OfS dataset, all English providers, first degree, full time and apprenticeship, 2018/19.

²¹ OfS dataset, all English providers, first degree, full time and apprenticeship, 2018/19. 70% attainment rate for Asian students, 67% for Other students, 77% for mixed students.

²² HESA Student Record, 2017/18.

²³ OfS dataset, all undergraduates, full time, 2018/19 (first degree full time data not available for ethnicity across London Russell Group universities). Attainment gap between white and Asian students was 5 percentage points; between white and mixed, 3.5 percentage points; between white and other, 7 percentage points. Analysis used median of London RG HEIs.

²⁴ OfS dataset, all English providers, first degree, full-time and apprenticeship, 2016/17. Black graduates have a 68% rate of highly skilled employment or further study, versus a 73% rate for white graduates

²⁵ OfS dataset, all English providers, first degree, full-time, 2016/17; progression rate was 67.4% for Asian students.

²⁶ ISE, Coughlan, 2018.

1.3 Mature students

Access

Significant decline in participation of mature students, driven by decline in part-time students

Between 2006/7 and 2016/17, there was a 49% decline in the number of mature entrants to undergraduate study, primarily driven by the 67% drop in number of part-time students over the same

period.²⁷ In general, mature learners are more likely than their younger peers to have characteristics associated with disadvantage and under-representation in higher education.²⁸

Success

Non-continuation

Rate of non-continuation significantly higher for mature students

The rate of non-continuation is significantly higher for mature students than for young students (14.9% versus 7.6% respectively).²⁹ Significant reasons for this cited by students include the difficulties of balancing study with their other work and family commitments, and financial difficulties.³⁰

Attainment

A nuanced picture of attainment

In 2017-18, 79% of young graduates gained a first or upper second-class degree, compared with 70% of mature graduates.³¹ However, HEFCE data suggests that after taking into account factors such as entry qualifications, mature graduates have a 7 percentage points advantage over young graduates.³²

Progression to employment or further study

Better progression for mature graduates versus young peers

Mature graduates tend to have slightly better progression than young graduates, with 76% of mature graduates in highly skilled employment or further study, versus 71% of young graduates.³³

²⁷ HESA UK performance indicators.

²⁸ www.millionplus.ac.uk/documents/reports/Never_Too_Late_To_Learn_-_FINAL_REPORT.pdf: Mature students are more likely to be from lower socio-economic status backgrounds, have caring responsibilities, be disabled, and be from Black and minority ethnic groups.

²⁹ OfS dataset, all English higher education providers, first degree, full time and undergraduate, 2017/18

³⁰ www.millionplus.ac.uk/documents/reports/Never_Too_Late_To_Learn_-_FINAL_REPORT.pdf; www.millionplus.ac.uk/policy/reports/forgotten-learners-building-a-system-that-works-for-maturestudents.

³¹ OfS dataset, all English higher education providers, first degree, full time and apprenticeship, 2017/18

³² www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2015/201521/

³³ OfS dataset, all English higher education providers, first degree, full time and apprenticeship, 2016/17. ³⁴

OfS dataset, all English higher education providers, first degree, full time and apprenticeship, 2018/19 ³⁵
Family Resources Survey, 2016/17.

1.4 Disabled students

Access

Disabled students remain underrepresented in higher education

The participation in higher education of disabled students has improved year on year since 2013/14; 16% of students in the UK in 2018/19 had a known disability.³⁴ However, this remains below the proportion of working-age adults with a disability in the UK (estimated at 19%).³⁵

Success

Non-continuation

Small gap in continuation rates between disabled and non-disabled students

There is a small gap in continuation rate between disabled and non-disabled students (90.8% versus 90.3%).³⁴ Further analysis suggests that continuation rates vary significantly by type of disability. Only

86.8% of students who reported having a mental health condition continued their studies.³⁵ This is an area to watch, given the rapid growth in the number of students presenting with a mental health condition. In 2019, 21.5% of students had a current mental health diagnosis and 33.9% had experienced a serious psychological issue for which they felt they needed professional help.³⁶

Attainment

Continuing gap in attainment between disabled and non-disabled graduates, but no gap at London higher tariff providers.

There remains a 2.4 percentage points gap between graduates without a disability and graduates with a disability gaining a first or upper-second class degree across the sector.³⁷ However, there is no statistically significant gap in attainment between disabled and non-disabled students at the London Russell Group universities, and in setting attainment objectives for our disabled students, we will seek to continue this trend.³⁸

Progression to employment or further study **Lower progression for disabled graduates**

Students reporting a disability, particularly those not in receipt of the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), have slightly lower progression into employment compared to those not reporting a disability (1.3 percentage points gap).³⁹ Analysis of the London Russell Group universities shows no statistically significant gaps in progression between disabled and non-disabled students; again, LIS will aim for similar outcomes for its disabled graduates.⁴⁰

³⁴ OfS dataset, all English providers, first degree, full-time and apprenticeship, 2017/18.

³⁵ OfS continuation data, 2016/17.

³⁶ House of Commons briefing paper, *Support for students with mental health issues in higher education in England*, March 2020.

³⁷ OfS dataset, all English higher education providers, first degree, full time and apprenticeship, 2018/19

³⁸ LIS analysis of OfS dataset, London Russell Group providers, first degree, full time and apprenticeship, 2018/19.

³⁹ OfS dataset, all English HE providers, 2016/17, first degree full time and apprenticeship.

⁴⁰ OfS dataset, all undergraduates, full time, 2016/17, analysis of London Russell Group providers.

1.5 Care leavers

Access

Significant access gap for care leavers

Overall, care leavers are significantly less likely than other young people to enter higher education by the age of 23 (12% versus 42% of non-care leavers).⁴¹ Care leavers are 11% less likely to enter higher education than other young people with similar demographic profiles and qualifications. Where care leavers do enter HE, they are more likely to follow non-traditional and lower-status routes.

Success

Care leavers significantly less likely to continue and attain on their degree

Non-continuation

Once entry qualifications are taken into account, care leavers are 38% more likely to withdraw from their course and not return.

Attainment

Those care leavers who do complete their degree are just as likely as other students to get a first or upper-second class degree, once entry qualifications and demographic profile are taken into account.

However, before these attributes are taken into account, there is a nearly 11 percentage points attainment gap between care leavers and non-care leavers.⁴²

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

We understand that there are many intersections of disadvantage and that understanding and tackling these is fundamental to effecting meaningful widespread change in the HE sector. However, given the size of our institution, measuring inequality at an intersectional level is unlikely to be statistically significant. Further, given our newness, we do not yet have an understanding of the types of intersectional disadvantage we will encounter most often. Therefore our plan will not address intersectional disadvantage at this stage.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

Given our small size and newness, we are choosing to focus on the major areas of inequality set out above, as we believe this gives us a set of ambitious but credible objectives and targets. If we can achieve these objectives and targets, we believe we would be making a meaningful and effective contribution to the promotion of equality of opportunity both at the sector and institutional level.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

LIS's mission is to provide a transformational learning experience. We are seeking to enrol highpotential, curious and engaged individuals with a keen interest in tackling the problems that matter to society.

Fair access and participation of currently underrepresented groups is at the heart of this mission. Many of the individuals we will seek to recruit are from underrepresented backgrounds that traditionally have

⁴¹ National Network for the Education of Care Leavers.

⁴² Care leaver data from National Network for the Education of Care Leavers, *Moving on up: Pathways of care leavers and careexperienced students into and through higher education*, November 2017.

fewer opportunities to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education. These individuals are underserved by the current university system; their passion and potential are untapped. This inequality of opportunity is a key driver behind our efforts to establish a new institution, which, by avoiding the entrenched structures and incentives common amongst current top-tier HEIs, can effectively reach these underrepresented, high-potential individuals and support them through the admissions process, to succeed in their degree and beyond.

2.2 Target groups

Our long-term, overarching strategic aims are to:

- Enable equal opportunity for access to higher education for all groups regardless of background, both at a sector- and institutional-level; *and to*
- Achieve equality of opportunity in terms of success and progression of students from all backgrounds within and beyond the LIS degree.

We see these aims as key not only in supporting social equity and mobility in general, but also in ensuring that we are identifying, attracting and effectively supporting and enabling the very best students. Our APP objectives will support the delivery of these strategic aims. Our objectives will be set in relation to those groups which, as evidenced by our assessment of performance, have the starkest

gaps in opportunity across the student lifecycle at a sector level and/or at London higher tariff providers, and which are meaningful for us to address as a small, single-programme provider.

Target groups that we will set objectives for

Our assessment of sector and comparator group performance demonstrates that:

- There are significant gaps in opportunity across the student lifecycle (i.e., in terms of access, success and progression) for students from lower HE participation, household income and socioeconomic status groups. The access gap for these students is particularly acute at comparator London higher tariff providers when viewed through the POLAR4 or IMD lens.
- There are significant gaps in access for black students at comparator London higher tariff institutions, as well as acute gaps in the success and progression for black students versus white students across the sector.
- There are stark continuation, attainment and progression gaps for Asian, mixed ethnicity and other ethnicity students across the sector; however, the attainment gap for these groups is much narrower at London higher tariff providers.
- Disabled students have a particular gap in attainment versus non-disabled students sector-wide, as well as a slightly lower rate of progression into employment or further educational study (although there is no statistically significant gap at London higher tariff providers)

We have set sector-focused access objectives and institutional-focused access, success and progression objectives to improve the equality of opportunity of these groups across the student lifecycle, in line with our strategic aims. In setting our objectives and targets we have drawn on the OfS's KPMs.

Groups that we will not set objectives for at this time

Care leavers: Our assessment of performance identifies significant sector-wide access and success gaps for care-leavers. However, given the small size of our institution and the comparatively low number of care

leavers in any cohort of school-leavers, we do not believe it would be meaningful to set institutional objectives for care leavers at this time.⁴³

Mature learners: Our assessment of performance also identifies a significant drop in participation in HE of mature students, and markedly higher non-continuation rates for these students. However, as a provider that will only offer a single full-time programme from 2021, we do not believe that it is meaningful to set objectives in relation to mature students, given the propensity of mature students to seek part-time courses.⁴⁴ In the coming years, we will consider opening a part-time course that would be more accessible for mature students, and will develop dedicated access activities to target mature students.

Intersectional and disaggregated groups: We believe that it would be statistically unreliable as well as problematic from a data privacy perspective to set objectives and targets at the disaggregated level (e.g., the disaggregation of disabled students into disability categories) or certain intersectional levels

(e.g., intersections between ethnicity and gender). We will, however, from the outset of operation, seek to legally and securely capture data on these personal characteristics (as well as other personal characteristics, such as mature learner, carer, and estrangement from parents). This will enable us to assess our students' access, success, and progression, so that we can, over time, begin to develop a more intersectional and detailed view on gaps in equality of opportunity, using rolling averages where required to increase statistical significance and protect student privacy.

Although we will not set specific objectives for care leavers, mature learners and intersectional and disaggregated groups, and will not, in the first instance, conduct special activities to target them, our aim is to improve their equality of opportunity to access, succeed on and progress from LIS. This will be achieved through our open, contextual admissions process and our inclusive approach to success and progression.

2.2 Aims and objectives **Access**

Strategic aim

LIS's strategic aim in relation to access is to help create the conditions whereby all students, whatever their background, have equal opportunity to access higher education.

Objectives

Our sector-contribution objective over the first ten years of our operation is to increase the access to higher education of:

- Students who are from areas of lower HE participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups; *and*
- Black students.

We will aim to achieve this objective via our Outreach Programme, which is detailed below.

⁴³ The Department for Education estimated that there were 72,670 looked-after children in the UK at 31 March 2017—60 per population of 10,000 children under 18 years. The National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (*Moving on up: Pathways of care leavers and care-experienced students into and through higher education*, November 2017) states that the best information available is that at present, around 650 care leavers enter HE each year (of all ages), with an additional 3,500 care-experienced students who either left care before the age of 16 or who entered HE later after the responsibility of their local authority ended;⁷⁹ however it has argued that these figures are likely to be underestimated.

⁴⁴ Roughly half of all mature students are part-time, mature students only make up 23% of full-time u/g students. HESA, 2016/17.

Our institutional objective is, within the first fifteen years of operation, to have a student intake that reflects society in terms of socio-economic status, ethnicity, and disability. Specifically, our objectives are, by 2035/36, to have a student intake which:

- Has equal representation of all POLAR4 quintiles.
 - This exceeds the OfS KPM to eliminate the gap in participation at higher-tariff providers between the most and least represented groups (POLAR4 quintiles 5 and 1) by 2038-39.
- Has equal representation of all IMD quintiles.
- Reflects the London population in terms of proportion of students who were eligible for and claiming FSM at secondary school (17.4%).⁴⁵ ○ We are running a direct applications scheme (i.e., non-UCAS) and will gather FSM data from our students directly at the point of application, which will allow us to assess our progress against this objective.
- Reflects the London population in terms of ethnicity (estimated in the 2010 census at 18.4% Asian students, 13.4% black students, 5% mixed, 3% other ethnicity students).

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- Reflects the UK population in terms of disability (19%).

Targets

In setting our institutional targets, we are focusing on the major areas of inequality as set out in our assessment above—the groups where there are the starkest gaps in opportunity to access higher education. Specifically these are:

- Students from lower higher education participation, lower household income, and lower socioeconomic status groups; *and* ● Black students.

Lower HE participation, household income and socioeconomic status groups

Our 5-year (2025/26) targets have been set as milestones towards our long-term, 2035/36 objectives. They are:

- A 3:1 ratio of students from POLAR4 quintile 5: POLAR4 quintile 1 (working towards a 2035/36 objective of 1:1).
 - We aim to first achieve this ratio in 2024/25, in line with the OfS' KPM to reduce the gap in participation between the most and least represented groups (POLAR4 Q1 and Q5) to a ratio of 3:1 by 2024-25.⁴⁶
- This is equivalent to 10% of our student intake from POLAR4 quintile 1 (working towards a 2035/36 objective of 20%).

⁴⁵ Department for Education, *Pupils Eligible for Free School Meals, Borough, 2019*, proportion London children at maintained secondary schools who are eligible and claiming for FSM in 2019

⁴⁶ OfS dataset shows that current intake of first degree, full time 18 year old undergraduates/degree apprenticeships in the POLAR4 quintile 5 group in 2017/8 was 30.6%, which is three times our target of 10.2%

At London higher tariff providers in 2018/19, only 4% of students were from POLAR4 quintile 1.⁴⁷ Given our unique and radical contextual admissions process (combined with our outreach activities), we aim to improve on this and open with 6% of our students from this quintile.

Given the limitations of POLAR4 as described above, we will complement our POLAR targets with IMD targets; our 5-year (2025/26) targets (set as milestones towards our long-term, 2035/36 objectives) are:

- A 1.87:1 ratio of students from IMD quintile 5: IMD quintile 1 (working towards a 2035/36 objective of 1:1).
- This is equivalent to 15% of our student intake from IMD quintile 1 by 2025/26 (working towards a 2035/36 objective of 20%).

At London higher tariff providers in 2018/19, 11.5% of students were from IMD quintile 1.⁴⁸ Again given our approach to admissions and outreach, we aim to improve on this and open with 13% of our students from this quintile. We anticipate that over time as our outreach increases in scope we will deliver a growth in this proportion every year to reach our target and objective.

Black students

Our five-year (2025/26) target is:

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- 9% of our student intake to be black students (working towards a 2035/36 objective of 13.4%).

At London higher tariff providers in 2018/19, 5% of students were black.⁵¹ We aim to improve on this and open with at least 7% black students.

Given the relatively high levels of representation of Asian and mixed ethnicity students both at our set of comparator universities (London Russell Group) and in England and Wales higher education institutions in general,⁵² we are not setting a dedicated access target for these groups at this time.

In order to focus our targets, we will also not set targets for access of disabled students at this time.

Given our small size, we do not believe that it is meaningful to set an access target for care-experienced students.

Once we have admitted our first cohort of students, we will review our access performance in relation to Asian, mixed and other ethnicity groups and disabled students, and where appropriate will set targets accordingly.

Success

Strategic aim

LIS's strategic aim in relation to success is to create an inclusive teaching and learning environment in which all students, whatever their background, are able to achieve their full potential on the LIS degree.

⁴⁷ London Russell Group universities, 2018/19 intake of POLAR4 quintile 1 students (first degree, full time and apprenticeship), median taken across the universities. Source: LIS analysis of OfS dataset

⁴⁸ London Russell Group universities, 2018/19 intake of IMD quintile 1 students (first degree, full time and apprenticeship), median taken across the universities. Source: LIS analysis of OfS dataset

Objectives

Our institutional objective is that, by 2030/31, all student groups at LIS will have parity of continuation and attainment rate on our degree; and, specifically, that all student groups will have a continuation and attainment rate consistent with the most advantaged students.⁵³

Targets

The School has been instructed not to set targets in this area for the current submission. The School will assess gaps when in operation and set targets accordingly.

Progression

Strategic aim

⁵¹ London Russell Group universities, median intake of black students in 2018/19 (first degree, full time and apprenticeship). Source: LIS analysis of OfS dataset.

⁵² 14% of the student population is Asian, versus 7.5% of the general population. 9% of the student population is Black, versus 3.3% of the general population; 7% of the student population is "Other (incl. mixed), versus 3.1% of the general population. Student population numbers from Social Market Foundation analysis of HESA data, 2013/14-2015/16 and HESA 2016/17 for England, from *Building on Success: Increasing Student Retention in London*, March 2019; general population data is for England and Wales from the UK Census.⁵³ Using 2017/18 data, this currently means a continuation rate for all students of 94% and an attainment rate (first- or upper-secondclass degree of 83%). This figure is subject to change and more recent data will be used when specific targets are set following the entry of the first cohort of LIS students (see section 1 for further details).

LIS's strategic aim in relation to progression is, through access to our extensive careers programme and internship offering, to ensure that all students, whatever their background, have equal opportunities to progress to employment beyond their degree.

Objectives

Our institutional objective is that, within the first ten years of operation, all student groups at LIS will have parity of progression rate from our degree; and ,specifically, that all student groups will have a progression rate consistent with the most advantaged students.⁴⁹

Targets

As with success targets, the School has been instructed not to set targets in this area for the current submission. The School will assess gaps when in operation and set targets accordingly.

Targets and inclusive design: Our success and progression objectives aim to ensure that all students have equal opportunity to succeed on and progress from our programme; and our inclusive design approach to learning, support and employability supports this. It is worth noting, however, that we would expect to see

⁴⁹ Using the most recent data (2016-17), this currently means that all student groups at LIS will have a progression rate into highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level of 73%. This figure is subject to change and more recent data will be used when specific targets are set following the entry of the first cohort of LIS students (see section 1 for further details).

a greater improvement in outcomes (versus current sector performance) for underrepresented groups as a result of this inclusive approach, when compared with groups with higher HE representation.

Collaborative targets: We plan to take a staged approach to collaboration. Once we have opened to students and have identified our access and participation gaps, we will seek to address these gaps through partnerships and collaborative targets with relevant organisations.

Indicative targets: As a new institution with no baseline data, we understand that any targets must necessarily be broadly indicative at this stage. Once we gather our own institution-specific data on access, success, and progression, we will revise our baselines and targets accordingly, subject to agreement by the OfS.

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overview

Inequality in higher education access and participation is a multidimensional problem; it has roots in broader social and economic inequalities and is perpetuated by a range of complex interactions between the student and the institution, across the student lifecycle. Given this, it is crucial that a commitment to equal access and participation is embedded in all of the School's activities:

- *Our values:* to be kind, be brave, be honest, keep learning, and welcome difference.
- *Our mission:* to provide a transformational learning experience for individuals who do not feel that the current university system caters for their needs.
- *Our leadership:* strong vocal commitment by senior leadership to equality, diversity and inclusion, and to closing access, success and progression gaps for underrepresented students.

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- *Our core activities:* open, contextual admissions; inclusive teaching and learning; intensive one-to-one student support; and wide-ranging practical careers support from the beginning of enrolment.
 - *Our site:* fit-for-purpose, accessible site, with inclusive fit-out design.
 - *Our staff:* commitment to staff diversity, equality and inclusion, embedded in the School's human resources and equality policies; OKRs for access and participation for each department and linked to individual performance objectives.
 - *Our School-wide training:* mandatory induction and ongoing training for all staff and students in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, including Unconscious Bias Awareness, Gender Diversity, and Anti-Racism training.
 - *Our governance:* inclusion of elected students on all major governance bodies, and ongoing incorporation of student feedback into quality monitoring processes and programme development. Sub-committee of Academic Council dedicated to equality, diversity, access and participation (the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC)).
 - *Our policies:* our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#), [Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Procedure](#), [Disability Policy](#), and our [Safeguarding Policy and Procedure \(including Prevent\)](#).

Alignment with other strategies

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Our APP has been developed in alignment with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which states that LIS will:

- (a) seek to ensure that all individuals are treated equitably, regardless of gender, race or ethnicity, socio-economic background, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, or any other inappropriate distinction;
- (b) promote diversity of student recruitment and equity of student continuation, attainment and progression;
- (c) promote diversity in staff recruitment and equitable staff development and promotion; *and*
- (d) promote an inclusive teaching, learning and working environment, where all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, and are given equal opportunities to achieve their potential. Our specific equality objectives include:
 - Moving towards a student body that is representative of the general population in terms of black and minority ethnic students, disabled students, and students from deprived and lower socioeconomic status backgrounds; *and*
 - Ensuring that equality groups have equal opportunities for success on and progression from our degree relative to other student groups.

These equality objectives are in clear alignment with our APP objectives, which are to actively enable and support diversity in our student body and to ensure that all students have equal opportunity and the necessary support to succeed at LIS and progress to professional employment or further study. Specifically, our APP will support our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy via:

- Our outreach activities to increase the diversity of our student body.
- Our efforts to eliminate bias against BAME students, disabled students, and students from lower representation, lower household income and lower household socio-economic status groups, and any other students with protected characteristics via our open, contextual admissions process.
- Our monitoring of individual student progress and outcomes, considering contextual information (including protected personal characteristics), determining where there are inequalities of opportunity, and making targeted academic and non-academic interventions.
- Our inclusive model of teaching, learning and support, which is key to both supporting the success of all our students, and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (under the Equality Act 2010) and those who do not.
- Our support for disabled students through the provision of reasonable adjustments under our [Disability Policy](#).
- The cascading of access and participation objectives through all School departments.

To ensure that our APP and our equality and diversity strategy align, we have developed an Equality Impact Assessment procedure and template, which we use to evaluate the impact of all major activities that affect students or applicants. We have recently conducted a full EIA in the design of our admissions process and in the planning of our open days.

At the organisational level, both our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and our delivery against our APP are overseen by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC), supported by a Widening Participation evaluation team.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy

Our APP aligns with our Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy in the following areas: focus on universal design and inclusive teaching, learning and assessment approach; high contact, supportive learning environment; intensive one-to-one tutoring and our [Academic Progress Policy](#) to track learners and productively intervene early when issues arise.

Strategic measures

Sector-focused strategic measures

Outreach Programme

We are a new, small institution with a specialist, single-focus programme and limited resources. We must therefore be highly targeted in our sector-focused access programmes if we are to make a meaningful contribution. Our Outreach Programme is set out below, including its expansion over the period of the Plan.

Our core interventions will centre on improving access of underrepresented groups in the sector by providing support and information, advice and guidance (IAG) for students focusing on links between Higher Education and the future world of work. The goal is that by helping underrepresented pupils and their teachers to better understand the benefits of Higher Education for future careers and the rapidly changing job market, we will help these pupils to broaden their understanding of the opportunities provided by Higher Education, and to develop clear, practical, motivating visions of their future based on multiple careers. This will drive their engagement and attainment, which is a key influencer on whether and how an individual can enter HE.

In keeping with our strategic aims, the initial target groups for this programme (years 1 and 2 of our operation, i.e., 2021-23) are students from areas of lower HE participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups. Given existing sector data which indicates significant gaps in access for higher tariff providers, we predict that interventions will be required for students in these areas. Having analysed our data from the first two years of operation (2021-23), we will then focus on additional target groups. Our assessment of current data (see section 1) suggests that activity may be required to counter access gaps for black students. Our aim for all participant groups will be to increase the number of these students applying for and being accepted into HE.

Our underlying theory of change is informed by Neil Harrison's work, which applies the psychological theory of "possible selves" to access to higher education.⁵⁰ Harrison draws on a series of large-scale empirical studies that have demonstrated that, while aspirations play a limited role in influencing education outcomes, supporting young people in developing clear and tangible expectations can increase their motivation and ultimately their attainment.

Harrison argues that possible selves —specific representations of oneself in future states and circumstances— "serve to organise and energise one's actions".⁵¹ These "possible selves" must be supported by significant others if they are to shape behaviour.⁵² In particular, they must be accompanied by a clear pathway to realisation, through short-term goals and longer-term destinations. Significant adults

⁵⁰ Neil Harrison, *Using the Lens of "Possible Selves" to Explore Access to Higher Education: A New Conceptual Model for Practice, Policy, and Research*, Social Sciences, 2018.

⁵¹ Harrison quoting Ruvolo and Markus 1992.

⁵² Nurius 1991, p.236.

not only play a crucial role in supporting a student's view of "possible selves"; they also play a key role in supporting the student in formulating clear pathways to realising these possible selves. It is the development of these pathways that tends to distinguish relatively advantaged pupils from their disadvantaged peers, potentially due to the greater pool of educational knowledge and experience within the family. There is "clear empirical evidence for possible selves impacting on motivation for schoolwork and thence to educational decision-making".⁵³

Our Outreach Programme will support pupils not only in the development of possible selves but also in the development of clear pathways to realising those selves. We will do this by working with pupils directly, offering face-to-face information, advice and guidance on alternative routes to higher education through events such as summer schools, open days, and school visits. These activities "form part of the process of elaboration and reinforcement that embeds like-to-be selves involving higher education within the self-concept".⁵⁴ We will also work with these pupils' teachers, so that, as significant adults in their pupils' lives, they can support their pupils' formulation of possible selves, specifically by broadening their understanding of the HE options available to them, and by clarifying realistic pathways to these options. Research by the DfE and IFS, and the experience of Causeway Education, has found that engaging teachers as well as students is critical to widening participation:⁵⁵ almost 60% of young people consider teachers to be one of the key influences on their future careers.⁵⁶

Our programme will have two strands, designed around the potential intervention points described by Harrison (see Exhibit 1):

-
- A. Supporting Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils in elaborating future possible selves by providing them with tangible options around alternative higher education, and helping their teachers support them in this process. This includes school visits and teacher workshops.
 - B. Working with pupils above Key Stage 4 to clarify alternative higher education routes and make them desirable and realistic, including setting out a clear pathway to application, with guidance on non-conventional admissions processes. We will also work with their teachers to support them in giving information, advice and guidance on these alternative routes and admissions processes. Work within this area is likely to include structured programmes of *in situ* school visits, open days, summer schools, and teacher workshops.

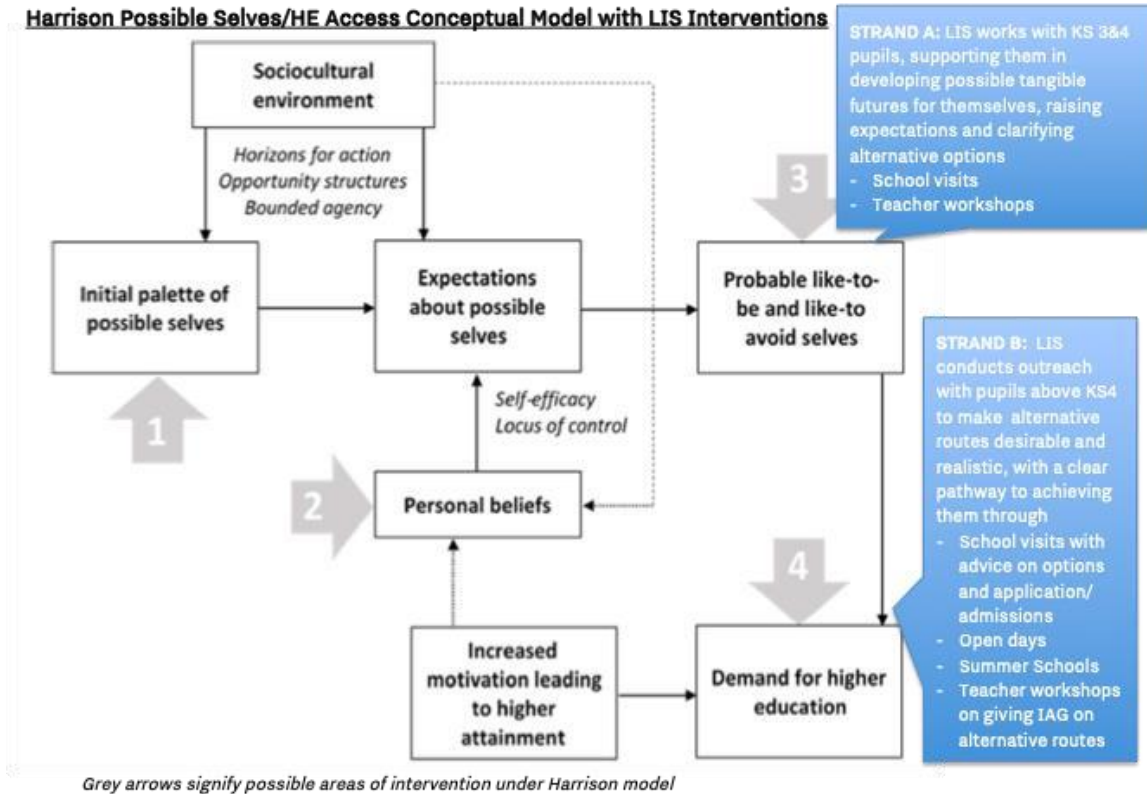
⁵³ Harrison, referring to Oyserman et al 2002, 2006, 2007; Hock et al. 2006.

⁵⁴ Harrison

⁵⁵ <https://www.tes.com/news/widen-access-you-need-to-engage-teachers>

⁵⁶ British Youth Council, National Children's Bureau, Young NCB, October 2009 survey.

Exhibit 1:
Harrison Possible Selves/HE Access Conceptual Model with LIS Interventions



In 2021/22, we will focus on strand B, working with pupils above Key Stage 4. We recognise that a broad body of evidence suggests that students can be at an advanced stage in their HE decision-making post Key Stage 4. We do, however, see efficacy in this approach not least in providing timely data to evaluate the effectiveness of our initial outreach work. From 2022/23, we will broaden our programme to include strand A, and each year will extend our activities to a younger year group (so that by 2025/26, we will be targeting Years 8 and upwards).

In order to reach pupils from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups, we are currently forging collaborations and providing inputs for third-sector organisations including the Accelerate and Access Foundation (AAF). As we anticipate potential access gaps for black applicants after the first two years of operation, we are partnering with Amos Bursary to contribute to their programmes. As our theory of change is closely linked to encouraging students to explore “possible selves” which link HE decisions to career pathways, we are developing collaborations with organisations such as Career Ready.

Internally-focused strategic measures

Our internally-focused strategic measures are fundamental to the way we operate: they comprise our way of working from recruitment and admissions, through teaching and learning, student support, to positioning students for employment. Therefore, the majority of the strategic measures listed below will come into play from the outset of our operation; and they will expand in scale as our student body and higher-fee income increases.

Contextual Admissions Process, Focused on Potential

Our admissions process—which views all academic attainment in the context of background and which looks beyond grades to evaluate potential—is the main lever by which we are aiming to achieve our

institutional access objectives for lower HE participation, household income and socioeconomic groups, BAME students, and disabled students.

Prior attainment has long been cited as a key driver of access to HE.⁶² The links between attainment and HE access are complex; however, one clear and powerful link is that an applicant's grades are currently used as the primary basis for admissions decisions by UK universities. This absolutist focus on grades tends to inhibit access for disadvantaged groups because they tend to perform more poorly in public exams relative to their more advantaged peers;⁶³ further, high-attaining disadvantaged pupils are more likely to have their grades under-predicted versus their more advantaged peers.⁵⁷

The Fair Education Alliance has argued that in order to improve access, universities must move away from a reductive view of student attainment, and should instead consider attainment in the context of student background.⁵⁸ Abroad, concerns about biases inherent in standardised tests⁵⁹ have led universities such as Hampshire College and Minerva to dispense with them altogether, with positive impacts on student diversity;⁶⁰ and 36% of all US HEIs have moved to test-optional or test-flexible admissions. In the UK, leading employers are removing consideration of all traditional academic criteria in considering applicants, leading to significant improvements in talent diversity with no reported negative impact on quality.⁶¹

⁶² Research for BIS found that GCSE attainment was the strongest predictor of whether pupils went on to higher education. BIS (2015), *Socio-economic, ethnic and gender differences in higher education*; Russell Group: *Opening Doors: Understanding and overcoming the barriers to university access*.

⁶³ In 2017, 69% of disadvantaged pupils achieved an average grade of 4 or above in English and Maths, compared to 95% of all other pupils; whilst 7% of disadvantaged pupils achieved a 7 or above, compared with 20% of non-disadvantaged pupils. DfE, *Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England, 2016-17* (where pupils are defined as "disadvantaged" if they are known to have been eligible for FSM in the last 6 years (from Year 6 to Year 11), if they are recorded as having been looked after for at least one day, or recorded as having been adopted from care).

The LIS admissions process, which will be launched for the 2021/22 admissions cycle, supports equality of access through three key features: (1) no minimum grade tariff; (2) all student attainment viewed in the context of individual background; and (3) evaluation of potential as well as attainment.

LIS is open to all grade backgrounds and subject backgrounds. All applicants will fill in an application form containing information on their academic attainment and their contextual background. All applicants will then be invited to a Selection Day where their problem-solving abilities all be assessed using case studies,

⁵⁷ Almost 3,000 disadvantaged, high-achieving children—or 1,000 per year—have their A-levels under-predicted. Sutton Trust, *Rules of the Game: Disadvantaged Students and the University Admissions Process*, December 2017, p.4.

⁵⁸ Fair Education Alliance, *Putting fairness in context: using data to widen access to higher education* (July 2018).

⁵⁹ Research cited by the New York Times shows that the practice of asking for SAT scores tends to underestimate the college performance of women and minority students.

⁶⁰ Hampshire College saw significant improvements in the diversity of its student body when it moved to test-blind admissions - 31% students of colour, up from 21% two years before, 18% students first in family to attend university, up from 12% - with what Hampshire describes as an improvement in quality of students. Minerva ignores standardised tests like the SAT in favour of its own three-stage meritbased admissions process, leading to a diverse student body with no national, cultural or ethnic group in majority.

⁶¹ The Bridge Group describes how employers are increasingly adopting a more inclusive approach to applications, including removing UCAS tariffs or A-level scores from their entry requirements and masking this information during the recruitment process (*Inspiring policy: graduate outcomes and social mobility* (2016)). Since removing all academic criteria on application in 2015 in favour of cognitive and strengths-based assessment, Ernst & Young have seen a 10% increase in recruits from state schools and a 7% increase in recruits who were the first in their family to go to university. Overall, 18% of its 2016 UK intake would have been ineligible to apply before this new approach.

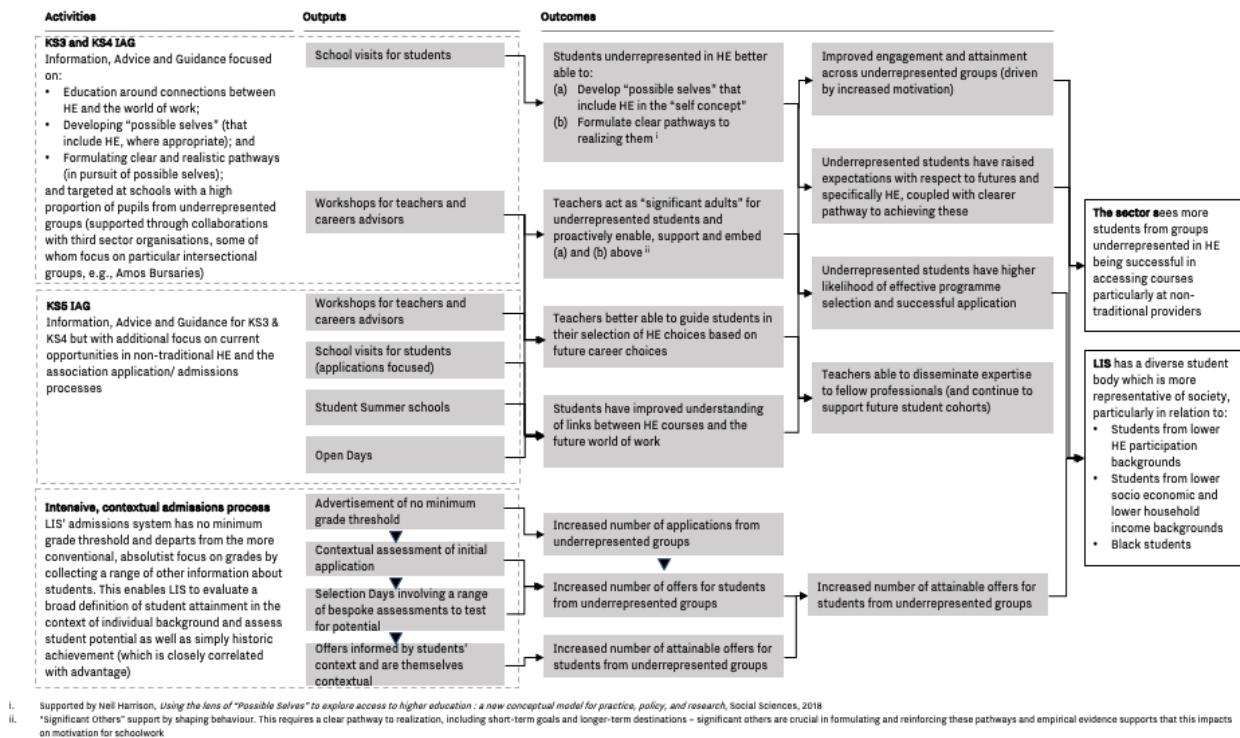
and their mindsets and behaviours will be tested using behavioural interviews.⁶² In developing these Selection Day assessments, we have drawn on best practice in the employment sector (such as McKinsey and Ernst and Young), consulted Widening Participation experts (Causeway, The Access Project), assessment experts (Daisy Christodoulou) and external academics on their application (academics from Birmingham, Cambridge and the Open University), and have trialled them with students and secondary school teachers.

After Selection Day, and based on advice from Widening Participation experts, the School will consider each individual applicant holistically, considering (a) their academic attainment in the context of their educational, geodemographic and personal background; (b) their performance in the case study and behavioural interviews. All selected students will be given a contextual offer, taking into account their educational, family and individual background and their predicted grades. These admissions decisions, and the role of contextual data in making them, will be carefully logged in our Student Record System so that we can monitor the outcomes of our approach over time.

It is important to note that being open to all grades does not mean that LIS will not be highly selective; the difference is that: (a) we will look at what applicants have achieved academically given their starting point, which is a fairer approach to admissions given that we know that public exams are not a level playing field; and (b) we will seek to understand distinctive potential as well as distinctive contextual attainment.

⁶² Contingency plans are being put in place to deliver these Selection Days online in the light of COVID-19. Further detail on the School's Admissions Process can be found in its [Admissions Regulations and Procedures for Students](#)

Theory of Change for outreach and contextual admissions activity



Curriculum and Pedagogic Support

A high-contact, supportive learning environment

A high-contact, supportive learning environment is proven to have a positive impact on continuation and attainment and will support the delivery of our success objectives and targets from the outset of our operation.

- LIS will have a small learning environment, which will enable more vulnerable learners to feel safe and supported, with a sector-leading student-to-teacher ratio (opening at a ratio of 10:1 faculty to students). Research shows that relationships between staff and students and among students, as well as the extent to which students feel supported in their daily interactions with their institutions, have a positive impact on continuation and attainment.⁶³
- Teaching will focus on small-group working and seminars, which research shows improves attendance and student performance (especially for those with lower entry qualifications), and also benefits students living at home by increasing their sense of belonging.⁶⁴
- Each student will have a personal academic tutor, whom they will meet at on average twice a term. The academic tutor will:
 - Be responsible for overseeing the academic progress of their students, providing academic support as required;

⁶³ HEFCE, *Causes of Differences in Student Outcomes*, 2015.

⁶⁴ "This is how to stop students dropping out of university", *The Conversation*, Dennis Duty and Ruth Brooks, 2017.

- Provide a first port of call for their students if they have a question or issue relating to either their academic or non-academic experience;

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- Actively monitor their students' academic progress (via discussion with the learning team and observation of the Student Record System and VLE) including detecting red flags and positively intervening as early as possible, in line with the School's supportive Academic Progress Policy;
 - Be formally trained to understand signs of mental health, safeguarding or abuse issues, so that they can signpost them to the right student support services;
 - Students deemed at risk of non-continuation or with Specific Learning Differences will be assigned a "super tutor" (a tutor with additional training or specific expertise) who will meet the individual on a more frequent basis to provide intensive support.
 - From Year 2, will look develop a "Study Partners" programme. These are more senior students with a particular strength in an area of the curriculum that offer learning support to their peers and are paid by the School.⁶⁵

Inclusive, flexible learning

An inclusive learning environment enables the needs of students with disabilities or learning difficulties to be accommodated, as well as accommodating those who live at home, have jobs or care-giving responsibilities. The benefits of universal design in teaching and learning are demonstrated by a large body of research, which we have drawn upon in developing our teaching and learning approach.⁶⁶ Inclusive and flexible learning will be a core component of our delivery from the outset of our operation, and will support the delivery of our success objectives and targets.

- LIS teaching and learning will incorporate the flipped classroom, online assessment and feedback, technology-enhanced learning, and collaborative online learning, primarily delivered through our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE); as well as digital library resources and the sharing of lecture and seminar resources online, to facilitate remote and student-led, flexible learning. This flexible learning approach is recommended by JISC and enables the ongoing participation of students who have disabilities, who commute, who are in paid part-time work, or who have caring responsibilities. This is balanced with face-to-face teaching and learning to ensure that students do not become detached from the programme, their teachers and their peers, as this can contribute to non-continuation.⁶⁷
- LIS will have regulated timetables designed to support students who are commuting or working part-time (e.g., on-site learning "chunked" into a portion of the week to minimise unnecessary travel and support free time for paid employment). Research has found that regulating timetables has a positive impact on student retention.⁷⁵

⁶⁵ This system has been successfully trialled at UCL.

⁶⁶ *Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education: a synthesis of research*, Professor Christine Hockings, April 2010.

⁶⁷ Social Market Foundation and UPP Foundation, *On Course for Success? Student Retention at University*.⁷⁵ Ibid

- There will be targeted support and provision for disabled students, delivered via the Student Support Department, including the availability of assistive technology and the provision of alternative assessment methods where necessary.
- Student feedback will be used in evolving programme design and delivery and learning support via termly module feedback, and student involvement in the academic governance of the school.

Data and nudging

Early intervention and behavioural nudging have been successful in increasing engagement of disadvantaged or struggling students with learning and non-academic support services. Our SRS will enable us to track students' academic progress (attendance, engagement and attainment) and wellbeing (through a clear record of all interactions with the student and by providing a 360-degree view of their life at LIS). These information flows will enable our staff to deliver academic and pastoral student support. Furthermore, our VLE has been procured specifically with student engagement and communication in mind, to ensure that we are best placed to support and understand students' participation in academic life, as well as to engage constructively with students through online channels. As our technology investment increases and our student body grows, we will explore incorporating "nudges" (e.g., automated texts/instant messaging) where student engagement drops (from year 3 of the School's operation onwards).⁶⁸

Intensive careers support

The School's intensive careers support offering, extending from enrolment to graduation and including annual optional, paid internships, one-to-one mentorship and professional development training, constitutes a set of evidence-based interventions that will support disadvantaged students in their progression from higher education. These strategic activities aim to deliver our objectives and targets relating to progression for all of our students, no matter what their background is.

The School's Careers and Networks department will offer all students, from their first year, a set of ongoing development opportunities based on the School's Employability Model (which focuses on Self, Community, Experience and Opportunity). These include:

- Professional development training;
- Future Selves workshops;
- Ongoing one-to-one professional development support and mentoring from dedicated Careers Mentors;
- The Future Self Accelerator Award;
- Post-graduation careers support (the LIS Launchpad).

⁶⁸ At a recent Data Matters conference, the University of Northumbria described how their student progress teams have been sending encouraging and supporting messages to groups of students, nuanced slightly, depending on how the students are engaging and performing academically. The messages may lightly and confidentially direct students to potential sources of support, and have been successful at Northumbria in increasing student engagement with learning, mental health and disability support services.

In addition, all students will be eligible for an annual, optional internship with a leading employer, brokered by the School.⁶⁹ This optional internship offering will actively improve the progression opportunities of our disadvantaged students: 30% of recruiters expect to fill entry-level jobs with graduates who have already worked for their organisations; however, students from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to be able to secure internships, as 68% of students organise internships through friend/family, and only 14% secure internships through their university.⁷⁰ Paid internships will also alleviate the financial pressures that tend to face students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

(Students from socio-economic groups D and E, and black students, experience more actual financial hardship than their peers, which in some cases includes an inability to meet basic needs).⁷¹

Student Support

Universal design of student support services and a focus on treating each individual according to their specific needs supports the attainment and continuation of all students, no matter what their background or circumstances. Our inclusive approach, which will be in place from the outset of our operation, is designed to be flexible to recognise and accommodate the various needs of a diverse range of individuals and is not designed to be “one size fits all”.

Our dedicated Student Support Department oversees all aspects of non-academic student support, focusing on welfare, health, community, and personal development. It will:

- Provide general advice and guidance (for example on nutrition, exercise, sleep, technology use, personal relationships, financial health).
- Direct students to relevant support services, both internal (e.g., in-house counselling, Academic Tutors, personal development programmes, wellbeing activities) and external (e.g., financial advice charities).
- Determine and provide reasonable adjustments to support learning for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, in line with the School’s [Disability Policy](#).
- Support students in accessing government benefits such as the DSA.
- Deliver a personal development programme in partnership with expert external organisations. Some aspects will be compulsory, others voluntary or by referral. The planned programme includes: Resilience, Belonging and Confidence workshops (delivered in partnership with GRIT); Mindfulness workshops; Unconscious Bias learning; Sexual Consent workshops (delivered with advice from NUS women’s campaign and Sexpression); and Look After Your Mate workshops (delivered by LIS faculty trained by Student Minds).
- Deliver mental health literacy training to all staff and students.
- Partner with other London HE providers to provide LIS students with access to sporting, music, and recreational facilities and societies.
- Organise and fund social activities, in collaboration with the students’ association.

⁶⁹ Note that the internships are neither credit-bearing nor compulsory for completion of the School’s Interdisciplinary Problems and Methods degree.

⁷⁰ High Fliers Research 2015, National Centre for Universities and Business 2014, UK Commission for Employment and Skills.

⁷¹ Unite Students, *Everyone In*, 2017.

Safeguarding of vulnerable students will be assured through our [Safeguarding Policy and Procedure \(including Prevent\)](#), our Designated Safeguarding Officer, and safeguarding training for all School employees.

Our student support strategy is focused on personal student contact. Every student will have a personal tutor and an assigned Welfare Advisor whom they can approach with any issue. In addition, from Year 2 students will have access to Wellbeing Officers who will be selected from the student body. These students will receive mental health training and coaching by the Student Support Department, and will be paid by the School to provide support on non-academic issues to students in the years below.⁷²

The number of full-time professional Welfare Advisors will be two on opening and the number of these staff will increase as our student body grows. These Advisors proactively reach out to their assigned students on a regular, individual basis, as well as monitor their wellbeing through:

- Monitoring their attendance, progression and attendance via the Student Record System;
- Monitoring their usage of non-academic support services;
- Regular liaison with their academic tutor about their progress.

Our aim is that these Welfare Advisors are a friendly and informal point of contact for their students, equipped with the information and experience to identify issues as they are arising and ensuring that students are signposted to relevant support services, such as:

- Rapid one-to-one counselling (provided by an in-house counsellor contracted on a part-time basis);
- Referral to health and support services (e.g., local GPs, charities);
- Access to wellbeing services (e.g., meditation workshops and exercise classes, delivered in partnership with local providers).
- Access to group self-help (delivered in partnership with charities such as GRIT).
- Access to volunteering and extra-curricular opportunities.

Targeted Financial Support

Financial worries are a significant source of student anxiety and have a direct effect on drop-out rates: 64% of UK students worry about their finances all the time or very often, and 36% of students worry about their finances so much that it is affecting their mental health. In a recent large scale survey, over a quarter of students said they were likely to drop out of university due to a lack of funds.⁷³ Certain disadvantaged students face greater financial difficulty than advantaged students (i.e., those from a lower household income/ lower socioeconomic background); we can support the continuation and success of these students by offering them additional, non-repayable financial support.

Bursaries

⁷² Leiden University College in the Netherlands has successfully run this type of programme.

⁷³ Future Finance/ NUS Insight: Financial woes affecting Mental Health (2016).

To support our most financially disadvantaged students through their studies, we have set a budget to provide financial support bursaries to students most in need. This budget will increase in line with our growing student body. These annual bursaries will be worth an average of £1,000 and will be for courserelated costs and other materials. The minimum bursary level will be set at £250. To qualify for financial support, students must be UK citizens with a household residual income of up to £25,000; allocation of bursaries will be based on which students have the greatest demonstrable financial need.⁷⁴

Additional targeted support

In addition to this automatic targeted support, we will retain a budget for hardship bursaries, to support those students who encounter financial hardship during their time at the School. Any UK Home student will be eligible to apply for a hardship bursary; hardship bursaries will be allocated annually on a case-by-case basis and will average at £500 per student.

We will evaluate our financial support packages using the OfS finance toolkit once initial data is available.

Collaboration and Alignment with Other Work and Funding Sources

LIS has formed initial partnerships with third-sector organisations including the Accelerate and Access Foundation and Amos Bursary. LIS is currently exploring additional collaborations with organisations such as Causeway Education. We are also looking to work with the London National Collaborative Outreach (NCOP) Hub (now part of UniConnect) to collaborate on and add value to their new remit relating to careers and HE progression.

Our strategic approach to collaboration is phased as follows. In Stage 1 (2021-22), we will form new partnerships with third-sector organisations such as those outlined above. In Stage 2 (2022-24), following analysis of the composition of the first cohort, we will seek additional collaborations with providers who work with underrepresented groups which our initial data suggests requires an increased level of intervention. At the end of Stage 2, we will review our partnerships in order to drive continuous improvement and to close any key access gaps that have emerged in our first 3 years of operation.

3.2 Student consultation

We will ensure that our students have the opportunity to input on the development, implementation and evaluation of all of our major activities via our Student Engagement model, which is based on the HEA Engagement Through Partnership Approach. This Student Engagement Model consists of a variety of individual, focused, representative and collective opportunities for input into and feedback on the running of the School and the quality of its provision.

⁷⁴ We will make every effort to describe these bursaries in terms that enable the DWP to disregard it as income. Prospective students will receive clear guidance on our financial support scheme via our online and physical prospectus; students who are successful in the admissions process will receive this information with their offer. Each student receiving a bursary will receive detailed information on LIS's timetable of payments, our offsetting and retrospective claims policy, and the impact of deferred entry.

Student consultation to date

Design of Access and Participation Plan

The School has undertaken a set of consultations of its Access and Participation Plan allowing students to express their views about the Plan’s design and proposed implementation and evaluation.

The methodology for consultation has centred on three key mechanisms:

- (i) a dedicated student focus group assessing draft versions of the Access and Participation Plan;
- (ii) structured discussions with prospective students at LIS Open Days;
- (iii) formal internal approval of the Plan including student representation on the Academic Council.

Each consultative strand is described below with key changes outlined. Where changes are highlighted, they have been passed through LIS’s formal governance procedures.

(i) Focus Group

A dedicated focus group comprising 30 students from a range of disadvantaged backgrounds (the backgrounds are not specified here to preserve anonymity) was conducted in November 2019.

Student views	Changes made by LIS
<p><i>All students should be invited to Selection Days irrespective of attainment.</i></p> <p>Students argued strongly that the School should amend its admissions policy so that all students who applied to LIS were offered an interview at a LIS Selection Day.</p>	<p>In light of these views, the Access and Participation Plan and accompanying admissions policies were amended to ensure that all students who complete an application for LIS will be eligible for an interview.</p>
<p><i>Increased linkage between career options and HE choices</i></p> <p>Students expressed a clear view that they would benefit from an outreach programme which emphasised and clarified links between student course choices and future HE choices.</p>	<p>Taking into account these views, earlier versions of the Access and Participation were amended with careers options and “future selves” placed at the centre of the Theory for Change and proposed outreach programme.</p> <p>In terms of implementation of its careers offer, the School has expanded its programme to include additional, structured extra-curricular opportunities to interact with employers.</p>

(ii) Structured discussions at Open Days

Throughout 2019-20, the School ran a series of Open Days with prospective students. This included participation by students from a range of disadvantaged backgrounds (including low income households, BAME, care-experienced, GRT and students with specific learning differences). The proposed arrangements

for student support and a range of other sections of the Access and Participation Plan were consulted on at separate Open Days.

Student views	Changes made by LIS
<p><i>Enhancement of student support arrangements</i></p> <p>Students at Open Days requested increased opportunities for 1:1 support, particularly in relation to wellbeing.</p>	<p>In order to take into account student views and to drive improved retention, the Access and Participation Plan and associated Student Support Framework were amended to include two channels for 1:1 support namely, an Academic Tutor and a named Welfare Advisor.</p>
<p><i>Variety of assessments</i></p> <p>Students expressed a strong preference for a varied assessment strategy which was not reliant on terminal examinations.</p>	<p>In accordance with the School’s academic governance procedures and the QAA code, the Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy includes opportunities for a range of assessments.</p>

(iii) Student engagement in ratification process of Access and Participation Plan

Student views	Changes made by LIS
<p><i>Proposed evaluation of Access and Participation Plan by students sitting on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee</i></p>	<p>Internally, progress against targets set out in the Access and Participation Plan will be monitored by the School’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee who will report to the Academic Council.</p> <p>Following debate at the Academic Council and the support of the student representative, it was agreed that student participation in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee would be expanded from one to two representatives.</p>
<p><i>Admissions: enhancing provisions for students from Widening Participation backgrounds when preparing for interviews</i></p>	<p>The School’s revised policy of making all students who have completed applications eligible for interview at a Selection Day was debated at the Academic Council. The student representative supported the extension of the admissions policy and questioned whether additional provisions for students from Widening Participation students would be made. A range of measures, including enhanced familiarisation with the interview process and additional contact with teachers, will be on offer for students allocated a contextual flag as outlined earlier in the Access and Participation Plan.</p>

Future student consultation

Implementation of Access and Participation Plan

In implementing the Access and Participation Plan, the School will engage with students from a range of backgrounds in the following ways:

(i) Student ambassadors

The School will actively recruit and train students from different backgrounds (including but not limited to BAME and low household income) and students with specific learning differences to take part in Outreach activities including work with target schools. In accordance with our Theory of Change this will include, for instance, sessions linking HE choices to future careers.

(ii) Student wellbeing officers

LIS will recruit and train students from different backgrounds (including but not limited to BAME and low household income) and students with specific learning differences to act as Wellbeing Officers for students in later cohorts. This commitment is set out in greater detail on pages 22-23 of the Access and Participation Plan.

Evaluation of Access and Participation Plan

Evaluation of the Access and Participation Plan by groups from different backgrounds will be conducted through a range of mechanisms.

(i) Focus groups & interviews

As set out in the School's Quality Framework, LIS will conduct with a series of focus groups and interviews in order to evaluate the Access and Participation Plan. This will include focus groups and interviews with students from a range of backgrounds including but not limited to BAME and low household income and students with Specific Learning Differences.

(ii) Student feedback and surveys

As detailed in our Student Support Framework, the School will seek feedback from students on a range of topics linked to the Access and Participation Plan. Surveys will be anonymised but students will be encouraged to complete fields including ethnicity, household income, self-declared disability allowing for the disaggregation and evaluation of results according to different student backgrounds. These surveys will cover:

- (a) inclusive teaching and learning (evaluated through termly (modular) and annual surveys);
- (b) student support and wellbeing (evaluated through termly and annual surveys);
- (c) employment and progression support (evaluated through annual and internship surveys);
- (d) financial support surveys for recipients (specifically students from low income households);
- (e) termly "you said, we did for" where the School will share with students how their feedback has affected decision-making.

(iii) Student engagement in governance

Students' involvement in School governance and their feedback on all aspects of student experience will support the School in improving their understanding of student needs, as well as increase students' sense of belonging to the provider, which may contribute to improved retention and attainment.⁷⁵

Ongoing data and processes linked to the Access and Participation Plan will be monitored and evaluated by students in line with the School's governance. In line with the School's Student Support Framework, students from diverse backgrounds will be pro-actively encouraged to stand for election and a full suite of training including induction to policies and training in analysis of data will be made available for all representatives.

Formal representation channels will include:

(a) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

This Committee will monitor progress towards Access and Participation targets on a termly basis and will include two student representatives.

(b) Academic Council

Up to two student representatives will sit on the Academic Council; an important role of the Council will be to discuss findings from the surveys and feedback channels enumerated above.

(c) Board of Directors

A student representative will sit on the Board of Directors where compliance with ongoing conditions of registration, including progress against Access and Participation targets, will be discussed.

(d) Programme and Module Review and Approval Panel (PMRAP)

A student representative will sit on the Programme Modification and Approval Panel. Programme related proposals will include scrutiny of how changes will impact on inclusivity and diversity in relation to teaching and learning.

(e) Student Voice Committee

All elected student representatives will sit on a Student Voice Committee. The Committee's remit will include considering how evaluation and student engagement practices across the organisation can be continuously developed.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

Overview of LIS evaluation strategy

Our evaluation strategy sets out the approach we will take evaluating our access and participation strategic measures. We are committed to ensuring that our higher fee cap income is spent on activities that provide

⁷⁵ www.heacademy.ac.uk/individuals/strategic-priorities/retention/what-works

the greatest possible economic and social return, and recognise that high quality evaluation is vital to this, to ensure that decisions are made based on reliable and robust evidence. We have used the HM Treasury *Magenta Book* and guidance from the OfS in determining our evaluation strategy.

Our evaluation strategy is focused on:

- Understanding the outcomes of our access and participation strategic measures;
- Ensuring that robust quantitative and qualitative evidence is used to both measure these outcomes and understand how these can be attributed to the strategic measures, and that our evidence base is continually strengthened;
- Securing continuous improvement—evaluation findings will help determine what works, value for money, adverse consequences, and opportunities for improvement, and will be used to improve future decision-making and prioritise activities, to ensure there is a sound evidencebase for our access and participation activities. Evaluation from our outreach programmes will lead to changes in the design of future programmes.

Evaluation is built into new programmes and measures from their inception, to ensure that activities are designed purposefully and to ensure that they can be properly evaluated against their expected impact.

The objective of our evaluation strategy is to determine whether our access and participation strategic measures are effective and efficient in achieving our access and participation objectives. It seeks to answer the following questions for each strategic measure:

1. *Strategic context*: what was the strategic relevance of the measure—specifically, what are the access and participation objectives to which the measure is contributing, and how is it expected to do this (cross-referencing the theory of change)?
2. *Process*: how was the strategic measure delivered—is it being implemented as intended, and what, in practice, is working more or less well?
3. *Impact*: what changes have occurred that can be objectively attributed to the strategic measure? Does the strategic measure support the delivery of our objective? In evaluating impact we will refer to our targets and milestones and whether or not these have been delivered as anticipated. Through a combination of process and impact evaluation, we will effectively be testing our theories of change—whether our chosen activities are creating the impact they were intended to create.
4. *Economic*: what are the benefits of the strategic measure compared with its associated costs?

Evaluation is led by the Director of Widening Participation. Detailed evaluation approaches are developed using the OfS Evaluation Self-Assessment Tool.

A summary of our main evaluation activities is set out below by categorised by activity area and with accompanying timescales.

Activity area	Timescales
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Admissions	<p>Data collection will commence during the application process evaluated at the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Spring 2021 (and for each subsequent year of the Plan): analysis of initial application data disaggregated by underrepresented groups. (ii) Autumn 2021 (and for each subsequent year of the Plan): analysis of admissions statistics disaggregated by underrepresented groups.
Access/Outreach Programme (see section below for further detail)	<p>Data collection will commence when outreach work begins following registration and ratification of the School's Access and Participation Plan.</p> <p>Data on the reach and preliminary effectiveness of outreach activities (e.g. through attitudinal surveys) will be monitored on a termly basis by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.</p> <p>As set out below, statistical analysis of the effectiveness of outreach work in terms of admissions to Higher Education will be analysed, where appropriate, through the Higher Education Access Tracker and UCAS's STROBE service. This will typically take place in the autumn term of each year beginning in the autumn of 2022 (i.e. following the 2021-22 outreach programme cycle).</p>
Student Support	<p>The effectiveness of student support will be initially measured through surveys taken in each term. In the first instance, collection of student support data will begin in the autumn of 2021 and will be analysed in Spring 2022. An annual survey of student data will be conducted in the final term of each year.</p>
Success	<p>Student success, primarily measured by attainment, will be measured on an annual basis and disaggregated by under-represented groups. The first analysis of student success data will follow the ratification of Examination Board marks for the first year of the first LIS cohort in the summer of 2022. Following the graduation of the first cohort in summer 2024, analysis of differential success rates for under-represented groups will be conducted.</p>
Progression	<p>Progression data will be split into two main categories. On an annual basis starting in the summer of 2022, analysis of the number and type of internships undertaken by students will be conducted. Following the graduation of the first cohort in summer 2024, further analysis will be completed in line with the timescales and definitions set out by the Graduate Outcomes survey.</p>
Financial support	<p>Financial support will be evaluated on an annual basis in line with the OfS' Financial support toolkit. The first evaluation will take place in the summer of 2022.</p>

Evaluation activities are conducted as outlined above. The results are shared with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC), which is a sub-committee of the Academic Council. The EDIC will consider the effectiveness of the strategic measures evaluated, capturing learnings and agreeing departmental and

cross-departmental actions to improve performance. The EDIC will share the evaluation outcomes and resulting actions from evaluations with the Academic Council and Board of Directors, as well as with staff and students via the School intranet, VLE and internet.

In assessing how LIS's financial support packages are improving outcomes for those from underrepresented groups, we will use the OfS's Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit (with particular emphasis on the survey and interview tools, given the small size of our institution).

Evaluating our sector-focused Outreach Programme

To evaluate the effectiveness of our sector-focused Outreach Programme, we will evaluate it using the above four approaches as appropriate. The evaluation will consider the *strategic context* (the objectives of the Outreach Programme), the *process* (how the programme is being delivered, drawing on objective resourcing data and qualitative data from participants and LIS staff), the *impact* of the Programme, and the *economic* costs of delivering the Programme relative to its benefits (i.e., a cost-effectiveness analysis to determine the cost of convincing a participant to access higher education).

To evaluate the *impact* of our Outreach Programme, we will analyse the progression to higher education of each student that has participated in the programme. We plan to track the individual outcomes of these students through two means: (i) the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) or equivalent; (ii) UCAS's STROBE service. The latter service provides benchmark groups to compare applicants with similar characteristics to our programme participants (e.g., in terms POLAR, IMD, FSM, ethnicity) and compares their percentage progression rates to HE (including type of institution attended—higher, medium or lower tariff, alternative, degree apprenticeship) versus our participant group, to offer a counterfactual (i.e., what might have occurred were our Outreach Programme not in place). Qualitative data will test dimensions such as the extent to which participants' expectations of possible selves and the desirability of higher education have been raised as a result of the programme. As our Outreach Programme grows in size, impact evaluation will seek to determine how changes varied across different groups and stakeholders.

In conducting the annual evaluation of the Outreach Programme, the Director of Widening Participation will ensure that rigorous data collection, analysis, and benchmarking is conducted. This activity will require an investment in external tracker and evaluation services which will form a significant proportion of our access spend.

Given the long range of our Outreach Programme (where we are working with children from Key Stages 3 and 4), we expect that it may take several cycles of evaluation to understand the effectiveness of our Outreach Programme activities. Where the programme has been deemed to be effective by EDIC, this information will be shared with the Evidence and Impact Exchange (EIX), and, where possible, learnings shared with the journals and bodies such as the *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning Journal* and the *British Educational Research Association*.

Evaluating our LIS-focused activities

In evaluating our internally-focussed access and participation measures, we will first prioritise the measures for evaluation. Proper evaluation is time and resource-intensive, and prioritisation is necessary to ensure focus of evaluation efforts upon areas where they will have most effect.

The Director of Widening Participation is responsible for prioritising strategic measures for evaluation. Our initial strategy is to stage our evaluation of internally-focused strategic measures according to the progress of the student life-cycle, as this will be the most meaningful given the cycle of activity and evidence. We

will also conduct a biennial evaluation of our admissions approach, which is innovative and therefore requires special attention. Student focus groups and interviews (see section 3.2) as well as other evaluative instruments will be used in internal quality evaluations with a focus on the following themes:

- 2020/21: Admissions
- 2021/22: Inclusive Teaching and Learning
- 2022/23: Student Support
- 2023/24: Student Engagement
- 2024/25: Access Collaborations & Admissions

This strategy will be reviewed annually by the Director of Widening Participation, and any emerging priority measures for evaluation identified, for example where a known quality issue has arisen or where we have failed to reach objectives and targets in a particular area (e.g., an issue in attainment might prompt an evaluation of our teaching and learning strategic measures).

In evaluating a prioritised strategic measure, the Director of Widening Participation will, where appropriate, evaluate the *strategic context* of the measure, the *process* of conducting the measure (i.e., whether it was conducted as planned), its impact, (based on qualitative and quantitative analysis and benchmarked against the sector, comparator universities (e.g., London Russell Group) and prior year performance), and the economics of the measure. In evaluating economics, we will focus on the opportunity costs of our way of operating, benchmarking against costs of alternative provision (e.g., through case studies of external best practice), as well as evaluating cost-effectiveness analysis of the measure over time.

The Director of Widening Participation will determine the detailed approach for evaluation of the impact of LIS's access and participation activities, using the OfS Evaluation Self-Assessment Tool. The School will gather and analyse the data required for evaluation; this will include the gathering of relevant quantitative data (much of which will be captured in LIS's termly monitoring of the Plan), as well as conducting process evaluation and organising focus groups, surveys and structured interviews to gather qualitative feedback from students to understand the effects of LIS's internally-focused access and participation activities.

Data collection will be at the individual student level, allowing for measurement of individualised change, as well as sub-group and cohort level. Before this data is shared either internally or externally, rolling averages or summaries will be used to protect the individual identity of students. In gathering and using data, we will ensure that we are compliant with GDPR and our [Data Protection Policy](#).

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is responsible for ongoing monitoring of progress against the Plan, and will meet on a termly basis to review data on delivery against the Plan's targets, as well as to discuss how the Teaching and Learning, Student Support, Careers and Networks, Operations and Recruitment Departments are delivering on the strategic measures of the plan.

Quantitative and qualitative data will be gathered in the general course of School operations, e.g.:

- The Registry will gather quantitative admissions, contextual, attendance, continuation and attainment data as part of its responsibility to deliver HESA returns;
- Qualitative student survey data (linked to student satisfaction, potential drivers of noncontinuation, barriers to success, perceived quality of learning and non-academic support) will be gathered as part of the NSS, termly student feedback, and the Annual Programme Monitoring and Annual Quality Review processes;

- The Student Support Department will gather service usage data;
- The Careers and Networks Department will gather quantitative data on take-up of placements, qualitative data on whether students feel that placements have increased their employability, as well as data for the Longitudinal Education Outcomes, the Graduate Outcomes Survey and HESA Data Futures programme.

The Outreach Department will analyse this data by student group, before sharing it with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. This data will be collected, stored and analysed in line with GDPR and LIS's [Data Protection Policy](#).

As well as monitoring progress against the Plan, EDIC is also responsible for using the ongoing access and participation monitoring data to determine whether there are further gaps in access and participation to be addressed, for example intersectional gaps, and developing plans to address these.

EDIC will report to the Academic Council on a termly basis on compliance with the provisions and our Access and Participation Plan and progress towards our Plan's targets. The Academic Council will agree and monitor any actions for improvement. In the early stages of the School's operation, the Academic Council will report to the Board of Directors termly on the progress against the delivery of the plan; over time this will change to 6-monthly reporting. The inclusion of student representatives at EDIC, the Academic Council and the Board of Directors (see earlier section for further detail) will ensure that students are engaged with the monitoring of performance and provisions of the plan.

Where progress is worsening or failing to meet the plan, the Academic Council and/or Board of Directors will:

- Approve actions to improve delivery of strategic measures, including the provision of additional resources, the development of partnerships, and changes in responsibility for delivery;
- Commission an evaluation by the Director of Widening Participation of a strategic measure where it is deemed to be potentially ineffective;
- Agree changes to the School's Access and Participation Plan, such as the removal, modification or addition of strategic measures;
- Propose significant modifications to the Plan, for agreement by the Office for Students.

EDIC is also responsible for drafting the School's Access Participation Plan and annual Access and Participation Impact Report for sign-off by the Academic Council and the Board of Directors.

Beyond the formal committee structure, all areas of the School have a responsibility to support, promote and embed widening access and participation. This will be achieved through the embedding of our Access and Participation Plan into our School strategy, and through the incorporation of our Plan into departmental objectives and targets. For example, the Student Support Department will have targets relating to take-up of services; and the Careers and Networks Department will have targets relating to take-up of internships and student satisfaction scores on internships. Some objectives and targets will be shared across Departments (e.g., continuation targets shared across the Teaching and Learning and Student Support Departments). Our cross-departmental approach to overseeing and monitoring our access and participation activities (via EDIC) will also ensure that the key departments in delivering our access, success and progression activities are engaged in ensuring the success of these activities.

4. Provision of information to students

Prospective students will receive clear guidance on the following via our online and physical prospectus, as well as at the point of offer:

- Our financial support scheme (including eligibility criteria, level of financial support, ways to apply, and decision-making process).
- Fees (including any information regarding possible changes to the level of tuition fees, how these are calculated, and how it could affect them).
- Our approved APP.

Current students will be able to access this information via the School internet and VLE, their academic tutor, and the Student Support Department.

Appendix to LIS Approved Access and Participation Plan (APP) [July 2022]

- **Priority A: Make access and participation plans more accessible in a way that prospective and current students, their parents and other stakeholders can easily understand.**

To make our access and participation plan more accessible we have created a summary document. This document outlines the LIS' plan including:

- Key Points
- Fees Charged
- Financial help available
- Information for students
- Aims
- Actions being taken to achieve aims
- Student participation
- Evaluation
- Contact details for further information

The summary document will be accessible on our website along with our full access and participation plan.

- **Priority B: Develop, enhance and expand their partnerships with schools and other local and national organisations, to help raise the pre-16 attainment of young people from underrepresented groups across England.**

As a new and small provider with a specialist single-focus programme, our capacity to engage with schools in a discrete attainment raising programme is currently limited. In 2022 and 2023, LIS will therefore explore collaborations with other organisations who specialise in widening participation through attainment raising activities. Through these national and local partnerships we will seek to add to our planned outreach activities.

Our outreach programme has two strands:

- A. Supporting Key Stage 3 and 4 students in elaborating future possible selves by providing students with tangible options around alternative higher education, and helping their teachers support them in this process. This includes school visits and teacher workshops.
- B. Working with pupils above Key Stage 4 to identify alternative higher education routes and make them desirable and realistic, including setting out a clear pathway to application, with guidance on non-conventional admissions processes. We will work with teachers to support students in giving information, advice and guidance on these alternative routes and admissions processes. Work within this area is likely to include structured programmes of *in situ* school visits, open days, summer schools, and teacher workshops.

To expand both strands of activity we are exploring participating in existing networks and interventions being delivered by our local Uni Connect partnerships. This will allow us to avoid duplication in outreach work and target specific underrepresented groups including POLAR4 Q1-2 learners in schools.

By developing collaboration with other local networks such as the Local Enterprise Adviser network (LEAN), the Careers Enterprise Company and London Careers Hubs we will aim to expand our local partnerships. Each Career Hub has a network of schools who are supported with their Gatsby benchmarks. We will explore working with the Central Careers Hub who support Camden, City of London, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth and Westminster. By focusing on Tower Hamlets schools, we can deliver a joined-up approach for example hosting workshops, summer schools and other information advice and guidance (IAG) events on our campus for local schools.

As part of this variation, we will expand our network to include organisations such the Access Project, The Brilliant Club and the Amos Bursary who utilise different models of activity with underrepresented learners to increase attainment. In this regard, LIS will aim to work with students and contribute to and complement existing programmes.

- **Priority C: Set out how access to higher education for students from underrepresented groups leads to successful participation on high quality courses and good graduate outcomes.**

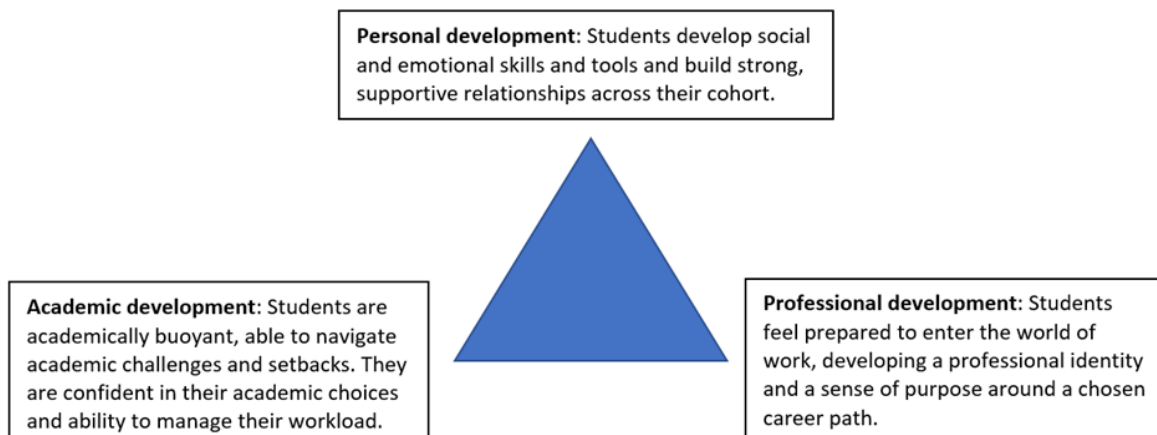
Student Support: Context

As a small institution, LIS's approach to high participation and strong graduate outcomes is to offer powerful undergirding student support for *all* students and to increase the intensity of support for students who may come from underrepresented groups and/or be "at risk" for other reasons.

Student Support Model

Our approach to ensuring successful participation and graduate outcomes for students from underrepresented groups is set out in our Student Support Framework. The LIS model for student support has three main dimensions:

1. **Personal development:** Students develop social and emotional skills and tools and build strong, supportive relationships across their cohort.
2. **Academic development:** Students are academically buoyant, able to navigate academic challenges and setbacks. They are confident in their academic choices and ability to manage their workload.
3. **Professional development:** Students feel prepared to enter the world of work, developing a professional identity and a sense of purpose around a chosen career path.



Student support personnel

All students at LIS are provided with high-quality, wrap-around support. This will involve three main support figures: an academic tutor, welfare advisor and careers mentor. Students deemed to be "at-risk" are allocated staff with extra training who can provide additional support (e.g. more frequent meetings) if required. "At-risk" status is decided on a case-by-case basis and typical indicators include: POLAR 1-2, High IDACI indicator, FSM Ever 6, First in family to enter Higher Education, Specific Learning Difference e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia, Asperger's, Lower than expected attendance rates.

LIS has a specialist counselling service for students with specific needs.

As part of our policies, we ensure that reasonable adjustments to teaching and the wider environment are made when needs are identified.

Graduate outcomes: Context

As a new institution which opened for its first cohort in 2021, LIS will not have graduate outcome data until 2024-25 at the earliest.

Graduate outcomes model

The LIS approach to graduate outcomes is set out, in part, in our Careers Framework. The core principles are to provide an accessible, holistic, student-centred and networked experience.

A key feature of shaping good outcomes is LIS's commitment to broker all eligible students with internships in each year of study. These paid internships cover a range of sectors and enable students to develop valuable experiences.

Students from underrepresented groups are provided with additional one-to-one support both in brokering an internship and in supporting the transition into an internship.

The internship programme is complemented by careers and employability support including a careers mentor and a full suite of employability activities.

Monitoring and Review

LIS's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) regularly monitors the uptake of student support and careers and employability activities. A gap analysis for underrepresented groups is undertaken to highlight any emerging disparities and provide mitigations as required.

- **Priority D: Seek to develop more diverse pathways into and through higher education through expansion of flexible Level 4 and 5 courses and degree apprenticeships.**

LIS secured provisional degree awarding powers for the period September 2021-2024. In this period, LIS's ability to develop additional Level 4, 5 and degree apprenticeship courses is limited in line with the Statutory Instrument 2020 No. 1615.

Within this context, LIS continues to actively monitor opportunities in developing new programmes with an emphasis on underrepresented groups including, potentially, students in prison.

Provider fee information 2022-23

Summary of 2022-23 course fees

*course type not listed by the provider as available in 2022-23. This means that any such course delivered in 2022-23 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

Table 1a - Full-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,000
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 1b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students

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

Table 1c - Part-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students

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

Table 1d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students

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

**Access and participation plan
Fee information 2021-22**

Provider name: The London Interdisciplinary School Ltd

Provider UKPRN: 10067623

Summary of 2021-22 entrant course fees

*Course type not listed by the provider as available to new entrants in 2021-22. This means that any such course delivered to new entrants in 2021-22 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

Inflationary statement:

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

Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2021-22 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	£9,000
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students

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

Table 4c - Part-time course fee levels for 2021-22 entrants

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

Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2021-22

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

Targets and investment plan

2021-22 to 2025-26

Provider name: The London Interdisciplinary School Ltd

Provider UKPRN: 10067623

Investment summary

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

Note about the data:

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Total access activity investment (£)	£33,000.00	£75,000.00	£109,000.00	£151,000.00	£186,000.00
Access (pre-16)	£4,000.00	£12,000.00	£17,000.00	£23,000.00	£28,000.00
Access (post-16)	£13,000.00	£28,000.00	£41,000.00	£56,000.00	£69,000.00
Access (adults and the community)	£0.00	£1,000.00	£2,000.00	£6,000.00	£7,000.00
Access (other)	£16,000.00	£34,000.00	£49,000.00	£66,000.00	£82,000.00
Financial support (£)	£12,000.00	£23,000.00	£34,000.00	£46,000.00	£57,000.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£21,000.00	£30,000.00	£42,000.00	£55,000.00	£68,000.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Higher fee income (EHFI)	£360,000.00	£696,000.00	£1,008,000.00	£1,368,000.00	£1,701,000.00
Access investment	9.2%	10.8%	10.8%	11.0%	10.9%
Financial support	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Research and evaluation	5.8%	4.3%	4.2%	4.0%	4.0%
Total investment (as %HFI)	15.0%	15.1%	15.0%	15.1%	14.9%

Targets and investment plan 2021-22 to 2025-26

Provider name: The London Interdisciplinary School Ltd

Provider UKPRN: 10067623

Targets

Table 4a - Access

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Underrepresented group	Comparator group (optional)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2021-22 milestones	2022-23 milestones	2023-24 milestones	2024-25 milestones	2025-26 milestones	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To increase the proportion of students of black ethnicity in HE	PTA_1	Ethnicity			Increase the proportion of entrants from black ethnicity backgrounds to match local demographics.	No	The access and participation dataset	2018-19	Percentage	5%	0.07	0.07457	0.07914	0.08371	0.08829	We have used as our baseline the access of black students at London Russell Group universities (first degree, full time and apprenticeship) as we believe this gives us a likely picture of our starting point. We expect to exceed this baseline by two percentage points in our first year. Our 2035/36 objective is to have a student intake that reflects ethnic population of London (13.4% black students). We assume a linear progression from our first year to our 2035/36 objective.
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from underrepresented groups	PTA_2	Low participation neighbourhood (LPN)	POLAR quintile 1	POLAR quintile 5	Ratio in entry rates to LIS for POLAR4 quintile 5: quintile 1 students	No	The access and participation dataset	2018-19	Ratio (X:1 format)	8:1	5.4:1	4.6:1	3.9:1	3.5:1	3.1:1	Baseline is all Eng. providers 2018/19 POLAR4 Q5 students, vs. London Russell Group HEIs 2018/19 intake of POLAR4 Q1 students, median (1st degree, FT/app.). Given limitations of POLAR4 for London students (set out in our APP), we've used London RG HEIs as comparator for Q1 intake as this gives a realistic picture of our likely starting point. We've set our targets against all English HEIs in order to align with OFS KPM. Our 2035/36 objective is for equal representation of all POLAR4 quintiles.
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from underrepresented groups	PTA_3	Socioeconomic	IMD quintile 1	IMD quintile 5	Ratio in entry rates to LIS from IMD quintile 5: quintile 1 students	No	The access and participation dataset	2018-19	Ratio (X:1 format)	2.43:1	2.15:1	2.07:1	2.00:1	1.93:1	1.87:1	We have used as our baseline London Russell Group universities 2018/19 intake of IMD Q5 students (first degree, full time or apprenticeship), vs. London Russell Group universities 2018/19 intake of IMD Q1 students (first degree, full time or apprenticeship), median, as we believe this gives a realistic picture of our likely starting point. We expect to exceed this baseline in our first year. Our 2035/36 objective is for equal representation of all IMD quintiles.
	PTA_4			Other (please specify in description)												
	PTA_5			Other (please specify in description)												

Table 4b - Success

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Underrepresented group	Comparator group (optional)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2021-22 milestones	2022-23 milestones	2023-24 milestones	2024-25 milestones	2025-26 milestones	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
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Table 4c - Progression

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Underrepresented group	Comparator group (optional)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2021-22 milestones	2022-23 milestones	2023-24 milestones	2024-25 milestones	2025-26 milestones	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
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