

# Bishop Grosseteste University

## Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

The Access and Participation Plan (APP) for Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU or the University) has been informed by specific institutional history and context. It also reflects a long-standing commitment to increasing access and widening participation locally (especially), as well as regionally and nationally.

Established in 1862 as an Anglican teacher training college for women, BGU achieved Taught Degree Awarding Powers in 2006 and full university status in 2012. The academic portfolio focuses on teacher development, humanities and social sciences. There are over 2,300 students, predominantly drawn from Greater Lincolnshire and the East Midlands region, across Foundation Degree programmes (n=177 students), Honours Undergraduate awards (n=1,555), PGCE teacher education and training (n=338), Masters degrees (n=250) and Doctorates (n=31).

The University's mission emphasises its role in:

- enabling all students to achieve the highest possible standard in their field of study;
- providing life-enriching opportunities for our students;
- recognising in our students, aspiration and achievements and provide opportunities for self-development;
- fostering an ethos in which individuals are valued and diversity is celebrated.

As a widening-participation Higher Education Institution (HEI), BGU provides excellent education opportunities and enables the achievement of positive outcomes for a wide range of students. Since 2013/14 the proportion of all undergraduate and PGCE students who identified with at least one of the under-represented learner groups (i.e. POLAR4 Q1, BAME, mature, and students with a known disability) has fluctuated between 57% and 64%.

The most recent data available shows overall undergraduate continuation at 94% (2016-17), attainment of upper degrees (2.1 and 1<sup>st</sup> class honours) at 69% (2017-18), and progression to highly skilled employment / further study at 72% (2016-17).

Recruitment of PGCE students has been relatively stable over the last five years but with a trend of an increasing proportion of BGU graduates rising steadily from 25% to 37.5%. The profile of the PGCE students is broadly similar to the undergraduate profile.

Over the past 150 years BGU has been committed to delivering excellent learning and teaching and a supportive student experience which was recognised when awarded TEF Gold in 2017 based upon its strong continuation and progression rates and low differential split metrics.

### 1. Assessment of performance

The analysis of under-represented undergraduate learner groups through the student journey that follows draws upon individualised student data provided by the Office for Students (OfS) to determine BGU's performance. Reference will be made to comparative sector benchmarks from the provider-level dataset also provided by the OfS.

At the end of each under-represented learner group section PGCE student performance is included, drawn from BGU's own student record dataset and reflecting the closest set of equivalent metrics.

There are three important differences:

- *Retention* – for a one-year PGCE programme, continuation (i.e. students still in higher education one year after starting their programme) is not an appropriate metric. Instead, retention has been

used, which is the aggregate measure of the cohort who successfully achieved their award plus those who are still to complete through intercalation / extenuating circumstances (i.e. the percentage of the cohort who have not failed the programme).

- *Completion* – the fail-pass outcome of the PGCE award means that attainment defined by achieving an upper degree is not appropriate. Instead, award completion will be used as a metric of success.
- *Progression* - the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey does not record PGCE progression and BGU does not collate employment data. Progression for PGCE students is therefore omitted from the analysis.

## 1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

### Access

The University recruits mainly from Greater Lincolnshire – a county with persistent low participation in Higher Education (HE). In contrast to the sector, the proportion of ‘all undergraduate’ students recruited from POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 has increased from 49% to 54% over the last five years. This is almost double the sector’s average of 27-28% over the same period.

In 2017-18, the proportion of POLAR Q5 and Q1 was 9.0% and 22.3% respectively. This represents a Q5:Q1 ratio of 0.4:1 (significantly better than the sector’s ratio of 2.5:1) and already below the OfS KPM1 2038-39 target for high tariff institutions of 1:1.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data for 2017-18 show that BGU recruited 16% of its undergraduate student cohort from IMD Q1 (11.2% in 2012-13) and cumulatively 37.5% from Q1+Q2 (31.2% in 2012-13). These 2017-18 metrics are now consistent with the population of the geographical region from which BGU predominantly recruits (IMD Q1 16.3% and IMD Q1+Q2 37.2% – 2011 Census) although still lower than the comparable figures for the sector (Q1 21.6%, Q1+ Q2 41.6%). However, the ratio of IMD Q5:Q1 was a balanced 1:1 for both BGU and the sector.

When the IMD data specifically for 18 year old students is considered, BGU’s performance is better than the sector by recruiting 17.3% from IMD Q1 (sector 16.4%) and 37.4% from Q1+Q2 (sector 33.2%).

### Success – Continuation

Since 2012-13 BGU’s undergraduate student continuation rates after the first year of study have been consistently strong fluctuating between 92% and 94%, reflecting the intensive and supportive tutoring provided to all learners.

In contrast to the sector, in which there was a widening of the POLAR4 Q5:Q1 continuation gap from 4.2% to 5.0%, the gap between Q5 and Q1 for all BGU undergraduates decreased from 5.9% to 0.1% in 2016-17 (Q5=94.7%, Q1=94.6%). Indeed the Q1 continuation rate has been at 90% or better meeting the target set in the University’s previous Access Plan. The decreasing, and not statistically significant, continuation gap at BGU is in-line with the OfS’s ambition (KPM3) of eliminating the gap between Q5 and Q1.

The BGU continuation gap for the broader comparison groupings of POLAR4 Q1+Q2 and Q3-Q5 has fluctuated between 0.6% (2014-15) and 3.2% (2012-13) and in 2016-17 was 1.2%. None of these ‘gaps’ were statistically significant.

## Success - Attainment

Student attainment (i.e. the proportion of undergraduate students achieving an upper degree classification) for POLAR4 Q5 students aged under-21 (young) increased from 68.2% in 2012-13 to 70.0% in 2017-18, whilst it increased by a greater amount for POLAR4 Q1 from 58.4% to 70.8%. Although the resultant gap was 27.4% in 2015-16, it has since reduced from 9.7% to -0.8% (the sector gap has stayed relatively stable; 9.5% to 10.5%).

This reduction in the attainment gap at BGU can also be seen for the broader Q3-Q5 and Q1+Q2 groups. In 2017-18, the BGU attainment gap was -2.2%, with an attainment rate for Q3-Q5 of 71.0% and 73.2% for Q1+Q2.

The IMD data for 2017-18 shows that 62.9% of BGU's Q1 students compared to 76.2% for Q5 students achieved an upper-degree. Over the 5 year period the IMD Q5:Q1 attainment gap has decreased from 18.8% to 13.3% at BGU whilst the sector's gap has changed from 18.1% to 18%. For the combined Q1+Q2 the gap with Q3-Q5 has increased from 5.6% to 11% (the sector's gap has stayed stable at about 12.1%).

## Progression to employment or further study

The overall progression rate at BGU was 72.5% in 2016-17 for all undergraduates and 73.8% for students on the Foundation Degree programmes. The progression rate for POLAR4 Q5 students has over the last five years fluctuated between 80.0% (2012-13) and 67.4% (2016-17). Over the same period, the progression rate for POLAR4 Q1 has increased, from 55.5% to 65.9%. The resultant gap has fluctuated from 24.5% in 2012-13 to 0.0% in 2014-15, and in 2016-17 it was 1.6%. In contrast, the sector gap has declined more consistently from 7.1% to 6% but it is not as narrow as that at BGU.

Comparisons of the broader Q3-Q5 and Q1+Q2 groups show the BGU progression gap in 2016-17 at 0.5% whilst the sector was at 3.2%.

The IMD data for 2016-17 shows that the progression rate for BGU's Q1 students was 64.2% compared to 73.3% for Q5 students achieved an upper-degree. Over the 5 year period the IMD Q5:Q1 progression gap has increased from 6.6% to 9.1% at BGU whilst the sector's gap has decreased from 6.7% to 5.2%. For the combined Q1+Q2 the gap with Q3-Q5 has decreased from 6.9% to 6.5% (the sector's gap has decreased from 6.7% to 4.9%).

All the progression 'gaps' for BGU were found not to be statistically significant.

## PGCE students

The proportion of PGCE students from low participation areas is similar to the undergraduate profile with 20.7% recruited from POLAR4 Q1 in 2017-18 compared to 10.5% from Q5. Retention data show a small and variable difference between Q1 and Q5, 88.6% and 91.3% respectively, compared to 93.2% overall. Award completion data show comparable completion rates for Q1 and Q5 students with some modest fluctuation in the Q5:Q1 gap between years (-2.6% in 2017-18, +3.1% in 2016-17 and -5.3% in 2015-16).

## 1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

### Access

In spite of its widening participation mission, BGU continues to recruit only a small proportion of BAME students with an undergraduate intake 'high' of only 31 students (4%) in 2015-16, and a 'low' of 10 (1.4%) in 2017-18. Whilst the small numbers and the year to year variation mean the change over the last 5 years from 18 to 10 students has not been statistically significant the

declining trend needs to be addressed. In contrast, across the sector the proportion of all undergraduate BAME students recruited increased from 26% to 31% – significantly more than the national BAME population (16%). However, BGU mainly recruits its undergraduate students from Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire (excluding Nottingham) and the BAME population in these counties/municipal areas was reported as 3.5% in the 2011 Census.

The disaggregated group data shows very small student numbers and entry cohort proportions for all four main groups (Asian 0.3%, Black 0.6%, Mixed 0.4% and Other 0.1%). The proportion of Black students in the entry cohort at BGU has not changed over the period from 2013-14 to 2017-18 (the proportion of the Black population of Lincolnshire has been 0.4%) and nor has Other (the Lincolnshire population proportion was 0.2%). In comparison the proportion of Asian students has declined from 1.0% to 0.3% and for Mixed ethnic students from 1.1% to 0.4% over the same period (the Lincolnshire Asian and Mixed ethnic population proportions were 1.0% and 0.9% respectively). Whilst the trends over the last 5 years are not statistically significant trends they do indicate that BGU need to improve its recruitment of BAME students generally and more specifically Asian and Mixed ethnic groups.

### Success - Continuation

The continuation rate for White students at BGU has fluctuated between 92.2% and 94.1% over the last five years. The continuation rate for BAME students is comparable (between 89.5% and 94.4%) with small gaps from year to year (-2.2% in 2013-14 and 4.6% in 2016-17).

### Success – Attainment

The attainment rate for White students has fluctuated between 61.0% and 70.0% over the last five years whilst for BAME students this has ranged from 38.9% to 66.7%. The BGU attainment gap was 8.4% in 2017-18 (compared to 13.2% for the sector) but has been as high as 31.1% (2015-16) and as low as 1.3% (2014-15). The small absolute numbers account for the high annual variability and differences are not statistically significant.

### Progression to employment or further study

With a low response to the DLHE survey amongst BAME students coupled with small graduating cohorts, comparative data about progression are limited in their usefulness. Over the last five years the progression rate for White students has improved from 68.7% in 2012-13 to 72.2% in 2016-17. In comparison only two years are reportable for BAME students; 2014-15 71% and 2016-17 90.9%, resulting in BAME student progression being better than that for White students.

### PGCE students

The proportion of BAME students on the PGCE programmes in 2017-18 was 3.3%, twice the rate on undergraduate programmes and comparable with the BAME population for the main recruitment area, but still with low absolute numbers – 11, 13 and 11 students recruited in the last three years.

The gap in retention between BAME and White students has varied between -2.4% in 2015-16 and 2.7% in 2017-18. The award completion gap also shows variation, 10.7% in 2015-16, -0.5% in 2016-17 and 16.9% in 2017-18.

## 1.3 Mature students

### Access

The proportion of mature undergraduate students (i.e. over 21 years old) has increased from 42% to 44% over the last five years. This increase is in line with the sector which also increased by 3% over the same period, but was still only 28% in 2017-18.

The University's Foundation Degree (FdA) programmes ('other degrees') have been most impactful for attracting mature learners. In 2017-18 the proportion of mature students enrolling on the FdAs was 82%, significantly better than the sector average (62%).

### Success – Continuation

Continuation across all age groups is strong, better than sector, and has improved during the last five years. Over that time the 'gap' between the two groups has always been negative with continuation higher for mature than young, ranging from -2.7% in 2014-15 and -1.1% in 2016-17.

### Success – Attainment

During the last five years, the attainment rate for students aged under 21 has increased from 60.9% to 72.2% and for mature learners it has increased from 59.2% to 62.9%. The resultant gap has fluctuated greatly over the same period from -7.1% (2014-15) to 15.1% (2016-17), and in 2017-18 it was 9.4% (comparable to the sector gap of 10.3%).

### Progression to employment or further study

The BGU progression data for students aged under 21 have increased since 2012-13 from 65.4% to 76.5%, yet there has been a decrease for 'mature' learners from 73.3% to 66.7%. Though not statistically significant, the resultant gap has increased from -7.8% to 9.8%, compared to the sector's gap which has changed from -7.3% to -3.4%.

The progression of FdA programme students at BGU (73.8%) is better than for the overall cohort in 2016-17 and reflects many progressing to study honours awards at the University. The progression rate for mature students on FdA programmes was 69.8%, much less than for young students (88.2%).

### PGCE students

The categorisation of mature for PGCE is different (over 25) and the proportion on the PGCE programmes at BGU was 37.6% – comparable to the previous two years (42.4% in 2016-17, 39.3% in 2015-16) and to the undergraduate figure of 44% for 2017-18.

Retention is similar for mature and young students – slightly better for mature students in 2015-16 and 2017-18 (-0.8% and -2.0% gap respectively) and slightly worse in 2016-17 (5.6% gap).

Award completion has been better for young students than for mature students, but there are signs of improvement from 78.5% to 87.5% over the last three years and the gap has declined from 6.4% to 2.1% in 2017-18.

## 1.4 Disabled students

### Access

The proportion of undergraduate students with a 'known disability' at BGU has increased from 17% to 22%. These figures are both greater than, and have increased faster than, the sector average (12% to 15%).

The overall proportion of students with a known disability has been greater for students on BGU's 'first degrees' than 'other degrees', 24% and 13% respectively in 2017-18. Indeed, the Foundation Degree programmes' profile is slightly below the sector average of 14%.

Since 2012-13 there have been fewer students declaring a 'cognitive and learning' disability and the proportion has also decreased. Conversely, there are more students, and a greater proportion, declaring 'multiple impairment' and 'mental health'. In 2017/18, 52% of students declaring 'multiple impairment' also had a 'cognitive and learning' condition.

### Success – Continuation

The continuation rates for students declaring or not declaring a disability are both strong and better than the sector. Over the last five years, for students with no known disability, continuation has risen from 92.6% to 94.4%, and from 91.0% to 92.5% for those declaring a disability. Over that time the 'gap' fluctuated from -1.2% in 2014-15 to 2.0% in 2016-17, but was never statistically significant.

### Success – Attainment

Over the last five years the attainment rate for students with no known disability has increased from 62.6% to 70.0%, and for students declaring a disability it has also increased, from 51.4% to 68.4%. The resultant gap has decreased from 11.2% to 1.6% (although it has been higher at 12.1% in 2015-16) and none of these gaps are statistically significant. The sector's gap has also decreased from 3.4% to 2.8% in 2017-18.

Differentiating disability type presents the challenges of small numbers and greater inter-annual variance. However, since 2012-13 students with 'multiple impairments' and with 'sensory, medical and physical disability' show consistently lower attainment. Attainment has increased for students declaring 'cognitive and learning' (to 70.6%) and 'mental health' disability (74.4%).

### Progression to employment or further study

Progression for students with no known disability has increased from 69.7% to 75.3% over the data period. Yet for students declaring a disability, progression decreased from 64.6% to 65.2% resulting in the gap increasing from 5.1% to 10.1%. The progression 'gaps' for BGU were not statistically significant but were greater than the sector's gap (1.1% to 1.8%).

### PGCE students

The proportion of PGCE students with a known disability has risen slightly over the last three years from 18.4% in 2015-16 to 22.1% in 2017-18.

Retention rates are very similar for students with and without a known disability. In 2015-16 and 2016-17 retention was slightly better for students with a known disability (gaps of -1.7% and -1.9% respectively) whilst in 2017-18 the gap was 1.6% worse for students with a disability, but retention was still 92% - the highest in three years.

For award completion, the gap has grown over the last three years for students with a known disability from -0.7% in 2015-16 to 7.9% in 2017-18.

## 1.5 Care leavers

The University has recruited a small number of care leavers (16 in total over the last 5 years) but continues to provide support originally developed for the Buttle UK Quality Mark, which includes assistance throughout the admissions phase, and with securing 365 day accommodation. Information is provided via the Propel website for use by Local Authority Leaving Care Services.

In 2017-18 the proportion of BGU student's disclosing themselves as care-leavers was 0.4% which is comparable to the 0.32% average proportion of English care leavers studying in UK universities (data provided by the charity 'Become').

The most recent data show that over the last five years 12.5% of the care leaver students attending BGU withdrew before completing their programmes of study, 68.8% have graduated (out of the 87.5% that should have completed by 2017-2018) and the remaining 18.8% are continuing their studies. 56.3% of the students that have graduated were on an honours first degree (12.5% were on Foundation Degrees) and 45% of them attained an upper-degree classification. Whilst BGU is satisfied that the data indicate a positive pattern of student success for degree completion, BGU does recognise it needs to ensure that care leavers are supported to achieve their highest possible attainment. A review of the DLHE progression data for care leavers who graduated in academic years 2014 to 2017 showed that of those that responded to the survey (25%), all were in further higher level study.

## 1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

Since 2013-14 the proportion of the undergraduate entry cohort identified with at least one of the under-represented learner groups has increased from 58.4% to 64.4% in 2017-18. The number of students at BGU identifying with multiple characteristics (two or more under-represented groups) increased over the same period from 15.5% to 18.2%.

Set in the BGU context of a portfolio that recruits disproportionately more women than men (16.5% in 2017-18), the main intersection of potential of disadvantage is males from low participation areas. However, the data shows that males from POLAR4 Q1 do not exhibit statistically significant greater differential performance gaps (2017-18):

- Access – there was a greater proportion of males recruited from POLAR Q1 (26%) than the overall cohort population (22.3%) and the ratio of Q5 males to Q1 males was 0.5:1 which is comparable to the overall cohort (0.3:1);
- Continuation – POLAR Q1 male continuation rates (92.3% 2016-17) were comparable to female Q1 rates (95.1% 2016-17) and the 'gap' has oscillated both ways over the last five years. In 2016-17, the continuation rate for male Q1 students was better than for male Q5 students (90.0%);
- Attainment - in 2017-18, attainment rates for males (all ages) was 70.0% for Q1 compared to 50% for Q5 and contrasts with 67.8% for females in Q1. The broader Q1+Q2 group progression rate for males was 67.6% (females 67.1%) and 60.5% for male Q3-Q5;
- Progression - in 2016-17, progression rates for males was 86% for Q1 compared to 58% for Q5 and contrasts with 62% for females in Q1. The broader Q1+Q2 group progression rate for males was 80% (females 71.2%) and 70% for male Q3-Q5.

## 1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

### Student carers

A support package for student carers has been in place at BGU since 2017-18. The number of students disclosing carer status is very low, and meaningful analysis of performance data is difficult. The University offers financial support to student carers, as well as a range of in-course adjustments to help facilitate engagement with study. Recipients of support have been successful in reaching the final year of study and our aim is to encourage disclosure so that the maximum number of students can benefit.

## Estranged students

The number of estranged students disclosing their status to BGU is also very low. BGU signed-up to the Stand Alone Pledge in 2017/18 and support is available with finance, accommodation, mental health and outreach. Estranged students currently enrolled with BGU have made successful progress to date.

## Children from military families

The University is committed to the Armed Forces Covenant and this group has been identified as one for BGU to develop further interventions over the period of the APP. Preliminary work is underway regarding coordination of a Service Children's Progression Alliance for Lincolnshire.

## 2. Strategic aims and objectives

### 2.1 Target groups

The specific priority target groups identified for the University are represented by the shaded cells in the table below:

	<b>POLAR4 Q1 (+ Q2)</b>	<b>IMD Q1+2</b>	<b>BAME</b>	<b>Mature</b>	<b>Known Disability</b>	<b>Care Leavers</b>
<b>Access - Enrolment</b>	Q1> 20% Q1+2>45%	<b>UG</b>	<b>UG</b>	>35%	>20%	<b>UG</b>
<b>Continuation</b>	>93% with no statistically significant 'gaps'					
<b>Attainment</b>	No statistically significant 'gaps'	<b>UG</b>	<b>UG PGCE</b>	<b>UG</b>	<b>UG PGCE</b>	<b>UG</b>
<b>Progression</b>	No statistically significant 'gaps'	<b>UG</b>	No statistically significant 'gaps'	<b>UG</b>	<b>UG</b>	<b>UG</b>

- **Outreach and enrolment (Access):**

- In previous Access Plans the **BAME undergraduate enrolment** target was 3.5% and whilst this was achieved in 2015-16 (4.0%), the figure fell to 1.4% in 2017-18.
- IMD data show that BGU recruited a lower proportion of combined **Q1+Q2** than the sector average in 2017-18.

- **Attainment (Success):**

- The attainment gap for **BAME students** (8.8% in 2017-18) will be an improvement target as the number of BAME undergraduate students grows. For **PGCE students** the gap between students completing their award needs to be reduced from 16.9% in 2017-18.
- Most recently, the attainment gap for **mature undergraduate students** was 9.4%.

- For **students with a known disability**, the gap for **undergraduate students** was 12.1% in 2015-16 and 9.3% in 2016-17 before falling to 1.6% in 2017-18, and for **PGCE students** in 2017-18 the gap was 7.9%.
- Most recently (2017-18), the attainment gap for **IMD Q1** was 13.3%.
- **Progression:**
  - For **mature undergraduate students** the gap was 9.8% in 2016-17.
  - For **Undergraduate students with a known disability** the gap was 10.1% in 2016-17.
  - Most recently (2016-17), the progression gap for **IMD Q1** was 9.1%
- **Care leavers:** BGU recruits a very small number of care leavers and the ambition is to ensure that care leavers do engage successfully with HE at the University and they are supported to maximise continuation, attainment and progression.

In the table above, the non-shaded cells are not considered to be specific priority action group areas. Instead they represent 'business as usual' activity:

- With 22% of undergraduate entry cohort from POLAR4 Q1, BGU's performance is twice the sector average and 3 times greater than students from Q5. The University expects to recruit 20% of undergraduates from POLAR4 Q1 through usual outreach and recruitment activity.
- Mature students currently compose 44% of BGU's undergraduate entry cohort (15% better than the sector). The University would normally expect at least 35% of its overall cohort to be mature learners and this will be achieved through on-going recruitment activity.
- Over a fifth of the undergraduate student cohort have a declared known disability (22% at PGCE), again greater than the sector average. BGU would normally expect at least 20% of its overall UG cohort to have a declared disability achieved through business as usual recruitment activity.
- Over the last five years the continuation rates for undergraduate students after the first year of study have been consistently strong, fluctuating between 92% and 97% and in 2017-18 PGCE retention was 93%. This reflects the intensive and supportive tutoring provided to all learners. The continuation 'gap' for undergraduate cohorts between:
  - POLAR Q5 and Q1 has reduced to only 0.1% and is not statistically significant (Q3-5 vs Q1+Q2 is even smaller 1.2%);
  - White and BAME students has fluctuated from -2.2% (2013-14) to 0.0% in 2015-16 and 4.6% in 2016-17 due to the small absolute numbers, being both positive and negative and not statistically significant;
  - Young and mature students has fluctuated but has always been negative (mature continuation rates are better than young continuation rates) and, most recently, it is at 1.1% (not statistically significant);
  - students without and students with a known disability has fluctuated from between -1.6% and 2.0% with the gaps not statistically significant;
- For BGU high continuation rates will always be a key target to maintain (previous access plan targets have been 90+% for POLAR4 Q1 students, 100% for BAME students and 94% for students with a known disability) and, as an on-going target, BGU will aim to maintain a 93% continuation rate with no statistically significant gaps for under-represented learner groups. Whilst not identified as a specific priority area in this plan, the tutoring and support interventions which

will be deployed to enhance attainment and progression for specific learner groups will assist in maintaining our strong continuation performance.

- Attainment for POLAR4 Q5 compared to Q1 for young is only at 0.1% and for Q3-Q5 vs Q1+Q2 at -2.2%. Progression data shows a small gap of 1.6% for Q5 vs Q1 and a smaller gap of 0.5% for Q3-Q5 vs Q1+Q2. Whilst these gaps are not statistically significant they are smaller than the sector average. Whilst not identified as a specific priority area in this plan, the tutoring and support interventions which will be deployed to enhance attainment and progression for other specific learner groups will assist in ensuring these metrics are maintained.

## 2.2 Aims and objectives

- I. **Access – Recruitment BAME:** To increase the proportion of BAME students recruited onto BGU undergraduate programmes.

The objective will be to achieve sustained BAME student recruitment at 3.5% of the undergraduate cohort entry by 2024-25 based on a baseline of 1.4% in 2017-18.

This five-year target would see BGU recruiting BAME students in proportion with the BAME population from its main areas of recruitment, but it is likely to be the most challenging of its Access and Participation Plan targets. Achieving this target will require, amongst other things, a comprehensive review of inclusivity within the learning and teaching strategies, systematic analysis of the attractiveness of the portfolio, as well as an active marketing and recruitment campaign to encourage more BAME students (and specifically Asian and Mixed ethnic students) to consider studying at BGU in an increasingly competitive HE landscape.

The full five years of this plan period will be needed to achieve this target because actual increases in BAME applications and enrolments might not manifest themselves until year three of the period.

- II. **Access – Recruitment IMD:** To increase the proportion of IMD combined Q1+Q2 students recruited onto BGU undergraduate programmes.

The objective is to achieve an increase in the current proportion of students from IMD Q1+Q2 backgrounds from a combined figure of 37% (2017-18) to a sustained 40% by 2024-25.

The full five years of this plan period will be needed to deliver this target due to the anticipated lag effect of outreach, promotion and recruitment cycle to attract students onto programmes.

- III. **Success – Attainment BAME:** To improve degree attainment for BAME students; thus reducing and minimising the percentage difference gap in degree attainment between BAME and White students on both undergraduate and PGCE programmes.

The objective will be to reduce the attainment gap to minimal / not statistically significant levels of difference by 2024-25:

- a. For undergraduate students this means reducing the gap in attainment in upper-degree classes from the current 8.8% (2017-18 baseline) to 2% or less.
- b. For PGCE students this means reducing the gap in degree completion from the current 16.9% (2017-18 baseline) to 2% or less.

- IV. **Success – Attainment Mature:** To improve degree attainment for mature students; thus reducing and minimising the percentage difference gap in degree attainment between mature and young students on undergraduate programmes.

The objective will be to reduce the attainment gap from the current 9.4% (2017-18 baseline) to minimal (less than 2%) / not statistically significant levels of difference by 2024-25.

- V. **Success – Attainment Known Disability:** To improve degree attainment for students with a known disability; thus reducing and minimising the percentage difference gap in degree attainment between students with and without a known disability on both undergraduate and PGCE programmes.

The objective will be to reduce the attainment gap to minimal / not statistically significant levels of difference by 2024-25:

- a. For undergraduate students this means eliminating the attainment gap (0%) – recent data show fluctuations between from 9.3% in 2016-17 to 1.6% in 2017-18 (baseline).
- b. For PGCE students this means reducing the gap in degree completion from the current 7.9% (2017-18 baseline) to 0%.

- VI. **Success – Attainment IMD Q1:** To improve degree attainment for IMD Q1 students; thus reducing and minimising the percentage difference gap in degree attainment between IMD Q1 and Q5 students on undergraduate programmes.

The objective will be to reduce the attainment gap from the current 13.3% (2017-18 baseline) to minimal (less than 2%) / not statistically significant levels of difference by 2024-25.

- VII. **Progression Mature:** To improve progression rates for mature students; thus reducing and minimising the percentage difference gap in progression rates between mature and young students on undergraduate programmes.

The objective will be to reduce the progression gap from the current 9.8% (2016-17 baseline) to 5% by 2024-25 \*.

- VIII. **Progression Known Disability:** To improve progression rates for students with a known disability; thus reducing and minimising the percentage difference gap in degree attainment between students with and without a known disability on undergraduate programmes.

The objective will be to reduce the progression gap from the current 10.1% (2016-17 baseline) to 5% by 2024-25 \*.

[\* For progression aims VI – VIII, the ambition is to halve the current baseline figure over the next five years and then beyond 2024-25 to have no statistical significant difference.]

- IX. **Progression IMD Q1:** To improve progression rates for IMD Q1 students; thus reducing and minimising the percentage difference gap in progression rates between IMD Q1 and Q5 students on undergraduate programmes.

The objective will be to reduce the progression gap from the current 9.1% (2016-17 baseline) to 5% by 2024-25 \*.

- X. **Care Leavers:** BGU aims to improve its current recruitment (at least 0.4% of entrants to 0.9% by 2024-25) and retention rates for care leavers. Whilst the emphasis within the plan is on access for care leavers, success and progression will be monitored so that 'satisfactory' outcomes are maximised. This means continuation and attainment rates, averaged across the 5 year period of the plan (the cohort numbers are so small it is not possible to identify statistically significant continuation and attainment gaps for each year) will be comparable to the student body as a whole.

BGU will examine the first set of Graduate Outcomes data for its July 2018 graduates when it becomes available and review whether it is necessary to conduct its own additional alumni survey to understand the progression outcomes of its care-leaver students.

### 3. Strategic measures

#### 3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

##### Overview and alignment with other strategies

As a widening-participation HEI (see Introduction on page 1), access and participation at BGU is not 'a project with a minority of our learners'. Rather, it underpins and informs all that we do across the whole University. The timing of the OfS's new approach to Access and Participation Planning has coincided with the launch of a new University Strategy; the two are closely and deliberately aligned. During the last six months through its Access and Participation Working Group (previously the Widening Participation Group) BGU has 'taken stock' and evaluated performance, examined the coherence of interventions and their effectiveness throughout the student lifecycle / journey to enhance effective impact. BGU has drawn upon the principles of institutional wide change outlined in the AdvanceHE 'What works? Student retention and success' reports (Phase 1: 'Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change' and Phase 2: 'Supporting student success: strategies for institutional change').

During 2019-20, prior to the period of the APP, BGU will put in place the foundations for the delivery of the APP through 2020 to 2025. This will include:

- Conducting research to understand and critically develop its 'programmes' of strategic measures / interventions, adopting best practice from elsewhere and adapting it to the BGU context. Included in this will be a shared understanding and embedding of the 'Theory of Change Model' to each of the intervention threads as well as the APP overall.
- Focusing on understanding and addressing the differential performance of students both collectively from under-represented learner groups but also as individuals. Through involvement in both Subject-level TEF Pilot projects, BGU has already introduced to subject leaders the concept of cohort performance 'split metrics' and 'positive outcomes for all'.
- Improving the gathering of evidence and more consistent use of business analytics to understand the impact of initiatives, to adjust approaches in a timely manner and to share lessons learnt internally and externally. A new framework of impact assessment has already been introduced and will be adopted consistently for this plan.
- Understanding the learning challenges of all students to facilitate individual effective support and to provide everyone the opportunity to maximise their potential. The LiNCHigher project (National Collaborative Outreach Programme) has already indicated that students from under-represented learner groups would prefer not to be identified and defined by those 'labels' and then treated 'specially'.
- Enhancing personal tutoring through the adoption of learner engagement analytics which will be used with all students ensuring that any individuals demonstrating lower engagement, (whether from under-represented groups or not) are supported.

The strategic enhancement measures (below) have been developed holistically with reference to both the student lifecycle / journey and specific under-represented groups. Most will have positive impacts across the whole learner population by changing how students are supported by the whole University. They recognise the need for background, enabling strategies to be put in place to ensure the effective delivery of more direct interventions. For example, staff development on

equality and diversity will act as a precursor to facilitate review of student experiences and inclusivity of the curriculum, and data dashboards will enable academic staff and professional service support teams to interrogate performance and monitor impact.

To support delivery of the new University Strategy 2019-25, BGU is currently preparing its enabling strategies (e.g. Learning and Teaching, Research and Knowledge Exchange, Partnerships, Portfolio Development) and their implementation plans.

A key strategic driver is BGU's **Equality and Diversity Strategy**. Its equality objectives are to:

- Bring the gender balance within the BGU student body in line with the national population;
- Increase the ethnic diversity for staff and students;
- Narrow the gap in relation to outcomes between disabled and non-disabled students.

These objectives align broadly with the priority groups outlined earlier in this plan. Whilst rebalancing the gender profile of the student body is not a specific priority of this APP plan, some of the measures outlined below will contribute to this e.g. continued evolution of the subject portfolio.

At a strategic level, the APP is an agenda item at People and Inclusion Committee which has oversight of BGU's institutional response for all protected characteristics. Whilst this plan focuses on OfS defined groups, many of the activities are also of benefit to additional protected characteristics. The University's Codes of Practice are designed with an inclusive approach, and intersectionality between protected characteristics is addressed through these codes.

The policy framework relating to safeguarding measures for students in vulnerable groups has also been reviewed in respect of the Prevent Duty. Specific considerations have been made for students in the LGBT+ community and via the Suicide Safer Campus initiative. Related issues have been accounted for within a review of support for study/fitness to study procedures. Further development is underway in respect of sexual violence and hate crime.

### Strategic measures

To assist in understanding and demonstrating the interconnected / holistic approach of the new APP, the strategic measures below have been cross-referenced to those areas of the University which will be involved in their delivery (the areas are noted in parentheses).

#### *A. Inclusive University culture (Aims I. – X.)*

To review and refresh the inclusive environment of the University to welcome, support and enable all students to achieve positive outcomes. This will be achieved by embarking on a two year programme (2019-2021) of:

- **Equality and diversity training** and staff development including unconscious bias training for managers, leaders, academics and professional support services. [Equality and Diversity / Staff Recruitment and Development strategies; all departments and Students' Union]
- Review and enhance the **inclusiveness of the curriculum and learning, teaching and assessment approaches**. [Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy; all subject teams, professional support services and Students' Union]

BGU's current student population profile and outcomes data indicates under-representation of BAME students. In the absence of any opportunity to seek routine engagement and feedback from such groups, the above measures are intended as a proxy to achieve an environment in which positive outcomes can be achieved for all. Implementation of these measures will be heavily informed by best practice from within the sector and specifically both the UUK / NUS joint report

(2019) on 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Student Attainment at UK Universities: #ClosingTheGap' and the OfS's 2019 report '*Understanding and overcoming the challenges of targeting students from under-represented and disadvantaged ethnic backgrounds*'.

### *B. Collaborative Outreach with LiNCHigher (Aims I. & II.)*

A key strategic measure is working collaboratively through LiNCHigher – the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) for Lincolnshire, for which BGU is the lead organisation and hosts the project team on its campus.

In addition to BGU there are 11 consortium partners (Boston College, Grantham College, Grimsby Institute, Lincoln College, Lincolnshire County Council, Lincoln UTC, Riseholme College, New College Stamford and University of Lincoln). BGU will use LiNCHigher's networks, to support and deliver outreach interventions that local young people, parents and schools say have the greatest impact on engagement with HE through an integrated approach to all under-represented groups in HE rather than a differentiated model of delivery to separate groups.

With the creation of the NCOP hub, other partners (e.g., Careers Enterprise Company, Local Authority, employers, voluntary sector) will enable BGU to create access for the hardest to reach coastal, rural and urban communities. Specific targeted collaboration that is on-going includes:

- Marginal gains intensive support with white working class students,
- Looked-After Children's core offer,
- Service Families Hub and creative forces activities,
- The Traveller Initiative,
- Parents fora and workshops, targeting interventions in our coastal and rural communities,
- Embedding the Learner voice within evaluations of what works,
- Role model development to grow the ambassador support network reflecting diverse local communities,
- Translation service and mentors, particularly linked to the parenting strategy.

BGU has a long-established and successful track record in delivering outreach, complementary to the work of LiNCHigher. As lead institution for LiNCHigher, BGU has demonstrated effective management of the project thus far in terms of achievement of positive outcomes, and is committed to establishing a meaningful legacy.

### *C. Programme Portfolio Developments (Aims I. & II.)*

To review and develop the portfolio to attract learners who may not have previously considered studying on HE programmes at BGU, including:

- From 2019-20, recruitment to a new **Foundation Year** extended pathway programme to attract mature students returning to education and needing to enhance their preparation for HE study. This provides integrated progression onto honours programmes offering an alternative to Foundation Degree pathways which cater for work-based learners. [BGU's Centre for Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT) / Marketing & Recruitment / subject teams / Student Advice]
- From 2022-23, develop and recruit to an extended and re-launched subject area of **Business, Management and Leadership** to attract new learners to BGU, including BAME

students, mature students, work-based learners and apprentices. [Portfolio Management Group / Marketing & Recruitment / subject teams]

BGU has undertaken competitor analysis within the local region which indicates development of key subjects within our portfolio is likely to have a positive impact on the recruitment of students from target groups, particularly BAME students. Sector level intelligence (UCAS, Cathedrals Group) has indicated development of the Foundation Year is likely to yield success in encouraging participation from students who may not otherwise enter higher education.

#### *D. Working with Educational Partners (Aims I. & II.)*

Further develop existing partnerships with HEIs / HE in FE Educational Providers, or establish new ones to extend the geographical access to BGU programmes for learners who would not normally be able to attend BGU's Lincoln campus:

- To continue to work with local FE Colleges to extend collaborative programmes to engage students from low-participation / low IMD areas. [Educational Partnership Strategy]
- To develop (by 2020-21) an educational partnership with a new provider in a city with a larger BAME recruitment population to collaboratively facilitate access to BGU programmes and mutually share best-practice in teaching, learning and student support for a more ethnically diverse student body. [Educational Partnership / Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategies]

Local population data (Census 2011) indicates structural challenges in terms of the local area which are challenging to a provider of BGU's size. Forging partnerships with providers whose local population profile reflects BGU's access and participation is viewed as a realistic and credible means of mitigating such challenges. BGU has been approached by prospective partners seeking to work in this way, and opportunities for additional partnerships are encouraged.

#### *E. Recruitment and Community Engagement (Aims I. & II.)*

To refocus recruitment and community engagement so that it is aligned to the under-represented learners and the aims of the APP:

- Implement (from 2019-20) a new **Schools and Colleges Development Plan** to provide outreach and HE engagement activity (including a mentoring offer) for under-represented learners from locations of low-participation / socioeconomic status including Taster Days, First Steps 2 Study, Next Steps 4 Study and Residential Summer Schools. [Marketing & Recruitment, subject teams]
- Revise and implement (from 2019-20) a **contextual offer-making policy** to target under-represented learners. [Marketing & Recruitment, subject teams]
- Extend the geographical reach of **BGU's marketing campaign** to 50+ miles to include and target cities in the East Midlands with more diverse BAME populations and create (from 2019-20) a dedicated **BAME community engagement role** to work with communities in Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and other areas of the East Midlands. [Marketing & Recruitment / Student Support]
- **MOVE Project** - a Big Lottery/Skills Funding Agency co-financed contract to support **adults in the community** (until 2022) targeting unemployed adults with mental health issues. The project uses multi-disciplinary academic expertise and professional support staff for information, advice and guidance, psychometric and coaching expertise; working with agencies in the community such as Jobcentre Plus and the Health Service. [Stakeholder

Engagement Strategy / BGU Careers and Business Engagement team (BG Futures) / subject teams]

- **Teenage Market Project** - provides the opportunity for young people aged 10-29 to develop their enterprise skills and for markets to enable members of the community to engage with University staff who provide information and careers advice and guidance. Markets are being delivered across the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership area including in the coastal region (in the 10% of most deprived neighbourhoods). [Stakeholder Engagement strategy / BG Futures / subject teams]
- **Children's University** - BGU will continue its involvement with the Lincolnshire Children's University to engage in accredited aspiration-raising activity aimed at promoting educational achievement and supporting transition into HE.
- BGU and BGU's Students' Union are two partners working collaboratively with the University of Lincoln (lead institution) on a student-led approach to mental health support for students transitioning from school to university (**OfS Challenge Competition: Achieving a step change in mental health outcomes for all students**).

BGU's competitor analysis has helped inform the above recruitment and engagement measures, likely to have positive effects on increasing participation from target groups currently under-represented at BGU. The MOVE Project and the OfS Challenge Competition project are externally funded projects whose outcomes will be reviewed to determine their impact in attracting under-represented learners.

#### *F. Student Support and Personal Tutoring (Aims III. – VI. / X.)*

To transform personal tutoring to create a proactive individualised student engagement support service:

- BGU will invest in **Learner Engagement Analytics** (from 2019-20) to enable personal tutors / programme leaders and professional support staff to identify students with low-engagement and facilitate proactive early intervention to ensure continuation and maximising student's academic performance. [CELT / subject teams / IT Data team / Data Capability Strategy / Workload Allocation Model]
- Personal Tutoring will be refocused directly on individual student development, goal setting, **learning gain and graduate attribute development**. [CELT / subject teams]
- To provide **integrated sign-posting and referral processes** for students to engage with **BGU's professional support services** including CELT with its Learning Development Tutors and Digital Learning team, Student Advice and Support for students needing well-being and special learning support and Student Administration. [Subject teams / Student Advice and Support / CELT / Student Administration / IT Data team]
- Embedding (from 2019-20) a **mental well-being and resilience framework** into the curriculum following the adoption of well-being as the learning and teaching enhancement theme during 2017-18 and 2018-19. This will be supported by the adoption and rollout of the Association of Managers of Student Services in HE Resilience Building tool-kit for programme design. [CELT / Student Advice / professional support services / Estates / subject teams / Students' Union / Chaplaincy]
- A revised **Welcome Week** transition for all students from 2020-21 including a **mature student 'flying start'** acculturation event to demystify enrolment, alleviate fears of what it means to be a HE student, and explore what HE studying means. There will also be specific

HE in FE to BGU transition events for Foundation Degree students progressing onto honours progression pathways. [CELT / subject teams / Students' Union / professional support services / Student Advice / Education Partnership Strategy]

Retention data and NSS / BGU Satisfaction Survey results indicate strong systems are already in place within BGU to offer support to students. The above measures are key enhancements to respond to changes in student demand (e.g. the increased emphasis on mental health and wellbeing support since 2015) and to provide continuous metrics on engagement to augment proactive personal tutoring to facilitate early interventions. There is increasing evidence that learner engagement analytics integrated into an effective tutoring framework can help student continuation, attainment and well-being.

#### *G. BGU have Graduate Attributes and Employability Development (Aims VII. – IX.)*

A key strategic aim is to develop Graduate Attributes and employability skills within all undergraduate programmes to provide BGU graduates with the confidence to develop their careers / further study post-graduation:

- **Graduate Attributes** – from 2019-20, to further explicitly embed these skills into the curriculum, integrate extracurricular activities, facilitate greater awareness of skills development and integrate the framework into the PDP / personal tutorial system. Recognition will be given to those developing Graduate Attributes via caring responsibilities. [Subject teams / CELT / BG Futures / Students' Union / professional support services]
- The **BGU Graduate Attributes Award** is being introduced (fully from 2020-21) to build on the success of the BGU Employability Award and recognise the progress of individual students both in terms of engagement with employability skills embedded within their programme and with extra-curricular opportunities undertaken to enhance their skill profile. [Subject teams / CELT / BG Futures / Students' Union / professional support services]
- BG Futures will deliver **targeted support and careers / Graduate Attribute events integrated into the subject curriculum** for all programmes, based upon best-practice developed internally and externally. To create and embed the concept of an '**outduction**' for all undergraduate subject areas; all support activity will be inclusive and tailored for under-represented learners. [BG Futures / Student Advice / subject teams / CELT]
- Review the effectiveness and **enhance the work placement offer / protocols for students with a declared disability** with support from BG Futures and Student Advice to create a positive springboard for progression into employment. [BG Futures / Student Advice / Placement Office]
- BG Futures are working in partnership with the University of Lincoln on the **OfS-funded Challenge Competition 'Industrial strategy and skills: support for local students and graduates' project (2019-2021)**. The Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) economy has a low skilled, low wage economy, ranked 13<sup>th</sup> out of 39 in relation to overall deprivation and the project will offer 'real world' industry / business challenges. It will target GLLEP students from subject disciplines who struggle to find graduate level employment in the locality.

BGU has historically had high employability rates for its student's given its teacher training focused portfolio. As BGU has diversified its portfolio it has continued to value the importance of a practitioner focused and informed curriculum which values the development of graduate attributes, placement experience and employability skills. Student engagement with these activities in promoting progression is accepted across the sector. BGU's focus will be on ensuring and

enhancing that engagement experience for all students by embedding activities within the curriculum and integrating academic and professional support service delivery of graduate attribute development.

#### *H. Care Leavers holistic support (Aim X.)*

To enhance the promotion of the package of support available for care leavers to access HE specifically the support provided by BGU. BGU will sign-up to the **Care Leaver Covenant** (from 2019-20) and actively develop employment and community-based pathways to encourage participation of care leavers on campus. Develop liaison via the Care Leaver Covenant and links with the Virtual School Heads across the local region; promote in-course vocational placements, campus-based employment and associated advice and guidance; mapping on-campus community-focused activities for dissemination to care leaver partnership organisations. [Student Advice and Support / local schools / Care Leaver Covenant]

#### *I. Targeting financial support (Aims I. – X.)*

To provide adequate levels of financial support to reduce financial barriers for under-represented groups accessing HE at BGU and support them in their studies to realise their potential.

- BGU's **bursary scheme** has traditionally targeted students from low incomes, with additional funding available for students from specific groups (mature, POLAR4 Q1, student parents, etc.). BGU has revised the scheme to make the groups highlighted within this plan the starting point for financial support, maintaining a relatively high low income threshold (£30,000) to ensure the additional support is directed where it is most needed. The introduction of a more highly targeted scheme enables higher bursaries to be awarded as well as helping simplify communication of the scheme to students.
- Undergraduate students paying tuition fees of at least £6,165 per year with household incomes of £30,000 or less who are in the following groups are eligible for a non-repayable bursary for each year of study as follows:

BGU has used the OfS Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit to monitor outcomes for students in receipt of additional financial support. Continued use of this methodology will be critical for BGU to monitor any changes in outcomes for students as it moves to implement the revised financial support model set out in this plan.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Hons Award Annual Amount</b>	<b>FdA Award Annual Amount</b>
Mature (over 21 on entry)	£800.00	£600.00
POLAR Q1 (young entrant, low participation neighbourhood)	£800.00	£600.00
Student parent	£1000.00	£750.00
Student carer	£1000.00	£750.00
Estranged students (as assessed by funding body)	£1000.00	£750.00
Care Leaver	£3,600.00	£3,600.00

- The bursary is differentiated for honours and foundation degree programmes with the latter receiving 75% of the amount reflecting the lower tuition fee for their programmes and, as a foundation degree student, they would be in employment.
- Students identifying with more than one group will only receive the bursary for the group with the higher amount.
- Additional support will be available for students from a household income of £25,000 or less via a **discretionary support fund** which will respond to individual cases of unforeseen hardship.
- BGU has evaluated its financial support package using the OfS Financial Support Evaluation toolkit. Results showed no differential outcomes for those in receipt of financial support, which is interpreted as evidence that the scheme reduces financial barriers to student success and progression. BGU will continue to use this tool to monitor the scheme during the period covered by this plan.

### 3.2 Student consultation

The student body at BGU has been fully involved in the development of all aspects of this 2020-25 APP. The range of engagement activities has included:

- Representation at the Widening Participation Group and the APP Working Group by the Students' Union Vice-President (Education), and Students' Union Welfare Officer addressing performance data of under-represented learner groups, identification of intervention measures and the student engagement activities.
- The 2019 spring term Student Forum introduced access and participation and was attended by over 25 students representing the range of the student body including under-represented learners. The Forum operated as a focus group to identify potential barriers to transition into HE and positive outcomes for different student groups. The responses covered physical and cultural accessibility, support for students with known disability, for mature students with parental or care support responsibility, for care leavers and BAME students – together, these highlighted the urgency to review the inclusiveness of the academic and broader student experience which is reflected in the first strategic measure (A), to enhance the Inclusive University Culture (see p13).
- The proposed priority areas for the APP, main targets and strategic measures were presented at the Students' Union's Student Council meeting in May 2019 at which there were over 20 student academic subject representatives and student officers (part- and full-time).
- The finalised key aims, targets and strategic measures have been presented and discussed at the key deliberative and advisory committees of the University (including Learning and Teaching Committee, Senior Management Group, Academic Enhancement Committee, Senate and University Council) at which student body opinions were provided by the Students' Union President and/or Vice-President (Education) and/or other student representatives.

Feedback from all these consultations on the APP has been positive and whilst the student representatives were invited to submit contributions to the plan, no further actions were received. This reflects BGU's on-going consultation with the student body on enhancements which has created a series interventions implemented from 2017-18, including: mature student study orientation events, parent-carers group (student organised and student sustained), Student's Creating Projects on Trans-awareness and on the Accessible Campus.

Going forward with the implementation of the APP, the development of specific project interventions and monitoring of the plan's effectiveness, student engagement will be key, including:

- Within BGU's student-voice listening processes – Subject Student-Staff Liaison Meetings (the Students' Union-led Representative Feedback System), the annual BGU Student Satisfaction Survey (and National Student Survey) – the inclusiveness of the student experience will be a key focus and the views of under-represented learners will be, when possible, identified.
- The Student Forum (held once per term) will be a key opportunity to receive feedback on implementation and evolution of strategic measures and interventions to meet the APP aims.
- BGU will also work with the Students' Union and students to focus its successful BGU-funded **Students' Creating Change projects** on delivering collaborative projects with tutors and professional support staff to enhance the student experience for different learner groups at different stages of the student journey to deliver positive outcomes for all. Already a team of academic colleagues have identified the focus of a project working with students to research the student experience of BAME students to provide a baseline for APP enhancement activity from 2020-21 onwards; and the Students' Union (SU) are working collaboratively with CELT to initiate to examine and promote greater diversity amongst the SU's student representatives and officers.
- Collaborative training on equality and diversity and unconscious bias will be provided to part-time and full-time Students' Union officers to contribute to the inclusive culture of the University and facilitate meaningful contributions to the monitoring and development of the APP.

*"I am more than content with the direction BGU is taking with its Action and Participation Plan. There have been more than ample opportunities for students and the Students' Union to have been involved with this process, which has included having SU representation on the Widening Participation Group and the Access and Participation Working Group, garnering student feedback from BGU and BGSU's Student Engagement Forum, and presenting the Access and Participation Plan's targets and strategic aims to BGSU Student Council for student consultation. This has led to a level of student engagement with the Access and Participation Plan that I believe is more than satisfactory at this current time"*

Students' Union Vice-President (Education) 2017-19

### 3.3 Evaluation strategy

BGU has critically reviewed the informed design of intervention programmes using the OfS's 'evaluation self-assessment toolkit'. The toolkit has demonstrated that for all of the sub-headings below, BGU is 'currently emerging or in development for most [intervention / enhancement] programmes'. This reflects:

- Prior to the development of the APP (2020-25) BGU's access plans focused predominantly on the 'outreach / access' expectation for recruiting students from under-represented groups. Consequently, the outreach / access aspect of BGU's interventions has benefited from adopting a more project-based approach as well as working collaboratively with external organisations (e.g. LiNCHigher), resulting in robust evaluation strategies across all its activities.
- In contrast, the 'success' part of the previous access plans focused on overall continuation and attainment, and progression rates were generally monitored as 'business as usual' activity, resulting in less consistent approaches to evaluation of success interventions.
- The self-assessment toolkit recognised this dichotomy with outreach-/ access-related activity, responding 'yes' to most prompts, and 'emerging / in development' was the predominant response for the 'success' activity.

18 months ago BGU developed an 'Evaluation and Impact Framework' (based upon the 'What Works' Framework), to facilitate setting clear objectives, approaches, evidence needs, evaluation and impact learning for enhancement interventions. This framework will provide the basis for engaging with the OfS's Theory of Change and evaluation strategy approach. During 2019-20, all existing and new programme interventions will be assessed using the OfS's evaluation self-assessment toolkit.

### Strategic context

Across the University, widening-participation is recognised and its evaluation is discussed regularly within the Widening Participation Group and deliberative committees. The implementation of the BGU Evaluation and Impact Framework; participation in the Subject-level TEF pilot, with the analysis of split group metrics; Annual Monitoring Reports, requiring reflective commentary on 'positive outcomes for all'; and the Access and Participation Working Group has raised the awareness of evaluation and the need to collect robust data / evidence.

### Programme design

All programmes will be underpinned by clear objectives and informed by literature and best-practice reported from the sector. Within the access area, deliverables and measures of impact are clear, informed by the East Midlands Widening Participation Research and Evaluation Partnership (EMWPREP) data and reports in collaboration with LiNCHigher. Bench-marked data is used whenever possible, including data returns from HESA Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), OfS APP data and TEF metrics. BGU has well-established annual evaluation mechanisms in place for its outreach programmes, and is working in partnership with EMWPREP to further enhance the capture of meaningful data to achieve a holistic overview of the effectiveness of all outreach, and any gaps that might be determinable. For example, BGU is currently pursuing richer data via the EMWPREP end of year report in order to ascertain which elements of our outreach programme are not reaching students in receipt of free school meals.

### Evaluation design

BGU continues to use OfS toolkits and standards of evaluation, for example, in the University's last access plan report, the OfS's Financial Toolkit has been used to show that outcomes for students in receipt of financial support are equivalent to those for students who were not in receipt of financial support. For access activities, Type 1: Narrative Evidence is predominantly used as well as Type 2: Empirical Evidence, for example, pre- and post-activity surveys of Taster Day participants. For success and progression activities, the consistent design of evaluation and selection of evidence is an area for development, but will predominantly draw on narrative and empirical evidence through the development of pilot activities as a precursor for full roll-out. For example, the planned introduction of Learner Engagement Analytics to augment the effectiveness of BGU's personal tutoring will involve: extensive learning from the introduction engagement analytics at other HEI's; metrics to monitor student engagement with personal tutoring and how tutee engagement changes post tutor intervention; changes in overall engagement metrics cross referenced to continuation, attainment and progression metrics; plus questionnaire and focus-group activity to enhance the effective integration of the engagement analytics into the personal tutorial framework for both tutors and tutees.

### Evaluation implementation

All intervention programmes will identify appropriate data to measure outcomes and impacts and, in the access area, the outreach team will work with stakeholders sharing data including EMWPREP, LiNCHigher and local partners in OfS Challenge Competition Projects ('*Industrial Strategy and Skills: support for local students and graduates*' and '*Achieving a step change in*

*mental health outcomes for all students*'). All data are used ethically and within the context of GDPR compliance. Evaluation for specific activities is undertaken, reported and reviewed annually. BGU remains committed to using the OfS Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit in order to determine the effectiveness of the additional financial support delivered via this plan. The results of using the toolkit on an annual basis have shown no significant differences in the outcomes for students in receipt of financial support (positively interpreted to mean that the financial support has helped mitigate against a potential barrier), but have been particularly useful in identifying other factors that could contribute to differential outcomes (e.g. commuting students). The introduction of our new Foundation year programme is accompanied by evaluation to monitor outcomes from its inception to provide the basis for regular review and comparative data as students progress through subsequent years of study.

### Learning to shape improvements

Whilst there are mechanisms for sharing lessons within BGU, such as the annual Learning and Teaching Conference, there does need to be more consistent sharing and use of findings. Similarly, BGU needs to share findings / practice with the sector more systematically, including engaging with the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in HE (TASO-HE). BGU will co-develop external promotion of its APP intervention programme findings in-line with its Research and External Exchange Strategy; and specifically develop a research cluster around supporting under-represented learners in HE. The Access and Participation Working Group will play a lead role in collating evaluation reports and determining next steps in development of activities to ensure their effectiveness.

## 3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The University and University Council (BGU's governing body) will adopt the following key performance metrics for the period up to 2024-25:

- Access – to continue to recruit high proportions of under-represented students including increasing the proportion of BAME undergraduate students to 3.5% of the entry cohort;
- Continuation – to maintain minimal (no statistically significant differences) continuation gaps for under-represented learner groups;
- Attainment – to minimise the attainment gap, to 2% or no statistical significant difference, for all under-represented learner groups;
- Progression – to minimise the progression gap, to 5% or less, for all under-represented learner groups.

Monitoring of the APP will be embedded throughout the University's deliberative committees and managerial groups, reflecting the holistic approach to supporting all students. To this end, the Terms of Reference for all committees and groups will be reviewed and, where necessary, revised to ensure oversight and discussion of appropriate aspects of the APP. The APP metrics, based upon the evaluation strategy indicators, will be integrated into a revised set of KPI's owned by the appropriate committee or management group.

Deliberative committees and team management meetings (e.g. subject team meetings, School Boards, and professional support service team meetings) will review continuous metrics, for example, retention data, engagement data etc. All academic subject teams and professional support service areas produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), related to academic programmes, experience and support in which they comment on 'positive outcomes for all'. The AMRs are reviewed by Academic Enhancement Committee and inform the Deputy Vice-Chancellor's (DVC) Academic Health of the Institution Report, which is presented to, and discussed by, Senate and University Council.

Where monitoring of the key performance metrics indicates performance is not as expected, this will be reviewed at the earliest opportunity to gain understanding of the outcomes and any available evaluation. This process will determine the viability of the activity under scrutiny as to whether it should continue, possibly with revised levels of resource or an additional intervention should be implemented.

At BGU student engagement is central in our approach to institutional enhancement and student involvement in monitoring will be (primarily) through:

- Students' Union officers and student representatives being full members of all the deliberative committees of the University, which will scrutinise the implementation and monitoring of the APP. These include the Widening Participation Group, Learning and Teaching Committee, Academic Enhancement Committee, People and Inclusion Committee, Senate, Senior Management Group and University Council.
- Subject student representatives scrutinising subject AMRs (with their 'positive outcomes for all' section) in subject meetings, School Boards and the specific Students' Union-led Annual Monitoring Review meeting.

A key committee for oversight and monitoring of the APP will be the Access and Participation Committee (APC, previously the Access and Participation Working Group), which is currently a sub-committee of the Learning and Teaching Committee. The distributed model of APP ownership embedded across the University presents a challenge for the APC in coordinating and leading the delivery of the plan. Therefore, BGU will elevate the APC, for the duration of this plan, to be a Senate taskforce group enabling it to report updates, milestones and evaluations directly to Senate. This will facilitate APC connecting to, and working more directly with, for example, Learning and Teaching Committee, Portfolio Management Group, People and Inclusion Committee, School Boards, and Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

The monitoring of the APP will be overseen and led by the Executive Dean for Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement (LTSE) who reports directly to the DVC. As a member of both the Senior Management Group (SMG - all the senior department managers in the University) and the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group (VCEG), the Executive Dean will provide direct reporting and instigation of actions at the senior and executive level.

University Council has been regularly consulted throughout 2018-19 on the APP process itself and the strategic ambition, aims and measures within the plan. This regular reporting will continue at each of the three University Council meetings per year, where updates on milestone delivery will be reported. University Council's Audit Committee will monitor the achievement of the APP KPIs (listed at the start of this section) and their milestones, with audits by Uniac (the University's auditors) to be conducted every two years, starting in September 2019. Audit Committee will, if monitoring indicates it to be necessary, approve any mitigating actions and any related additional expenditure.

In addition, BGU will appoint a 'Link Council Member' for Access and Participation with the specific remit of understanding and challenging this aspect of the University's provision, liaising with the Executive Dean, the chair of the Access and Participation Committee and a Students' Union representative. The Link Council Member will be, along with three other members of Council, the DVC, the Executive Dean, the Registrar, the Students' Union Vice-President (Education) and the Heads of Schools, a member of the Academic Advisory Group (AAG). The AAG has been created to facilitate enhanced consultation between University Council members and University senior and executive leadership on strategic academic issues, including the annual reporting of APP delivery.

## 4. Provision of information to students

Information on tuition fees for the duration of a student's course:

BGU's tuition fees (with appropriate disclaimers) are set out on our website at <http://www.bishopg.ac.uk/student/fees/tuitionfees/>

The website provides the means of keeping prospective students, their parents/carers and their advisers up-to-date with on-going developments in relation to student finance.

Tuition fees information is also provided at Open Day and financial support outreach events aimed at prospective students.

Information on financial support from all sources:

Information on BGU bursaries including the annual amounts available, eligibility criteria and application process can be found on the BGU website at:

<https://www.bishopg.ac.uk/bgu-bursary/>

BGU's Student Advice team provides information about student finance and institutional financial support for prospective and current students. The team promotes a better awareness and understanding of tuition fee and living cost funding (as well as an awareness of loan repayment arrangements) and the development of appropriate strategies to manage their finances.

These include:

- Accurate information about fees, loans, grants, and bursaries;
- Additional information about welfare benefits, tax credits, and other opportunities to maximise income;
- Practical advice from experienced money advisers who provide one-to-one support on effective budgeting and financial capability;
- Money management workshops for prospective and current students covering budgeting and strategies to manage limited budgets;
- Advisers available to prospective and current students for one-to-one consultations in person, by e-mail or by telephone;
- One-to-one support, finance workshops and other supportive activities organised by the University made available to all students.

Publication of approved Access and Participation Plan:

BGU's approved Access and Participation Plan will be published on the University's website at: <http://www.bishopg.ac.uk/about/governance/policies-procedures/>

## 5. Appendix

The OfS will append the following items from the fees and targets and investment documents when an access and participation plan is published:

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)
2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)
3. Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

**Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees**

\*course type not listed

**Inflationary statement:**

For lower level qualifications (e.g.FdA), we have set our fee at a 75% proportion of the £9,250 fee, so we would only increase that fee in the event of the fee cap being increased. Otherwise, subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations, we intend to increase fees each year using the RPI-X

**Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants**

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree		£6,935
Foundation year/Year 0		£6,935
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT		£9,250
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	Grantham College 10002743	£6,935
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

**Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants**

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

# Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Bishop Grosseteste University

Provider UKPRN: 10007811

## Investment summary

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

### Note about the data:

The investment forecasts below in access, financial support and research and evaluation does not represent not the total amount spent by providers in these areas. It is the additional amount that providers have committed following the introduction of variable fees in 2006-07. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Total access activity investment (£)</b>	£744,463.00	£745,757.00	£766,832.00	£787,717.00	£805,466.00
Access (pre-16)	£28,919.00	£30,262.00	£31,017.00	£31,795.00	£32,597.00
Access (post-16)	£674,864.00	£686,370.00	£705,878.00	£725,144.00	£741,220.00
Access (adults and the community)	£40,680.00	£29,125.00	£29,937.00	£30,778.00	£31,649.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Financial support (£)</b>	£518,004.00	£516,181.00	£508,235.00	£512,439.00	£522,273.00
<b>Research and evaluation (£)</b>	£68,515.00	£71,663.00	£74,602.00	£77,409.00	£78,957.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Higher fee income (£HFI)</b>	£5,343,820.00	£5,331,480.00	£5,226,590.00	£5,361,545.00	£5,559,750.00
<b>Access investment</b>	9.8%	9.8%	10.3%	10.3%	10.1%
<b>Financial support</b>	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%	6.7%	6.6%
<b>Research and evaluation</b>	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
<b>Total investment (as %HFI)</b>	17.4%	17.5%	18.1%	18.0%	17.7%

# Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Bishop Grosseteste University

Provider UKPRN: 10007811

## Targets

Table 2a - Access

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones					Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
								2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
To increase the participation in HE for BAME students on BGU undergraduate programmes	PTA_1	Ethnicity	To increase the proportion of BAME students recruited and enrolling onto BGU undergraduate programmes.	Yes	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	1.4%	1.7%	2.0%	2.5%	3.0%	3.5%	To treble the current proportion of BAME students, given the local recruitment population will need the full 5 year period. There will be a ramped impact as cumulative actions - collaborative outreach work with LiNCHigher; extending the geographical range of marketing; revising the inclusiveness of BGU and its curriculum; adapting the programme portfolio to attract different learners - take effect. Early indicators will include outreach metrics, applications and then enrolments.
To increase the participation in HE for students from low socio-economic backgrounds on BGU undergraduate programmes	PTA_2	Socio-economic	To increase the proportion of IMD Q1+Q2 students recruited and enrolled onto BGU undergraduate programmes	Yes	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	37%	38%	38%	39%	40%	40%	The relatively small incremental milestones for this target reflect the relatively small gap as a result of the recent previous increases based upon sustained collaborative outreach work with LiNCHigher in the local region.
To increase the participation in HE for care leavers	PTA_3	Care-leavers	To increase the proportion of care leaver students recruited and enrolled onto BGU undergraduate programmes	Yes	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	0.4%	0.5%	0.6%	0.7%	0.8%	0.9%	Through collaborative work with LiNCHigher, local schools and organisations to increase the very small current proportion of student care leavers by half.
	PTA_4												
	PTA_5												
	PTA_6												
	PTA_7												
	PTA_8												

Table 2b - Success

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones					Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
								2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
To reduce the attainment gap for BAME BGU students	PTS_1	Ethnicity	Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between undergraduate White and BAME students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	8.8%	8%	7%	5%	4%	2%	To achieve a steady reduction in the attainment gap to low / not statistically significant levels by 2024-25 through a common suite of actions to support personal learning development. The current small absolute number of BAME students (until PTA-1 starts to take effect) means that annual variation will result in gaps above and below the indicated steady reduction.
To reduce the attainment gap for BAME BGU students	PTS_2	Ethnicity	Percentage difference in degree completion between PGCE White and BAME students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	16.9%	10%	8%	6%	4%	2%	To achieve a steady reduction in the attainment gap to low / not statistically significant levels by 2024-25 through a common suite of actions to support personal learning development. The current small absolute number of BAME students means that annual variation will result in gaps above and below the indicated steady reduction.
To reduce the attainment gap for Mature BGU students	PTS_3	Mature	Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between undergraduate Young_Under21 and Mature students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	9.4%	9%	7%	5%	4%	2%	To achieve a steady reduction in the attainment gap to low / not statistically significant levels by 2024-25 through a common suite of actions to support personal learning development.
To reduce the attainment gap for BGU students with a known disability	PTS_4	Disabled	Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between undergraduate students without and with a known disability.	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	1.6%	4%	3%	2%	1%	0%	To achieve a steady reduction in the attainment gap to low / not statistically significant levels by 2024-25 through a common suite of actions to support personal learning development. The baseline figure for 2017-18 is actually lower than the intended target reflecting the high annual variability in the data for the preceding 3 years (9.3% gap in 2016-17). Therefore, achieving a steady low gap is an appropriate target.
To reduce the attainment gap for BGU students with a known disability	PTS_5	Disabled	Percentage difference in degree completion between PGCE students without and with a known disability.	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	7.9%	7%	5%	3%	1%	0%	To achieve a steady reduction in the attainment gap to low / not statistically significant levels by 2024-25 through a common suite of actions to support personal learning development.
To reduce the attainment gap for IMD Q1 students	PTS_6	Socio-economic	Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between IMD Q1 and Q5 students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	13.3%	10%	8%	6%	4%	2%	To achieve a steady reduction in the attainment gap to low / not statistically significant levels by 2024-25 through a common suite of actions to support personal learning development.
	PTS_7												
	PTS_8												

Table 2c - Progression

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones					Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
								2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	

