

Leeds College of Music (LCoM)

Access and Participation Plan

2020-25

1. Assessment of performance

To undertake the following assessment of performance, LCoM has used the following sources:

- Data from OfS dashboard, TEF, Conservatoires UK, UCAS, HESA and our own internal student data analysis.
- A comprehensive annual report to LCoM's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, which informs action planning. This report looks at student and staff characteristics throughout the lifecycle, student outcomes, and intersections of characteristics.

Graphs have been used to illustrate key findings. They show actual data and trendlines for each variable, and unless otherwise stated, the narrative is based on the trendline.

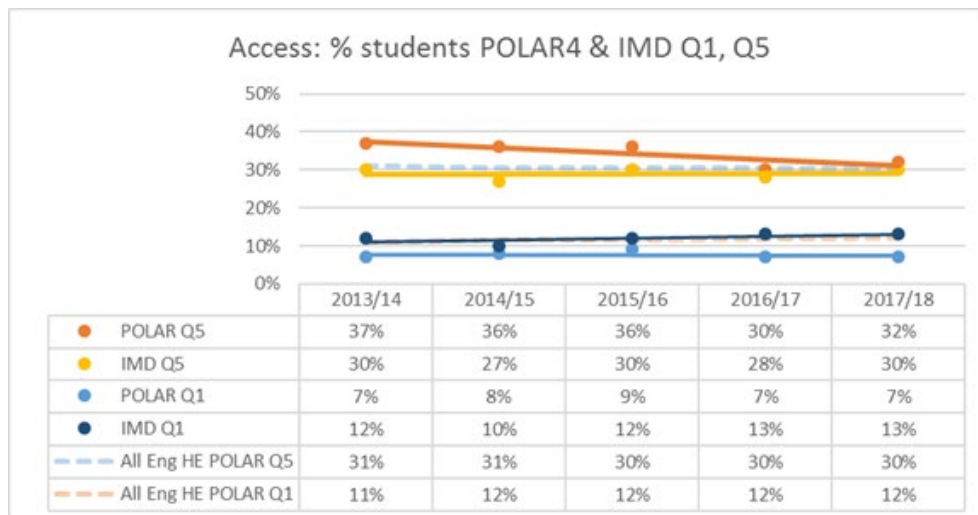
With regard to progression data, the highly skilled employment metric has limitations in showing the career trajectory of our graduates – around 80% work in the creative industries and around 70% combine two or more occupations. The number of hours that musicians work is likely to build slowly, meaning that early career graduates are *unlikely* to report a highly skilled employment outcome as their most important activity.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

POLAR4 and IMD data has been assessed and aggregated where the student population from individual quintiles is too small.

ACCESS

Ratio of Students from POLAR4 and IMD Q5 vs POLAR4 and IMD Q1



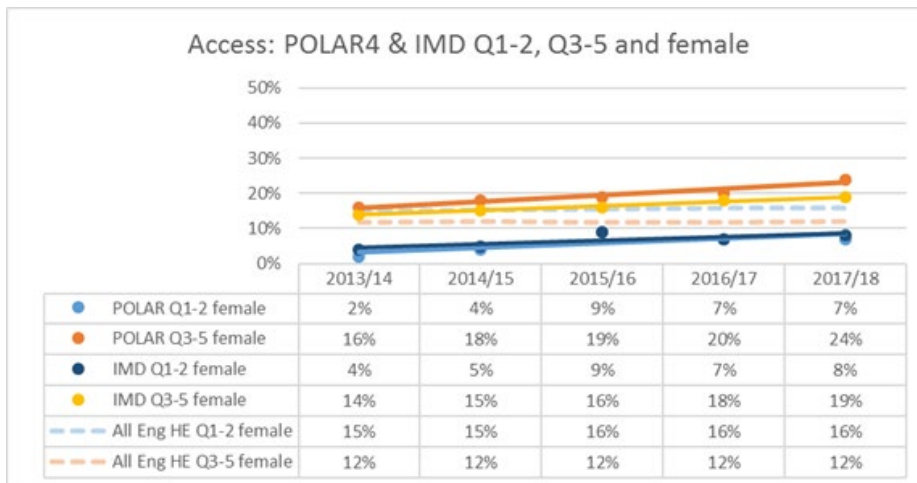
Participation of 18- and 19- year olds between the most and least represented groups using POLAR4 is a ratio of 4.6:1.

Participation of 18- and 19- year olds between the most and least represented groups using IMD is a ratio of 2.3:1.

Therefore, the POLAR4 gap should be the focus of an access objective.

Access - Intersections

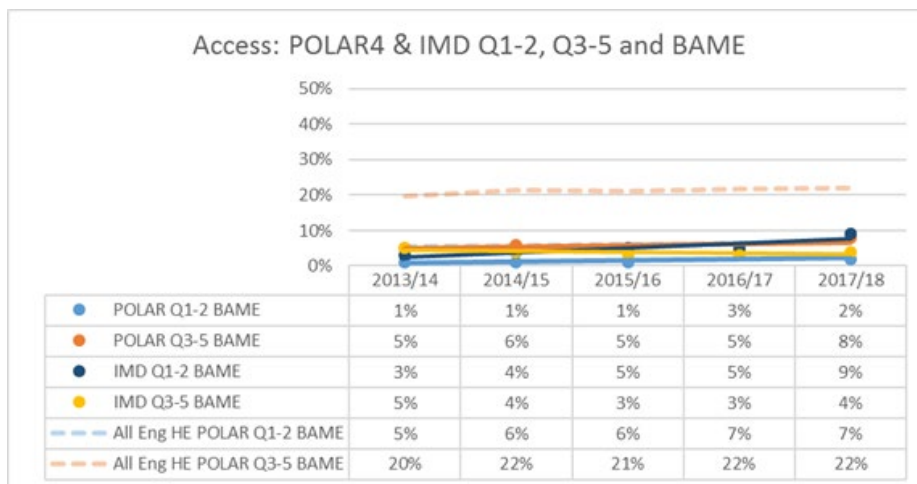
Intersection of POLAR4/IMD and Sex



Data shows that access for POLAR4 Q1-2 and male is good (5 year average of 17%). However, access for POLAR4 Q1-2 and female remains below 10%, resulting in a significant and sustained gap.

IMD data shows a similar gap.

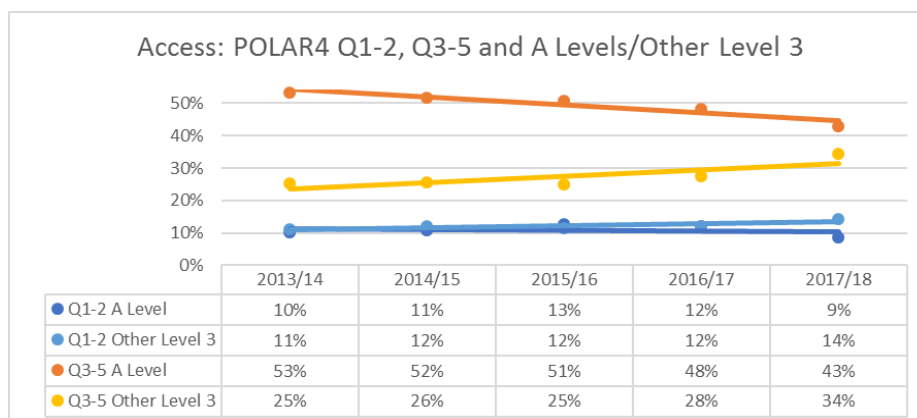
Intersection of POLAR4/IMD and Ethnicity



Data shows that access for POLAR4 Q1-2 and white is good (5 year average of 21%). However, access for POLAR4 Q1-2 and BAME remains below 5%, resulting in a significant gap.

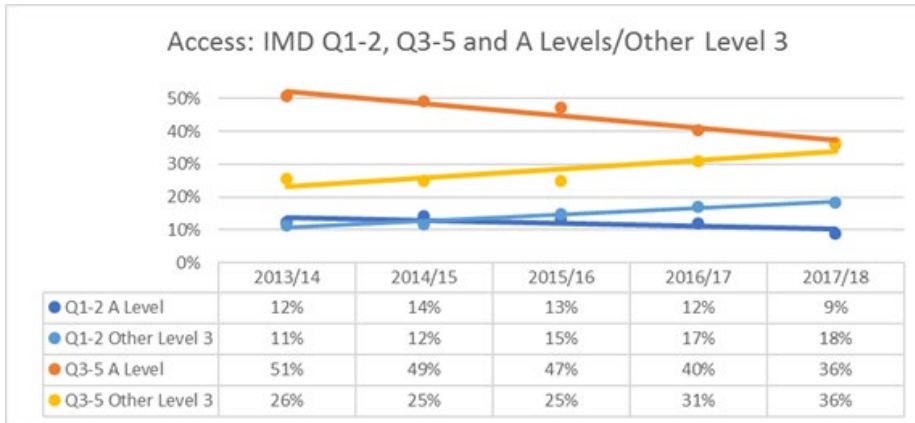
IMD data shows a positive gap between Q1-2, BAME and Q3-5, BAME.

Intersection of POLAR4 and Entry Qualifications



The proportion of students with Other Level 3 (non A-Level) qualifications is increasing for all quartile groups. Students from POLAR4 Q1-2 are more likely to enter with Other L3 qualifications.

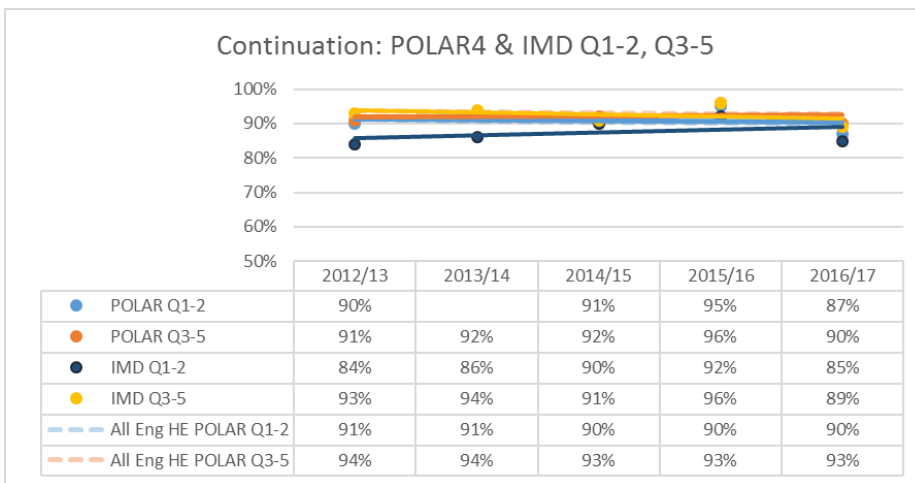
Intersection of IMD and Entry Qualifications



The proportion of students with Other Level 3 (non A-Level) qualifications is increasing for all quartile groups. Students from IMD Q1-2 are more likely to enter with Other L3 qualifications

SUCCESS - Continuation

POLAR4 and IMD Continuation Gap

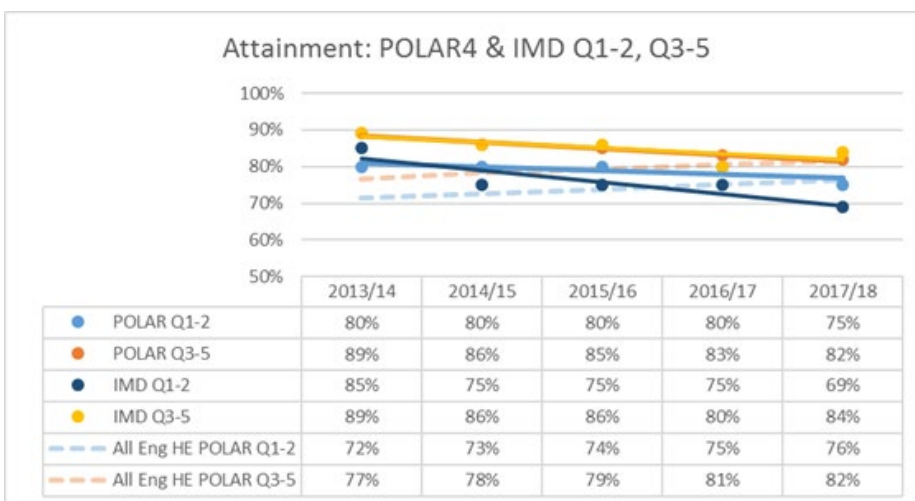


Data shows a small but widening gap in continuation between POLAR4 Q1-2 and Q3-5.

IMD data shows no significant difference.

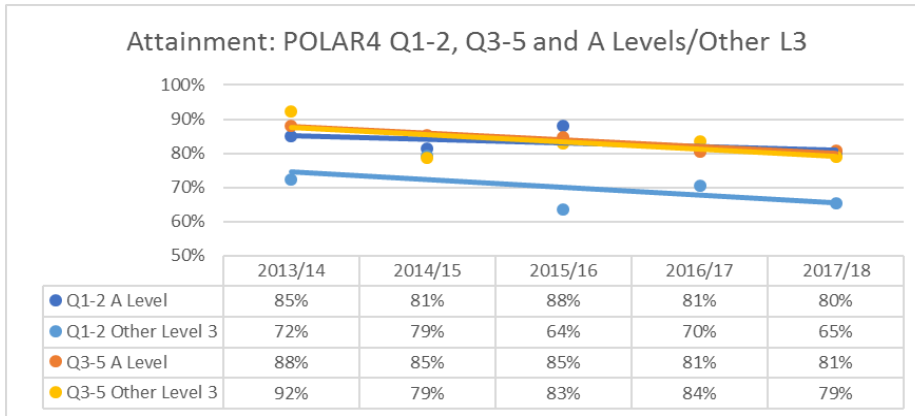
SUCCESS – Attainment

POLAR4 and IMD Attainment Gap



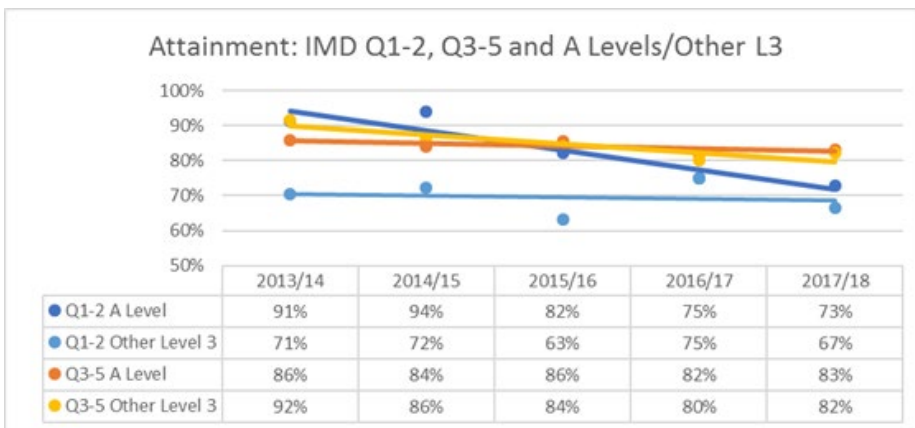
Data shows a decrease in attainment rates across all POLAR4 and IMD quintiles. This is the result of changes in grading strategy: there is a general reduction in grade inflation following several years of changes to classification calculations by our validating body. The gap in attainment is generally decreasing, with the exception of IMD data from 17/18.

POLAR4 Attainment Gap by Entry Qualifications



For students entering with A Levels, the attainment gap between POLAR4 Q1-2 and Q3-5 is 1%. For students entering with Other Level 3 qualifications, there is a persistent gap between POLAR4 Q1-2 and Q3-5: a five year average gap of 13%.

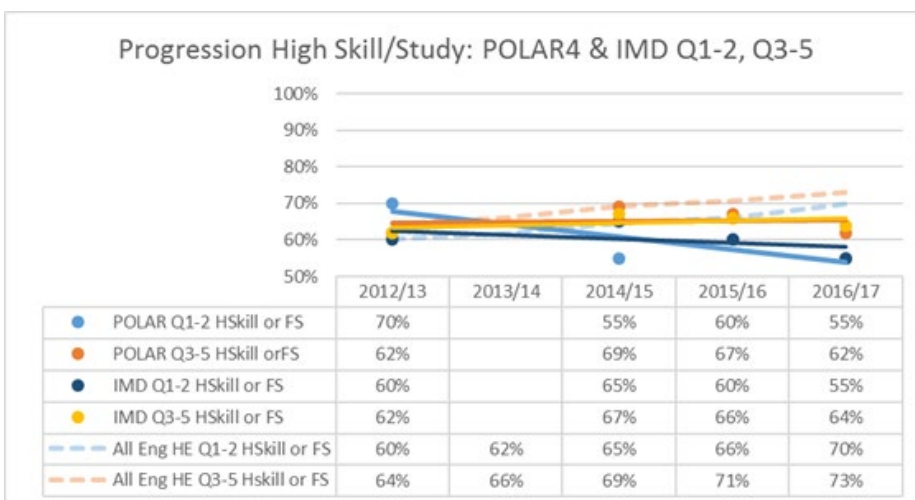
IMD Attainment Gap by Entry Qualifications



IMD data shows that the attainment of Q1-2 students entering with A Level qualifications is in decline. We need to find out why this is.

PROGRESSION

POLAR4 Progression Gap

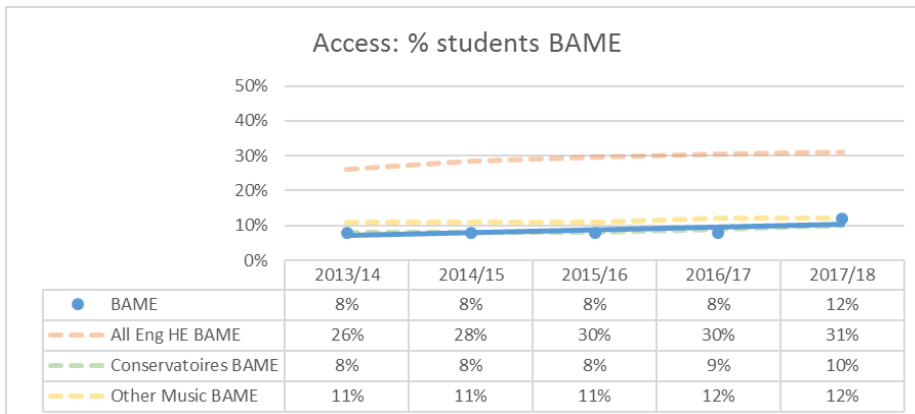


Data shows a widening gap between POLAR4 and IMD Q1-2 and Q3-5 for progression to highly skilled employment. However, the data is patchy and requires further investigation.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

ACCESS

Access of BAME Students



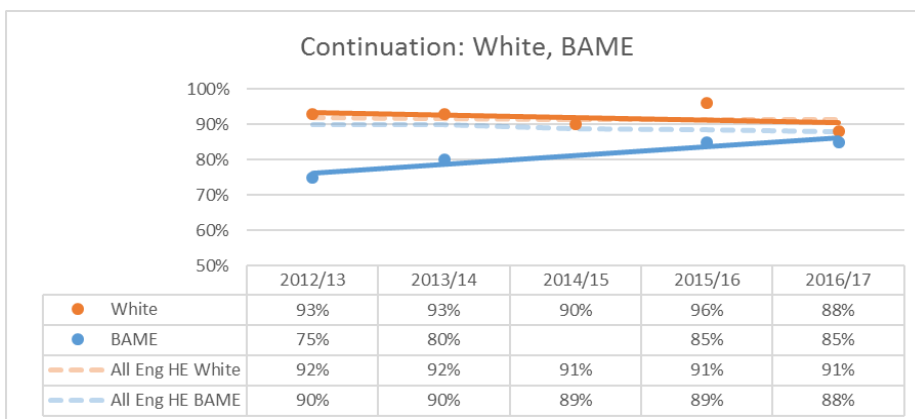
Proportion of BAME students at conservatoires and in other HE Music is much lower than for the wider sector. Therefore, access for BAME students to HE Music and Performing Arts is a high priority for the sector.

Disaggregating into ethnicity groups shows no

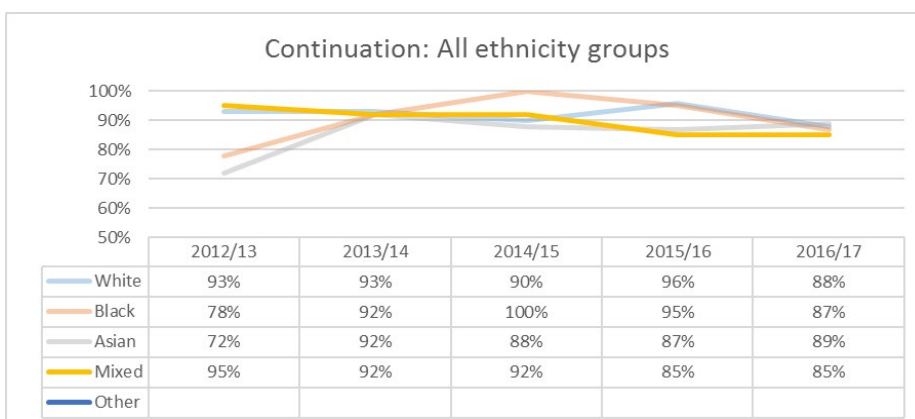
pattern due to low numbers.

SUCCESS - Continuation

BAME Continuation Gap



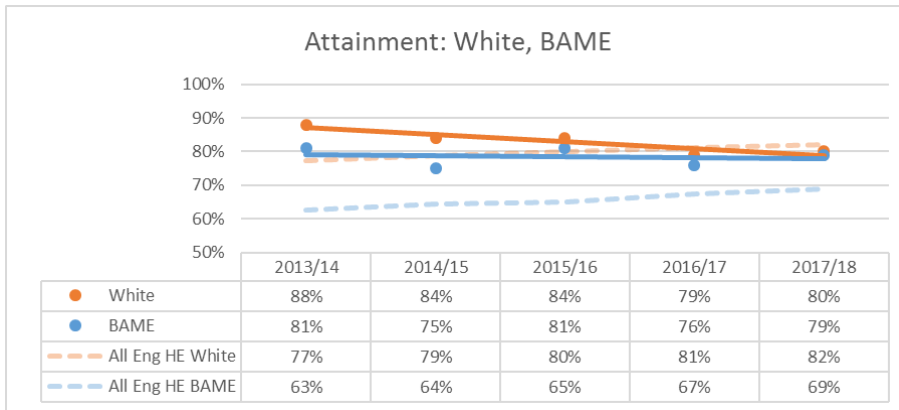
The continuation gap between white students and BAME students is decreasing and should be eliminated by 2020/21.



When the data is disaggregated it shows no pattern for a distinct ethnicity group. However, the gap is closing amongst all ethnicity groups.

SUCCESS – Attainment

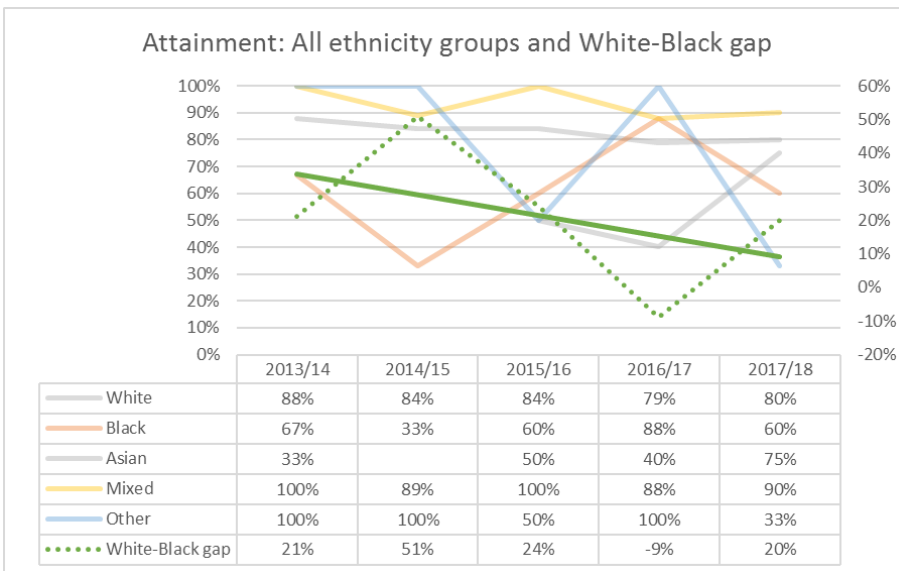
BAME Attainment Gap



The OfS data dashboard shows no attainment data for LCoM BAME students due to the small population, so this analysis is from our own data.

The attainment gap between White and BAME students has closed over five years, to 1%.

BAME Attainment Gap (disaggregated)

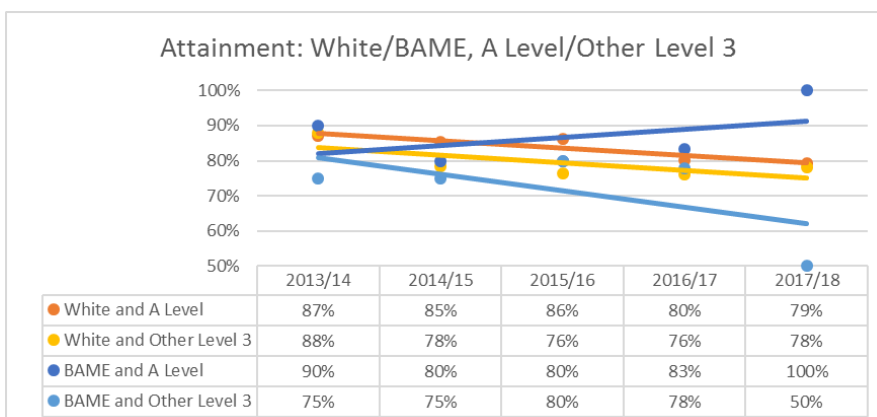


(Attainment gap % shown on right hand y axis)

Attainment by disaggregated ethnicity shows a fluctuating picture due to small populations.

However, the trend shows a decreasing attainment gap between White and Black students).

BAME Attainment Gap by Entry Qualifications

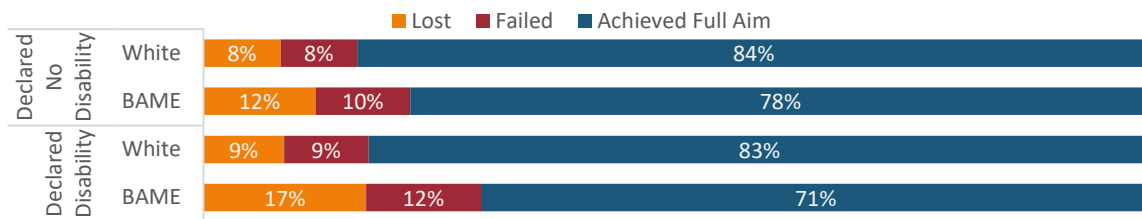


There is a significant attainment gap between BAME students with A Levels and BAME students with Other Level 3 qualifications: in 2017/18 the gap was 50%, though this extreme gap is in part due to the small population sizes. The five year average gap is 15%.

SUCCESS – Achievement Intersections

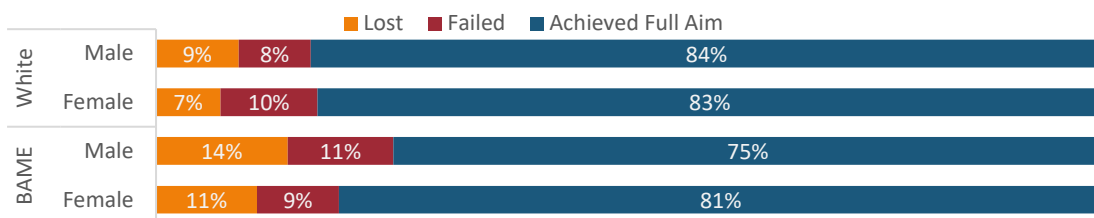
Internal analysis of student *achievement* (of the full aim for that level, in year) across all undergraduate students show significant gaps in student achievement when ethnicity is intersected with other characteristics.

5-year Average Achievement Intersection of Ethnicity and Disability



The most significantly disadvantaged group is BAME students who have declared a disability, where the 5 year average shows a gap of 13% when compared with White students with no disability.

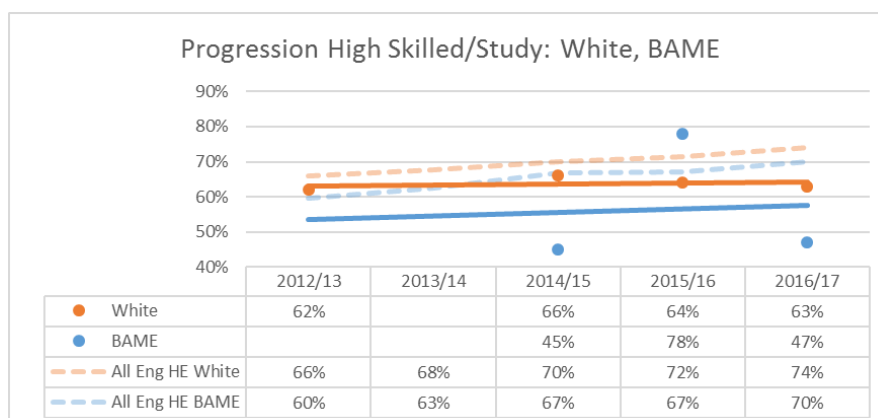
5-year Average Achievement Intersection of Ethnicity and Sex



BAME Male students are also significantly disadvantaged with an 11% failure rate and 14% loss rate compared with 8% and 9% amongst White Male students (a 9% achievement gap).

PROGRESSION

BAME Progression Gap

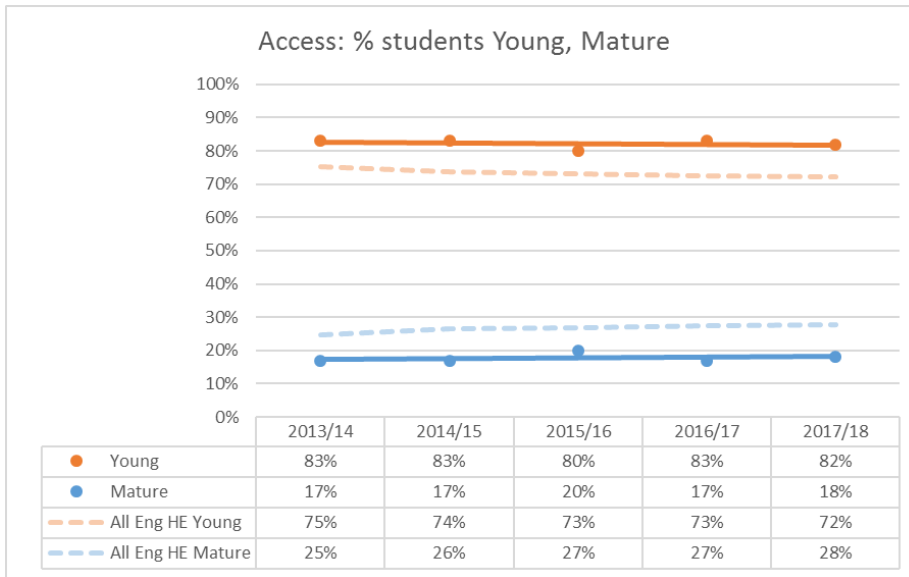


Data shows a narrowing gap between White and BAME progression, though with significant fluctuation. However, the data is patchy and requires further investigation.

1.3 Mature students

ACCESS

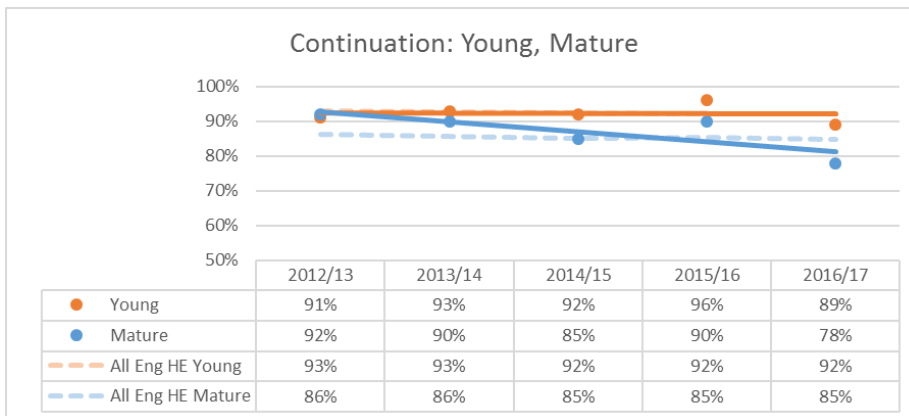
Access of Mature Students



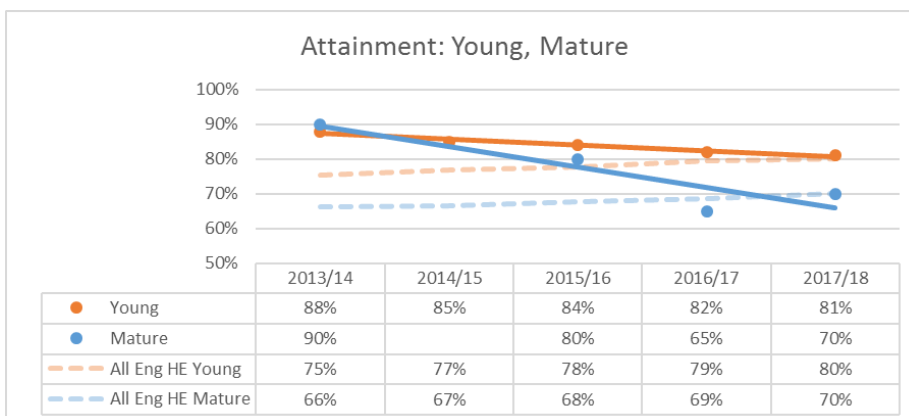
A consistent proportion of new LCoM students are mature (5-year average of 18%).

SUCCESS – Continuation and Attainment

Age Continuation and Attainment Gaps

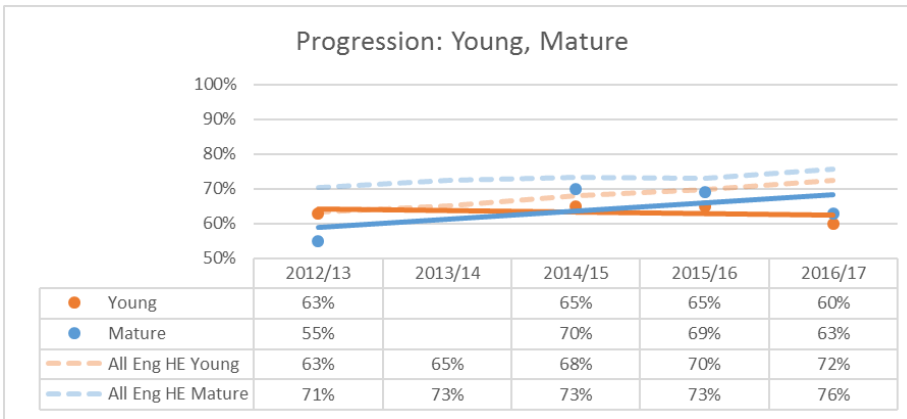


Gaps have opened and widened since 2012/13 in both continuation and attainment, with significant declines in outcomes for Mature students compared with Young students.



PROGRESSION

Age Progression Gap

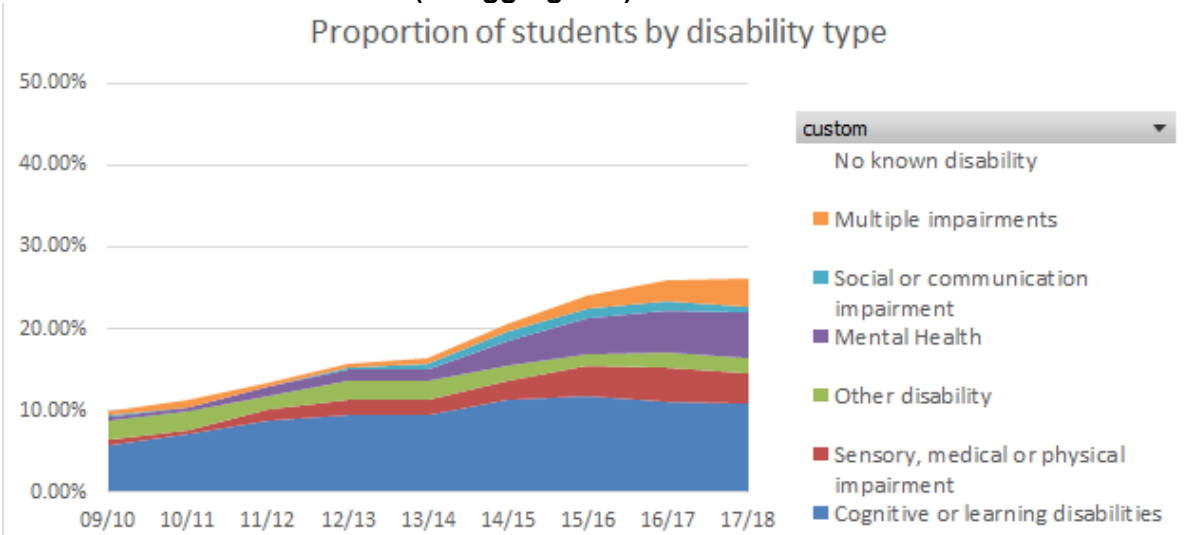


Data shows that Mature students are doing better than Young students. However, this data is patchy and requires further investigation.

1.4 Disabled students

ACCESS

Access of Disabled Students (disaggregated)

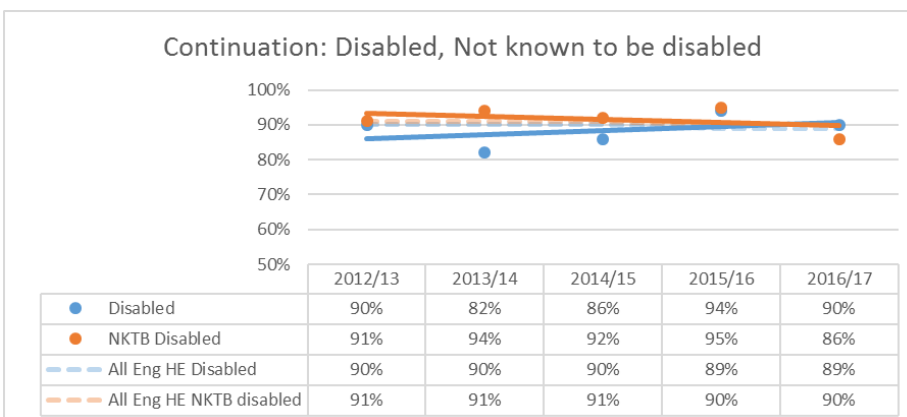


The proportion of disabled students at LCoM is increasing year-on-year (5-year average of 21%)

Disaggregated disability type over 10 years shows significant increases since 2013/14 in the proportions of students declaring cognitive or learning difficulties, and mental health disabilities.

SUCCESS - Continuation

Disability Continuation Gap

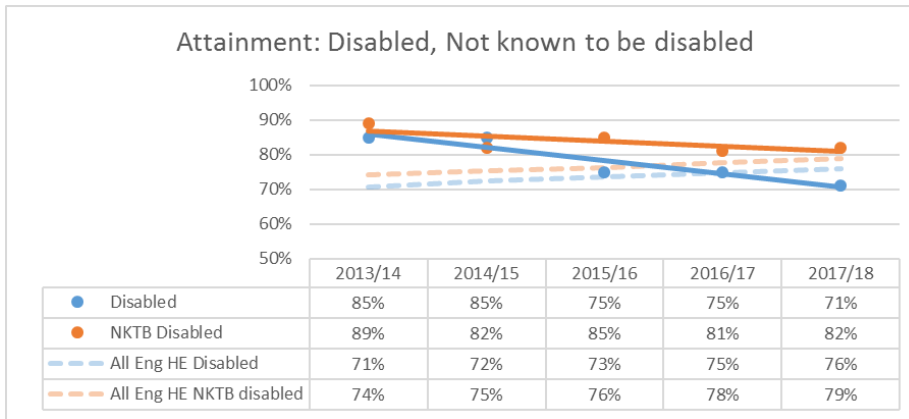


Disaggregation of disability type for is not possible as numbers are too small.

We have put in place provisions for students with disabilities and in particular students with mental health issues. This has been very successful, and as of 2016/17 the gap is negative.

SUCCESS - Attainment

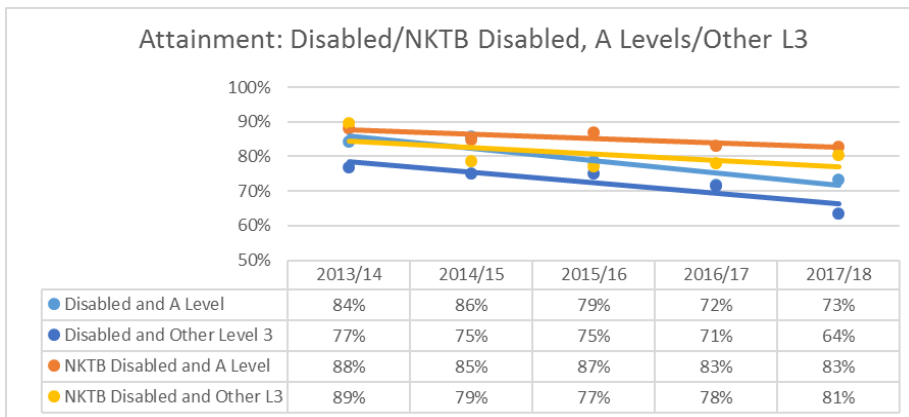
Disability Attainment Gap



Attainment for all students has decreased (as discussed earlier).

Attainment rate for students with disabilities has decreased at a faster rate, and a gap has opened and widened since 2013/14, with a gap of 11% in 2017/18.

Disability Attainment Gap by Entry Qualifications



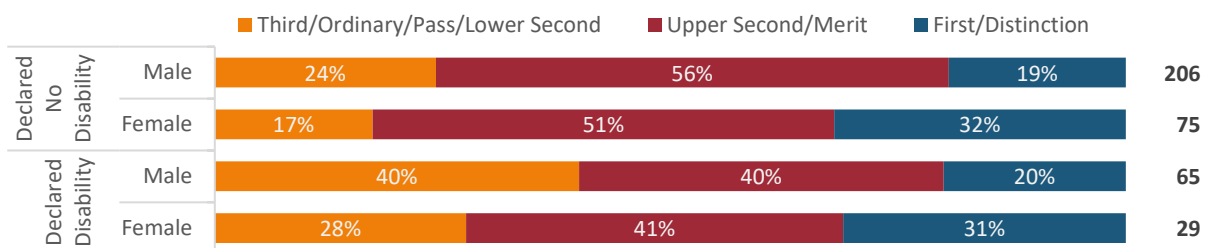
When intersected with entry qualifications, the gap is wider still. Students who are not known to be disabled and enter with A Levels are the highest attainment group, and students who are disabled and enter with Other Level 3 qualifications are the lowest attainment group.

There is a 5 year average gap of 13% between the highest and lowest groups, and in 2017/18 the gap was 19%.

SUCCESS – Attainment Intersections

Our own data (for all undergraduates) shows significant differences in attainment when disability is intersected with sex.

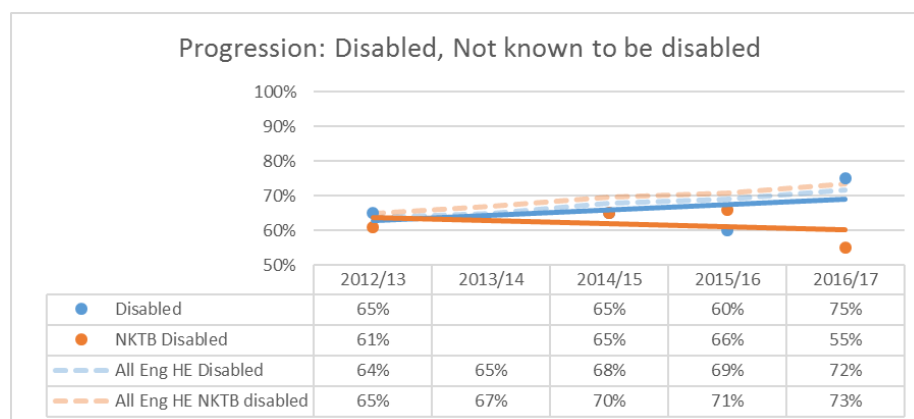
5-year Average Attainment Intersection of Gender and Disability



There is an attainment gap of 23% for male students with a disability compared with female students with no known disability.

PROGRESSION

Disability Progression Gap



Data shows a trend for disabled students to enter highly skilled employment or further study more frequently than students with no known disability, a -20% gap in 2016/17. However, the data is patchy and requires further investigation.

1.5 Care leavers and other groups who experience barriers in higher education

We are unable to ascertain trends for care leavers or other groups who experience barriers due to a very small number of LCoM students per year declaring that they are care leavers or from other underrepresented groups.

However, in the 2017 “Moving On Up” report, prepared by Dr Neil Harrison on behalf of the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers, it states that the care leaver HE participation rate is a quarter of that for all students, and half the rate of those that qualified for free school meals or who come from low HE participation areas. However, these participation rates become more equal if KS4 qualifications are achieved. LCoM has signed up to the Go Higher West Yorkshire Care Leaver Covenant, which commits to improving access to HE for care leavers via a number of mechanisms, including provision of online information, dedicated advisers and bespoke events for care leavers and the families of looked-after children.

The “Moving On Up” report also states that care leavers are more likely to withdraw from HE study and 10% less likely to attain a higher degree. Care Leavers at LCoM are allocated the Head of Student Services as their dedicated contact and through this we aim to achieve a better understanding of the needs of this group of students and to support them to succeed in and progress from HE.

Please see p16 where the development of our offer for care leavers is considered.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

Based on the assessment of our performance, we will focus our access and participation activity on the following target groups:

ACCESS

1. POLAR4/IMD Quintile 1 and POLAR4/IMD Quintile 1-2/Female
2. BAME and BAME/Female

SUCCESS - Continuation

1. POLAR4 Quintiles 1-2
2. Mature students

SUCCESS – Attainment

1. POLAR4 Quintiles 1 – 2 with other L3 Qualifications

2. Black students, BAME, BAME/Male, BAME/Disabled and BAME with other L3 Qualifications
3. Mature students
4. Disabled, Disabled/BAME, Disabled/Female and Disabled with other L3 Qualifications

PROGRESSION

1. Target groups to be confirmed following Graduate Outcomes Survey results in January 2020

2.2 Aims and objectives

Leeds College of Music is committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion. We seek to maximise the potential of our staff and students, be responsive to new ideas, and equip our students for life in a multicultural and diverse society.

Our aim is to improve the access to and success in Music and Performing Arts of underrepresented groups for both staff and student populations.

Access

Aim: To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from underrepresented groups and to eliminate the POLAR4 gap by 2030/31.

Objectives:

1. **Reduce the gap in participation of 18- and 19- year olds between the most and least represented groups (POLAR4 quintile 5 and quintile 1) from a ratio of 5:1 to 3:1 by 2023-24** (National KPM). LCoM's ratio as of 17/18 is 5:1.
 - a. Include a specific focus on female students within this group
2. **Reduce the gap in participation between white students and BAME students from a ratio of 8:1 to 6:1 by 2024-25.**
 - a. Include a specific focus on female students within this group

Success

Aim: To reduce the non-continuation and attainment gaps for students from underrepresented groups by 2027/28.

Objectives:

1. **Reduce the unexplained gap in non-continuation between the most and least represented groups (POLAR4 quintile 5 and quintile 1) to 0% by 2023-24** (National KPM).
LCoM data shows no gap in continuation between students from POLAR4 quintiles 5 and 1. However, OfS data shows a small but widening gap when aggregated data compares POLAR4 quintiles 1-2 and 3-5. This gap currently stands at 3%.
2. **Reduce the non-continuation gap between young students and mature students to 0% by 2024-25.** The non-continuation gap between young students and mature students has increased by 12% during the five years from 12/13 and was at 11% in 16/17.
3. **Reduce the attainment gap between students from POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2 with non-A Level entry qualifications and all other students to 2% by 2024-25.** The attainment gap as of 17/18 is between 14-16%.
4. **Reduce the attainment gap between BAME students with non-A Level entry qualifications and all other students to 3% by 2024-25.**

The National KPM is to eliminate the gap in degree outcomes between white students and black students. However, using the data from OfS, the attainment gap between white

students and black students at LCoM was 20% in 2017/18 and -9% in 2016/17. Outcomes are disproportionately affected by the small population and so it is hard to discern a trend.

Aggregating into white and BAME, the attainment gap in 17/18 is 1%, steadily decreased from 7% over the previous five years. However, when intersected with entry qualification, there is a 15% 5-year average gap between BAME students with A Level qualification and BAME students with other Level 3 qualifications.

5. Assessing our achievement data, we can see gaps between BAME non-disabled and BAME disabled students and between White Male students and BAME Male students. Our objectives regarding these gaps are:
 - a) **Reduce the achievement gap between BAME non-disabled and BAME disabled students to 4% by 2024-25.** The most recent 5-year average shows the gap as 12%.
 - b) **Reduce the achievement gap between White Male students and BAME Male students to 1% by 2024-25.** The most recent 5-year average shows the gap as 9%.
6. **Reduce the attainment gap between young students and mature students to 3% by 2024-25.** The attainment gap between young students and mature students has increased by 13% during the five years from 13/14 and was at 11% in 17/18.
7. **Reduce the gap in degree outcomes between non-disabled and disabled students to 0% by 2024-25 (National KPM).** The attainment gap between non-disabled and disabled students has increased by 7% over the five years from 13/14 and was at 11% in 17/18.
 - a. Include a specific focus on BAME, female and students with other Level 3 entry qualifications within this group.

Progression

Aim: To obtain comprehensive progression data for LCoM students and use this to set relevant progression targets by 2021/22.

Objectives:

1. **To obtain comprehensive progression data for LCoM students and use this to set targets for 2021/22 and beyond.**
 - a. Assess results of the Graduate Outcomes Survey in January 2020 and set areas of focus for progression activity, relating to underrepresented groups.
 - b. Where there are gaps in understanding, request additional provider-specific questions to be asked of our students in the 18/19 graduates' survey.
 - c. Following the Graduate Outcomes Survey results in February 2021, assess where the progression gaps are and set specific targets relating to improving the progression of underrepresented groups from 2021/22 onwards.

Developing collaboration/activity & output targets:

1. We will work in partnership in our local area via Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY), a consortium of diverse HE providers, to improve the access, success and progression of under-represented groups.
2. We will work with Backstage Academy to collaboratively support students from under-represented backgrounds to access music and performing arts at HE level, and to develop programmes to support the mental health of our students.
3. We will work with Leeds City College, to set a collaborative target to work towards reducing the gap in continuation and success between BAME and white students. Initial shared activity may include:
 - a. Assessment of exactly when BAME students are dis-continuing / dis-engaging.

- b. Assessment of areas of academic study where gap is in attainment / success is seen.
 - c. Mutual peer-mentor scheme.
 - d. Facilitating communication between LCoM and LCC SUs to enable collaborative student-led support for underrepresented groups.
4. Conservatoires UK members have agreed to work collectively to share best practice and enhance their impact in the following areas:
- a. Improving understanding of access, success and progression in a conservatoire context
 - b. Sharing expertise and best practice to address the challenges and remove any barriers for underrepresented student groups
 - c. Promoting conservatoire education as a positive study choice for underrepresented groups locally, regionally and nationally
 - d. Engaging in dialogue with the wider higher education sector to evidence the impact of the decline in access to performing arts education within schools and the disproportionate impact this can have on disadvantaged young people

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Our Strategic Plan and Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategies 2020-25 will have a significant focus on access and participation. The commitment to access and participation will be explicit and led from the top, and priorities will align with this plan to embed a whole institution approach. Our overarching theory of change starts with musicians and performers at a young age and supports them throughout their student lifecycle and in to the performing arts industry. This long term approach will take place over the course of a 10-year period and we would expect that young musicians and performers that engage with LCoM during the first year of this plan would be ready to study at HE level in 2030.

Equality and diversity is integral to any activity delivered by LCoM. Our annual EDI report data has been used for much of the assessment of performance in this plan, and a separate action plan has been developed that focuses on gaps relating to protected characteristics amongst staff and students at LCoM. Staff and student representatives from the EDI Committee also belong to the Access and Participation Working Group, where responsibility for the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of this plan lies.

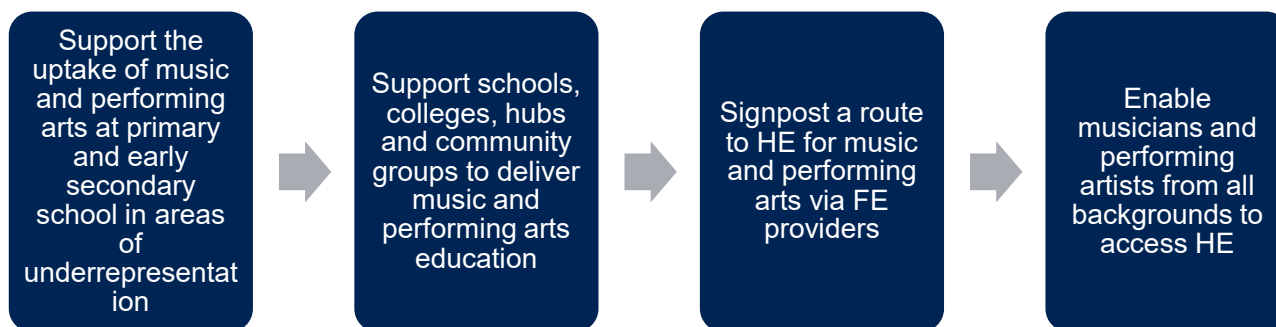


ACCESS – POLAR4/IMD Q1-2, BAME, Care Leavers

Income and sometimes cultural background can be a barrier to studying music and performing arts, where instruments, tuition and travel can be expensive and texts and pieces are from a predominantly white European tradition. LCoM's access programmes will aim to provide the means and the relevant inspiration for students from all backgrounds to engage with music-making and performing and to see studying at HE level as viable option for them.

For students to reach conservatoire standard by the age of 18 in music particularly, they need to begin studying early. The decline in primary and secondary music education puts the student recruitment pipeline at risk (and therefore institutional sustainability, with a disproportionately negative effect on underrepresented students).

We, therefore, need to make significant investment in long-term, sustained outreach with target underrepresented groups, to support them into conservatoire study.



To deliver this theory of change, we will undertake the following:

Schools and Colleges

Through the NCOP programme we will deliver a series of interventions for students and schools from 27 wards in West Yorkshire that have been identified as having lower than expected levels of HE participation considering KS4 attainment, as well as identified POLAR4 quintile 1 and 2 wards. We will use our specialisms in music and the performing arts to inspire students to consider HE study as an accessible option through collaborative taster days with other GHWY partners, on-campus activities, sessions delivered in schools and resources for teachers, parents and communities. This activity will be delivered to years 9-13. Through the NCOP programme we will recruit to a role dedicated to delivering and evaluating this activity. Our plan is to retain this role beyond the lifetime of NCOP funding and commit long term to resourcing this area of improving access.

Outside of the NCOP programme, we will evaluate our current schools activity to identify POLAR4 quintile 1 and 2 schools and create a bespoke offer for these schools based on current activities, including:

- Free workshops for schools from members of LCoM academic staff who are appropriate to the needs of the students
- Funded travel to workshop days at LCoM (building on our current travel bursary scheme for those with a high percentage of students claiming free school meals)
- Live music performances in schools, showcasing students from a variety of backgrounds (this has been requested already by several local music hubs who have identified this as an area that is lacking in the curriculum delivered in schools)
- Visits from student ambassadors from underrepresented groups
- Support for music teachers with specific areas of the curriculum, i.e. composition
- CPD opportunities for teachers

Although we are requesting additional data through GHWY from the HEAT tracker regarding the number of BAME students at NCOP target schools, identifying target schools by POLAR4 quintile is easier than identifying schools with large populations of BAME students. However, the February 2019 “Understanding and overcoming the challenges of targeting students from under-represented and disadvantaged ethnic backgrounds” report to the OfS states that “...home UK, undergraduate, BAME students are more likely to come from deprived areas, areas of low HE participation, and low socio-economic backgrounds.” Therefore, at this stage we can reasonably presume that our outreach targeted at low POLAR4 quintiles will also impact BAME students. As we conduct our interventions, we will improve our knowledge on school populations, and tailor our activity accordingly to ensure we are reaching both of our target groups for improving access.

Under 14

Junior LCoM is our development programme that aims to support students to become proficient enough in music and the performing arts to meet entry criteria for HE study. Through Saturday Music School (SMS), students are given the opportunity to study in a conservatoire environment from the age of nine, and those entering our SMS Target programme, delivered in conjunction with

Leeds Music Education Partnership, can be completely new to music. Additionally, pupils attending a Leeds Schools or Academy can borrow an instrument free of charge from ArtForms.

20% of Junior LCoM students are BAME and 13% receive a 90% bursary as they are eligible for free school meals, with a further 19% receiving a lower amount of bursary.

Through Junior LCoM we aim to deliver outreach activity, similar to that listed above, to primary schools and students aged under 14 across the West Yorkshire region, supporting younger students to access music and performing arts tuition and enabling them to take the first steps towards studying at HE.

We will also continue discussions with organisations such as Music For Youth regarding a collaborative approach to the delivery of outreach programmes that engage students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

LCoM, through its relationship with Leeds Cathedral School, supports the school choir of Holy Rosary and St Anne's primary school via an annual grant of £12,000 towards the salary of a Choral Director and the long term loan of a piano. The school is in one of the most disadvantaged areas of West Yorkshire (top 3% of deprivation nationally, IMD 2015), with 92% of its pupils from immigrant and BAME families. The school is now in the top 10% nationally for progress made by pupils, and the impact on progress of disadvantaged pupils is substantial (2018 SAT results / Ofsted Report). We will continue this relationship and work with both schools to improve access to HE.

Collaboration

We work strategically via Go Higher West Yorkshire by pooling resources in support of common goals. GHWY brokers collaboration between providers of higher study and our theory of change is that if people, particularly those from underrepresented groups, can access information about the range of HE options available to them it will support them to enrol and succeed in HE. Through GHWY we deliver information and support to underrepresented groups where they are and when they want it through an integrated programme of research, evaluation, long term engagement with providers and schools, individual activities and community engagement. Our short term aim is the continuation of existing projects and understanding their impact. Longer term our aim is the development of those activities that have evidence of impact – both as a collaborative group and individual organisations. We will use a realist evaluation approach to evidence effectiveness.

We have already begun conversations with Conservatoires UK and Backstage Academy about access to music and performing arts at HE for underrepresented groups. Our aim is to work with HE institutions that deliver performing arts and related courses, as well as those who are part of Go Higher West Yorkshire, to develop collaborative programmes that support our access objectives.

Care Leavers

Through Go Higher West Yorkshire, we are a signatory to the national Care Leaver Covenant and are working towards developing a Stand Alone pledge, with collaborative versions of each drawn together by GHWY to showcase our local offer and commitment. Joining the Covenant has allowed us to build our Care Leaver and Estranged Students' offer based on the commitments of other partners.

This is still in development, to be confirmed by January 2020, but we intend to include:

- A dedicated point of contact for Care Leavers and Estranged Students, from initial point of contact.
- Advice and support on how to apply for funding and associated benefits, to be delivered by a trained member of staff.
- A complimentary Freshers' wristband to enable students to take part in all Freshers' Week activities.
- Links with accommodation providers who will be flexible about the need for a guarantor.

We have already been part of the collaborative delivery of Foster Family Fun days with other GHWY partners, which aim to inform and inspire looked-after children and their foster families through on-campus activities. It also enables us to talk to foster carers about their needs regarding supporting students to study at HE, and we will use this information to enable us to improve our

communications to parents and carers on our website, at open days, in schools and at recruitment fairs.

ACCESS – Removing Financial Barriers to Access

We will continue to reduce financial barriers to our application process, which is typically expensive in the conservatoire sector, by removing audition fees and offering audition travel refunds to applicants from lower-income households.



SUCCESS – Mature, Disabled, non A-Level (BAME, POLAR4 Q1-2), BAME (Male, Disabled), POLAR4 Q1-2

We will embed inclusive practice throughout the curriculum through the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy.

Our approach to supporting success for students is highly individualised and we will enhance and build on existing student progress and wellbeing strategies, as well as introducing new programmes, to achieve our aims of reducing the non-continuation or low attainment of students from underrepresented groups.



Enhancing Current Activity

At LCoM, each first year students has a personal tutor. We will train our personal tutors so that they may better understand and support students from underrepresented groups who are at higher risk of loss or failure. Our aim is for tutors to have a deep understanding of the personal circumstance of their tutees, beyond their academic needs, and therefore be more able to support them throughout their time at LCoM, replicating our Female Tutor scheme, which has resulted in parity of continuation and attainment between female and male students. We will enlist members of our student population to assist in this training, sharing their journey to and through HE study.

Our regular data and attendance meetings between Programme Managers, Registry and Student Services staff allow us to identify students who are at risk of leaving or failing and determine the appropriate course of action to support them to re-engage.

We will extend this mechanism to identify students from underrepresented groups, in particular Mature, BAME and disabled students, and those with non-A Level entry qualifications and from POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2, and prioritise their interventions. Students' personal tutors will work with them to create a bespoke support plan to enable them to succeed.

In addition to these general initiatives, we will develop specific programmes to support the following groups:

Mature Students

LCoM has gaps in both mature student continuation and attainment. We plan to address this via a number of initiatives, including:

Developing a mature student network. We know that most mature students live locally and so don't live in student accommodation. Feedback from SU Officers stated that these students, therefore, did not get to know their peers as easily as students living in shared accommodation. We plan to support the SU

during 2019/20 to develop a scheme whereby mature students can meet and grow their support network within LCoM's student community.

Recognising that mature students may have additional areas of priority outside of HE study, and supporting this. Our mature students may have additional employment, families, caring responsibilities or other priorities. We need to further assess our mature student population to understand if this is correct, and then we will develop our support services to suit these needs. One example of where we have recognised the unique needs of our students is our decision to open our facilities until 3am and at the weekend to ensure that students can access them at a time that suits them.

Students with Non-A Level Entry Qualifications/BAME/POLAR4 Q1-2/IMD Q1-2

The number of students enrolling at LCoM with non-A Level entry qualifications has risen steadily from 45% in 14/15 to 58% in 18/19 and we are seeing a gap in these students' attainment when they are BAME or from low POLAR4 backgrounds.

To enable their success, one measure we will undertake is to learn from the successful Reciprocal Journeys initiative, undertaken by Manchester Metropolitan University in 2015, and Transforming Transitions, a HEFCE Catalyst Project led by the University of Exeter. These initiatives demonstrated the importance of HE staff understanding the teaching methods used in and skills acquired from various Level 3 courses.

Using our relationship with Leeds City College and using their music and performing arts BTEC staff, we will undertake training with our HE staff, both academic and support, that enables them to understand the skills and learning that students encounter during BTEC and Access courses. Although this activity isn't directly focused at BAME students or those from low POLAR4 backgrounds, students from low POLAR4 backgrounds are more likely to be first in the family to study at HE, and the February 2019 report previously mentioned also states that BAME students are "more likely to be first in family to access higher education". Therefore, it may be the case that the lack of understanding of alternate entry qualifications by our HE staff disproportionately affects BAME and low POLAR4 students as they do not have access to a support network that understands the demands of HE.

Disabled Students

Our work on improving the continuation of disabled students has been successful. We have introduced long term mental health support, dedicated points of contact for those with additional requirements and changes to assessment guidelines, submission requirements and general lecture materials for dyslexic students and those with other learning difficulties.

However, we can still see a widening attainment gap for disabled students. Internal data shows that there is no gap in disabled students' attainment of a First degree, but there is a gap in disabled students' attainment of an Upper Second degree, leading to an overall gap in attainment. In order to support disabled students' attainment, we plan to further analyse our achievement data to identify the early signs of lower attainment, and then put specific and timely measures in place to support success.

Care Leavers

Care leavers and other groups who experience barriers in higher education, for example disabled students and estranged students, are already offered targeted support including, in some cases, a named member of staff who can work with them to achieve positive outcomes. As part of our Care Leavers and Estranged Students offer, we hope to include an offer of regular mentoring support with a named contact. We are working to confirm this offer by January 2020.

SUCCESS – Removing Financial Barriers to Success



We will continue to provide the LCoM Bursary of £800 per year for students with a household income of £0 - £25,000 and £400 per year for students with a household income of £25,001 - £42,875 for 2019/20. Students are means-tested each year of study and allocated a bursary if they

fall within the relevant household income bands in that year. If eligible, students will always receive the same annual amount that they received at the start of their studies. Household income bands are in line with those used by Student Finance England and so thresholds may change due to inflation.

We carried out an initial analysis of our financial support provision in 2016/17. This report provided insight into 2,960 students who received bursaries from 2011/12 to 2016/17, the relationship between financial support and performance, and how gender, disability and course pathway might affect this relationship. POLAR3 data was also mapped against 1,333 students over the same period to assess the relationship between POLAR quintile, bursary, and academic outcome.

The report provided evidence that student bursaries had a beneficial impact on academic outcomes. Students receiving bursaries initially performed at a lower average module mark than non-bursary students, but after three years, although there were still gaps in final learning outcome measured by degree classification and marks, the bursary was shown to narrow the gap. Though there was no true control group, we were able to show that consistent financial support could stabilise the attainment gap between students from different POLAR quintiles.

However, as we are unable to definitely attribute the narrowing of gaps to the bursary, for students enrolling in 2019/20 we slightly reduced the bursary from £1000/£500 the previous year in order to allocate more funds towards other Access activities. We intend to, as part of an annual review, assess if this decrease impacts the outcomes of our students, and further amend the bursary if necessary.

We plan to adopt the OfS toolkit to undertake our financial support evaluation. As the statistical tool requires more than 300 recipients of financial support each year to provide valuable evaluation, and as LCoM has only just reached this threshold, we will aggregate data from the past three years to obtain more useful analysis. We also plan to trial the survey tool in line with our existing survey methodologies. Results will feed in to LCoM's annual planning cycle for financial support

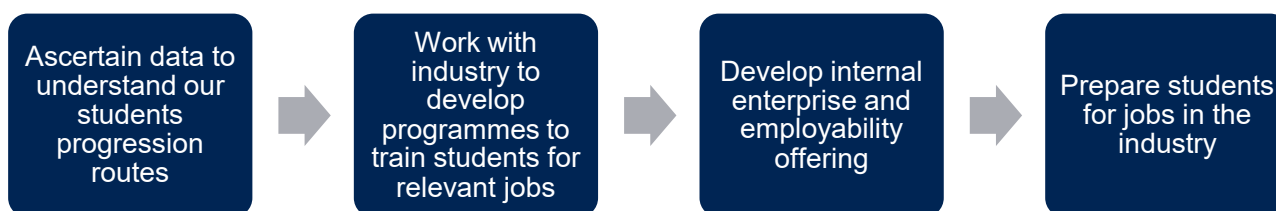
PROGRESS

Lead by our Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy, employability, entrepreneurial skills and preparation for entering the music industry are all built in to the curriculum, particularly via our Professional Studies strand that runs through each course.

As a modern and ambitious conservatoire, our goal is to develop creative but sustainable career paths for our students. In order to serve a large community of creative students we need to provide a suitably adaptable suite of products to suit their range of interests and approaches. Our Musicians' Development and Booking Agency (MBDA) offers tailored services to students beyond the curriculum, supporting the development of ideas and encouraging innovative approaches to the foundations of their careers. The aim is for students to take ownership of their employability and to encourage them to consider the 'product' in their work. Providing this individualised service means that all students have the opportunity to access appropriate support and enhance their career prospects during their study.

We will assess engagement with The MBDA by underrepresented groups at LCoM and set actions to increase this where relevant. Initial analysis shows that that underrepresented groups may be less inclined to engage with employability opportunities or, in the case of many of our mature students, already be in employment. We will look to target our communication of our employability initiatives towards underrepresented groups, seeking guidance from student representatives about how best to do this.

Our Registration and Induction Survey captures data relating to new students' career aspirations. We intend to compare this data with Graduate Outcomes data for underrepresented groups to assess whether or not students are moving towards achieving their career aims following HE study. We will then use this information to adapt or enhance our employability initiatives. For example, if a number of students from underrepresented groups aspire to a career in teaching and the corresponding Graduate Outcomes data shows that this number of students have not followed this path, we will assess where there may be barriers to success.



We are in the process of creating a Research Working Group that will have oversight of research projects and identify and close any gaps in our research policies and procedures, for example ethical approval and standards of evidence.

PROGRESS – Removing Financial Barriers to Progress

Students can apply for small funding pots via our Experience and Match Funding schemes, enabling them to explore other methods of learning (e.g. courses abroad, or attendance to relevant conferences and performances) and raise funds towards early career business projects. We intend to ring-fence a percentage of this funding to be accessible only to students from underrepresented groups.

We will also continue to offer a 10% alumni discount for our postgraduate tuition fees and ten cash bursaries of £1,000 to students from low-income households.

3.2 Student consultation

During the creation of this plan, the Students' Union President and Liberation Officers (Disabilities Officer (also a mature student), BAME Officer, Women's Officer and LGBTQ+ Officer) were consulted at two points. After the completion of the Assessment of Performance, potential Aims and Objectives were discussed with them during a meeting, and the first complete draft of the plan was circulated to them for comment. Each was given the opportunity to feed back personally and to gather information from the student communities that they represented.

The SU Officers commented that they would have liked the opportunity to undertake a peer review of other providers proposed Access and Participation Plans, but acknowledged that the extremely tight timescales set by the OfS prevented this. However, they would like to see sharing of best practice and collaborative delivery of initiatives across institutions, with particular engagement by the Students' Unions. This prompted conversations with Leeds City College and Conservatoires UK and as such, collaborative aims with these organisations have been included in the plan.

The Officers also acknowledged that LCoM's unique specialism in music and the performing arts means that student progression hasn't been recorded accurately historically, and suggested that institutions like the Musicians' Union and ISM could be good sources of information to support initiatives. This has been recognised in the Progression objective. However, students were very keen to highlight that degree study at LCoM shouldn't just be about employability. They felt that their degree should be primarily about studying and excelling in their specialism and that LCoM shouldn't move the focus away from this. Their recommendation was that LCoM should assist in signposting progression options to students, rather than trying to cater to all employability needs.

Suggestions received from students, via the SU Officers, focused on ideas for specific activities that could be delivered to achieve the plans aims, which have been logged for discussion at the Access and Participation Working Group (APWG). They did request training for interpreting data and also for undertaking student-led support, as it was recognised that many students turn to their peers in the first instance during a crisis.

To ensure ongoing input from students to the implementation and evaluation of the plan, it was decided that the SU President and Liberation Officers would form a student consultation committee for Access and Participation work at LCoM, representing the conservatoire's underrepresented groups, feeding back regarding student experience, and recommending specific activities to assist with the achievement of the plan's objectives. This committee would be formed during the first semester of 2019/20 and two of its members would continue to be part of the Access and Participation Working Group, with minutes and information shared between the two groups. In this way, as representatives of the student body, they would be able to feed the views of students from underrepresented groups in to the group and to influence activity delivered by the group.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

We have reviewed our capability and capacity in each area of evaluation using the OfS self-assessment.

Strategic Context

The strategic context for evaluation is well established, with scope for further improvement:

- An Access and Participation Working Group is in place, and has a specific remit for evaluation, reporting through the committee structure to the Board of Directors.
- A whole institution approach to Access and Participation will be in place by September 2020, through the development of the new Strategic Plan and Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy 2020-25, which will set out explicit commitments for access and participation and for equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Our evaluation of student and staff EDI data, and subsequent action planning, is well-established. This takes place at the EDI Committee, which oversees the Access and Participation Working Group and includes student representation.
- We have increased our capacity for data analysis and insight through the introduction and expansion of a Planning team.
- There is scope for further development of our analysis to include intersections of characteristics, however due to our small student numbers we will need to achieve this by developing more qualitative analysis and use of national data and academic evidence.
- We have an emerging research culture, through the establishment of a Research Working Group, and we will develop our research capacity and capability over the life of the APP.

Programme Design

Our programme design capability is emerging, and needs further development.

- Targets for our previous programmes (through Access Agreements) have been activity- and output-based. Our increased data capability means we are now able to set outcome-based targets and to focus on these outcomes from the outset of our programmes and partnerships.
- The Access and Participation Working Group will develop a proforma for oversight of all APP programmes so that it can take a consistent approach to consulting on programmes, agreeing deliverables, measurable outcomes for participants and evaluation timescales. We will also develop our use of the Theory of Change methodology, logic chains, data and evidence analysis, to ensure that our interventions are evidence-based.

Evaluation Design

Our evaluation design is emerging, with scope for improvement. In all cases where we undertake long-term, multi-activity programmes and/or invest significantly in programmes, we will use empirical evaluation to establish whether our activities are leading to their intended outcomes, and whether investment is targeted in the right places and at the right level.

An example of a long-term, multi-activity programme is our work with schools. Outcomes-based targets we may set for this work might include the number of students at target schools who progress to Level 2 or 3 courses in music or performing arts, or the enrolment and retention at Junior LCoM from underrepresented groups from school cohorts that we've worked with.

We will use both narrative and empirical approaches to evaluation for this work. To undertake narrative evaluation, we will engage with effective practice in the literature, through conference attendance, through practice-sharing within Conservatoires UK and the NCOP, and through the OfS Evidence and Impact Exchange. Given the relatively small groups of pupils that we will work with, our approach to empirical evaluation will be predominantly qualitative, for example pre/post activity feedback surveys with pupils, teachers and parents, case studies and focus groups. We may be able to complement qualitative evidence with some quantitative data, for example school attainment and progression to HE, once we are able to track pupil progress via the NCOP.

POLAR data has been updated every five years, and so may be updated again in 2022/23, during the lifecycle of the plan. We will, therefore, schedule this in to our evaluation planning.

To evaluate the impact of significant financial investment, such as our financial support for students, we will build on our previous empirical approach (described above) to find out the impact of bursaries on student outcomes. We will do this by adopting the survey and interview tools from the OfS toolkit to include a range of qualitative and quantitative evidence in our evaluation, acknowledging that our student numbers are currently too small to use the statistical tool.

A number of mechanisms will enable us to meet the required evidence standard:

- Data protection guidance is in place (e.g. for schools participants) and can be specifically developed further for APP activities that will involve different groups of people to ensure data protection is robust and people are confident in our use of their data.
- We have identified areas for improvement of data, for example recording of financial support information to enable us to evaluate its impact.
- Partnership with NCOP will enable us to use more tracking data.
- Heidi Plus will enable us to establish better benchmarking data, e.g. for BAME students and conservatoires.
- Data sharing agreements are in place, e.g. with Leeds City College, and we will develop others where there is an opportunity to collect data from multiple sources.
- Research framework – the ethics and appropriateness of research design are currently overseen by our Academic Council but there scope to develop this through the Research Working Group and to establish a detailed research ethics framework.

Learning from Evaluation

We have mechanisms in place to shape improvements:

The Access and Participation Working Group will manage an action plan that is updated quarterly in response to monitoring outcomes (see below), and annually in response to review and evaluation activities, as well as the previously mentioned proforma for oversight of all APP programmes.

Programmes will be evaluated by each delivery team. For example, school interventions will be delivered by the outreach team and evaluated at the point of delivery and at the point where impact may be measured, i.e. application data. The delivery team will report to the Access and Participation Working Group (APWG) regarding the success of each programme by its outcome. Decisions will then be made by the APWG as to whether or not to proceed with, amend or discontinue interventions.

Evaluation timescales will vary according to programme. For example, interventions with a school may take place seven years prior to a student applying to HE, and a further three years before they succeed in their studies and progress to further study or employment. However, we will employ KPIs to ensure that long term activity is contributing towards progress and merits continued investment. KPIs we may use could include conducting a certain number of interventions with target schools each year and working with a high percentage of schools year on year. With regards to interventions we may aim to achieve a level of satisfaction from students with our interventions or to achieve increased awareness of HE study amongst each student cohort. We would measure this via survey feedback.

The APWG will use the action plan and proforma to commission any relevant research needed to understand current, or inform future activity. Research will be commissioned in dialogue with the Research Working Group to ensure robust oversight of the process.

The investment in research and evaluation outlined in our Target and Investment Plan will be used to commission external research where we do not have the capacity or expertise to undertake it at LCoM, the operation of the Research Working Group (for example payment of part-time staff to scrutinise proposals and attend meetings), and/or teaching remission for staff to undertake evaluative research into access and participation.

Partnerships with Go Higher West Yorkshire, Leeds City College and Conservatoires UK will enable us to share evaluation findings, contributing to a wider understanding of the efficacy of

programmes at a regional and sector level. Sharing evaluation findings may enable us to discover new initiatives that will work for LCoM or to deliver a greater number of collaborative projects.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The Outreach Team will supply reports regarding access interventions and activity and the Enterprise Team will supply reports regarding employability initiatives, to be discussed at the APWG, allowing monitoring of activity delivered towards the plan's objectives.

Regarding programmes to support success, LCoM has an embedded quarterly Performance Review reporting cycle, where student data is reviewed, lead outcomes for student outcomes KPIs are considered, and risks are actively managed and reported through the leadership and committee structures.

This review will be expanded to include lead indicators for the Access and Participation Plan success objectives, and reported to the APWG.

The APWG will consider reports against action plan targets and agree further actions to be taken. If there are indications that objectives will not be achieved then objectives and investment may be reprioritised. In severe cases, milestones may be amended to a more realistic success level.

Updates to the APWG Action Plan, including progress towards targets, risk and further actions will be presented to the Students' Union, EDI Committee, Executive Leadership Committee (ELC) and the LCoM Board (governing body) at least biannually.

The APWG and EDI Committee include representatives from across LCoM, including members of the student body, and so are able to make decisive decisions on future activity. The APWG membership includes a representative from the Executive Leadership Team, enabling direct feedback to the Board, and student representation is also in effect at the ELC and Board.

The breadth of skills and knowledge on the Board is maintained through regular skills audits, which shape the Board recruitment processes, and currently there is also a focus on increasing the diversity of Board membership, particularly in terms of ethnicity. The Board has a breadth of expertise from the HE, FE and schools sectors, enabling informed and joined-up dialogue on long-term access measures. On our designation as an HEI, the Board received detailed briefings on the OfS regulatory framework, including Access and Participation, and approved revisions to the committee structure to make sure that assurance routes were in place for each aspect.

The Board regularly receives detailed briefings on key regulatory topics. The APP was discussed by the Board in January and June 2019, and Directors considered the identified gaps, and provided challenge and feedback on the scope and ambition of the plan, and the resources required to address the gaps.

The Board monitors student recruitment and progress via a range of reports during the year, including key performance indicators, predicted and actual student outcomes (retention, progression and attainment), student voice, and equality, diversity and inclusion. Directors provide feedback and challenge on the outcomes, and approve actions to address any areas of weakness. The same approach will be taken to monitoring the plan: an annual report on Access & Participation will be added to the reporting schedule from 2019/20, which will invite the Board to consider the progress made against APP targets and the resources allocated to them. The Board will monitor the risks arising from the updates, for example where expected progress is falling behind target, and will approve actions to be taken in response.

Where actions arise from Board feedback they are assigned to a member of the Executive and delegated through the management and/or committee structures as necessary. Members of the Senior Leadership Team regularly attend the Board to engage directly with governors on key topics, and 'link governors' are assigned to provide advice and support on areas of expertise to the Executive and Senior Leadership Teams. We will be assigning a link governor for Access and Participation.

To ensure that students will be engaged with the monitoring of performance and provisions of the plan, in addition to the biannual distribution of the updated Action Plan to the SU, student

representatives will attend the APWG, which will take place at least bimonthly, and will be able to feed back to the student consultation committee for discussion, dissemination to the wider student population and to gather feedback to bring back to the APWG.

Additionally, the Student Feedback Working Group is currently redeveloping our student voice framework to make sure that the student feedback loop is closed, resulting in the SU and the Student Staff Forum taking on a greater role in disseminating outcomes to students.

To monitor progress of our partnership work, Leeds College of Music is a core member of the GHWY Board which receives updates and progress reports.

4. Provision of information to students

We provide current and prospective students with comprehensive information regarding tuition fees, and the financial support available to them, on our website, at our open days, and in the offer and joining information. Staff, including NASMA accredited advisers, are available at all open events to provide individual guidance to prospective applicants and their families. Advisers are also able to provide support by telephone, email and in person, to prospective applicants, about applying for student finance, particularly for vulnerable groups such as estranged students or care leaver students. We also provide a detailed booklet outlining the tuition fees and all the financial support applicable to Leeds College of Music applicants in one publication.

All published information, whether online or in print, is subject to stringent approval processes ensuring that it is clear, accurate and timely.

For bursary levels and criteria, see page 18-19 of this plan.

5. Appendix

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)
4. Statement of name change (In this document)
5. An update to our evaluation activity (In this document)
6. Our response to new OfS priorities 2022 (In this document)

5.4 Statement of Name Change

On 3 August 2020 Leeds College of Music officially changed our name to Leeds Conservatoire, our access and participation commitments remain the same so any reference to Leeds College of Music or LCOM should be read as Leeds Conservatoire.

Leeds College of Music's Saturday Music School (SMS) also changed their name at this time to Leeds Junior Conservatoire. Any reference to SMS should be read as Leeds Junior Conservatoire.

5.5 An update to our evaluation activity

Since 2020, our evaluation strategy has developed further. High-intensity activities and those that incur high costs will be evaluated robustly at significant points throughout their lifecycle, and we have now begun to adopt a 'realist' approach to our evaluation, supplementing numerical data with context and reflection from participants. This allows us to better explore what kinds of activities work and for whom they work. It provides a clearer picture of the impact of our activities, which is beneficial for a small,

specialist institution. Evaluation is overseen by the Access and Participation Manager and shared with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee on an annual basis.

In September 2022, we engaged SEER to add capacity to our evaluation commitments and support our data interrogation and reporting.

5.6 Our response to new OfS priorities 2022

On 8 February 2022, the new Director for Fair Access and Participation set out new priorities for his term of office, including refocussing providers' access and participation plans to address the following priorities as well as reducing the term of each plan from five years to four. Institutions have been asked to request to make variations to their Access and Participation plans for 2020-2024. Leeds Conservatoire does not intend to set any additional targets for the remainder of this cycle. We will instead focus on our current targets and develop new ones for the 24-28 cycle as we believe that our current targets already align with what has been requested.

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

To address this priority, we have completed the plan summary as requested in the guidance by the Office for Students. We recognise that this document in itself is still not the most engaging way to communicate this information to students and their parents and will, therefore, aim to create video content to sit alongside it.

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

The guidance from the Office for Students is this is not a mandatory aspect of the variations request for any provider with less than 2,000 students. However, we feel it incredibly important to include information about the work we do in this area. Our Schools Liaison Team and Junior Conservatoire carry out focused and engaging work, to enrich the lives of young people from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, as well as enhance their understanding of studying music or performing arts at HE and raising their aspirations for careers in the arts. This is all detailed in the plan summary.

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

Our current plan is predominantly weighted towards the success of our current students. For the groups highlighted as part of our access work, we continue to support these groups throughout the student lifecycle once they enrol with us, therefore, our full set of targets details our intentions for supporting their success. Our success targets for students from low participation backgrounds and ethnically diverse backgrounds, build upon our access targets and begin to explore further our commitment to support students who belong to multiple communities and aren't just counted as discrete groups with only one source to their barriers.

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

As a small and specialist provider, our provision is already considered by many to be alternative. Our degree offering is highly vocational, with intrinsic links to the industries our students progress into. We also provide alternative entry points to our programmes via our foundation degrees and foundation years. We are currently undertaking a curriculum development project, to rewrite our programmes to ensure that they are accessible, meet EDI objectives and provide the very best opportunities for our students. With our new curriculum, we will also be applying for degree awarding powers.