



Queen Mary University of London

2019-20 Access and Participation Plan

Submitted April 2018

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SITUATION	1
AMBITION AND STRATEGY	4
ACCESS, STUDENT SUCCESS AND PROGRESSION MEASURES	10
INVESTMENT	19
PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO STUDENTS	19

INTRODUCTION

Queen Mary University of London is a Russell Group university with a difference. We are a multi-faculty institution teaching undergraduates and postgraduates across all the major disciplines; we offer more than 280 undergraduate courses. We have world-leading research across disciplines and were ranked 5th in the UK in the last Research Excellence Framework for the quality of our research outputs¹. We are very proud of our teaching and learning and were awarded a 'silver' in the Teaching Excellence Framework (2016-17). We continue to be attractive to potential students; this year, applications have risen at a faster rate compared with similar universities² despite the demographic downturn in the number of 18-year-olds, and the uncertainty caused by Brexit and other factors. We are also deeply embedded in the local community and were the first UK university to be awarded a gold watermark for public engagement by the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement.

Unlike many other Russell Group universities, we attract a very diverse student population. Of our 25,000+ students, 35% are from non-EU overseas countries, and 9% are from the EU. Our international students are drawn from over 160 countries. 90% of our home students are from state schools, 59% are BME, 42% are the first in their families to go into higher education and over 30% are from households where the household income as assessed by the Student Finance England is less than £15,000. We attract a lot of local students, owing to our strong relationships with schools in the surrounding boroughs, coupled with a strong reputation for inclusivity. 37% of our students commute to our campuses daily.

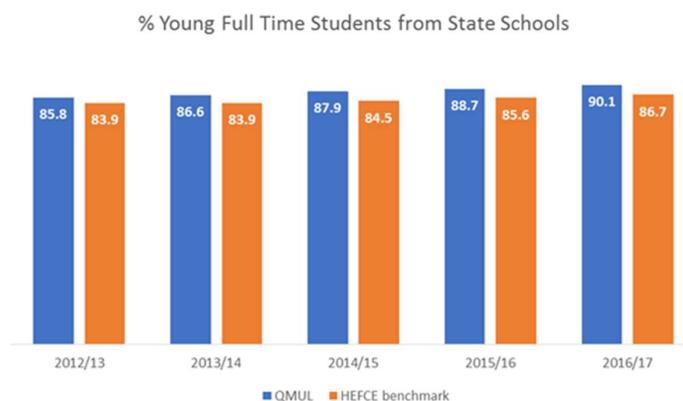
In September 2017, Professor Colin Bailey, previously the Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Manchester, joined Queen Mary as our new Principal. Professor Bailey brings with him a wealth of experience from the sector, coupled with a strong commitment to the local and skills agendas. We will shortly be embarking on a process to refresh the university's strategy that will seek to strengthen our position while remaining true to our values of excellence, inclusivity and embracing diversity.

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SITUATION

We have a well-established programme of widening-access activity, which includes sponsoring two multi-academy trusts, access programmes to law and medicine and a variety of other activities. Collaboration is a strong thread throughout our widening-participation work. We currently collaborate with other Russell Group universities, including with the University of Warwick on different projects and in addition we have just joined the national 'Realising Opportunities' programme. We realise, however, that we have work to do in ensuring all of our students succeed, and have been reviewing our strategy in this area as described later in this document.

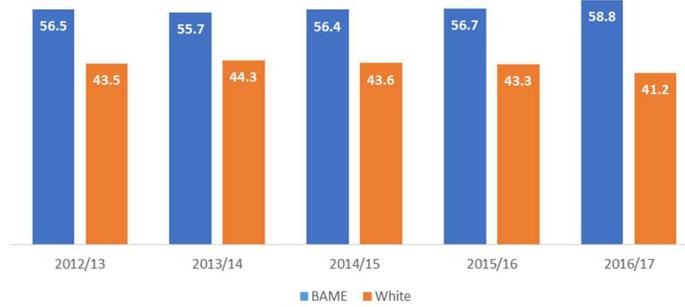
Current performance in relation to Access

We consistently exceed the HEFCE location-adjusted benchmark in relation to the numbers of students we attract from state schools and, as the graph below shows, we continue to improve our performance in this area year on year:



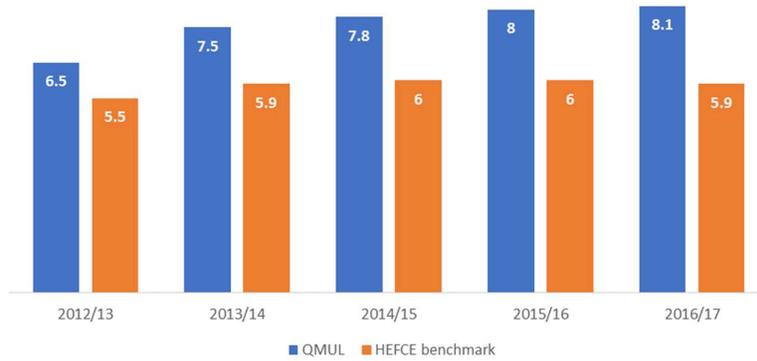
We are proud of the ethnic diversity of our student population, as demonstrated in the graph below:

% UG Students BAME/White



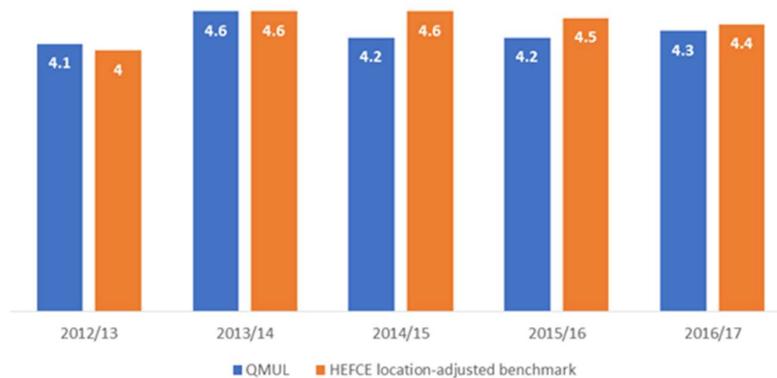
The number of disabled undergraduate students at Queen Mary continues to increase year on year, and we consistently exceed the HEFCE location-adjusted benchmarks in this area:

Full-time UG students: % in receipt of DSA



Attracting students from low-participation neighbourhoods (LPNs) presents more of a challenge, as it does for many London universities. We continue to hover around the HEFCE location-adjusted benchmark:

% Young Full Time Students from LPNs

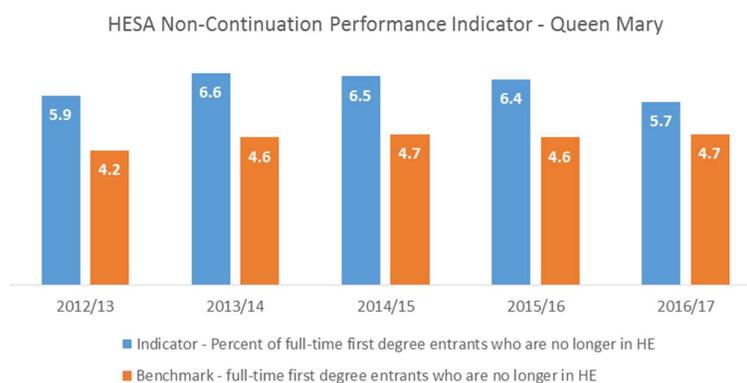


We do not believe that the LPN metric is a good proxy for success in widening participation for universities such as ours. The re-categorisation of low-participation neighbourhoods based on the implementation of POLAR3 data has had a significant impact on universities that target outreach activities at students based in London, where there are now fewer postcodes in Quintile 1. Tower

Hamlets, where Queen Mary's Mile End campus is based, is one of the most deprived areas of London: 39% of children live in income-deprived households in the borough, which is the highest in the UK. It is also very ethnically diverse: 70% of people are BME. Evidence shows that learners from under-represented backgrounds are likely to stay in their own regions, and that participation in London is higher than elsewhere in the country. We believe that the percentage of students from low-income families shows a better approximation of our success in widening participation, and we have an excellent record for recruiting these students. 30% of our home undergraduate students come from families with a household income as assessed by the Student Finance England of less than £15k, and 25% come from families with an assessed household income of less than £10k.

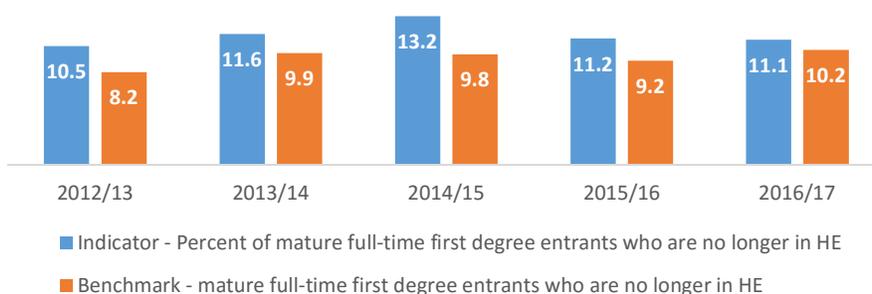
Current performance in relation to student progression and success

We have a deeply held commitment to widening participation and ensuring student success. However, we are aware that our continuation rates are not at the level to which we aspire. Retention rates vary across disciplines and programmes of study. We are keenly aware of the duty we have to our students and across the institution we are embedding a culture of support and wellbeing. We aim to support and provide opportunities for all of our students and we use an evidence-based approach for targeted student support wherever necessary. Our non-continuation rates for our whole student population (HESA data) are shown in the below graph. We are aware that patterns vary for different subsections of our community and plan accordingly. Our mature students have a significantly higher non-continuation rate than young students, although we are closer to the benchmark. Disabled students have a higher non-continuation rate than non-disabled students and some BME groups have higher non-continuation rates than white students. We have set targets and are developing programmes of work to address these issues. We are also very aware of the importance of intersectionality and the effect on performance for students who belong to more than one of these groupings.



As a university, we have work to do to ensure that we have reliable data for the whole university across the different cohorts, and do not have cross-university data available at this point for retention and success of the other cohorts listed in the guidance. It is a priority to develop new datasets and tools that will enable us to monitor the student journey of all cohorts in real time, enabling us to target support and evaluate the impact of interventions more effectively than we have been able to date. We will have this in place for next year's submission to OfS. We have included data below for mature students.

HESA Non-Continuation PI - Queen Mary - Mature Students



AMBITION AND STRATEGY

The graphs above demonstrate our success in widening access but an underperformance on student retention. Our targets for widening access remain as they were, in relation to increasing numbers of students from low-participation neighbourhoods and numbers of disabled students. We will augment our widening-access activity through our new contextualised admissions process, detailed below, and have also recently joined Realising Opportunities. We will also be seeking to broaden out the geographical reach of our work, particularly for years 12 and 13.

We will continue to focus on retention and success, where we know we have work to do. We have changed our targets so that they are in line with our strategy for the Teaching Excellence Framework. Our first target for student success will be the non-continuation benchmark set annually by HESA, encompassing the institution wide benchmark and the benchmarks set at disciplinary and demographic levels. The demographic benchmarks will include all widening participation markers for which data is available. We have indicated that we wish to remove the target that relates to the success of those students who complete their first year, as we wish to focus on the success of all our students. Our second set of targets for student success will relate to the employment outcomes of our students. We will use the Graduate Outcomes Survey to measure our performance and we will aim to meet or exceed our HESA set benchmarks for both employment and highly skilled employment. Again we will set targets internally for all disciplines and widening participation markers where data is available, and will aim for year-on-year improvements. As both the non-continuation and employment benchmarks are set retrospectively we will use the additional internal target of meeting or exceeding the previous year's benchmarks in both areas. We have specific interventions in place for BAME students in different subject areas detailed below.

A critical element of our work to ensure our students have the skills they need to succeed is the introduction in 2017/18 of the QMUL Model. The Model is an innovative teaching and learning initiative that will broaden opportunities for our undergraduates within and beyond higher education, supporting them to plan and manage their ongoing professional development. The Model is firmly grounded in the core Queen Mary values of respect for, and engagement with, the local area and communities, with a distinctive focus on enabling students to make a genuine societal impact through leadership in their chosen field. The Model is organised around the key themes of networking, multi- and inter-disciplinarity, international perspectives, and enterprise. Since the launch in September 2017, all first-year students have, via credit-bearing modules, the opportunity to develop broader experiences and skills – from business and entrepreneurial skills, to global perspectives and communication skills. The opportunities are embedded in each year of study of the degree programmes that our schools offer, which means that all our students will take them and be assessed upon them as they progress. We believe this approach is innovative and will widen the opportunities for our students and graduates to fulfil their potentials commensurate with their talents and succeeding in their chosen careers irrespective of disadvantaged backgrounds. The QMUL Model has the backing of our Students' Union (QMSU) and many employers and funders. There are currently more than 350 QMUL Model modules, and the options will be expanded year-on-

year. There is more detail on our [website](#). This activity is embedded in our core teaching and learning and is aimed at all our students, and is not costed against our access and participation plan.

We have reviewed the sector evidence on financial support, and have also commissioned our own research. Whilst we believe that financial support is only one aspect of supporting students to succeed, with our particular student demographic we believe it is critical. This view is shared by our Students' Union; please see appended statement on page 21. We are therefore expecting to increase spend in this area. We are not reducing spend in other areas, this increase has led to our committing an increase in the overall percentage of the higher fee income to widening access and participation.

We are committed to taking a whole institution approach to access and participation. To enable that, steering and monitoring groups provide oversight to this work, with representatives from the different constituencies within the organisation and including student representatives. We will draw further on tools suggested by [Liz Thomas](#) to look at the maturity of our strategy and in particular to ensure a cross-institution approach to evaluation.

Widening access

Over the next five years, we will increase the number of schools and colleges that we work with, and broaden the geographical area that we cover. We will coordinate widening participation activity better across the university, which will make the activity more efficient and should improve schools' experience of working with us. We will work more closely with the Students' Union, and we will also investigate the role staff volunteering can have in supporting our relationships with schools and colleges.

We will continue to deliver intensive programmes with our two sponsored Multi Academy Trusts, and other sustained interventions including access to medicine and law programmes. In addition, our ambition is to broaden our work to include more schools and colleges and extend the reach of our widening-access activity, particularly at years 12 and 13. We will seek to streamline other activity to enable us to do so. This will include looking to see where we can, for example, replace activity that is currently paid for (such as some of the work to support reading in primary schools) with voluntary activity through the Students' Union and Students' Union partner charities, noting the benefit of such voluntary work to students. We will also be looking to capture more holistically all the work that is being done with schools, to avoid duplication and ensure we are best serving the needs of the schools and colleges.

We will only make changes to activity where there is an evidence base to do so, and in dialogue with the schools concerned.

We will target our work carefully to ensure maximum impact, and focus our access work on students from the following target groups (this list is not in priority order):

- first in family to attend higher education
- previously or currently eligible for free school meals
- from low-income families
- from a low-participation neighbourhood
- parents from non-professional occupations
- have a disability
- young carers
- estranged from family/living independently
- state-school students.

We will use online applications for our intensive outreach programmes. This enables us to gather detailed information about the applicant's socio-economic background and whether the student has any close family members who have been to university, more easily. Additionally, through our engagement in the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) we can now undertake further postcode profiling of potential outreach participants. Students are selected if there is good evidence that they

are in one or more of the key target widening participation groups. Whole-group activities are targeted at schools and colleges that have a high percentage of students from low-participation neighbourhoods, or who are entitled to free school meals.

Collaboration will be a strong thread running through our work. We will enhance our collaborative work in 2019-20 by building on Year 1 of the Realising Opportunities programme, which we will enter in August 2018. We are a partner in Advancing Access, a national collaboration of 24 selective universities, and through this collaboration we will work with schools and colleges to develop and deliver continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers and advisors that supports student progression to selective universities and courses. Collaboration is also an important component of our work to support the progression of care leavers, and we will continue to play an active role in the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers. A member of our staff is Co-Chair of the National Strategy Group, and we provide support through engagement in conferences and meetings and internal strategic leadership. In addition, Queen Mary has taken a pledge to outline our commitment to estranged students, with the charity Standalone. We have a dedicated scheme to support estranged students to achieve their potential and succeed at university.

Student Success and Progression

Work to monitor, evaluate and improve the experience of our students is undertaken across the university with the core Engagement, Retention and Success (ERS) programme dedicated to improving student retention and success being located within Student and Academic Services. The activities of the ERS programme are currently under a review to ensure we are addressing our concerns around our non-continuation rates. A significant portion of the ERS team's work to date has focussed on data analysis and research into disparities in attainment. In tandem with our Planning Office we are improving our business intelligence platforms to make internal reporting on continuation and attainment a routine task, including reporting on attainment by ethnicity, gender, disability and socio-economic background. As this reporting becomes routine we will shift the focus of our ERS work towards action-based solutions.

The Engagement, Retention and Success programme also has an important focus on student support and wellbeing. This encompasses personal tutor training, engagement analytics, Welcome Week and transition, support for front-line staff working with students, and academic development programmes. There is also a significant strand of work that focuses on bespoke disciplinary-specific projects where the ERS team members work collaboratively with academic schools.

The Students' Union supports student engagement and retention through developing student communities in more than 250 societies, 7 Student Media Outlets, 10 Volunteering Groups, and 62 sports clubs.

Research

The Engagement, Retention and Success (ERS) programme undertakes both quantitative and qualitative research, fully cognisant of national and international research and best practice. This research has covered various themes including the BME student experience, characteristics that affect student retention and degree classification. Each academic School now receives annual reports on the determinants for student success within their School based on in depth cohort analysis. This analysis has allowed for the development of plans for student retention and success at the discipline and programme level. As noted above we will in future be making much of this reporting automated through business intelligence programming improvements and, as such, we will be extending our activities into directing the institutional actions for improving continuation and success. Part of this work has already started in the Faculty and Institution-wide Student Experience Action Matrixes and Student Experience Action Plans that require each School and Professional Service to address issues that impact on student continuation, attainment and wellbeing. These plans are driven by data that includes performance on various metrics (non-continuation, employment, student satisfaction) broken down by ethnicity, gender and other markers of advantage/disadvantage. The plans are also informed by student surveys, Students' Union Executive Officers and Student Council, Student-Staff Liaison Committees as well as a variety of other student inputs. The Students'

Union also undertakes a program of research to understand the student body, using this to adapt provision to the needs of students from underrepresented groups.

The research work done to date within the ERS programme highlights important factors such as disciplinary differences in BME student achievement, in particularly noting that there is an attainment gap between white and BME students in the humanities but either a significantly reduced or no gap in the sciences. In addition to other solutions-focussed work we are currently engaged in a collaborative HEFCE catalyst project “Re-imagining Attainment For All 2 (RAFA2)” which is a student-led research project focused on enhancing assessment practices to address the attainment gap between white and BME students with an additional interest in the attainment of Muslim women students. Evaluation is built into the project. We are also participating in a second HEFCE-funded Catalyst project to investigate potential differences in outcomes for students who have BTEC entry qualifications.

Engagement Analytics

The ERS programme has also overseen the introduction of two important IT systems for supporting student engagement. QEngage is a system of monitoring individual students’ engagement in their programme of study. It flags recent engagement such as attendance at lectures and the submission of assessment using institute-specific markers via a high-level dashboard, identifying students at risk of disengaging in a timely manner and enabling a consistent approach to Queen Mary-wide student engagement monitoring and facilitating early interventions. Co-Tutor is an online repository that allows Schools to retain pastoral advice given to students (where appropriate) to ensure that advice is consistent and supportive across all years of a student’s programme of study. These two systems are currently being reviewed to ensure that their capabilities are fully understood by all users and integrated with other learning analytics data across the institution.

Equality and Diversity

The university has a comprehensive action plan to ensure that it fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010, and this supports the objectives of the 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan in a number of key areas. There are detailed actions plans to:

- enhance gender equality for staff and students
- reduce the attainment gap by ethnicity and investigate the withdrawal of black and minority ethnic students
- enhance access to Queen Mary’s buildings, learning resources and virtual environment
- ensure that disabled students and staff feel supported at work and study, and that disability awareness is raised among students and staff
- promote a culture in the university where staff and students can be themselves and support students and staff to represent themselves and build communities within under-represented groups
- ensure adequate facilities and policies are in place to allow the practice of religion and promote good interfaith relations including through the Students’ Union Interfaith Forum
- ensure students of different ages have access to support and facilities required
- reach participation levels within the Students’ Union that reflect the diversity of the student body.

We are committed to creating an environment with a zero tolerance approach to Harassment, Bullying and Hate Crime. Working with the Students’ Union, we are ensuring that our community is free from all forms of prejudice, discrimination, harassment and bullying. This involves the development of a new Dignity at Work Policy, a network of Dignity Disclosure Officers and an online reporting system.

All the activities in the widening-participation programme described in our Access and Participation Plan are open to everyone in the target cohorts of under-represented groups. Selection is based on this alone, and applicants are judged against clear criteria that are discussed and agreed with participating schools and delivery partners. All activities are advertised widely to targeted schools and colleges to ensure maximum take-up.

Activities described in the strategy have been designed to ensure that they will appeal to everyone in the relevant target groups. For example, science and engineering summer schools are designed to cover a wide range of engineering subjects to try to encourage higher take-up from girls, who often do not apply for these activities in the same numbers as boys. All outreach projects will be evaluated rigorously, and patterns of take-up will be monitored as part of this process.

Contextualised admissions

We implemented our new contextualised admissions policy at the start of the 2018 admissions cycle and routinely assess a number of items of contextual data, as well as contextual information relating to individual applicants, as part of our holistic process of considering undergraduate applications. Contextual data is weighted according to a standard formula to determine if an applicant has a high, medium or low contextual data score, which is then drawn to the attention of admissions selectors. Each academic School has determined a policy for acting on contextual data scores within the admissions process and this is governed by a university-wide policy framework. High and, where agreed, medium contextual data scores may lead to an offer being made to a student whose academic profile would otherwise have fallen below the threshold, a reduced grade offer and/or additional consideration at the point of confirmation if the applicant's grades have fallen below the conditions of the offer.

We are also involved in running our own and participating in specific external schemes designed to widen access to our programmes among disadvantaged applicant groups. The latter include the Sutton Trust Pathways to Law programme and the Realising Opportunities programme. Consideration of contextual data is embedded in these schemes and the admissions selection and offer-making process is aligned to our contextualised offer-making policy as far as possible.

Our contextualised admissions policy is reviewed annually, in light of monitoring and evaluation, and approved by the Student Recruitment and Admissions Group (SRAG), which is chaired by the Vice-Principal (Student Experience, Teaching and Learning), who is a member of the university's senior executive. Final approval of our admissions policy, of which contextualised admissions forms a part, is the responsibility of Senate.

Our approach to monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of this work is governed by the Access Steering and Monitoring Groups.

These groups will look at:

- (i) annual HESA statistics, data provided through our Student Information System, and data recorded in our Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) database, as clearly measurable evidence of progress towards meeting the targets and milestones set out in Table 8 of the Resource Plan.
- (ii) rigorous evaluation of individual outreach initiatives, with evaluation reports

Evaluation is embedded into our outreach programme, and we use a combination of process evaluation and participant outcome evaluation to provide the fullest picture of the impact of our activities. Our methodology for evaluating the impact of an initiative on participant outcomes is principally quantitative in nature, utilising a mixture of: pre and post-engagement participant surveys, in which we are looking for statistically significant differences in attitudes and aspirations; concise knowledge quizzes, in which we are looking for evidence that key learning objectives have been achieved; and long-term destination tracking, in which we are looking for progression to higher education in general, and to research-intensive institutions in particular. In some instances, where most appropriate, we gather qualitative data through interviews and focus groups. We have found a cyclical evaluation process to be the most effective approach for ensuring that evaluation outcomes influence practice. Evaluation reports are disseminated internally, and feed directly into the development of the project the next time it is delivered.

In addition to our own evaluations, we use evidence from the sector to shape our approach to widening participation. Research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies has identified a socio-economic gap in university attendance at 'high status' institutions which cannot be explained by attainment

differences³. One objective of our programme of activities is to reduce this gap, by encouraging academically able young people from under-represented groups to consider Russell Group institutions like Queen Mary as an option for themselves. As such, a primary concern of our evaluation strategy is establishing which activities appear to have the most positive impact on a young person's self-belief and sense of belonging in relation to higher education. Beyond this, we seek to assess how well our activities convey practical information about securing access to competitive courses that may not otherwise be readily available to students whose parents did not attend HE, or whose school or college lacks appropriate careers guidance.

In 2019-20, we will undertake further evaluation of the Queen Mary bursary scheme, as described on page 19. We are in dialogue with another university about the potential for collaboration on this matter. This work will build upon the evidence-base generated by the mixed-methods evaluation of the scheme already undertaken, which is described in detail in our 2018-19 access agreement, and existing work including that undertaken by and summarised in the paper by Hoare and Lightfoot in 2015⁴. In January 2018, an aspect of the research we had undertaken was published in an academic journal as part of an OFFA initiative to support WP evaluators to transform their research into articles for publication. Participation in this programme is part of our commitment to contributing to the widening-participation evidence-base through undertaking and disseminating outcomes from robust research projects.

Queen Mary is a member of the HEAT, which assists HEIs in England to target, monitor and evaluate their outreach activity. Subscribing to HEAT helps us to take an evidence-based approach to planning outreach delivery so that we can continue to invest in outreach activities that optimise progression with disadvantaged cohorts. Furthermore, being an active member of HEAT, by participating at Steering Group and Research Group level, allows us to be contributory in helping HEAT to realise its wider research aims.

Queen Mary records data about its outreach activities and participants on the HEAT database. Tracking reports received from HEAT will help us to understand better the relationship between our outreach provision and the attainment and progression of disadvantaged young people. Due to the longitudinal nature of HEAT, it takes a number of years for an institution to build up a meaningful dataset; by 2019-20, we will have a reasonable amount of tracking data with which to begin shaping our programme toward the most effective activities.

Analysis of this aggregate data by the HEAT service tells us that outreach participants who engage in a sustained programme of activities, including a campus visit, have higher rates of progression. These findings have influenced our decision to continue our campus visit programmes and to incorporate a visit to our university into all of our initiatives where appropriate.

As part of the ongoing review of our Engagement, Retention and Success activities we are developing a mixed methods based evaluation strategy. The primary tool for evaluating our work will be metrics based and will look at non-continuation rates, degree outcomes and employment data, combined with student satisfaction data. For non-continuation and degree outcomes we will use internal data to allow us to undertake rapid analysis as soon as information is available. On a longer term basis this data will be combined with HESA data to allow comparative analysis with the rest of the sector. We will also use other data such as module pass rates, module satisfaction and discursive conversations with staff and students to allow for a data driven analysis of activities. The precise mode of evaluation will depend on the nature of the intervention or project. For example, our work on transitions and welcome week will be evaluated through immediate feedback from staff and students in the short term, September-December student attrition and internal surveys in the medium term, and comparisons with sector-wide non-continuation rates in the longer term.

Student Involvement

We value the contribution made by our students to both the planning and delivery of our widening-participation programme. Development and submission of the 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan was managed by the Queen Mary Access Steering Group (chaired by the Vice-Principal: Student Experience, Teaching and Learning). This Group is also ultimately responsible for the delivery of our

obligations under the plan. The Students' Union President is a full and active member of the Steering Group, and represents students' views in the discussions. Our Access Monitoring Group (chaired by the Director of Marketing and Communications) monitors progress against targets in the Plan. All the Students' Union Executive Officers – the students' elected representatives - are members of the monitoring group and they represent students' views and ideas in the discussions.

We aim to facilitate more student involvement in widening-participation activities and build on our partnership with the Students' Union by collaborating more closely on some of the Students' Union initiatives. In particular, we will work with the Students' Union to ensure that relevant volunteering work and student mentoring is recognised as a vital part of our widening-participation programme, and integrated into it.

Targets and Milestones

We reviewed our targets for the 2018-19 Access Agreement, and we have chosen to maintain our access targets (as set out in Table 8 of the Resource plan) with a new collaborative target added to reflect our work as a Realising Opportunities partner. For student success and retention, our targets will be to meet or exceed the HESA benchmarks for continuation, employment and highly skilled employment.

OVERVIEW OF ACCESS, STUDENT SUCCESS AND PROGRESSION MEASURES

Access

Research has indicated that widening-participation activities have the greatest impact if they are delivered in a sustained way, as part of a long-term partnership with target schools. In 2019-20 Queen Mary will deliver an outreach programme that will focus on raising student aspiration and achievement and on providing appropriate information, advice and guidance to support students in making the right choices for successful progression to higher education. This will combine projects involving a wide range of schools and colleges with the development of long-term structured interventions with a smaller number of partner institutions.

We will achieve the ambitions and priorities set out in the section above by

- Maintaining a whole-institution approach to widening participation throughout the student lifecycle and working collaboratively to achieve this
- Developing longer-term and more intensive interventions, ensuring these are embedded and sustainable
- Reviewing the targeting of all areas of work to ensure that it is focused on those who would benefit most. This will be done by redefining the targeting methodology for outreach work, using school-based and individual indicators
- Grounding work in available research and data and growing the evidence base through better evaluation and monitoring of widening-participation work throughout all areas of the student lifecycle.

We will support raising attainment in areas of social and economic deprivation through our long-term work in developing two multi-academy trusts. We started work with St Paul's Way Trust School in Tower Hamlets in 2009, when it was a failing school. We took on the role as lead education partner for the then Foundation Trust, and by 2013 the school was judged "outstanding" by Ofsted. In September 2016 St Paul's Way Trust School (SPWTS) became an academy and simultaneously a multi-academy trust ((MAT) called the University Schools Trust, East London (UST), with Queen Mary as lead sponsor, and bringing in the Royal Greenwich Trust School (converting from a UTC) as the second 11-19 UST school. This is an ambitious development and with Queen Mary's support the UST will be expanding to approximately 12 schools (primaries and secondaries) over the next three years. Senior members of staff from Queen Mary chair the UST MAT Board. We also support SPWTS through a balanced programme of short- and long-term initiatives, which will be extended to all UST schools. UST now supports other schools in the area through its School of Education (a national teaching school).

We also continue to work with the Drapers' Company as co-sponsor of the Drapers' MAT in Havering. The Drapers' MAT comprises the Drapers' Academy (11-19) and three primary schools. Our support for the MAT includes chairing the MAT Board and the provision of governors for the primary and secondary schools, a programme of outreach activities for Year 6-13 students, and continued support for the development of the Drapers' Academy sixth form.

In addition to the intensive work with partner schools detailed above, we will deliver a broader outreach programme targeted at Year 6-13 students from lower socio-economic groups, students from low-participation neighbourhoods and students who are the first in their family to consider university. This programme will include activities such as summer schools, a campus visit programme and targeted work to support raising attainment at Key Stage 4. There will be an increased focus on supporting Year 12 and 13 students, including through our involvement initiatives in such as the Realising Opportunities programme and Year 12 coaching support. We will also aim to broaden the number of schools we work and the geographic area we cover.

We will continue to deliver long-term projects such as *Bridge the Gap*, an access to medicine and dentistry programme. This work is focused on targeted secondary schools and colleges, and aims to raise aspirations and awareness of medicine and dentistry as career pathways among students from groups that are significantly under-represented within the profession. It offers age-appropriate interventions at three stages – stage 1: Years 7-8, stage 2: Years 9-11, and stage 3: Years 12-13. The programme works with experienced external partners such as the Brightside Trust, who provide support for the e-mentoring strand of the programme. In addition, support is offered to parents, carers and teachers through online resources and an insight event held at the university. All students who have completed the *Bridge the Gap* programme, and who meet Queen Mary's minimum entry requirements, will be guaranteed an interview for a place on the undergraduate dentistry or medicine course. It should be noted that our medical school was the only one in London to be awarded additional places for 2019-20 by Government, which is partly in recognition of our commitment to improving access for local students from a diverse range of backgrounds.

We are realistic about the feasibility of robustly evidencing attainment gains. The size of our individual project cohorts, which typically number less than fifty students, is not large enough for us identify modest but educationally important differences. Furthermore, given the widespread over-inflation of predicted grades at KS5, we are wary of the use of these grades as a baseline attainment measure. Given the exam burden already endured by young people, we are also reluctant to subject them to further additional testing in relation to the evaluation of outreach projects. For these reasons, we feel unable at this time to employ the use of experimental designs, which we firmly believe to be the only robust way to measure attainment changes. However, we are exploring collaboration as a means of achieving a sufficiently large sample size to undertake an evaluation of this nature. In 2018-9, we plan to pilot a new collaborative attainment-raising project with an external partner (The Access Project). The proposed project will have two strands: undergraduate students will act as volunteer tutors for Year 10 and 11 students, and graduate staff within the wider university community will be recruited as volunteer tutors for Year 12 A-Level students. The pilot programme will run initially for one year from September 2018 to August 2019 and will involve secondary schools and sixth forms across east London, in which a high proportion of students meet widening participation targeting criteria such as being eligible for free school meals or having no family experience of higher education. This is an innovative programme, developed with an external partner with 10 years' experience of raising attainment through 1-2-1 subject tutoring. Following the evaluation of the pilot we will seek to extend the project to future years, with long-term outcome-based targets.

Realising Opportunities

We are delighted to be joining Realising Opportunities (RO) from August 2018. This is a unique collaborative partnership of research intensive universities delivering an innovative national fair-access scheme, which promotes social and geographic mobility for able students from under-represented groups.

The RO programme provides support for students through interventions designed to raise aspirations, develop skills and enable them to demonstrate their potential to succeed at a research

intensive university. These interventions are offered locally and nationally and include a National Student Conference, ongoing support and encouragement from a trained student e-mentor and an assessed academic element. Successful completion of RO will result in additional consideration given to applications through UCAS from all partner universities, and the potential for an alternative offer where successful completion of RO is worth two A Level grades or equivalent.

RO has a robust evaluation framework that incorporates contextual data, student aspirations and the longitudinal tracking of students through the HEAT database and UCAS. Evaluation work has indicated the impact of RO on a number of levels. Independent analysis has shown RO is robust in its dual targeting of high attaining students from disadvantaged backgrounds: 100% of students meet this criteria.

UCAS analysis shows evidence of elevated application and offer rates for RO students for 2017 entry to HE. HEAT analysis for students entering HE between 2011 and 2015 indicates that higher numbers of RO students are entering both HE generally and research intensive universities (RIUs) than comparator groups. RO increases the number of students it works with annually and since 2014 has seen the number of students progressing to RIUs increasing both as a percentage of the cohorts and as a real number of students.

The RO Programme aims to prepare students for successful transition to higher education. In July 2017, HESA data provided by HEAT data showed that 77% of students received a 1st or 2:1 compared to 66% of all students nationally, including those from the most advantaged backgrounds. 94% of RO students who graduated in 2014/2015 were in work or study six months after graduation, compared to 90% for all leavers from all UK HEIs.

Student Success and Progression measures

Student Support Officer and Personal Tutor Training

All academic schools within the university have a dedicated Student Support Officer and each student within the university has a dedicated personal tutor (although the title of these posts may vary between the disciplines). The Engagement, Retention and Success programme provides regular training and discussion forums for both Student Support Officers and academic colleagues in Senior Tutoring roles, ensuring they are kept abreast of developments within the university and within the sector. These meetings are also attended by senior staff from the Advice and Counselling Service who are able to provide specialised support. The programme also delivers regular personal tutor training, with a focus on pastoral care, and has trained almost 600 staff over the past four years. This training is reviewed annually to ensure it is kept up to date with developments within the sector, for example the #stepchange in student mental health UUK programme. In addition to this training on pastoral care over 500 personal tutors have also been trained as part of the Queen Mary Model programme.

Welcome Week

The ERSs programme has recently taken responsibility for the annual Welcome Week programme. This was a strategic decision made in light of the importance of Welcome Week in students' transition from sixth form to university. We are developing the delivery of Welcome Week to ensure that it meets the students' needs at this significant stage of the student journey. Schools will be supported in ensuring that all activities are relevant, at an appropriate level, inclusive, and, while accessible to all students, offer specific support to those students that are evidenced to be typically more vulnerable. Students will be involved in the planning and delivery of activities.

The Students' Union runs a fortnight-long welcome program targeted at both new and returning students. The Welcome Fair hosts more than 250 stalls offering the opportunity to get involved in activities and opportunities. Throughout the year the 'Try Something New' program offers more than 100 one-off alcohol-free events including craft, daytrips, sport activities, meet and greets and Club and Society Events. Speed Meeting Events are particularly popular, with more than 600 attendees. In 2017, more than 11,000 students attended events in the welcome program.

Throughout the Welcome period the Students' Union coordinates 'Crew', a group of student volunteers who provide support, information and assistance to first-year students. They help new students move into halls, assist at events and provide information on the University and Students' Union services and activities. Halls Representatives are appointed within halls and support and represent students living in halls, working closely with the Residences team.

We are conscious that the period between confirmation and arrival is also a critical time, and we have initiated a 'Waiting to Start' project, to examine the context and content of all communications sent to students between confirmation and arrival. We aim to have communications that are clear, helpful and inclusive, and support students during this crucial phase of their university experience.

Academic Development Programmes

The academic experience and success of students in their first year of study is a key focus. This year, in order to improve the ways in which teaching is organised and delivered particularly in core modules, where student cohorts are large, we have deployed observers across Schools and interviewed numerous students and teaching and support staff. Putting this material together with quantitative data on student satisfaction and performance, we are building a picture of where practice is strong and should be shared, and of where intervention and development are needed. Policy and practice recommendations from this work will be taken forward from this summer.

Our postgraduate taught programmes for academics and support staff guide participants in effective, evidence-based approaches and models for teaching and learning in higher education. Learner analytics and qualitative research findings emerging from the ERS programme are used in taught sessions to raise critical questions about barriers and enablers to student success, and the themes of inclusion, student engagement and students as co-producers integrated as 'golden threads' throughout the curricula.

Support for Commuting Students

Commuting students have a particular set of needs as they often have caring responsibilities, and frequently do not have access to quiet study space outside of the university, and are more likely to come from very low income households. We are investing in facilities on campus that will provide students with comfortable and quiet spaces to study, including within the Students' Union. In the 2017/18 academic session, in response to student feedback we launched 24/7 opening of our Library to allow students a greater flexibility in their study hours. We have also improved our welfare referral systems within the Library in light of these extended opening hours. The Students' Union runs events specifically for commuting students during the welcome period, which include enabling them to meet students commuting from similar areas.

Transition support for first-year students

Transition between school and university can be a challenging time, and students from widening-participation cohorts can be particularly vulnerable to drop out in the first year of study. We have in place mentoring schemes to offer additional support for first-year undergraduates. PASS (Peer Assisted Study Support) is a course-based mentoring scheme, run for students by students. It gives first-years the opportunity to discuss study-related problems and get general advice from higher-year undergraduates in their subject. In addition, QMSU run a peer support scheme to help first year students with the transition from secondary education. The Union Buddy Scheme matches trained Queen Mary students with incoming first-year students. Through mentor and mentee application forms QMSU are able to pair students based on their selected preferences, with the aim of ensuring that each student (both the mentor and mentee) get as much out of the scheme as possible. The Union Buddy Scheme is a voluntary scheme and focuses on community building, advice on university life and the development of new friendship groups.

Support for Disabled students

Queen Mary's Disability and Dyslexia Service is a well-established department that offers support to all of the university's disabled students, including those with mental health difficulties and specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia and dyspraxia, from the point of application through to graduation. The staffing levels in the Disability and Dyslexia Service have increased significantly in the past three

academic years to reflect the growing number of disabled students studying at the university, particularly in the areas of mental health and specific learning difficulties.

The Disability and Dyslexia Service assists applicants to Queen Mary and contacts each successful applicant who declares a disability to begin the process of identifying the support that the students will need to engage successfully with their academic programme. This includes support in assisting them with the process for applying for a Disabled Student's Allowance (DSA). Once the students have enrolled, the service works with them to ensure that they have access to the reasonable adjustments to which they are entitled and to support them in realising their academic potential. Two Disabled and SLD representatives within the Students' Union represent the interests of disabled students.

Mental health provision

We have expanded our mental health provision in response to demand. There are now two full-time mental health specialists within the Disability and Dyslexia Service who work closely with their colleagues in the university's Advice and Counselling Service. They provide students with a wide-reaching raft of support that includes liaison with NHS mental health teams as well as the implementation of reasonable adjustments to support their teaching and learning. The Disability and Dyslexia Service also uses their expertise to make decisions on whether to provide interim specialist mentoring support whilst applications for Disabled Students' Allowances are being processed.

The university is delivering a programme of Mental Health First Aid training sessions for student-facing staff across the institution. In addition, the Mental Health Adviser has delivered bespoke training sessions to staff based in Residential Support and Security on supporting students experiencing acute mental health crises.

The Mental Health Adviser has a specific brief to support students with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). One of the activities that we offer for students with ASD is an autism specific induction session, which lasts for two days immediately prior to the start of the academic year, but crucially before the majority of students arrive. We offer students a room on campus for the session at no cost to the student and provide a less hectic university induction experience to new students with ASD. There is also a 'social circle' for students with ASD, which is a dedicated resource for them on our virtual learning environment. The Disability and Dyslexia Service offers two drop-in sessions for the exclusive use of these students each week to recognise the difficulties that they have with keeping to firm appointment times. In 2017/18 our Careers and Enterprise team launched a collaboration with Ambitious about Autism running employer recruitment events on campus aimed solely at students with ASD.

The Students' Union runs annual 'Be Kind to Your Mind' and 'Study Well' campaigns to encourage students to discuss issues around mental health and healthy studying practices. These have included study skills training and de-stress activities.

Disability and Specific Learning Difficulties

The Disability and Dyslexia Service has a variety of other full and part-time staff to advise students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties and provides them with specialist one-to-one study skills support through our DSA-QAG accredited in-house provision.

We have funded the full cost of diagnostic assessments for students with suspected specific learning difficulties for many years. This level of support is provided to all students; it is funded by the university and costs in the region of £55,000 each year.

The following table provides data on the rising numbers of disabled students at Queen Mary University of London and the associated growth in numbers of individual student appointments offered by the Disability and Dyslexia Service.

Academic year	Total number of disabled students at QMUL	Total number of appointments delivered by DDS
2013/2014	1,369	1,821

2014/2015	1,620	2,162
2015/2016	1,911	2,341
2016/2017	2,133	2,796

Changes to Disabled Students' Allowances

We have responded to the various changes that have been made to the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) in recent years and have provided funding for disabled students required to contribute £200 towards the cost of their DSA-funded computer on a means-tested basis through the university's Financial Assistance Fund. The university spent £9,400 on this activity in 2016/17: 47 students successfully applied for this award. It would appear that this number is likely to expand further in 2017/18 (it is £9000 at the time of writing).

We have a budget of £40,000 to continue to provide the non-specialist human support (e.g. note-taking support) that was removed from the Disabled Students' Allowances at the start of academic year 2016-17. The Disability and Dyslexia Service assesses the needs of students who require this form of support and provide it as appropriate.

Inclusive Practice

The university has a number of measures designed to improve the outcomes of all of its students, including disabled students. Some examples of these measures include networked assistive software, enhanced technology suites and lecture capture provision.

Students supported by the Disability and Dyslexia Service can request alternative assessments from their academic school. The Disability and Dyslexia Service facilitates these requests by balancing the needs of the student with the expressed learning outcomes of the particular assessment.

In the summer of 2016, the university commissioned research to review how inclusive, in the widest possible sense of the word, Queen Mary's teaching, learning and assessment are and where we can improve our current provision. A Task and Finish Group is currently considering how to further embed the inclusive learning agenda into all programmes.

Employability

Queen Mary has the strategic goal to meet or exceed its benchmark in both the 'employed and further study' and the 'graduate level employment and further study' benchmarks set by the Office for Students. We aim to achieve this goal not just in its aggregate form but across all student subgroups including ethnicity, age, family income/POLAR group, sex, and disability.

Detailed below are specific programmes that have been created to improve the life chances of various 'at risk' groups as defined by data evaluation and national research. In addition to these programmes, there is a programme of careers support and advice available to all students and embedded into academic curricula across the university with the aim of engaging students as early as possible in their academic journey. This early intervention is aided by our careers registration dataset, introduced to the enrolment process from autumn 2017.

In addition to standard careers guidance support we offer a suite of support programmes to help students develop enterprise skills, and to help them to test and grow their own businesses. More than 500 students are now supported each academic year.

In 2014, the university conducted an analysis of five years of graduate destination data (using the DLHE dataset). The analysis revealed that, six months after graduation, graduates who had received a bursary from Queen Mary were up to 14% more likely to be unemployed, and 30% more likely to be in non-graduate jobs, than their non-bursary peers. This research led to the following interventions with plans for a second five-year analysis in August 2018 to establish whether interventions have led to an improvement in this outcome. Early indications show that the employment gap between these groups of students has closed significantly.

QConsult

QConsult is our student consultancy programme. Run by our Careers & Enterprise Team, QConsult was developed in 2015, thanks to generous funding from the J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation. It continues to be funded (until at least 2019) by the Foundation. The programme places our students from low-income families into teams of five to conduct mini consultancy projects within East London growth sector businesses. The students are paid the London Living Wage to work part-time on their project over 5-12 weeks. Students receive wraparound support from careers consultants. J.P. Morgan provides team mentors and a formative Dragon's Den experience. The programme has been placing 120 students a year since 2015. From 2018/19, the programme up-scales to place 200 students a year. Whilst it will no longer be solely for students from low-income backgrounds, these students will continue to be prioritised for the programme with a target of matching or exceeding the proportion of these students in our overall UG UK population. QConsult has won three awards, including the Guardian's Employability Initiative of the Year in 2016.

QMentoring

QMentoring is Queen Mary's employer mentoring programme for students from low-income backgrounds. Run by our Careers & Enterprise Team, QMentoring was launched in 2014 and the programme is now funded through our Strategic Fund. Students are matched with a mentor, often a Queen Mary alumnus, in a sector of interest. Support is given to mentors and mentees before, during and after the programme. 120 students receive a mentor each year with this figure expected to rise year-on-year.

In 2018/19, in collaboration with our School of Business Management, the Careers & Enterprise Team will launch a new strand of QMentoring which will prioritise the School's female Muslim students, following analysis of three years of School graduate destination data which reveals this student cohort does consistently less well in the job market six months after graduation. Students will be offered an employer mentor and the same levels of wraparound support given to those on the university-wide QMentoring scheme.

QInsight, QTaster

More recently, the Careers & Enterprise Team launched two new programmes in close collaboration with employers as pilot modules for the QMUL Model. Both of these programmes prioritise students from low-income backgrounds with the target to engage a number of bursary students which matches or exceeds the proportion of these students in our undergraduate UK population. QInsight was developed with the Civil Service in 2017/18 with 80 students taking part. From 2018/19, 160 students a year will have the opportunity to undertake a series of networking and insight activities on Civil Service sites. Meanwhile QTaster is a development of our existing Career Taster Scheme, which has been running since 2016. From 2018/19, QTaster will give 300 students a year the opportunity to 'taste' and compare a range of sectors as they visit up to four employer sites to undertake business case studies and networking activity. QTaster is kindly funded by Sir John Cass's Foundation until at least 2019.

For all of the above programmes, students are asked to feed back after each round to find out what they learned and how the experience has impacted upon them, as well as how the programme can be improved for future years.

Outward student mobility

Outward Mobility (OM) is rapidly expanding across Queen Mary, with the adoption of a year abroad now standard within the majority of degree programmes subject to attainment criteria. The benefits of OM for students have been extensively researched: students who have taken part achieve better grades, find jobs more quickly, and have higher starting salaries. Increasing opportunities for outward student mobility will be a key theme of our new International Strategy. However, students taking part in Outward Mobility tend to be from more affluent backgrounds, more uniform ethnically, and from private schools. Given the unique and culturally diverse student body at Queen Mary, as well as the significant number of students from WP backgrounds, it remains a priority to ensure all students at Queen Mary have access to this important resource. In 2016/17 we introduced a pilot bursary scheme for WP students for OM. The scheme was popular and we will continue to offer it for both

short-term and longer term mobility opportunities. We will also track the impact of the scheme on the outcomes of the students taking part.

Additional Programmes

Since 2016/17, the Queen Mary Careers & Enterprise Team has worked with third sector organisation 1 Million Mentors to provide an employer mentor to 25 BME students each year. This figure rises year-on-year. Since 2012, the Queen Mary Careers & Enterprise Team has worked with third sector organisation, the East London Business Alliance (ELBA), to provide an employer mentor to 20 students each year. A further 200+ Queen Mary students benefit from this collaboration through participation in other ELBA employer-led skill training and work-placement activities. BME students and students from low income backgrounds are prioritised for these opportunities. In addition, the Students' Union have a QM Skills Award that helps students to recognise, strengthen and talk about the skills they have developed through their role in the Students' Union as either an activity leader, representative or student staff member.

Since 2016, an arrangement has been in place between Queen Mary's Careers & Enterprise Team and Queen Mary's Advice & Counselling Service to improve support to care leavers. The two services liaise to make a direct referral (with the student's permission) if they feel a care leaver would benefit from intensive careers support for an agreed period of time. We are now expanding this scheme for all students having appointments with our Welfare Advisors to ensure that they are connected with the wide variety of careers support that we are able to offer.

Financial support for 2019-20 entrants

Owing to the socio-economic profile of our student population we have, traditionally, spent a significant proportion of the money accountable under our Access Agreement on bursaries. We are, however, cognisant of the sector-wide research on the impact of bursaries and on the guidance from the Office for Fair Access. In 2016/17, we commissioned research into the impact of the bursaries at Queen Mary. The executive summaries of the research are available on our [website](#). We were not able to use the OFFA toolkit when we did this research as it had not been published, but we used a similar statistical approach.

The first piece of research looks at undergraduate student finance. Qualitative comments indicate that our bursaries positively impact students' wellbeing and reduce financial stress, and that they are used for essential activity such as course-related costs and transport. The impact of financial stress is significant, with 2 in 5 of the students surveyed regularly worrying about having enough money to meet basic living costs such as rent and bills. The same proportion disagree that they have enough money to participate in all aspects of university that they want to, and almost 1 in 2 feel that money worries have impacted negatively on their ability to study.

The second piece of research showed that the bursaries have the biggest impact on the most financially-disadvantaged students. The research also shows that these students are the least likely to progress. We believe that looking for a simple correlation between bursary provision and progression is not appropriate for the student demographic we attract at Queen Mary. We are not alone in the view that this simple correlation may be inappropriate⁴. Our students who come from families in these income brackets are frequently dealing with a variety of complex issues and we simply do not know what their progression rates would be without the bursaries. We do however have the research outlined above which shows the impact on their wellbeing.

We believe, based on the research described above and ongoing dialogue with our students via our Students' Union, that significant bursary provision at Queen Mary is important. We have therefore agreed to increase bursary provision such that any new home undergraduate student starting in 2018 or 2019 from an income of less than £20k per annum (as assessed by Student Finance England) will receive £1700 per annum, and any student from a family with an assessed income of between £20k and £35k will receive £1000 per annum. These amounts take into account our annual suggested food budget for each student, travel costs for commuting students (who are over-represented in the lowest-income groups) and the costs of books and other learning necessities. This represents an increase to bursary provision as described in our last (2018/19) Access Agreement. Compared with

students who started with us in 2017, this change represents an increase for those students from families with an income of under £20k, a slight decrease for those students from families with incomes between £20-35k, and the abolition of bursaries for students from families with incomes over £35k.

In consultation with the Students' Union, and based on our research and theirs, we have agreed to set up a transitional wellbeing fund, prioritised for students who are negatively affected by the change in bursaries and who cannot, owing to finance, access activities that positively enhance wellbeing or other aspects of the student experience. For example, the impact of sport on wellbeing is well-documented, but currently the costs associated with club membership fees, travel and competition means that joining in with some sports is out of the financial reach of some of our students. This is exacerbated by Queen Mary being London-based, as many of our sports clubs use facilities at a distance from our campuses and hence there are travel costs associated with taking part. The biggest barrier to participation in competitive sport at Queen Mary is students' ability to pay for transport costs to both training and matches. Examples are our football, cheerleading and netball clubs, as well as elite athletics. Other examples for which the fund could be used include outward mobility, where we have evidence that finance impacts on students' decision to take part, or other activities that enable students to gain skills or experiences that will positively impact their wellbeing.

The use of this wellbeing fund will be prioritised for students who are adversely affected by the change to our bursaries, but will also be available to other students who meet our WP criteria. The overall budget for the fund will be £260k. We are setting this fund up for next year (i.e. from September 2018) and will continue it into the following academic year. We will review its impact during this time.

This increase in spend, for bursaries and for the wellbeing fund, is an extra commitment. We are not reducing commitments in other areas.

We will monitor the impact of the changes in bursaries closely. We recognise this is a significant investment and we have agreed to commission a piece of research to review the sector evidence about the impact of bursaries across a range of comparable institutions, as well as looking further at evidence of the local impact at Queen Mary. This will build on the current evidence base, which was reviewed in OFFA's research and in that conducted by Hoare and Lightman⁴. We will use the evaluation toolkit that OFFA has developed in this process. We will commission this research jointly with our Students' Union, and will use the outcomes of the research to inform our next Access and Participation Plan.

In addition to the main bursary schemes, we have allocated £50,000 for Article 26 Bursaries to support undergraduate students who are asylum seekers, children of asylum seekers or those holding Discretionary Leave to Remain in the UK. Two students per academic year will be awarded a tuition-fee waiver plus maintenance support. This will consist of a non-repayable grant worth the equivalent of a Student Finance Maintenance Loan and a Queen Mary Bursary. In addition, all asylum seekers or children of asylum seekers who meet the academic programme requirements will be eligible to pay the 'home rate' of tuition fee while their asylum application is under consideration by the Home Office. Queen Mary is currently supporting six Article 26 students

We will provide a Financial Assistance Fund of £250,000 to provide assistance for students who may need extra financial support to access and remain in higher education. The fund will be used to assist students who need extra financial help to meet specific costs that are not already met from statutory or other sources, to help students in financial hardship by providing emergency payments for unexpected financial crises, and to intervene in cases where a student may be considering giving up their course because of financial problems.

Students studying undergraduate programmes at the University of London Institute in Paris (ULIP) are registered through Queen Mary. They will, for the purposes of this access agreement, be considered the same as Queen Mary students. They will therefore be eligible for all the support outlined above, subject to meeting the same eligibility criteria as our other students.

INVESTMENT

We will in 2019-20 commit 30.2% of the additional fee income raised from tuition fees above £6,000 to support additional access and retention measures (including direct financial support for students) and the detail of how this will be spent is found in Tables 5 and 6 of the 2019-20 Resource Plan. For 2019-20, Access and Participation Plan countable investment across the student life-cycle is as follows

	Investment in cash terms	Investment as a proportion of additional-fee income raised from tuition fees above £6,000
Access investment	£915,500	2.5%
Success investment	£908,500	2.5%
Progression investment	£313,000	0.9%
Investment in financial support	£8,781,092	24.3%
Total	£10,918,092	30.2%

The 2018-19 Access Agreement committed a substantial increase in investment in access and student success measures, and this has been maintained and increased for the four-year period from 2019-20 to 2022-23. This will support our strategic objectives of maintaining our good record on access and improving our outcomes relating to student success and progression. Queen Mary commits substantial resources to support outreach work in addition to the funding allocated through the 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan. This is set out in Table 4 of the 2019-20 Resource Plan.

We have developed our Access and Participation Plan on the basis that the funding model for teaching students remains consistent through the period of the Plan. However, we reserve the right to apply inflation to tuition fees should Government policy allow, and to adjust the agreement in accordance with any guidance following the Review of Post-Eighteen Education and Funding.

PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO STUDENTS

We are committed to the clearest possible communication of information to all our students. Information on new tuition-fee levels and financial-support arrangements from September 2019 will be available on our website from July 2018, together with information about fee levels and financial support for existing students. All information will make it clear that no student will be required to pay back loans until after graduation and until they reach specified minimum thresholds of earnings.

We will provide clear information to applicants and students about our courses and entry requirements so they are able to understand exactly what they will be studying. This will be provided as web-based information and through our printed prospectus. To support this there is work ongoing to ensure a clear and coherent content strategy for all our communications.

Provision of clear and accurate information to teachers and to parents and carers is important, as they are in a position to advise and influence students about the financial as well as academic aspects of their future studies. This can play a crucial determining role in deciding whether or not to progress to higher education. This work is undertaken across the university, for example by colleagues in the Advice and Counselling Service who provide information to offer holders and current students, and the UK Student Recruitment Team who provide information, advice and guidance for schools and sixth-form colleges through regular publications such as a parents' and carers' guide and communications targeted at teachers and career advisers. Academic Schools also provide information to prospective students, parents and carers, and teachers who wish to find out more about their courses and studying at Queen Mary.

Sessions on student finance are incorporated into outreach activities and included in information, advice and guidance work with schools and colleges.

We will ensure that clear and timely information on our tuition-fee levels and financial support for students is provided for UCAS and the Student Loans Company to enable them to populate their applicant-facing web services.

Our approved 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan will be published on the Queen Mary website on the Widening Participation webpages. A link to this is provided from the main landing page for undergraduate study.

Appendix

Statement from Queen Mary Students' Union

"We believe bursaries for students from financially-disadvantaged backgrounds are absolutely critical and are something students at Queen Mary feel very passionate about. It has been made very clear in student feedback we have collected and from research undertaken by the university in 2016 the significant impact bursaries can have on the retention and outcomes for students in receipt of bursaries. We are proud of the uniquely diverse student body we represent, and bursaries ensure students from all socioeconomic backgrounds can be supported to both complete their degree and enjoy their experience at Queen Mary."

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