

# RNN Group

## Access and Participation Plan

### 2026-27 to 2029-30



## 1. Introduction and strategic aim

The RNN group (the Group) is an education and training provider, meeting the needs of thousands of employers, adults and school leavers every year. The Group has sites situated within the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) and the Bassetlaw Local Enterprise Partnership (D2N2) area which includes: Rotherham College (RC); North Notts College (NNC); Dearne Valley College (DVC); University Centre Rotherham (UCR); Retford Post-16 Centre; Idle Valley and the National Fluid Power Centre (NFPC). The Group supports 11,000 learners annually across a range of 14,000 different education and training programmes including over 1,400 apprentices across a range of frameworks and standards. This is achieved through collaborative working with more than 600 employers and businesses and partnerships with Sheffield Hallam University and the Universities of Huddersfield and Hull.

The Group's Strategic Vision is to: 'lead innovation and skills within our communities'. The Group's mission is: "Through our strategic relationships with all the communities we serve, our education and training will provide exceptional opportunities for people throughout their lives. Our Centres of Excellence will be inspirational and we will be agile to the needs of our employers, stakeholders, schools and the community".

We have set five key priorities to drive forward higher education (HE) in the region in our HE & Skills Strategic Plan 2022-2026:

- To increase higher education & higher level skills opportunities within the region;
- To provide a high quality educational experience that meets the needs and aspiration of students, employers and the local community to support high levels of student success;
- Develop the management and governance of higher education;
- Provide opportunities for staff to undertake research-led scholarly activities which inform curriculum planning and implementation;
- Increase student belonging, satisfaction and engagement, particularly amongst those from low participation areas to successfully overcome disadvantage barriers to achieve positive outcomes.

South Yorkshire, comprising the local authority areas of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield, is one of the ten poorest areas in Northern Europe;<sup>1</sup> it is an area facing multiple and interconnected disadvantages. According to the UK Government's Levelling Up White Paper,<sup>2</sup> the region is among the most deprived in the UK, with productivity levels significantly below the national average. Historically reliant on coal mining and steel manufacturing, the decline of these industries has left deep economic scars, contributing to long-term unemployment and limited private sector growth.

Social inequality is a pressing issue in South Yorkshire with numerous neighbourhoods in Sheffield, Rotherham, and Doncaster among the most deprived 10% in England.<sup>3</sup> These areas face elevated rates of child poverty, health inequalities, and crime. The South Yorkshire Integrated Care Partnership reports stark disparities in health outcomes, with life expectancy in some areas up to 10 years lower than the national average.<sup>4</sup> Mental health issues, substance abuse, and housing insecurity are prevalent, further compounding social challenges.

Secondary school attainment in Rotherham is slightly below the national average. However, A-level performance is notably lower than average with only 8.2% achieving grades AAB or above,

compared with 16.2% across England. Adult skills are also much lower, especially higher level qualifications, with only 25% of working age people educated to degree level or above, compared with 38.4% nationally and 41.7% in Sheffield. Participation in higher education is also below average at 36%, compared to 41% nationally.<sup>5</sup>

As the Group serves an area of economic, social and educational disadvantage, it has a strategic commitment to increasing local and regional participation in HE as set out in its 2020/21-2024/25 Access and Participation Plan. The Group works closely with organisations such as UniConnect to enhance student progression into HE within South Yorkshire and North Nottinghamshire and the Group’s Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) sits on the Board of the Higher Education Progression Partnership South Yorkshire (HeppSY).

The Group’s higher education (HE) is predominantly delivered at the University Centre Rotherham (UCR). This £10.5 million facility for students and adult learners is in the heart of Rotherham and serves learners who live nearby or commute to study. HE subjects delivered at UCR include accounting, business and management, fine art, graphic design, media, computing, games design, engineering, music and performance and education. Additionally, HE provision in animal management, health and social care, early childhood studies and specialist hair and beauty are on offer at Dearne Valey College, North Notts College and/or Rotherham College. The Group’s HE provision ranges from level 4 certificates and diplomas to Honours degrees, as well as MA Education and Professional Development. There has been a general decline in HE recruitment over the last three years – see Table 1. Current HE numbers are provided in Table 2.

Table 1: Students on OfS-fundable courses 2022/23- 2024/25

	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
<b>By mode</b>	342	176	281	156	179	154	155	122
<b>Total</b>	518		437		333		277	

Table 2: Students on OfS-fundable courses in 2024/25

	Total	FT	PT	Female	Male	Mature	Young	BAME	White
<b>Headcount</b>	277	155	122	171	106	179	98	52	225
<b>%</b>	100	56.0	44.0	61.7	38.3	64.6	35.4	18.8	81.2

## 2. Risks to equality of opportunity

### 2.1 Equality of opportunity risk assessment

We commenced our assessment of performance by risk rating the 12 key areas of risk as set out in the [Equality of Opportunity Risk Register](#) (EORR). To rate the level of risk we used a range of information specific to the Group including the most recent data from the OfS access and participation dashboard, our own internal access and performance data and additional information including the National Students' Survey (NSS) and internal student survey data, and feedback from staff and students.

This risk assessment resulted in all aspects related to Access being rated as low risk as well as on-course risks of capacity issues. The remaining aspects were rated medium or high risk:

- **6: Insufficient personalised academic support – Medium risk.** While a wide range of academic support is available to students, student consultation indicated that additional support around assessment would be welcomed. The Group has an HE Achievement Coach but access to support from this post holder is not always available at times that is convenient for students. It is proposed that improvement in academic support will address underperformance in Continuation, Completion and Progression particularly for the students with characteristics identified as likely to be at greatest risk from this issue which across the Group may be males, students eligible for free school meals (FSM), Black and ethnic minority (BAME) students and students with disabilities. While the EORR recognises that Mature students are likely to be impacted by this risk, this is not observed across the Group.
- **7: Insufficient personal support – High risk.** This risk has been identified by the RNN HE strategy Group following feedback from staff and students. It is expected that improvement in personalised support will address underperformance in Continuation, Completion and Progression particularly for the students with characteristics identified as likely to be at greatest risk from this issue which across the Group may be males, students eligible for FSM, BAME students and students with disabilities. While the EORR recognises that Mature students are likely to be impacted by this risk as for Risk #6, this is not observed across the Group.
- **8: Mental Health – Medium risk.** This was originally risk assessed as low as student survey results indicate that the Group's students experience an environment that is conducive to good mental health and wellbeing. However, internal performance data (albeit with small numbers of students) indicates that students with mental health conditions are less likely to be retained or complete their courses, compared to students who do not report any mental health conditions. The EORR identifies that the Group's students likely to be at greatest risk from this risk are males, FSM-eligible students, BAME students and students with disabilities. While the EORR recognises that Mature students are likely to be impacted by this risk, this is not observed across the Group.
- **9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus – Medium risk.** Across the Group a wide range of support is provided to students recognising that many progress to HE from routes other than A Level and there may be gaps in learning as a result of the pandemic. The EORR indicates that the Group's students that are likely to be at greatest risk from this risk are FSM-eligible students and students with disabilities.
- **10: Cost pressures – Medium risk.** It is believed that recent cost of living increases puts pressure on all students, particularly those who are FSM-eligible, disabled, care experienced or estranged. While the EORR recognises that Mature students are also likely to be affected by cost pressures, mature students across the Group perform well. The Group maintains low tuition fees, compared to many HE providers, and has provide financial support to students from disadvantaged households.
- **12: Progression from higher education – High risk.** This is rated as high because OfS data indicates the Group underperforms for progression compared to other HE providers. Strategies to specifically address progression are not included within this

Plan but it is envisaged that the measures that are put forward will lead to improved continuation and completion which will impact positively on progression.

## **2.2 Analysis of access and performance data**

The second stage of our assessment of performance is the analysis of access and performance data.

### **OfS Access and Participation Dashboard data**

The data analysis is focused on full-time (FT) students throughout as this represents the majority of the Group's HE student population and numbers for PT students are low resulting in statistically unreliable data when disaggregated by age, gender, ethnicity, etc.

Screen shots from the Access and Participation Dashboard are provided in Annex A.

#### **Access**

The majority of the Group's FT students are recruited from IMD quintiles 1 (IMDQ1) and 2 (IMDQ2). In 2022/23 48.8% of the Group's students were from IMDQ1, significantly above the national average of 23.6%, and 22.8% were from IMDQ2 compared to 21.4% nationally. There are too few BAME students to be represented in the OfS data. Non-white students make up 6.2% of the Group's FT students in 2022/23, which although significantly below the national average, is roughly in line with the local population demographics in which 91% of residents are white. The majority of the Group's students are Mature: 52.0% in 2022/23 compared to 28.7% nationally. There is a high proportion of students reporting a disability: 40.7% in 2022/23 compared to 18.3% nationally. The proportion of students eligible for FSM is approximately double the national average at 36.8% compared to 17.7% nationally).

#### **Continuation**

There are too few students for the Access and Participation Dashboard to show meaningful comparative continuation data. Aggregated data was therefore reviewed as the screen shots in Annex A illustrate. Two-year aggregated data shows IMDQ1 students have the lowest continuation (74.6%) and those from IMDQ2 have the highest rates of continuation (86.6%). However the number of students within this aggregated dataset is relatively small (140) resulting in low statistical certainty. The small number of BAME students provides no comparative ethnicity data for continuation. Continuation of Mature students (79.5%) is roughly equivalent to that of Young students (79.4%). Disabled students have higher continuation (81.0%) than non-disabled students (78.5%), albeit also with low statistical certainty. Students eligible for FSM are less likely to continue with studies (71.7%) compared with non-FSM eligible students (82.2%).

#### **Completion**

As for Continuation, there are too few students for the Access and Participation Dashboard to show meaningful comparative year on year completion data. Aggregated data was therefore reviewed as the screen shots in Annex A illustrate. Two-year aggregated data shows IMDQ2 have the highest completion rate at 83.2% with IMDQ1 students having the second highest completion rate (73.7%). The small number of BAME students provides no comparative ethnicity data for completion. Completion of Mature students (68.5%) is higher than that for Young students (75.6%). Disabled students have reduced rates of completion (68.8%) compared to their non-disabled peers (73.6%). Students eligible for FSM are a little more likely to complete their studies (77.0%) compared with non-FSM eligible students (74.6%).

#### **Attainment**

The Group primarily delivers sub-degree qualifications and therefore there is no data for attainment in the Access and Participation Dashboard.

## Progression

Even with aggregation of two or four years of data, there is little useful comparative data in the Access and Participation Dashboard for FT student Progression due to low numbers and suppressed data. This is illustrated with the Access and Participation Dashboard screen shots in Annex A. However, the Access and Participation Dashboard data does indicate that Young students' progression is behind that of Mature students and disabled students have better progression than their non-disabled peers.

## RNN Group internal data analysis

Since published performance data provides limited insight to the College's performance on access and participation, a detailed analysis of internal data has been undertaken. This analysis covers OfS-fundable students from 2020/21 to 2023/24; students taught although many were/are registered at partner universities. The data has been analysed without disaggregation by mode of study to provide sufficiently large cohort sizes for meaningful analysis. The key findings from this analysis are presented in Tables 3 - 5.

Table 3: Analysis of internal Access data, all HE students on OfS-fundable courses

Lifecycle	Student characteristic	Comment/trend
Access	Age	Although the average age of students varies across courses, the majority of the Group's HE students are mature. With mature students being underrepresented in HE relative to under 21-year olds, we do not plan to address this position.
	Gender	The Group's course portfolio predominantly attracts females which represent approximately two-thirds of HE students, 61.7% in 2024/25. This is predominantly due to the courses on offer with females being attracted to subjects such as health & social care and education & professional development . The Group has started to address this gender gap with the development of new courses that typically attract male students including in the areas of computing and engineering.
	Ethnicity	The Group recruits predominantly White students, reflecting local demographics, noting that most students live locally. The proportion of BAME students has increased steadily from 7.5% in 2022/23 to 13.1% in 2024/25. The proportion of BAME students is now greater than the local environment (9.0%).
	Disability	Typically, around one third of the Group's HE students declare a disability which is significantly above the national average for HE.
	Mental health	Students often declare multiple disabilities. To consider mental health as disability type, we have reviewed data where mental health is cited as a condition, not necessarily, the primary disability. Disaggregation of data results in small numbers but approximately one quarter of students who consider themselves to have any disability disclose a mental health condition.
	Socioeconomic disadvantage	The Group monitors students' performance based on POLAR 4 quintiles (POLAR4Q); although this requires some further development as not all students' POLAR quintile classification is recorded on the Group's management information system. Of those whose POLAR4 status is known, the majority of HE students are from POLAR4Q 1 and 2. There is annual variation but in 2022/23 42.4% were POLARQ1 and 37.1% were POLARQ2. This very high proportion of socioeconomically

	disadvantaged students is reflected with IMD quintiles identified in the OfS Access and Participation Dashboard data analysis above. RNN has not routinely recorded or monitored students' FSM eligibility and this will be a development for the Group.
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Table 4: Analysis of internal Continuation data, all HE students on OfS-fundable courses

Lifecycle	Student characteristic	Comment/trend
Continuation	Age	Internal performance data shows considerable annual fluctuations due to small group sizes and variation of provision. For the years 2021/22 and 2022/23, there are similar continuation rates for mature and young students. However, a gap of 20.2% exists in end of year data for 2023/24, with young students considerably underperforming compared to their older peers.
	Gender	Across the years 2021/22 to 2023/24 there has been a steady decline in the continuation of males compared to females. The continuation rates for males in these years are: 78.5% (2021/22), 73.0% (2022/23) and 65.6% (2023/24). The continuation rates for females are: 79.9% (2021/22), 85.4% (2022/23) and 84.7% (2023/24) resulting in a current gap of 19.1%. Further analysis indicates that there has been a decline in the continuation of young males from 79% in 2021/22 to 50% in 2023/24, although the total number of young males in these latter two years combined is fewer than in in 2021/22 (<60) limiting statistical certainty. The continuation of young females in this period is spikey with a large drop in 2022/23 and recovering to 78.6% in 2023/24. This underperformance of young males will require further attention.
	Ethnicity	As detailed in Table 3 above, BAME students represented from 7.5% to 13.1% of the Group's HE student population across the three years 2021/22 to 2023/24. With a relatively small and declining HE student population, a number of ethnic groups comprise fewer than 5 students. To ensure no opportunity for identification and to provide numbers that are likely to have some statistical significance, the umbrella of BAME students is used for analysis of performance. Internal data shows a 10.3% gap for continuation of BAME students (70.7%) in 2021/22 compared to all white students (81.0%). This gap closed in 2022/23 and in 2023/24 BAME students had better continuation (84.4%) than white students (77.1%). Ethnicity data will continue to be monitored.
	Disability	There has been a declining trend in the continuation of students who consider themselves to have a disability from 80.0% (2021/22) to 73.9% (2023/24); this is compared to those who did not declare a disability: 79.4% (2021/22) and 81.0% (2023/24) resulting in a gap of 7.1%. Internal data indicates a wider gap for students who disclose a mental health condition with a continuation rate for this considerably smaller group of students of 68.4% at the end of 2023/24.

		This continuation gap between disabled and non-disabled students will require further attention.
	Socioeconomic disadvantage	The majority of the Group's HE students are from POLAR4Q 1 and 2 and the cohort sizes from POLAR4Q 5 are too small for meaningful comparison. Aggregation of POLAR4Q 3, 4 and 5 provides a more useful measure. In 2022/23 continuation of POLAR4Q1 students (81.3%) was behind that of POLAR4Q3/4/5 students (84.7%) and in 2023/24 the small gap seen in 2022/23 is nearly eliminated with continuation of POLAR4Q1 students at 79.5% compared to POLAR4Q3/4/5 students (80.9%). Continuation rates by POLAR4Q will continue to be monitored.

Table 5: Analysis of internal Completion data, all HE students on OfS-fundable courses

Lifecycle	Student characteristic	Comment/trend
Completion	Age	For the past 3 years, there has been a decline in completion rates for young students (76.2% in 2021/22, 68.0% in 2022/23, 62.5% in 2023/24) who underperformed compared to mature students: 72.6% in 2021/22, 79.6% in 2022/23 and 79.8% in 2023/24. This has resulted in a gap of 17.3%.
	Gender	For the past 3 years, there has been a decline in completion rates for male students: 73.0% in 2021/22, 69.7% in 2022/23, 62.3% in 2023/24, who underperform compared to females: 74.5% in 2021/22, 78.7% in 2022/23 and 80.7% in 2023/24. This represents a gap of 18.4%. As identified for continuation, there has been a similar decline in the completion of young males from 79% in 2021/22 to 50% in 2023/24, although the total number of young males in these latter two years combined is fewer than in in 2021/22 (<60) limiting statistical certainty. The completion of young females in this period has remained steady at around 73%. This underperformance of young males will require further attention.
	Ethnicity	Internal data shows a spikey profile for continuation of BAME students. In 2021/22 BAME students (70.5%) underperformed compared to all white students (74.9%). This gap narrowed in 2022/23 and in 2023/24 BAME students were more successful (81.5%) than white students (73.5%). Ethnicity data will continue to be monitored.
	Disability and mental health	Internal data shows a spikey profile for completion of students who consider themselves to have a disability. In 2021/22 completion of disabled students was 73.3%, compared to 74.5% those who did not declare a disability, and 71.0% in 2023/24 compared to 76.7% for non-disabled students. This represents a gap of 5.7%. To consider the number of students who disclose a mental health condition, further disaggregation of data provides quite small numbers of students. However, internal data does indicate reduced completion for these students: 63.2% at the end of 2023/24, albeit with limited statistical significance.

		The completion gap between disabled and non-disabled students will require further attention.
	Socioeconomic disadvantage	As discussed for continuation, aggregation of POLAR4Q 3, 4 and 5 is used for comparison with POLAR4Q1. In 2022/23 completion of POLAR4Q1 students (77.6%) was a little behind that of POLAR4Q3/4/5 students (78.1%). In 2023/24 completion of POLAR4Q1 students at 76.9% is considerably better than POLAR4Q3/4/5 students (72.9%). Continuation rates by POLAR4Q will continue to be monitored.

Intersectional analysis has been undertaken where it is meaningful, however, this is limited by the relatively small student populations. The key intersection for underperformance is young males as has been discussed.

Consideration of disadvantage and disability indicates that continuation and completion of students from POLAR4Q1 is reduced for students who report a disability compared to non-disabled POLAR4Q1 students, however this is not a strong trend and will require further monitoring.

Consideration of disadvantage and ethnicity indicates no significant difference for continuation or completion of non-white POLAR4Q1 students compared to white POLAR4Q1 students, although disaggregation of data into even broad ethnic groups results in student numbers that are too small to be statistically meaningful. In 2023/24 there was underperformance of POLARQ2 students from two ethnic groups compared to POLARQ2 white students, but with fewer than 10 students within this dataset it is not possible to make reliable conclusions.

In terms of disability and ethnicity, disaggregation of data into even broad ethnic groups results in student numbers that are too small (<10) to be statistically meaningful.

### Identified key risks

Based on our equality of opportunity risk assessment and assessment of performance through data analysis, we have identified three key risks to equality of opportunity that students may experience across the Group.

**Risk 1:** Students eligible for FSM may:

- be more impacted by cost pressures than peers
- be more likely to have mental health conditions (both disclosed and undisclosed)
- be less likely to benefit from academic and personal support that is available
- all leading to a greater likelihood of early withdrawal (non- continuation)

**Risk 2:** Disabled students may:

- be more impacted by cost pressures than peers
- be more likely to have mental health conditions (both disclosed and undisclosed)
- be less likely to benefit from academic and personal support that is available
- all leading to a greater likelihood of early withdrawal (non-continuation) and reduced likelihood of successfully completing their studies (non-completion)

**Risk 3:** Young male students may:

- be less likely to benefit from academic and personal support that is available
- leading to a greater likelihood of early withdrawal (non-continuation) and reduced likelihood of successfully completing their studies (non-completion).

### 3. Objectives

Our five objectives aim to address the identified risks provided above are:

- 1.1. To remove the continuation gap between FT students eligible for FSM and those not eligible which is 10.5% based on most recently published OfS data aggregated for 2-years (2020/21-2021/22) (PTS\_1)
- 1.2. To improve the continuation of young males from 63.0%, based on internal data for 2022/23, to 78% (PTS\_2)
- 1.3. To eliminate the 7.1% continuation gap between disabled students and students not declaring any disability, based on internal data for 2023/24 (PTS\_3)
- 2.1. To improve the completion of young males from 59.3%, based on internal data for 2022/23, to 78% (PTS\_4)
- 2.2 To eliminate the 5.7% completion gap between disabled students and students not declaring any disability, based on internal data for 2023/24 (PTS\_5)

Objectives 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are on-course objectives focused on improving continuation of three targeted student groups: FSM-eligible students, young males and disabled students.

Objectives 2.1 and 2.2 are on-course objectives focused on improving completion the performance of young males and disabled students.

### 4. Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

The over-arching intervention strategies that will be adopted are based on increasing students' academic skills to improve self-confidence as well as academic achievement, leading to an increased sense of belonging. It has been shown that academic skills and sense of belonging are linked and each can positively impact the other. There is a significant amount of evidence that sense of belonging is directly linked to continuation, and where students feel accepted and included by their peers and their institution, they are more likely to be retained and complete their chosen award.<sup>6,7,8</sup> Four key strategies will be employed:

1. Induction - fostering a sense of belonging for all students from the start of their course and improved signposting of personal and academic support that is available to all students.
2. Enhanced tutorial provision - improving personalised, age appropriate, support for students within the course environment, i.e. though both group and individual tutorials delivered by the course tutor.
3. Academic skills development – use of evidence-based approaches employed at other HE providers to further develop and improve students' skills and confidence leading to enhanced sense of belonging
4. Financial support – review of existing financial support so it is better targeted to the students in greatest need.

## Intervention strategy 1: Inclusive induction

Principle objective(s)	To improve induction for students to foster a sense of belonging for students to the Group, their college of attendance and their course group. There will be improved signposting of college-wide support, services and activities – both socially, for pastoral support and for academic skills support. The aim is that the increased sense of belonging will positively contribute to students' continuation.
Targets	PTS_1: To remove the continuation gap between FT students eligible for FSM and those not eligible which is 10.5% based on most recently published OfS data aggregated for 2-years (2020/21-2021/22) PTS_2: To improve the continuation of young males, from 63.0% based on internal data for 2022/23, to 80% PTS_3: To eliminate the 7.1% continuation gap between disabled students and students not declaring any disability, based on internal data for 2023/24
Risk to Equality of Opportunity	This intervention strategy addresses each of the Group's key identified risks (1, 2 and 3)

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross Intervention Strategy?
Review and re-design of the HE induction programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HE induction programme will be reviewed and redesigned to ensure the process is fully inclusive and meets the needs of young males, students eligible for FSM and disabled students including those with mental health conditions. The review will take account of ensuring greater awareness of cross-college support for all HE students, in particular embedding the ethos of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time to review and redesign the induction programme using best practice from other successful college-based HE providers (£1680 in 2025/26 and £1120 for review in year 2)</li> <li>Purchase/hire of student social activities (£1500 each year)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A refreshed HE induction programme with clear activities for all students to be delivered in the first half-term of each year of each course</li> <li>100% compliance from all HE course teams on the delivery of the new induction programme by the end of 2027/28</li> <li>Increased sense of belonging and wellbeing of HE students</li> </ul>	Yes – induction will be partly delivered by tutors (related to intervention strategy 1) and will promote financial support that is available (related to intervention strategy 4)

	<p>students' belonging to college and their courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The revised programme will be rolled out to all new HE student groups from 2026/27 - covering approximately 150 students annually</li> </ul>			
Evaluation	Each aspect of the intervention strategy will be evaluated as set out below	Evaluation activity (£1,400 in years 1, 2 and 4)		

**Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy 1: £22,640**

**Summary of evidence base and rationale:**

The main aim of this intervention strategy is to increase students' sense of belonging. An inclusive induction programme will ensure a wide range of activities is covered and information disseminated. A combination of whole-college and course group activities will enable students to start to bond with fellow students and start to develop a sense of belonging to the College and inclusion with their peers. The design of new induction activities will draw on evidenced good practice from other college-based HE providers and also published resources such as the TASO Mental Health Evidence Toolkit.<sup>9</sup>

**Evaluation**

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Include type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. empirical (Type 2).	Summary of publication plan When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take.
Review and re-design of the HE induction programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A refreshed HE induction programme with clear activities for all FT HE students to be delivered in the first half-term of each year of each course</li> <li>• 100% compliance from all HE course teams on the delivery of the new induction programme by the end of 2027/28</li> <li>• Increased sense of belonging and wellbeing of HE students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation will be Types 1 and 2 – comprising analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from student outcomes and staff/student feedback.</li> <li>• Feedback will be sought from staff and students on the effectiveness of the induction programme, with improvements considered and implemented from 2027/28</li> <li>• Feedback from students on their sense of wellbeing through focus groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation findings will be shared internally at the Group's Festival of Learning Conferences; through reports to senior leadership team (SLT) and governors.</li> <li>• Key findings will also be shared through the Group's HE networks such as regional AoC networks and QAA networks.</li> </ul>

## Intervention strategy 2: Enhanced tutorial provision

Principle objective(s)	To improve tutorials for FT students to further develop students' sense of belonging for students to the Group and their course group through both group and 1:1 tutorials. There will be improved processes to support tutors to identify mental health conditions or other previously undisclosed factors that may affect student wellbeing and/or hinder students' ability to stay on course or succeed. Tutors will also be better equipped with information and support colleagues to enable appropriate, age appropriate, personalised support to be provided for students, as and when need is recognised.
Targets	<p>PTS_1: To remove the continuation gap between FT students eligible for FSM and those not eligible which is 10.5% based on most recently published OfS data aggregated for 2-years (2020/21-2021/22)</p> <p>PTS_2: To improve the continuation of young males, from 63.0% based on internal data for 2022/23, to 80% (PTS_2)</p> <p>PTS_3: To eliminate the 7.1% continuation gap between disabled students and students not declaring any disability, based on internal data for 2023/24</p> <p>PTS_4: To improve the completion of young males from 59.3%, based on internal data for 2022/23, to 78%</p> <p>PTS_5: To eliminate the 5.7% completion gap between disabled students and students not declaring any disability, based on internal data for 2023/24</p>
Risk to Equality of Opportunity	This intervention strategy addresses each of the Group's key identified risks (1, 2 and 3)

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross Intervention Strategy?
Review and re-design of the HE tutorial process	<p>The HE tutorial process will be reviewed and re-designed to ensure the process meets the needs of disabled students and those with mental health conditions.</p> <p>The new programme will be piloted during 2026/27 with a minimum of 4 course groups including 1 with a high proportion of young males and at least 1 that is a PT course, targeting approximately 45 students.</p> <p>After evaluation the programme will be rolled out to all HE student groups from 2027/28.</p> <p>The programme will be reviewed and updated from 2028/29</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and re-design the tutorial programme using best practise from other successful college-based HE providers (£1680 each in year 1 and year 3 for review and updating)</li> <li>Training for HE staff on the new programme, how to deliver it and how to access further support from college staff as required (£4980 each in year 1 and year 3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A clear HE tutorial programme that is documented and shared with all HE Teams and managers 100% compliance from all HE course teams on the delivery of the new tutorial programme by the end of 2027/28</li> <li>Increased confidence of HE tutors in approaches to support HE students with disabilities and/or mental health conditions and young males and clear process on how to signpost additional support from cross-college colleagues</li> </ul>	Yes – the tutorial programme will also relate to intervention strategy 3
Student wellbeing guide	Support the creation of a student guide, written by the Group's students for students: that focuses on mental health and wellbeing using inclusive language and formatting to enhance students' feeling of belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff to facilitate focus groups with students and support identified students to create the wellbeing guide (£1680 in year 2)</li> <li>Recruitment of student researchers to gather student views, research best practice in student guides and create content (£1500 in year 2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student guide that is signposted at induction and in course handbooks</li> <li>The process of gathering student feedback by students is expected to raise issues/concerns that can be subsequently addressed by the College to further support disabled</li> </ul>	Yes – staff will also support students in the creation of the assessment guide (intervention strategy 3)

			students and those with mental health conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased sense of belonging and wellbeing of HE students</li> </ul>	
Evaluation	Each aspect of the intervention strategy will be evaluated as set out below	Staff training on evaluation and evaluation activity (£1,400 in years 2 and 4)		

**Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy 2: £19,300**

**Summary of evidence base and rationale**

The Group's HE students currently have weekly tutorials where they meet with their course tutor in a combination of group and 1:1 tutorials. This regular time with a named tutor enables the student and tutor to develop an appropriate relationship for the student to feel a sense of belonging to the College and for the tutor to develop an understanding of the student's skills gaps, individual needs and an understanding of any underlying issues that may be a barrier to learning. The tutor can provide academic skills support, refer to academic colleagues for additional academic support where this support need is identified and/or refer to professional services staff to support with non-academic matters such as financial support, counselling services or career guidance, for example. The current tutorial programme will be reviewed to ensure that the principles of providing this high level of support are met. Bespoke training will be devised and delivered to ensure that tutors have a strong awareness of potential different needs or different student types and/or the different ways in which requests for help may arise or may be recognised even if the students do not ask for help. It is intended that the revised tutorial programme will empower tutors to provide varied and tailored support for disabled students and those who may have disclosed or undisclosed mental health conditions, young males, and students from minority ethnic or cultural backgrounds and those who fall into another minority group.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, students will be supported to create a wellbeing guide, written by students for students, that focuses on mental health and wellbeing – the guide will be designed using inclusive language that is easy to read and in a format that is attractive to the Group's students.<sup>11</sup>

## Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Review and re-design of the HE tutorial process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear HE tutorial programme that is documented and shared with all HE Teams and managers 100% compliance from all HE course teams on the delivery of the new tutorial programme by the end of 2026/27</li> <li>• Increased confidence of HE tutors in approaches to support HE students with disabilities and/or mental health conditions and clear process on how to signpost additional support from cross-college colleagues</li> <li>• Clear process on sharing new disability and/or mental health condition declarations with appropriate colleagues so the numbers are recorded</li> </ul>	<p>Evaluation will be Types 1 and 2 – comprising analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from student outcomes and staff/student feedback.</p> <p>Feedback will be sought from staff and students on the effectiveness of the tutorial programme, with improvements considered and implemented from 2027/28</p> <p>Feedback from students on their sense of wellbeing through focus groups</p>	<p>When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take.</p> <p>Evaluation findings will be shared internally at the Group’s Festival of Learning Conferences; through reports to senior leadership team (SLT) and governors. Key findings will also be shared through the Group’s HE networks such as regional AoC networks and QAA networks.</p>
Student wellbeing guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student guide that is signposted at induction and in course handbooks</li> <li>• The process of gathering student feedback by students is expected to raise issues/concerns that can be subsequently addressed by the College to further support disabled students and those with mental health conditions</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback will be sought from the students who will create the wellbeing guide and from students as a result of having the guide to use and reference.</p>	<p>As above</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased sense of belonging and wellbeing of HE students</li></ul>		
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### Intervention strategy 3: Academic skills development

Principle objective(s)	To improve the support provided for FT students in relation to the development of academic skills. Training will be provided to staff on factors that may contribute to students with differing characteristics (age, gender, disability, etc) having different levels of understanding of aspects of academic skills and assessment literacy. This will support staff to deliver updated and enhanced academic skills support for students, tailored to individual needs. Improved academic skills and associated improved confidence can lead to improved mental health and wellbeing – which contributes to improved continuation and academic success.
Targets	<p>PTS_1: To remove the continuation gap between FT students eligible for FSM and those not eligible which is 10.5% based on most recently published OfS data aggregated for 2-years (2020/21-2021/22)</p> <p>PTS_2: To improve the continuation of young males, from 63.0% based on internal data for 2022/23, to 80% (PTS_2)</p> <p>PTS_3: To eliminate the 7.1% continuation gap between disabled students and students not declaring any disability, based on internal data for 2023/24</p> <p>PTS_4: To improve the completion of young males from 59.3%, based on internal data for 2022/23, to 78%</p> <p>PTS_5: To eliminate the 5.7% completion gap between disabled students and students not declaring any disability, based on internal data for 2023/24</p>
Risk to Equality of Opportunity	This intervention strategy addresses each of the Group's key identified risks (1, 2 and 3)

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross Intervention Strategy?
Assessment training for HE staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and provision of assessment training for HE staff to ensure the assessment strategies across all HE courses use best practice in relation to inclusivity – 30 staff to be trained in year 1 and year 3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design of assessment training using best practise from other HE providers (£2538 in 2025/26 and year 2 for review and updating)</li> <li>Assessment training for HE staff to support better student assessment literacy leading to enhanced academic skills, reduced stress and improved assessment outcomes (£6116 in years 1 and 3).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment training programme that is delivered at the Group's Festival of learning conferences in summer 2027 and 2028</li> <li>Online assessment guidance to support inclusivity as additional guidance for new and experienced staff</li> <li>Increased confidence of HE students in undertaking a range of assessments</li> </ul>	
Student assessment guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the creation of a student assessment guide, written by the Group's young male students for students: that focuses on and wellbeing using inclusive language and formatting to enhance students' feeling of belonging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff to facilitate focus groups with students and support identified students to create the assessment guide (£1680 in year 1)</li> <li>Recruitment of student researchers to gather student views, research best practice in student guides and create content (£1500 in year 1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student guide that is signposted at induction and in course handbooks</li> <li>The process of gathering student feedback by students is expected to raise issues/concerns that can be subsequently addressed by the College to further support young males and/or disabled students and those with mental health conditions</li> </ul>	Yes – staff will also support students in the creation of the wellbeing guide (intervention strategy 2)

Online academic skills support	Review of online academic skills support with a focus on accessibility by young males followed by updating or extension of online support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff to facilitate focus groups with students to review the existing online support (£1680 in year 1)</li> <li>• Training and/or support from JISC for best practice in online academic skills support (£1,680 in years 1 and 2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed and updated online academic skills support</li> <li>• Increased uptake of online support</li> <li>• Increased confidence of HE students in undertaking a range of academic tasks</li> </ul>	
Evaluation	Each aspect of the intervention strategy will be evaluated as set out below	Staff training on evaluation and evaluation activity (£1,400 in years 2 and 4)		

**Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy 3: £23,780**

**Summary of evidence base and rationale**

The intention of this intervention strategy is to increase students' academic skills to improve their academic outcomes as well as increasing their confidence to stay on course and their confidence to succeed. A large scale survey by Pearson and Wonkhe (2022) identified a clear link between confidence in academic skills and a sense of belonging and Campbell and Duke (2023) report that improved student confidence in assessment leads to reduced levels of stress and anxiety, which impacts on mental health<sup>6,12</sup>. The activities will be designed to be applicable for all HE students but with a focus on accessibility for young males who particularly for completion. Additionally, students will be supported to create an assessment guide, written by students for students, that focuses on key assessment terms and tasks that are often encountered but may be fully understood by all students – the guide will be designed using inclusive language that is easy to read and in a format that is attractive to the Group's students.<sup>11,13</sup>

## Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Include type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. empirical (Type 2).	Summary of publication plan When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take.
Strengthening assessment training for students to reduce ambiguity or lack of clarity around required tasks, reducing stress associated with assessment leading to an increase in confidence and achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment training programme that is embedded into HE course delivery from 2026/27</li> <li>Additional and/or updated online assessment guidance for students, tailored to each course/subject</li> <li>Increased confidence of HE students in undertaking a range of assessments</li> </ul>	<p>Evaluation will be Types 1 and 2 – comprising analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from student outcomes and staff/student feedback.</p> <p>Feedback will be sought from students on the effectiveness of the training and their assessment confidence</p>	<p>Evaluation findings will be shared internally at the Group’s Festival of Learning Conferences; through reports to senior leadership team (SLT) and governors. Key findings will also be shared through the Group’s HE networks such as regional AoC networks and QAA networks.</p>
Student assessment guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student guide that is signposted at induction and in course handbooks</li> <li>The process of gathering student feedback by students is expected to raise issues/concerns that can be subsequently addressed by the College to further support young males and/or disabled students and those with mental health conditions</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback will be sought from the students who will create the assessment guide and from students as a result of having the guide to use and reference</p>	
Assessment training for HE staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment training programme that is delivered at the Group’s Festival of learning conferences.</li> <li>Online assessment guidance to support inclusivity as additional guidance for new and experienced staff</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback will be sought from staff on the effectiveness of the training and their observation of students’ assessment skills and confidence</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased confidence of HE students in undertaking a range of assessments</li> </ul>		
Online academic skills support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed and updated online academic skills support</li> <li>• Increased uptake of online support</li> <li>• Increased confidence of HE students in undertaking a range of academic tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take-up of the online support will be measured</li> <li>• Feedback will be sought from students and staff on the effectiveness of the online support and their observation of students' assessment skills and confidence</li> </ul>	

#### Intervention strategy 4: Financial support

Principle objective(s)	To review the provision of financial support and better target the support to students in greatest need. The financial support is intended to support those struggling financially to stay on course to support academic success. Based on our EORR assessment, this is most likely to support FSM-eligible students and those who disclose a disability
Targets	<p>PTS_1: To remove the continuation gap between FT students eligible for FSM and those not eligible which is 10.5% based on most recently published OfS data aggregated for 2-years (2020/21-2021/22)</p> <p>PTS_3: To eliminate the 7.1% continuation gap between disabled students and students not declaring any disability, based on internal data for 2023/24</p> <p>PTS_5: To eliminate the 5.7% completion gap between disabled students and students not declaring any disability, based on internal data for 2023/24</p>
Risk to Equality of Opportunity	This intervention strategy addresses the Group's key identified risks 1 and 2

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross Intervention Strategy?
Bursaries for care experienced students	Bursaries will be provided for all care experienced students	Up to £1,000 per year will be provided to care experienced students, in each year of FT study, in 3 instalments spread across the year (£2,000 in each year of Plan).	• Improved financial support for care experienced students	No
Bursaries for disadvantaged students	Means-tested bursaries will be provided for FT students from low-income households, subject to evidence of personal/household financial income	£500 per year will be provided to students in each year of FT study in 3 instalments. The eligibility for a bursary will be a household income of £25,000 or less. Payments will be made 3 times a year: £250 at the start of term 1; £150 in term 2 and £100 in term 3 subject to maintaining a minimum of 80% attendance at timetabled sessions.	• Improved financial support for students in financial need	No

HE Hardship Fund	A HE Hardship Fund will be maintained to provide financial support to any HE students in significant need	A fund of £7000 increasing by £500 each year of the Plan to reflect the planned growth		
Evaluation	Each aspect of the intervention strategy will be evaluated as set out below	Staff training on evaluation and evaluation activity (£1,400 in years 2 and 4)		

**Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy 4: £191,150**

**Summary of evidence base and rationale**

The intention of this intervention strategy is to redirect existing financial support to those in greatest need. Currently the Group provides bursaries to students from POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2 (typically around 70% of all HE students) as well as to students declaring a disability and those from Black or ethnic minorities and care leavers. This broad-brush approach has resulted in the majority of HE students across the Group receiving bursaries preventing effective evaluation of the support to determine whether it makes a significant difference to students and potentially leaving the minority who were not eligible for bursaries feeling disadvantaged. The Group already has relatively low tuition fees and will withdraw bursaries from the majority of students, instead providing financial support only to those students who have the greatest need, to support retention and completion. In particular this will include all care-experienced students who are substantially underrepresented in HE.

## Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Include type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. empirical (Type 2).	Summary of publication plan When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take.
Bursaries for care experienced students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved financial support for care experienced students</li> </ul>	The number and amount of bursaries provided will be monitored each year and cross-referenced to students' retention and achievement	Evaluation findings will be shared internally through reports to senior leadership team (SLT) and governors.
HE Hardship Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved financial support for students in financial need</li> </ul>	The amount of financial support provided will be monitored each year and cross-referenced to students' retention and achievement	

## 5. Whole provider approach

The Group's commitment to a whole college approach to improving equality of opportunity, is set out in our Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement (FREDIE) Policy 2024-2027 and 2024-2025 Action Plan, written in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The RNN Group is committed to promoting an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all students, giving them the motivation, self-confidence and skills, they need to change their lives.

We have made a firm commitment to the key principles embodied by FREDIE:

**Fairness** – Being reasonable, right and just.

**Respect** – Having due regard for feelings, wishes and rights of others.

**Equality** – Where every person has equal rights and every person has a fair chance.

**Diversity** – Diverse means different. We are all different so diversity includes us all. The concept of diversity encompasses understanding, acceptance and respect.

**Inclusion** – Where every person feels respected, valued and that they fit in with the organisational culture.

**Engagement** – Two-way commitment and communication between an organisation and its employees.

As set out within our FREDIE Policy, the Group plans to implement the following strategic objectives/actions in order to enhance our understanding and practices across the Group:

- To retain accreditation of the Investors in Diversity Award.
- To continue to meet the requirements of the Equality legislation; to revise and update our equality policies and procedures to reflect legislative updates and good practice.
- To continue to eliminate barriers and challenge unfairness, to provide teaching and learning, opportunities and experiences which help learners, staff, people and communities reach their full potential.
- To be effective in advancing FREDIE across the Group, ensuring stakeholders understand and promote these principles in day to day college life.
- To provide an environment where people from any background feel safe, valued and included.
- To implement a communication model that uses trauma informed language to support conversations and demonstrate respect for individuals' experiences.
- To demonstrate and communicate to our stakeholders, both internal and external, that we are committed to providing a supportive, inclusive and respectful environment in our commitment to tackling inequality and promoting diversity and inclusiveness.
- Take positive action to obtain the view of colleagues from underrepresented groups.

A key focus approach of this Access and Participation Plan is to improve the sense of belonging of all HE students. Accordingly, while the intervention strategies target large student groups – all students will benefit from the activities and thus we are able to support students from the very minority groups that cannot be singled out or separately targeted due to very small numbers. For example, this includes care experienced students and estranged students.

## 6. Student consultation

Students have played an active role in shaping this Access and Participation Plan. We have engaged with our student community through targeted focus groups and surveys to gather their insights, experiences and priorities. This feedback has directly informed the development of our objectives, interventions and evaluation measures, ensuring that the Plan reflects the real needs and aspirations of our diverse student body.

The Group is committed to a high level of student engagement and will continue to seek and act on student feedback throughout the life of the Plan. This engagement includes student representatives to course committee meetings, induction and on-programme surveys as well as engaging with the NSS. Additional to these activities, staff undertake focus groups with students to explore any emerging issues or to discuss new initiatives.

This Plan has been approved by the Group's Board of Governors which includes two student governors within the membership.

## 7. Evaluation of the plan

The intervention strategies outlined in this plan are predominantly based on Type 1 and Type 2 evidence as set out in the evaluation plan for each intervention strategy. The OfS Evaluation Self-Assessment Tool will be employed to support the wider evaluation strategy of the Plan.

It is expected that evaluation training/up-skilling will be required, following an audit of staff skill in this area. The Group will fully support evaluation up-skilling, providing time and opportunity for staff to undertake training, as appropriate.

The College will use the range of resources provided by TASO and engage with other recognised sector evaluation tools and resources such as the [Universal Evaluation Framework](#) created by Jones-Devitt (Staffordshire University) and Austen (Sheffield Hallam University).<sup>14</sup>

## 8. Provision of information to students

The Group will continue to provide up to date, accurate, clear and accessible tuition fee information for current and prospective students on its website. This information will detail any fees, if any, that may be incurred. Clear links will be provided to external agencies to support applicants/students with financial information including to Student Finance England and partner universities, where courses are delivered in partnership with fees payable to the partner university. Additionally, independent financial information will be made available to students such as provided by [The Student Room](#).

Full details of the financial support for care experienced students and bursaries for disadvantaged students, including eligibility criteria and methods for application will be clearly detailed on the Group's website and signposted to students during induction and throughout each academic year. The Group's Student Services and HE tutors will be fully informed of the support available to HE students and will be available to offer guidance to any current or prospective student either in-person or by telephone or email.

We also ensure that our fees information is provided to UCAS and other key organisations in a timely manner to inform applicants and enable informed choices.

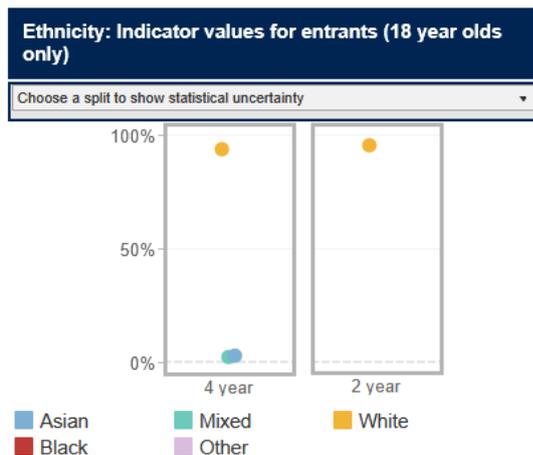
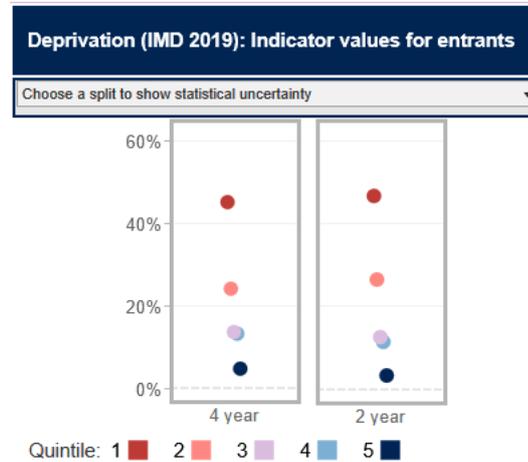
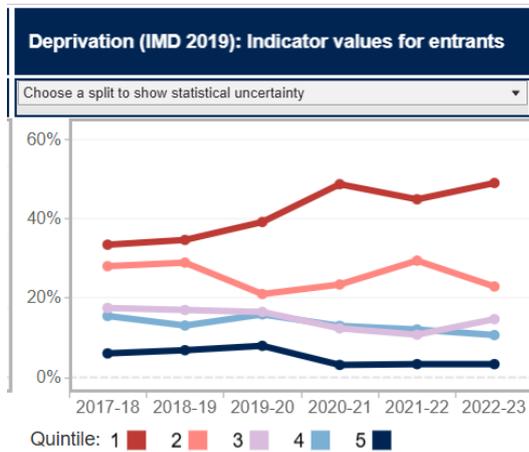
We are compliant with the requirements of consumer protection legislation and the Competition and Markets Authority. We are committed to ensuring that prospective students are provided with clear and comprehensive information regarding the financial support available to them in advance of their studies during 2026/27 to 2029/30. This information will be made publicly accessible via our website and other relevant communication channels to ensure transparency and to support students in making informed decisions about their studies.

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

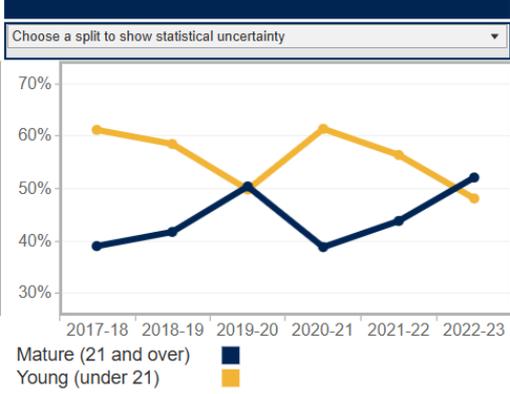
### OfS Access and Participation Dashboard: full-time data

The following are screen shots from the OfS Access and Participation Dashboard. For some metrics data has been reviewed based on the latest aggregated 2 and 4-year data, due to small student groups.

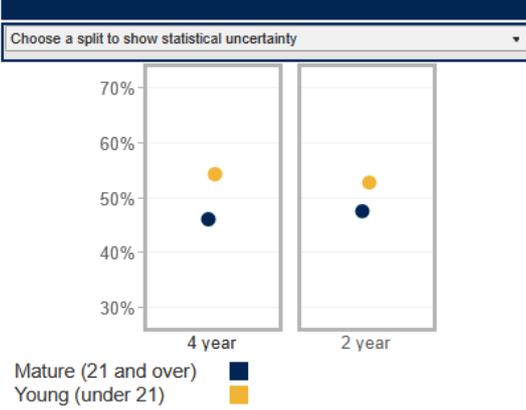
#### Access



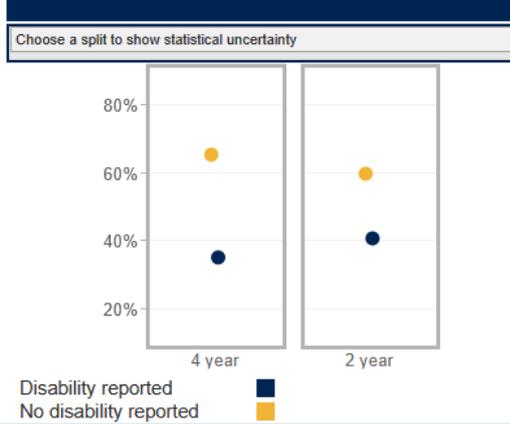
### Age: Indicator values for entrants



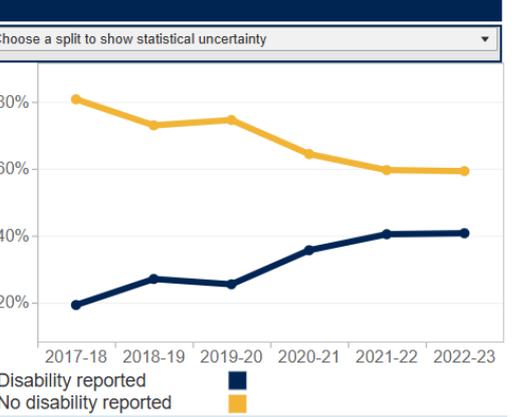
### Age: Indicator values for entrants



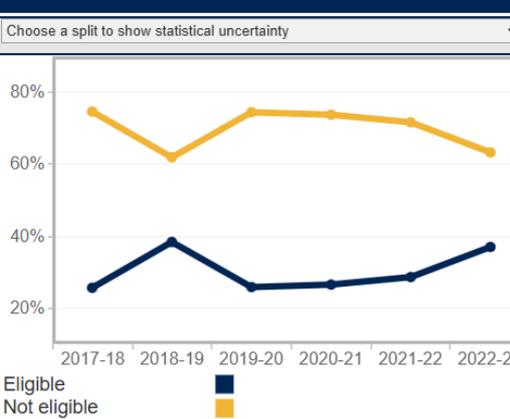
### Disability reported: Indicator values for entrants



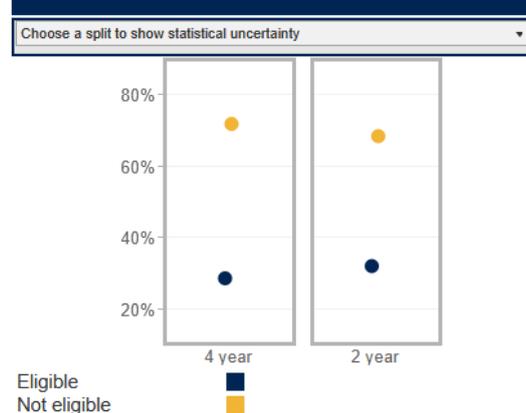
### Disability reported: Indicator values for entrants



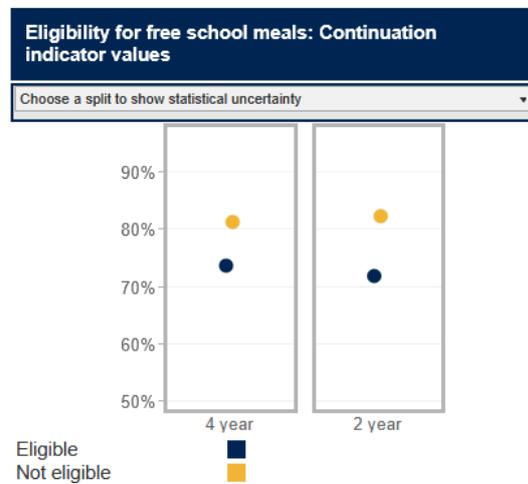
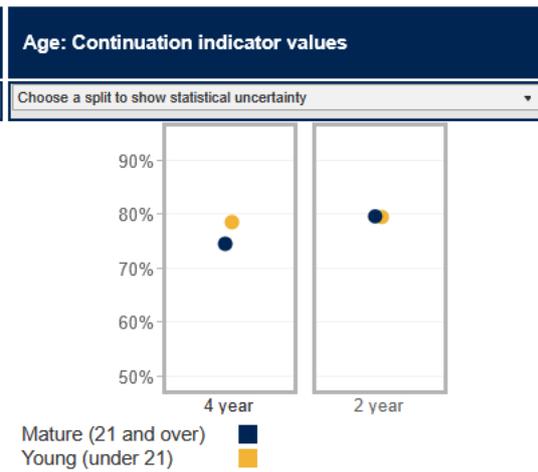
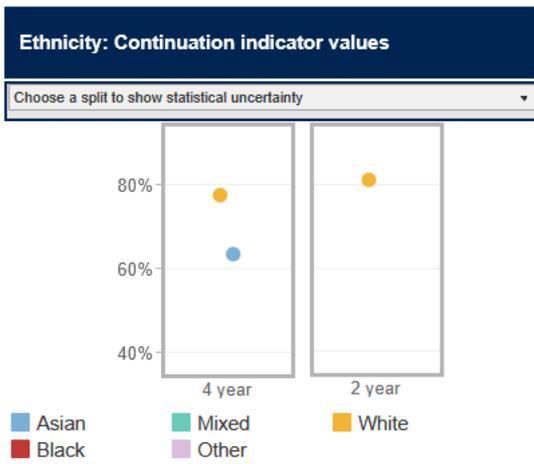
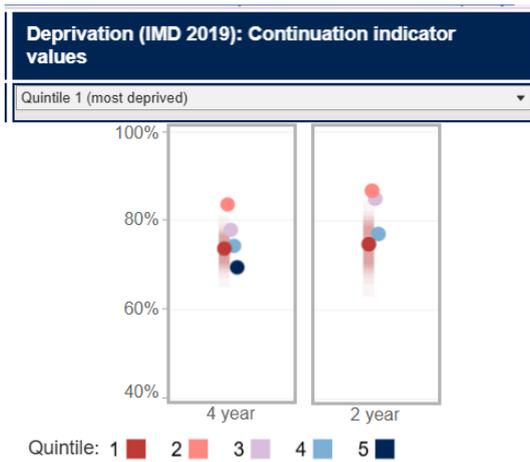
### Eligibility for free school meals: Indicator values for entrants



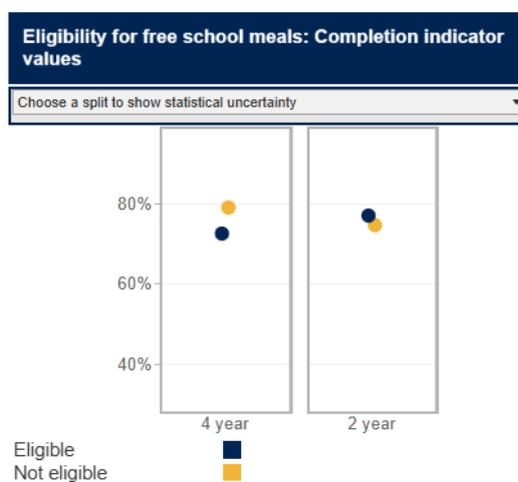
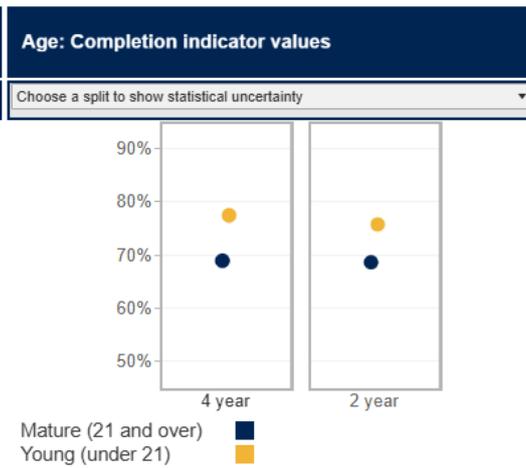
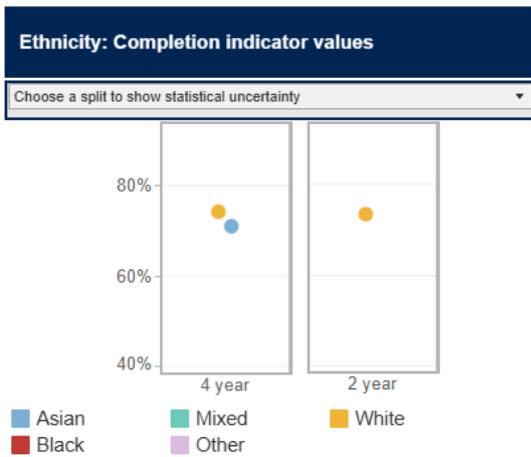
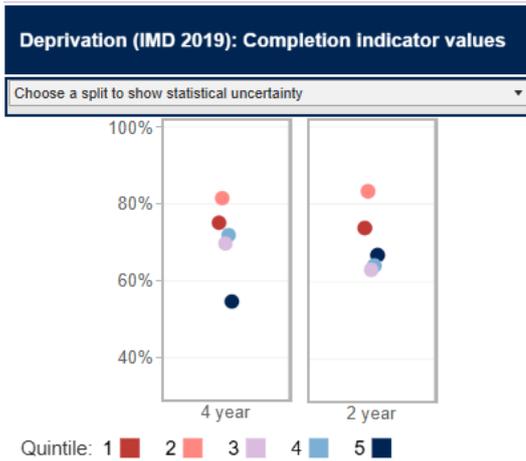
### Eligibility for free school meals: Indicator values for entrants



Continuation

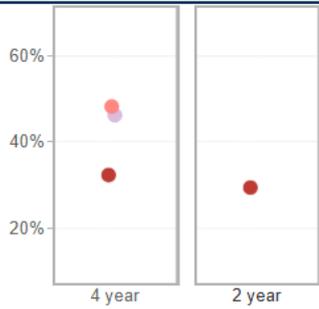


## Completion



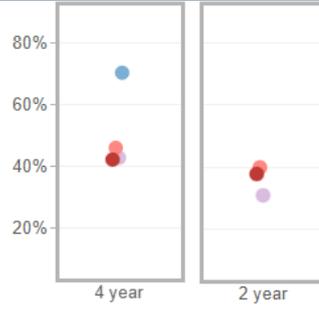
## Progression

**TUNDRA: Progression indicator values for young (under 21) students**  
Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



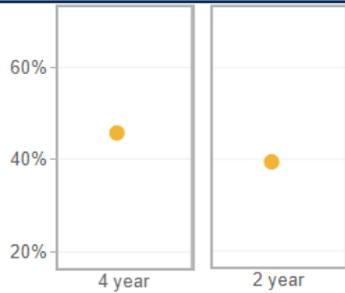
Quintile: 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■

**Deprivation (IMD 2019): Progression indicator values**  
Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



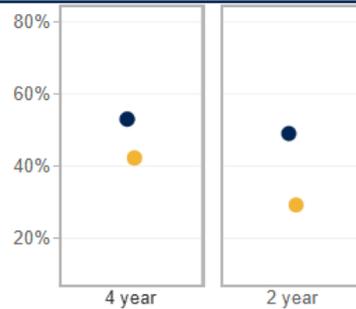
Quintile: 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■

**Ethnicity: Progression indicator values**  
Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



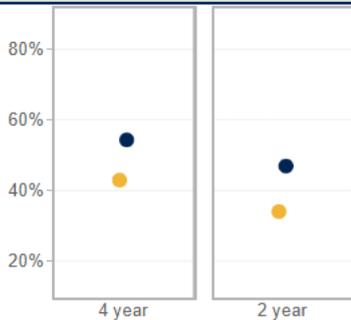
Asian ■ Black ■ Mixed ■ Other ■ White ■

**Age: Progression indicator values**  
Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



Mature (21 and over) ■ Young (under 21) ■

**Disability reported: Progression indicator values**  
Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



Disability reported ■ No disability reported ■

**Eligibility for free school meals: Progression indicator values**  
Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

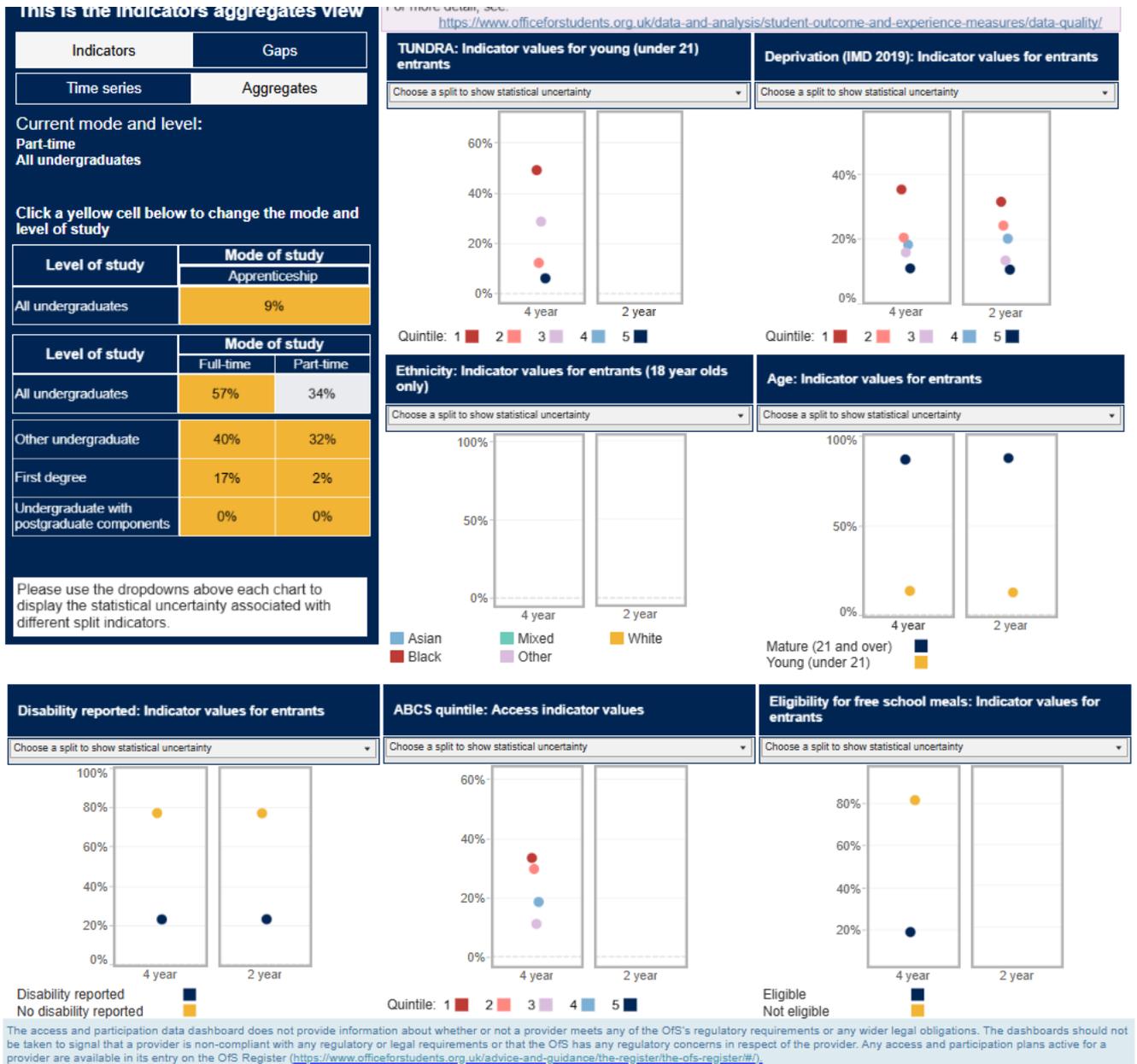


Eligible ■ Not eligible ■

## OfS Access and Participation Dashboard: part-time data

The following are screen shots from the OfS Access and Participation Dashboard. Even reviewing data using the latest aggregated 2 and 4-year data, there is little useful information due to small student groups.

### Access



Continuation

**This is the indicators aggregates view**

Indicators: Gaps  
Time series: Aggregates

Current mode and level:  
Part-time  
All undergraduates

Click a yellow cell below to change the mode and level of study

Level of study	Mode of study	
	Full-time	Part-time
All undergraduates	57%	32%
Other undergraduate	40%	30%
First degree	18%	2%
Undergraduate with postgraduate components	0%	0%

Please use the dropdowns above each chart to display the statistical uncertainty associated with different split indicators.

For more detail, see: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/student-outcome-and-experience-measures/data-quality/>

**TUNDRA: Continuation indicator values for young (under 21) students**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Quintile: 1 2 3 4 5

**Deprivation (IMD 2019): Continuation indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Quintile: 1 2 3 4 5

**Ethnicity: Continuation indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Asian Black Mixed Other White

**Age: Continuation indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Mature (21 and over) Young (under 21)

**Disability reported: Continuation indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Disability reported No disability reported

**ABCS quintile: Continuation indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Quintile: 1 2 3 4 5

**Eligibility for free school meals: Continuation indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Eligible Not eligible

# Completion

This is the indicators aggregates view

Indicators	Gaps
Time series	Aggregates

Current mode and level:  
Part-time  
All undergraduates

Click a yellow cell below to change the mode and level of study

Level of study	Mode of study	
	Full-time	Part-time
All undergraduates	34%	31%
Other undergraduate	24%	30%
First degree	10%	1%
Undergraduate with postgraduate components	0%	0%

Please use the dropdowns above each chart to display the statistical uncertainty associated with different split indicators.

For more detail, see: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/student-outcome-and-experience-measures/data-quality/>

**TUNDRA: Completion indicator values for young (under 21) students**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Quintile: 1 2 3 4 5

**Deprivation (IMD 2019): Completion indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Quintile: 1 2 3 4 5

**Ethnicity: Completion indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Legend: Asian (blue), Black (red), Mixed (green), Other (purple), White (yellow)

**Age: Completion indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Legend: Mature (21 and over) (blue), Young (under 21) (yellow)

**Disability reported: Completion indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Legend: Disability reported (blue), No disability reported (yellow)

**ABCS quintile: Completion indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Quintile: 1 2 3 4 5

**Eligibility for free school meals: Completion indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty

Legend: Eligible (blue), Not eligible (yellow)

The access and participation data dashboard does not provide information about whether or not a provider meets any of the OFS's regulatory requirements or any wider legal obligations. The dashboards should not be taken to signal that a provider is non-compliant with any regulatory or legal requirements or that the OFS has any regulatory concerns in respect of the provider. Any access and participation plans active for a

# Progression

**This is the Indicators aggregates view**

Indicators	Gaps
Time series	Aggregates

Current mode and level:  
Part-time  
All undergraduates

Click a yellow cell below to change the mode and level of study

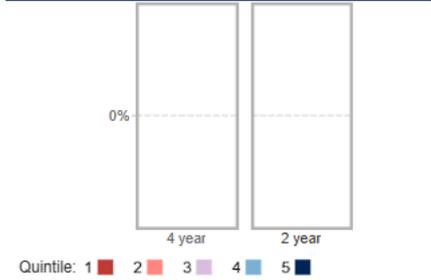
Level of study	Mode of study	
	Full-time	Part-time
All undergraduates	63%	32%
Other undergraduate	38%	25%
First degree	25%	7%
Undergraduate with postgraduate components	0%	0%

Please use the dropdowns above each chart to display the statistical uncertainty associated with different split indicators.

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/student-outcome-and-experience-measures/data-quality/>

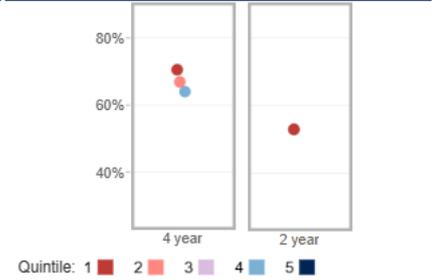
**TUNDRA: Progression indicator values for young (under 21) students**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



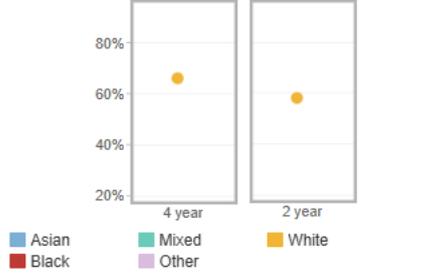
**Deprivation (IMD 2019): Progression indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



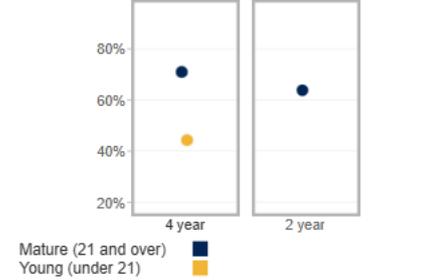
**Ethnicity: Progression indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



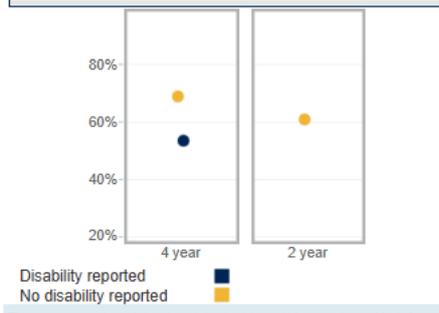
**Age: Progression indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



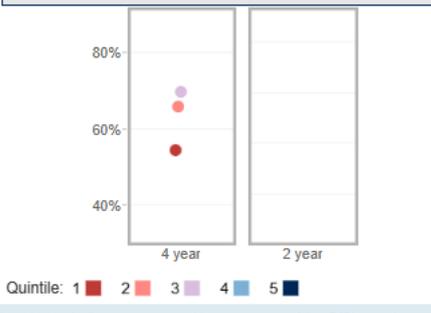
**Disability reported: Progression indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



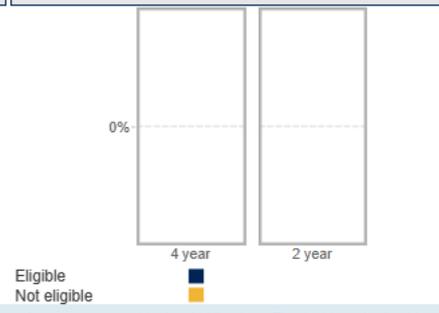
**ABCS quintile: Progression indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



**Eligibility for free school meals: Progression indicator values**

Choose a split to show statistical uncertainty



The career and participation data dashboard does not provide information about whether or not a provider meets any of the OFE's regulatory requirements or any wider local objectives. The dashboard should not

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

In addition to using experience from in-house interventions, communication across staff and students, as well as discussions with a range of colleges delivering HE and relevant networks/membership associations, we have used the following sources to inform our intervention strategies, embedded within the Plan as endnotes.

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<sup>1</sup> Inequality Briefing (2014) 'The poorest regions in the UK are the poorest in Northern Europe'. Available at: [https://inequalitybriefing.org/graphics/briefing\\_43\\_UK\\_regions\\_poorest\\_North\\_Europe.pdf](https://inequalitybriefing.org/graphics/briefing_43_UK_regions_poorest_North_Europe.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> HM Government (2022) 'Levelling Up the United Kingdom'. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61fd3ca28fa8f5388e9781c6/Levelling\\_up\\_the\\_UK\\_white\\_paper.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61fd3ca28fa8f5388e9781c6/Levelling_up_the_UK_white_paper.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> HM Government (2019) 'The English Indices of Deprivation (IoD2019)'. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

<sup>4</sup> South Yorkshire Integrated Care Partnership (2023) 'South Yorkshire Integrated Care Partnership Strategy'. Available at: [https://syics.co.uk/application/files/6816/8666/8429/015307\\_SYB\\_South\\_Yorkshire\\_Integrated\\_Care\\_Strategy\\_Doc.V20.pdf](https://syics.co.uk/application/files/6816/8666/8429/015307_SYB_South_Yorkshire_Integrated_Care_Strategy_Doc.V20.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Rotherham Together Partnership and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (2019) 'Extending Prosperity To All, Rotherham Employment and Skills Strategy 2019–2025.' Available at: <https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s122685/Appendix%201%20-%20Rotherham%20Employment%20and%20Skills%20Strategy.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Blake, S, Capper, G and Jackson, A. (2022) Building belonging in higher education. Recommendations for developing an integrated institutional approach, Pearson, Wonkhe. Available at: <https://wonkhe.com/wp-content/wonkhe-uploads/2022/10/Building-Belonging-October-2022.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Hausmann, L. R. M., Schofield, J. W. and Woods, R. L. (2007) 'Sense of belonging as a predictor of intentions to persist among African American and white first-year college students', Research in Higher Education, Vol. 48(7)

<sup>8</sup> Hussain, M. and Jones, J.M. (2021) 'Discrimination, Diversity, and Sense of Belonging: Experiences of Students of Color', Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, Vol. 2

<sup>9</sup> TASO Student Mental Health Evidence Toolkit. Available at: <https://taso.org.uk/student-mental-health-hub/toolkit/>

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<sup>10</sup> Thomas, L., Hill, M., O'Mahony, J. and Yorke, M. (2017) 'Supporting student success: strategies for institutional change, What Works? Student Retention & Success programme', Paul Hamlyn Foundation report. Available at: <https://www.phf.org.uk/programmes/works/>

<sup>11</sup> Example student guide, written by University of Reading students for University of Reading students. Available at: <https://www.reading.ac.uk/essentials/-/media/essentials/files/diversity-and-inclusion/first-generation-guide-interactive-pdf.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Campbell, Paul; Duke, Ben (2023). An Evaluation of the Racially Inclusive Practice in Assessment Guidance Intervention on Students' and Staffs' Experiences of Assessment in HE: A Multi-University Case Study. University of Leicester. Report. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.25392/leicester.data.23579565.v1>

<sup>13</sup> Making the language of assessment inclusive toolkit – resource created as part of a QAA-funded Collaborative Enhancement Project led by the University of the West of England. Available at: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/membership/collaborative-enhancement-projects/assessment/making-thelanguage-of-assessment-inclusive>

<sup>14</sup> Universal Evaluation Framework (UEF). Available at: <https://evaluationforall.org/>

# Fees, investments and targets

2026-27 to 2029-30

Provider name: RNN Group

Provider UKPRN: 10005534

## Investment summary

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

### Notes about the data:

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

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

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

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

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

**Table 6b - Investment summary**

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£20,000	£7,000	£13,000	£2,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£46,000	£48,000	£49,000	£51,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000

**Table 6d - Investment estimates**

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£20,000	£7,000	£13,000	£2,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>Access activity investment</b>	<b>Total access investment (£)</b>	<b>£20,000</b>	<b>£7,000</b>	<b>£13,000</b>	<b>£2,000</b>
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment (as % of HFI)</i>	12.7%	4.3%	7.8%	1.2%
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment funded from HFI (£)</i>	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)</i>	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£39,000	£40,000	£41,000	£42,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£7,000	£8,000	£8,000	£9,000
<b>Financial support investment</b>	<b>Total financial support investment (£)</b>	<b>£46,000</b>	<b>£48,000</b>	<b>£49,000</b>	<b>£51,000</b>
Financial support investment	<i>Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)</i>	29.1%	29.6%	29.3%	29.8%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000
Research and evaluation investment	<i>Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)</i>	2.5%	2.5%	2.4%	2.3%



