

University of Northampton

Access and participation plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

1. Assessment of performance

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socio-economic status

Access

The University of Northampton (UoN) utilises IMD Q1 & Q2 as the indicator for socio-economic status and disadvantage. UoN continues to see an increasing number of enrolments for students from Q1 & Q2 from 40.7% (2013/14) to 49.8% (2017/18). The proportion of enrolments continues to increase from 20% (2013/14) to 27.2% of students (all UG, FT) compared to a sector at 21.6% (2017/18). The proportion of students from Q2 has been increasing year on year, at a much faster rate than the sector. The same is also true when looking at IMD Q1& Q2 combined.

[The 2018 Hepi report](#) identified that white working-class males from disadvantaged backgrounds are the most underrepresented group in higher education. Whilst 19.6% of first year enrolments at UoN in 2016/17 were white males, only 14.4% of these came from IMD Q1 with 31.9% from Q1 & Q2 combined. The total number of white males across the UG student body from IMD Q1 & Q2 (all UG FT) has fallen from 253 (2015/16) to 203 (2017/18), where IMD, ethnicity, and gender are known.

UoN acknowledges that its wider access work requires greater emphasis on maintaining the gains made in raising participation for students from IMD Q1 & Q2. However, there is a need to focus on improving the numbers of white males from these areas to address negative trends. This focus will complement the objectives of the NCOP programme, which emphasises POLAR4 Q1 & Q2, and ensure a comprehensive programme of access activities are provided across NCOP, APP, and recruitment strategy.

Non-continuation

UoN has 85.6% of students continuing (all UG, FT) from IMD Q1, compared to an overall sector figure of 85.9%. However, the proportions have been decreasing year on year, at a much faster rate than the sector. The same is also true when looking at IMD Q1 & Q2 combined where the 3 -year gap trend between UoN and the all English HE providers rate has worsened from +2.8% to -0.5%. Gaps in continuation are identified between part-time (P/T) students IMD Q3 to Q5 and Q1 & Q2 with a three-year worsening trend rising from 2% (2013/14) to 10% (2015/16). Whilst this gap is not yet significant this compares to an increasing gap in full-time continuation against the same comparator groups which has risen from 0.9% to 3.1% over the same period. The gap between Q5 and Q1 IMD for part-time continuation has increased from -2% to 20% and between Q2 and Q5 IMD from 2% to 10%, identifying that a greater focus is required on closing the gap between the most and least deprived students. This gap in continuation is further explored in section 1.6 which considers intersections of disadvantage.

Attainment

UoN attainment rates are understandably at the lower end for the sector. In 2017/18, 65.0% of UoN full-time undergraduates from IMD Q1 achieved a good degree, compared to a sector figure of 67.1%. The proportion of UoN full-time undergraduates from IMD Q1 achieving a good degree has been static since 2015/16, whilst the sector increased by 3.4% over the same period. Over the five-year period UoN has moved from being slightly ahead of the sector (62% v 61%) to being 2.1% points behind the sector in 2017/18. When the good degree outcome for IMD Q1 & Q2 combined are reviewed - a similar trend is seen, the gap between UoN performance and the sector has increased from -0.5% points to -2.4% points since 2013/14. There are several significant gaps evident for students from areas of deprivation and for certain ethnic groups, many of these are also significant gaps at the sector level. Some gaps relate to

worsening of the IMD Q1 attainment rate when compared to the sector although we also see some gaps across the POLAR4 intersections. These intersections of disadvantage are discussed further in section 1.6.

The attainment gap between IMD Q3 to Q5 and Q1 & Q2 P/T students has reduced from 12% (2013/14) to 4% (2017/18) and is better than the performance for FT students from the same categories. The gap between P/T Q5 and Q1 IMD has halved over that period to 10%, whilst the gap between P/T Q5 and Q2 has doubled to 10% over the same period.

Progression to employment or further study

The UoN graduate employment rate for first degree leavers is lower than the UK average (-9%) and comparator HEI average (-10%). The three-year trend for UoN is improving as is the national and comparator group average. The gap between the UoN and national and comparator group continues to narrow from that seen in 2014/15. UoN has a progression to high skilled or further study rate for IMD Q1 graduates of 62% (all UG, FT), compared to a sector figure of 68.9%. However, the proportion grew by 5% since 2016/17 which is a faster rate than the sector which grew by 3.7%. There are improving five-year trends in reducing gaps in graduate outcomes across all IMD quintiles, and when comparing Q1 & Q2 with Q3 to 5. In addition, at the intersection of IMD and ethnicity and gender positive trends are also evident. Gains to date have been incremental and a step change in approach is required to speed up the improvements required to achieve transformational change. These incremental trends are also seen for students from low participation neighbourhoods. The data is limited in some of the intersections of gender and ethnicity, but the indication is that, as with IMD, a step change is also needed if transformational improvements are to be made in reducing gaps in outcomes over the period of this APP.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

UoN has 46.9% BAME students (all UG, FT) compared to the sector figure of 31.2%. The proportions have been increasing year on year at a rate faster than the sector. The proportion of Asian students (9.8%) is lower than the sector (13.7%). UoN has seen an increasing trend in the proportion of Black students from 14.3% (2013/14) to 33% (2017/18). Trends for other ethnicities have remained static with some gaps when compared with sector averages. The trend in the proportion of White students is negative from 68.3% (2013/14) to 53.1% (2017/18) with the gap against the sector increasing from -5.5% (2013/14) to -15.8% (2017/18). UoN's success at increasing access for students from BAME communities has significantly changed the ethnic composition of the student body and this is the result of targeted access and recruitment plans. The [2017 WONKHE analysis of Black applicants to HE](#) identified UoN as having the 4th highest proportion of BAME applicants in the English HE sector. The priority for UoN's wider access activity is to maintain the gains made in improving access for young people from BAME communities whilst the APP investment focuses on improving outcomes for BAME students across other stages of the student life cycle. The priority for access investment is to improve access for White working class male students defined as coming from IMD Q1 & Q2 wards.

Non-continuation

In 2016/17, UoN had 86.4% BAME students continuing (all UG, FT) compared to the sector figure of 88.1%. The trend in the proportion of BAME continuing has decreased year on year at a rate faster than the sector from a peak 93.2% (2013/14). The gap has worsened from +3.5% (2013/14) to -1.7% (2016/17). The proportion of Black students continuing is at 85.5% (2016/17) which is slightly higher than the sector at 85.0%. The trend is a negative one, falling 9% in five years compared to the sector trend which has fallen 2.3% over the same period. There are numerous gaps in continuation rates including that between BAME students from IMD Q1 & Q2 compared with those from IMD Q3 to Q5 where the gap has increased from +1% (2013/14) to -4% (2016/17). The gap between IMD Q1 & Q2 BAME students and IMD Q1 & Q2 White students has increased from 5% (2013/14) to -3% (2016/17). The gap between BAME students from IMD Q1 + Q2 compared with students from less deprived neighbourhoods (IMD Q3 to Q5) has increased from +2% (2013/14) to -5% (2016/17). Students studying P/T from BAME also present a negative trend with the gap compared to white students increasing from -4% (2012/13) to 15% (2015/16). Whilst this change is not

statistically significant it is a much faster change than that for full-time BAME which has worsened by 5.2 % over the same period.

Attainment

In 2017/18, 63.3% of full-time BAME students at UoN achieved a good degree, compared to the sector figure of 68.8%. The sector also performs better than UoN for BAME part-time students at 33.2% compared to 22% UoN (2017/18). Progress has been made in increasing the % of good degrees awarded to BAME students but the gap between White students remains at the 2014/15 level (-17%) and above the sector average of -13.2%. The proportion of students achieving a good degree at both full-time and part-time modes of study has grown faster than the sector. Finally, full-time Black students at UoN achieved a higher proportion of good degrees (59.9%) than the sector (58.9%). An analysis of good degree performance against entry tariff identified a statistically insignificant underperformance for students from BAME backgrounds however, Black African students with an entry tariff range 240-299 show the most significant level of under attainment. A more significant indicator of under attainment has been identified as entry qualification with those students, regardless of ethnicity. Students who enter University with alternative level 3 qualifications, i.e. Non- A-Levels entrants, are significantly under attaining. These types of qualifications are more prevalent within the BAME student body and could be contributing to the gaps in attainment seen for non-white groups.

Progression to employment or further study

The 2016/17 progression rate for BAME students (all UG, FT) was 57.2%, compared to a sector figure of 70.1%. The UoN five-year trend has decreased by -1.9% whilst the sector's trend has risen by 10.4% since 2012/13. The sector performs better than UoN for part-time BAME students. The gap between UoN BAME and White graduate employment or further study remains significant across all ethnicities at -14% (2015/16) against a sector average of -4.5%. The UoN 2017/18, the internally produced Graduate Next Steps survey identified that the gap between BAME and White leavers who were in graduate employment or further study 6 months after graduation had reduced to 9.4%. This gap is 2.9% less than 2016/17 and 4.1% less than 2015/16. This reinforces early indications that the gap is beginning to close between UoN White and BAME leavers is narrowing, even when further study is considered, but Graduate Outcomes data is still awaited. This being said, UoN acknowledges that the gap between White and BAME student progression is still significant and remains a priority; a finding reinforced by TEF data which double flags graduate employability and further study across all ethnicities.

1.3 Mature students

Access

Mature students (all UG, FT) make up 38.4% of the UoN student body (2017/18) compared to the sector figure of 27.8% (2017/18). Over the previous two years the proportion of mature students has increased at a rate much faster than the sector. 97% of part-time students are mature students, a level that has remained constant over a five-year period and which is a proportion that is 10% greater than the sector average.

Non-continuation

In 2016/17 UoN had 90.0% of mature students continuing (all UG, FT) compared to the sector figure of 84.8%, and 74% of part time mature students continuing compared to the sector at 61.8%. The proportion of FT UG mature students continuing has been decreasing year on year at a rate slower than the sector, with the five-year trend being static following a down turn in 2015/16. There are gaps in continuation for all Young UG FT students when compared to Mature students at -2.4%, down from +1.8% 2012/13 and compared to the sector at +7.4%, with two and five-year trends demonstrating that the percentage of mature students continuing, across all age ranges, is higher than young students. This is mirrored in both the two and five-year trends in First Degree Full Time Young students compared to Mature students' continuation rates.

Attainment

Full-time mature students at UoN achieved 75.1% good degrees, compared to the sector figure of 70.1% (2017/18), with the five-year trend remaining static despite a gradual increasing trend for the sector. Across all age ranges UoN performs better than the sector. Over the last five years the attainment gap between young compared mature students has narrowed to -1% from -2% (2013/14) against a sector trend where the gap has increased from +9% to +10.3% over the same period. However, the sector has 57.8% of part-time mature students gaining good degrees compared to UoN at 35.6% (2017/18) with no significant improvement seen over the preceding five years. When compared to mature full-time students the gap of 39.5% remains high, but is not statistically significant due to the numbers involved however, reducing the gap remains a priority for UoN's wider student success investment.

Progression to employment or further study

The UoN progression rate in 2016/17 was 76.5% for mature students (all UG, FT), compared to a sector figure of 75.7%. The proportion has increased year on year at a rate faster than the sector with a 15% increase seen between 2014/15 and 2016/17. The gap between mature student progression into higher skilled employment or further study compared to younger students has increased year on year to +17% against a sector average of +3.4%, with the largest gap at +23% is seen at the 31-40-year-old compared to the younger students and a sector gap of +6.1%. Part-time mature students perform slightly better at sector level at 75.8% compared to UoN at 75.7%.

1.4 Disabled students

Access

In 2017/18 12.1% of the UoN student body declared a disabled (all UG, FT) compared to the sector figure of 14.6%. The proportion has increased year on year at a rate lower than the sector over the preceding five years. The only individual disability type where UoN has a higher proportion than the sector is Social & Communication at 0.9%, compared to 0.8% for the sector. There are negative two and five-year trends in the proportion of Fulltime UG students with PG components with no known disability compared with disabled, Fulltime UG with PG components with a known mental health disability, and all UG FT with a known mental health disability. It is unclear from the data reviewed whether this is attributable to a failure by the student to disclose or an access challenge. This issue is being addressed through UoN's wider access investment rather than through the APP.

Non-continuation

2016/17 saw 86.9% of disabled students at UoN continuing (all UG, FT) compared to the sector figure of 89.3% and the no known disability rate of 88.5%. The proportion had reduced year on year at a rate much faster than the sector from 91.7% in 2013/14. UoN had slightly higher continuation rates than the sector for Cognitive & Learning and Multiple Impairments. Significant gaps were between all UG FT with a No Known Disability vs Mental Health (5%) and First-Degree FT No Known Disability vs Mental Health (4%) both with negative 5-year trends.

Attainment

In 2017/18 74% of full-time disabled students at UoN achieved a good degree compared to 75.9% for the sector. The sector performed better than UoN for part-time students. However, the proportion for both full-time and part-time modes of study had been increasing year on year at a rate much faster than the sector. Also, UoN performed better than the sector for Cognitive & Learning disabilities in both full and part-time modes of study. There were gaps in performance between Full-time Cognitive & Learning, compared to No Known Disability and Part-time Cognitive & Learning, compared to No Known Disability both with negative two-year trend and five-year trends.

Progression to employment or further study

UoN has a progression rate of 62.0% for disabled students (all UG, PT) compared to a sector figure of 68.9% (2015/16). The proportion year on year was growing at a rate faster than the sector, including an increase of 15.1% between 2015/16 and 2016/17, however it remains well above the 1.8% gap seen in 2012/13. When comparing progression rates between UoN students with a declared disability and those without a known disability the gap is 1% compared to a sector gap of 1.8%. UoN remains committed to success for all and will utilise wider student success investment to reduce the gap between UoN and the Sector in terms of progression outcomes for those with a declared disability. UoN will continue to ensure the progression outcomes for its students with declared disabilities will be comparable with those students who do not have a known disability.

1.5 Care leavers

There are currently 20 care leavers from Northampton (Northants County Council 2018 data) studying at a University across three undergraduate years. Given there are 181 children in care currently in years 11-13, assuming equivalent numbers, the numbers at university represent 11%. UoN recognises that nationally outcomes for care leavers are [reported as affected by a range of risk and protective factors that impact on student success](#). UoN currently has 25 students who have declared their care leaver status. A review of the county and institutional data does not indicate any statistically significant gaps in access and participation outcomes for care leavers across the student lifecycle at UoN, data is limited and inconclusive. This APP addresses the limitation of available data, explore enhancements to existing financial support provision, and launch a bespoke support package designed for care leavers. This APP continues to provide additional financial support through the Care Leavers Award.

In 2019/20 UoN committed to sign the Care Leavers Covenant to enhance best practice and data sharing across partners and develop a no wrong door approach to careers IAG and support to care leavers. UoN students and prospective students are encouraged to declare their status and a full review of systems and data capture is underway with care leaver status being included across all student records to enable UoN to build a clear picture of the student experience of care leavers by 2020/21.

Research undertaken to inform this APP indicated that accommodation costs are a significant barrier to access, so in 2020/21 UoN will pilot a scheme providing 100% discount on a student's first year UoN accommodation costs for up to 50 care leavers. The impact of this discount in overcoming barriers to access and continuation will be incorporated within the APP evaluation plan informing development of a Care Leaver Package in 2021/22. The Package will be developed in collaboration with HE and FE providers in the county, as well as strategic partners including the local authorities and LEP. The impact of the Care Leavers Package will be evaluated as part of the APP Evaluation Framework and reported in annual impact reports.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

This section only highlights significant gaps and trends identified in both the OfS data and UoN's own performance monitoring data.

Access

The intersections with the most significant access gaps relate to the % of BAME student in IMD Q1 & Q2 at UoN. In 2017/18 this stood at 34.0% of students (all UG, FT) compared to the sector figure of 20.7%. In addition, the UoN has 35.4% of POLAR4 Q3 to Q5 BAME students (all UG, FT) compared to the sector figure of 22.1%. The recruitment of BAME students from areas of social disadvantage remains strong but highlights the priority to address BAME and low socio-economic disadvantage attainment and progression further along the life cycle. In addition, internal data has identified a five-year negative trend in enrolments of white males from IMD Q1 & Q2 areas. In % terms this has reduced from 7.5% (2013/14) to 5.1% (2017/18) with only 148 students in the 2017/18 intake identified as being from these areas down from 245 in 2013/14. Maintaining UoN's achievement in diversifying the student body by improving access for BAME students is a priority for the University's wider widening participation investment, with the APP access

priority centring on improving social mobility for disadvantaged White Working-Class (WWC) males defined as males domiciled in IMD Q1 & Q2 super output areas.

Non-continuation

In 2016/17 UoN saw 85.2% of IMD Q1 & Q2 BAME students (all UG, FT) continuing in their studies compared to the sector figure of 86.3%. UoN had 85.9% of POLAR4 Q3 to Q5 BAME students (all UG, FT) continuing compared to the sector figure of 91.6%. Whilst UoN performs in line with the sector average against the IMD measure for BAME continuation, when viewed at intersections and multiple levels of disadvantage the indication is that more work is needed to address BAME continuation rate for students in IMD Q1 & Q2. The trend in continuation rates for white students IMD Q1 & Q2 shows a negative 3-year trend which is greater than the sector trend and mirrors that of the POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 trends.

UoN has reduced gaps in continuation for students from POLAR4 Q3 to Q5 compared to POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 from +2% (2013/14) to 0% (2016/17) with no gap between females POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 compared to Q3 to Q5 (2016/17) and a gap of -1% (2016/17) down from +2% (2013/14) for males from POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 compared with Q3 to Q5. The gap for POLAR4 males from Q1 & Q2 compared with females from the same quintiles has worsened from +4% to -7% in the three years ending 2016/17, a trend that mirrors that for the same group, males POLAR4 Q1 & Q2, compared to females from Q3 to Q5 where the gap is -7% down from 0% in 2013/14.

More significantly there has been a decline in the continuation rates for male undergraduates from IMD Q1 or Q2 which has fallen from a high of 92% in 2013-14 to 80% in 2016/17. This means that gaps in continuation rates between males in IMD Q1 & Q2 and other groups have grown:

- compared to males from IMD Q3 to Q5 the gap has increased from 0% (2013/14) to -6% (2016/17) compared to the latest sector gap of -6.9%
- compared to females from IMD Q3 to Q5 the gap has increased from +1% to -12% over the same period
- compared with females from IMD Q1 & Q2 the gap has increased from +2% (2013/14) to -10% (2016/17).

The latter two of these continuation gaps are statistically significant in 2016/17.

Attainment

As our part-time cohort is small it is difficult to ascertain patterns and real improvements or change when looking at the intersections of disadvantage.

However, for our full-time cohort, over recent years we have seen the greatest improvements with our White students from certain areas. Both the White IMD Q3 to Q5 and the White POLAR Q3 to Q5 populations have seen greater rates of improvement in attainment which has further opened gaps. These increases have broadly been in line with the sector and so now 76.0% of both our White IMD Q3 to Q5 and White POLAR Q3 to Q5 populations achieve good degrees compared to 75.8% and 78.5% for the sector respectively. In comparison the attainment rate of our BAME POLAR Q3 to Q5 population has fluctuated around the 60.0% mark for the last five years whilst across the sector the attainment rate has improved by 6.3% points to 72.7%. The BAME POLAR Q1 & Q2 stands at 69% and has been improving over recent years.

The significant gaps in the IMD related intersections of disadvantage are driven by the relatively poor performance of good honours degrees achieved by our most deprived BAME (IMD Q1/2) students.

Whilst the attainment rate for this group has increased from 57% in 2013-14 to 60% in 2017-18 in has increased at a much slower rate than the sector and some of our other groups of students.

Progression

Significant progress in improving levels of graduate employability and further study has been made since 2014/15 however, the current TEF data indicates that progression into higher skilled roles is double negative flagged against all ethnicities when compared to White students and sector averages. Specifically,

the University has 53.6% of IMD Q1 & 2 BAME students progressing into high skilled employment (all UG, FT) compared to the sector figure of 67.8%.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

Service Families

Military families are registered at their service base so the analysis is limited to utilising pupil premium data to identify potential families. As an active signatory to the Military Covenant, UoN works closely with local stakeholders and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to understand the issues faced by these families. Within the county, families are either housed in POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 wards or areas that sit within IMD Q1 & Q2. Children attend schools that are either located in POLAR4 Q2, Q3, or Q4 wards or have high proportions of children from POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 wards or IMD Q1 & Q2 catchment areas. For access purposes service children are identifiable through the NCOP programme, collaborative outreach, or will be supported through the focus on IMD Q1 & Q2 in this APP. UoN has identified that access to HE for spouses of military personnel is a growing issue as they do not receive the same support from the MOD as military personnel to transition into civilian life or access education and training. The partnership through the covenant is designed to improve data capture and understand the issues faced by these families based in the county.

Carers, Refugees, Gypsies, Travellers, and Roma.

Whilst identification of a student or prospective student's status within these categories is being captured, data is limited and does not provide a statistically significant evidence base upon which to build. UoN has identified that, as part of its efforts to encourage disclosure of other protected characteristic statuses, there is a need to promote disclosure of Carers, Refugees, Gypsies, Travelers, and Roma statuses so that support services can be improved as part of its wider access and participation investment.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

Access Target Groups

UoN's assessment of access data highlights that, at multiple levels of disadvantage, significant progress in widening participation for students from **BAME** backgrounds, those from **IMD Q1 & 2**, and **POLAR4 Q1 & Q2** wards. However, more work is needed to improve social mobility for **WWC males** defined as males from IMD Q1 & Q2 wards, where a five-year adverse trend is evident. UoN continues to build upon the NCOP investment and the development of the collaborative Outreach Hub to ensure the **Access investment** continues to align APP priorities with both NCOP and the LEP to ensure sustainability beyond the phase two NCOP funding round. UoN's approach to defining disadvantage in the context of access has been to take a basket of measure of disadvantage into account including free school meals, POLAR, household income and IMD indicators. Despite the advice in the regulatory notice to adopt POLAR4 as the indicator for social disadvantage, UoN has decided to adopt IMD as the Key Indicator for social disadvantage. Our mapping of these wards against the basket of indicators suggests that the intersection of the multiple indicators of disadvantage are more identifiable and concentrated when viewed through IMD than other indicators. The comment made by [Chris Skidmore in April 2019](#) indicated that a replacement for POLAR was needed because it is a problematic measure of disadvantage, this reinforces UoN's view that a focus on IMD is better suited for access priorities; expanding activities deeper into IMD Q1 & Q2 wards to improve participation for young people from the most disadvantaged families at multiple levels. UoN commits to consolidate the proportion of BAME students at 25% across the student body within the wider EDI investment.

Student Success and Progression Target Groups

Whilst progress has been made in addressing differential outcomes across some **BAME** groups the assessment highlights that outcomes for BAME students across multiple intersections of disadvantage, especially IMD Q1 & Q2 are significantly below those of White students. White males from IMD Q1 & Q2

face significant barriers to continuing in higher education, with long term negative trends in the proportion of UoN student from these groups that withdraw.

UoN's priority for APP **student success** investment remains to improve the attainment rates for all home BAME students by closing the gap with home White good degree outcomes. In addition, reversing the negative trend in IMD Q1 & Q2 BAME continuation rates remains a priority. Improving levels of continuation for males from IMD Q1 & Q2 requires targeted investment that will contribute to improving BAME continuation and provide White Working-Class males from IMD Q1 & Q2 with additional support to overcome barriers to success and close the gap with females.

UoN recognises the need continue its investment to increase levels of post study progression for all students across all protected characteristics. The APP **Post Study Progression** investment targets reducing the largest gaps in performance and tackling those gaps and trends that have the greatest impact on overall performance. The focus is therefore on closing the gap between UoN BAME graduate employability and White graduate employability, as well as the gap between IMD Q1 & Q2 graduate employability and the all student graduate figure. Whilst progress has been made against both priorities, UoN recognises that there is a need to accelerate the impact to achieve the ambitious strategic institutional milestone for this group.

2.2 Aims and objectives

Over recent years UoN have increased the % of students from BAME backgrounds and across all protected characteristics except White Working-Class males defined as white males from IMD Q1 & Q2. UoN has maintained the % of students POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 with increases seen in Q4 whilst Q3 and Q5 have reduced. UoN has strong relationships with local schools and stakeholders that enable us to deliver a comprehensive offer aligned with our NCOP programme. Performance in both P/T and mature student participation has shown an adverse trend that reflects National trends. The data related to part time student performance is variable and sporadic making any assessment of trends and actions difficult. All actions are designed to positively impact part-time as well as fulltime students as identified in the logic model (Section 3).

Whilst progress has been made against many of the student success and progression indicators UoN recognise there is a need to accelerate performance against BAME attainment and Graduate Employability across all protected characteristics. UoN recognises that more investment needed to close the gap in Good degree attainment for students from IMD Q1 compared with those from Q5 and to improve continuation rates for students from IMD Q1 & Q2 compared to less disadvantaged students.

The APP aims and objectives set out in this section have been prioritised on the assessment of performance in Section 1 and in consultation with the Northampton Students' Union (SU). All aims and objectives contribute to the University's Strategic Plan, **Transforming Lives and Inspiring Change**, operational priorities, and institutional action plans. The success measures align with the UoN's Operational Plan and Equality and Inclusion Action Plan (EIAP). UoN commits to investing 16.2% per annum of higher fee income in the APP

Access Objectives

UoN's Access strategic objective is to **overcoming barriers to entry into HE for young people with protected characteristics that are under represented at the University**. Total access investment will be maintained at £930,000 p.a. over the period covered by this APP with the % of investment from higher fee income reducing from 1.5% to 1.4% over the same period. The investment will address access priorities around the following target group.

1. PTA 1 Increase Access for White Working-Class male entrants, defined as males domiciled in IMD Q1 & Q2 output areas, to 15% of total entrants with know IMD, Gender, and ethnicity by 2024/25.

Student Success Objective

UoN's strategic aim is **to achieve success for all students**. This APP builds upon previous Access Agreements and APPs targeting investment to address gaps in student success. UoN investment in Financial Support, including the Student Success Package and Financial Assistance Fund, will reduce by 0.5% over the period of the APP from 11.4% to 10.9% with investment in support services increasing by 0.5%. The priorities for this investment are: -

1. PTS 1 Close the continuation gap between IMD Q5 and Q1 to 0% by 2023/24.
2. PTS 2 Close the gap in Good Degree attainment between FT Home (first degree) BAME and FT Home (first degree) White students to 0% by 2024/25. *(OfS KPM)*
3. PTS 3 Close the gap in Good Degree attainment between (FT home) students from IMD Q5 and Q1 to 0% by 2024/25
4. PTS 4 Close the continuation gap between White (FT Students) and BAME (FT Students) to 0% by 2023/24
5. PTS 5 Close the continuation gap between POLAR 4 Q5 and Q1 to 0% by 2023/24 *(OfS KPM)*

Post study Progression Objective

UoN is committed to ensuring that it **achieves outstanding levels of graduate employability and further study outcomes for all students**. This APP aims to make a positive impact in reversing adverse trends and closing significant gaps. Investment in student success increases from 3% to 3.6% per annum over the period. The investment will be applied to: -

1. PTP 1 Close the gap in graduate employment between UoN BAME (all students) and UoN white (all students) to 0% by 2024/25
2. PTP 2 Close the graduate employment gap between IMD Q1 & Q2 and the University (all graduates) to 0% by 2024/25

3. Strategic measures

Whole provider strategic approach

Overview

This section outlines UoN's APP Theory of Change whole provider approach to delivering the outlined above objectives. The APP logic model was developed in consultation with the SU, academic, professional service staff, and academics to ensure everyone is aware of how they contribute to addressing the priorities. It was informed by the analysis outlined in Section 1 and builds previous Access Agreements and APPs. Reporting mechanisms and data capture requirements are aligned to provide timely and consistent reporting against outcomes with outcomes reported to UMT and Governing body as part of the strategic planning and monitoring process. The impact report is incorporated into the UoN Social Impact report. The APP logic model aligns with the UoN Evaluation Framework designed through the completion of a 3-year PhD study and outlined in Section 3.3 below. The Logic Model was approved by the SU, UoN's academic committees, and signed off by the University Management Team (UMT) and Board of Governors (BGs).

Financial Support Logic Model

APP themes & activities	Theory of Change Factors			Indicators		
	Institutional approach ACTIVITIES	Student agency & decision making	Target groups	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Financial Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Success Package Care leavers Award Financial Assistance Fund Financial Support Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to the learning and teaching model Digital literacy Reduce the additional cost of study Improved financial management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BAME Care Leavers Disabilities Low income families All students experiencing financial difficulties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of students accessing financial support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reverse negative trends in continuation Improve progression rates Level 4-5 and Levels 5 to level 6 Close continuation gaps Improve BAME attainment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve Success for All Improve social mobility Overcome barriers to success Provide Exceptional Value for Money

Access, Student Success and Progression Logic Model

APP themes & activities	Theory of Change Factors			Indicators		
	Institutional approach ACTIVITIES	Student agency & decision making	Target groups	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
WP	Guest Lecture Programme Summer school and In-reach Programme of enrichment resources Level 3 learning resources Subject networks and research days Care leavers package (collaborative) Military Covenant (collaborative) CEC Enterprise Co-ordinator (collaborative)	Improved resilience General Self-efficacy Higher Aspirations Raise Attainment	White Economically disadvantaged males (IMD Q1 and Q2) LPN Care leavers Military families	# of young people (IMD 1 & 2) attending in reach # of young people accessing STEAM activities (IMD Q1 & Q2) # of schools signing a "English Learning Resource Agreement" # of schools signing a " Maths Learning Resource Agreement"	Improved general self-efficacy Increase % of white working-class males from IMD Q1 & Q2 Increase predicted attainment levels in KS2 English for participating school Increase predicted attainment levels in KS4 Maths for participating school	Overcoming barriers to entry to HE for young people with protected characteristics that are underrepresented at UoN
Student Success	Transition into HE programme Attainment and aspiration programme Integrated Learner support SU Student Voice BAME Forum Specialist Personal Tutor support Inclusive academic practice Learner Analytics (LEARN) Dedicated SU BAME Sabbatical Foundation Stage Framework ASSIST	Personalisation of student experience Increased Academic excellence Improved Resilience Improved Digital literacy Improved wellbeing	BAME Care Leavers Disabilities IMD Q1 and Q2 Low socio-economic IMD Q1 & Q2 (males) Mature Part Time POLAR 4 Q1 and Q2	% of No-to-Low student engagement reported on the LEARN Dashboard % of students continuing from level 4 to level 5 of their programme of study with 120 credits and average grade of C or above % of students continuing from level 5 to level 6 of their programme of study with 120 credits and average grade of B- or above	Reverse negative trends in continuation Improve progression rates Level 4-5 and Levels 5 to level 6 Close continuation gaps Improve BAME attainment Improve attainment for students from working class backgrounds	Achieve Success for All Improve social mobility Overcome barriers to success Provide Exceptional Value for Money
Progression	Increase levels of Joint Professional Accreditation Enhance employability offer Career Registration Work-based and work-related learning opportunities (Collaborative) Northampton Employment Promise County Employer Forums BAME Mentoring programme Careers for Life	Develop and Evidence Graduate Attributes Relevant sector work experience and skills Access to IAG and employability support General Self-Efficacy Digital Literacy	BAME Care-leavers Disabilities Low socio-economic IMD Q1 & Q2 Part-time Young Students (under 21)	% of students completing the employability award % of programmes with industry year option % of programmes with joint professional accreditation	Improve trends in graduate outcomes Close the gap in graduate employability between UoN BAME and White (all students) Close the graduate employability gap between UoN students IMD Q1 & Q2 and the UoN (all graduates) figure	achieve outstanding levels of graduate employability and further study outcomes for all students

Alignment with other strategies

In 2014/15, UoN adopted an institutional approach to Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and the delivery of its previous Access Agreement and APP programmes. This approach embedded the APP within the UoN governance structure and ensured the delivery of activities is undertaken at Faculty/Department and programme/service delivery levels. Student success across the life cycle is everyone's responsibility rather than residing in one department. UoN's sees the APP is an integral part of UoN's commitment to delivering outstanding student success and value for money through personalised, holistic support, and a Super Supportive environment in which all students can flourish. The APP contributes to UoN's mission to **'Transform Lives and Inspire Change'** with impacts that are aligned to institutional KPIs monitored by, UMT and the BGs.

This APP complements UoN's wider commitment to EDI outlined in the EIAP to ensure UoN discharges its obligations under the Equalities Act 2010. Priorities have been identified by the UoN Inclusive Student Experience Group (ISEG), which has institutional oversight for issues related EDI across the student experience. The APP priorities are integrated into the ISEG delivery plan with performance monitored accordingly.

The UoN Student Experience Committee (SEC) has governance and oversight responsibilities for the quality and outcomes of the entire student experience, with action plans in place for Access, Student Success, and Graduate Employability to ensure outcomes across the student life-cycle are maximised for all students including those identified as priorities within the APP. Action Plans are agreed and monitored by ISEG and annual reports are provided to Senate and BGs and are developed and signed off by the SU. The APP provides targeted activities and investment that contribute to both the ISEG and SEC priorities by addressing gaps in performance identified within the relevant committee action/delivery plans as well as Faculty and programme level plans.

The Learning and Teaching Plan (LTP) is developed and delivered by the Institute for Learning and Teaching (ILT) in consultation with Staff and Student representatives from the SU. The LTP is overseen by SEC and the Academic Quality Standards Committee (AQSC) and is approved by Senate, UMT, and the BGs. The LTP contributes to the APP by prioritising inclusive practice in learning and teaching to improve access to the curriculum for all students. Also, through innovation in curriculum development and academic staff development through the C@NDO development programme. Student Voice informs the plan through the URB@N student research grant enabling students to undertake a staff-student partnership project in learning and teaching that has the potential to improve the student experience.

Strategic measures

UoN's 2019/20 APP identified specific strategic goals and activities which remain priorities for this five-year APP. This section restates these goals and identifies the activities that contribute to achieving the transformational change needed to achieve these goals. Section 3.3 outlines how UoN will implement a new Evaluation Framework for APP investment All activities and interventions outlined have been developed from sector best practice guides e.g. Recognising Achievement Beyond the Curriculum (QAA 2012/13) SU research. Activities have been carried forward from previous Access Agreements and APP's that have produced early indications of impact and demonstrate a potential to address the challenges outlined in this APP. Evidence has been captured through internal evaluations and research, and their inclusion on the APP evaluation framework will enhance our understanding of this potential.

Access Goals

Having redefined the goals for Access in 2019/20 these remain unchanged for this APP. An additional Goal is included to ensure that UoN's committed to ensuring that the NCOP programme legacy is continued through the APP and that this aligns to the Collaborative Outreach Hub. The Access Goals are therefore

1. To improve subject knowledge and performance in maths KS3, literacy KS2 and science (KS3).
2. Increase levels of self-efficacy in those undertaking our programme of aspiration raising events, measured through the application of General Self-Efficacy tools.
3. Work with the LEP to joint fund the work of the Enterprise Co-ordinator, within the local careers hub, to increase access to local employers to ensure students benefit from better careers opportunities. Target is to see a 20% increase on the 2017/18 academic year actual engagement figure.
4. Continue informing parents/carers of pathways to HE including guidance on both higher and degree apprenticeships. To achieve a 20% increase on the 2017/18 academic year actual engagement figure
5. Address 'lifestyle' barriers to HE for Mature students focussing on Health-related professions, education, and Military spouses through targeted financial support and transition to HE provision. Reduce or halt the negative trend in P/T Mature recruitment.
6. Embed UoN Access investment into the Collaborative Outreach Hub and ensure the legacy of NCOP informs future provision.

Wider Access Investment

Having completed a major investment in the University's building infrastructure with Waterside campus in 2018, UoN keeps plans involving the sponsorship of academies under review whilst maintaining and developing its relationship on the governing body of Silverstone UTC and its priority to secure student targets with respect to the new Waterside campus.

UoN is committed to making Northamptonshire the best county in the UK for young people to flourish and learn and has achieving a positive social impact embedded in its strategic plan as a strategic priority. UoN continues to provide opportunities for learning and skills development through greater collaboration with the LEP (SEMLEP) and Local Authorities. UoN continues investment in the Higher Education Schools Engagement (HESE) team, providing outreach to primary and secondary schools focused on applying the University's Changemaker principles to raise attainment through aspiration raising. Changemaker activities are provided to all target schools, with an emphasis on improving attainment in literacy, numeracy and STEAM related subjects. Investment continues in wider Schools' Liaison activities improving recruitment pathways for students with protected characteristics. UoN continues to support school leadership teams by connecting them with academic colleagues and

supporting staff to become school governors. UoN leads on the County Heads of Post 16 conference and subject networks, including art and design, technology, sociology, psychology, computing, science, and PE.

Specific Access activities included in the APP programme

The following activities outlined in the 2019/20 APP will continue to be delivered over the period of this APP

- **"one-page wonder"** event led by Creative writing undergraduates to the creative writing summer programme
- **"UNiclub"** programme for year 9 learners identified by schools as gifted and talented mentored by PhD students
- **Changemaker Student Awards** for primary and secondary aged children
- **Free access to a selection staff/teacher CPD** to support the development of leadership capabilities and improve levels of attainment through professional development
- **Summer school and in-reach** activities focused on Science Technology Engineering Arts and Mathematics (STEAM)
- **Provision of programme of enrichment resources** to support parents/ children in understanding the benefits of Higher Education.

The following collaborative activities will also continue from the 2019/20 APP

- **Military Covenant** partnership to improve levels of disclosure of career/military family/ in care status to enable greater support targeting.
- **Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) Enterprise Co-ordinator** within the county to enhance and create new business links in schools

UoN's Access investment over the period of this APP will also provide the following initiatives

- **Guest lecture programme** linking academics to local schools to meet aspiration and attainment needs within secondary schools
- **Provision of level 3 learning resources** to primary and secondary schools in STEAM subjects
- Facilitation of countywide **subject networks**
- Subject specific **research days**
- A Collaborative programme delivered with Moulton College and local authorities to **support care leavers** to transition into HE.

Apprenticeships

UoN's Apprenticeship strategy makes use of the working links already established between the University, Employers, Cadets Forces, local schools and colleges to promote apprenticeships amongst underrepresented demographics. This strategy operates on two fronts:

- Engaging with young people who are traditionally underrepresented in Higher Education to inform, motivate and inspire. This activity profits from links with the Cadet Forces, as well as ongoing relationships with local schools and further education colleges.
- Engaging with businesses across Northamptonshire to develop a framework for Degree Level Apprenticeship.

UoN's apprenticeship activity is part of the wider Access work and contributes to the objectives outlined in this APP but is not part of the investment targeted towards the identified groups.

Access Output Indicators

The following output indicators will be monitored to ensure activities are effectively targeting the identified groups to deliver the required outcomes.

- a) PTA 1 Number of young people attending in reach/summer school activities from IMD Q1 & Q2

Year	Output measure
Base line 2017/18	723
2020/21	775
2021/22	830
2022/23	900
2023/24	925
2024/25	950

- b) PTA 1 Number of pupils from IMD Q1 & Q2 accessing a minimum of 2 STEAM and /or literacy activities delivered by UoN.

Year	Outcome measure
Base line 2017/18	221
2020/21	350
2021/22	450
2022/23	550
2023/24	650
2024/25	750

Student Success Goals

Based on the assessment of the data outlined above and a comprehensive consultation with the SU the UoN Student Success Goals focus on closing the continuation and attainment gaps between the least and most disadvantaged groups, specifically: -

1. Continuing the commitment to improving BAME continuation and attainment made in 2019/20 APP.
2. Improve levels of White Working-Class male (IMD Q1 & Q2) continuation rates
3. Improve attainment for students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds.

Wider Student Success Investment

1. **Faculty forums** subject specific initiatives delivered to address programme level differential outcomes.
2. **The Learning and Teaching Innovation Fund** prioritising projects designed to develop inclusive practice.
3. **Programme Level Initiatives** – Investment made in programmes where performance for BAME students (is more than 10% different to that of white students in attainment).
4. **Celebrate good practice** learning from best practice across UoN and the sector to connect programmes that do well with those performing less well.
5. **Student voice** ensuring success through continued work with the Student Union and the Course Reps.
6. **Student Union and Student Voice** –Continue to enhance the work of the SU's BAME and Student Experience Officers to embrace and celebrate diversity and capture the student voice.
7. **Learning Development:** - students receive free guidance and tuition on a wide range of academic skills.
8. **The UoN Additional Student Support and Inclusion Services Team (ASSIST):**- Supporting students with disabilities and additional needs to achieve an equal and accessible learning experience to non-disabled students
9. **Needs Assessment Centre (NAC):** - specialist support to students requiring assessment for the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) and Information Communication Technology (ICT).
10. **Disability Coordinators:** - Dedicated Disability Coordinators in each Faculty/department responsible for ensuring that the learning and work requirements of all disabled staff and students are supported.
11. **Mental Health and Counselling Service:** - providing counsellors and mental health advisors offering confidential support to students experiencing any emotional or mental health difficulties.

Specific Student Success activities included in the APP programme

The following activities outlined in the 2019/20 APP will continue to be delivered over the period of this APP

- **Delivery of a UoN inclusive pedagogy** – this programme of activities focusses on enhancing inclusive practice through the curriculum including content delivery, assessment and student experience.

- **Social/cultural belonging:** Work to increase the promotion of diversity across the student body.
- **Inclusive practice:** UoN initiatives for inclusive practice/curriculum include, staff CPD workshops, Curriculum design, and initiatives to improve access to the curriculum for BAME students.
- **Quality Processes:** Review and enhance key quality processes to enhance inclusive practice.
- **Programme level interventions:** support all programmes where the performance for BAME and/or students is more than 10% below UoN internal benchmarks for attainment and Graduate Employability.
- **Redesign of the Personal Tutor and Learner Support Model:** Significant emphasis on ensuring the needs of all learners are embedded in learner support to address academic skills development.
- **Attainment and aspiration:** Build stronger alumni/Employer connections/buddying and build on BME student success stories.
- **Term time residence:** consolidated timetabling, provision of short-term bookable overnight accommodation.

UoN's Student Success investment over the period of this APP will also provide the following initiatives: -

- **Delivery of a transition into HE:** - A targeted package of enhanced support for students from BAME, IMD Q1 & Q2, and those entering HE with non-A Level qualification to aid transition into HE.
- **Embed Learner Analytics:** - Institutional tool to monitor and identify levels of student engagement and target early intervention support services to improve retention of students showing signs of potential withdrawal from their course.
- **Redesign Foundation Stage Framework:** - to offer students without standard entry qualifications the opportunity to successfully study on the degree pathway of their choice while gaining critical study skills.

Student Success Output Indicators

The following output indicators will be monitored to ensure activities are effectively targeting the identified groups to deliver the required outcomes

- a) PTS 1 and 5 Reduce % of No-to-Low student engagement for all Male FT UG reported on the LEARN Student Analytics Dashboard

Year	Outcome measure
Base line 2018/19	16%
2020/21	14%
2021/22	12%
2022/23	10%
2023/24	8%
2024/25	%

- b) PTS 2 Increase the proportion of BAME students continuing from level 4 to level 5 of their programme of study with 120 credits and average grade of C or above.

Year	Outcome measure
Base line 2017/18	42.5%
2020/21	45%
2021/22	49%
2022/23	53%
2023/24	56%
2024/25	60%

- c) PTS 3 Increase the number of BAME students continuing from level 5 to level 6 of their programme of study with 120 credits and an average B- grade or above

Year	Outcome measure
Base line 2017/18	28.9%
2020/21	30%
2021/22	31%
2022/23	32%
2023/24	34%
2024/25	35%

- d) PTS 4 and 5 Reduce % of No-to-Low student engagement for all BAME English FT UG reported on the LEARN Student Analytics Dashboard

Year	Outcome measure
Base line 2018/19	22%
2020/21	20%
2021/22	18%
2022/23	16%
2023/24	14%
2024/25	10%

Progression Goals

UoN has invested heavily through previous Access Agreements and APPs in redesigning the employability offer at the University into a no wrong door approach that connect support services with curriculum, extra-curricular support, and local employers. UoN's 2019/20 Progression Goal to eliminate the gaps Graduate Employability and Further Study between BAME students (across all ethnicities) and White students, continues into this APP. The goal to close the gap in Graduate Employability between students from the least and most disadvantaged backgrounds is adopted. Having completed the redesign of the employability offer in 2018 the focus is on evaluating the longitudinal impact on graduate outcomes and continuous improvement.

Wider Progression Investment

2016 to 2019 UoN embedded employability across all undergraduate programmes and introduced the UoN Graduate Attributes Framework, under took a University Modular Framework (UMF) review, and Assessment update exercise. Investment in previous Access Agreements and APPs created an extra-curricular employability offer that built upon sector best practice and guidance¹ and is in the second year of a four-year roll out. Evaluation of the work undertaken to date has been included in the APP evaluation plan and will inform further development.

Quality processes are under review to embed employability at periodic subject reviews and validations. Improved levels of employer engagement in curriculum, and access to increased levels of work based learning and work-related learning remain priorities. The Northampton Employability award remains under evaluation for its impact on Graduate Outcomes, and Faculties continue to address under achievement against internal Graduate Outcome benchmarks through Annual Rolling Action Planning (ARAP). Improving levels of Graduate Employability for those with a declared disability by connecting the work of UoN's disability support service with that of the employability service is also prioritised.

Specific Progression activities included in the APP programme

The following progression activities outlined in the 2019/20 APP will continue to be delivered over the period of this APP-

- **Embedded Graduate Employability and further study support:** – the embedding of Employability across the student experience with Employability and Changemaker learning outcomes across every programme.
- **The Northampton Employment Promise (NEP):** - careers support for life to alumni assisting progression beyond their first job, career change, and access to postgraduate study.
- **The University's employability award:** - Employability Plus, has been rolled out across levels 4-8.
- **Changemaker Hub:** - UoN's award-winning online portal provides 24/7 access to scaffolded support that mirrors the University's active blended learning and teaching model.

UoN's Student Success investment over the period of this APP will also provide the following initiatives: -

- **Increase levels of Joint professional accreditation:** - to offer access to programmes with Professional, Statutory, and Regulatory Body joint accreditations across the Under Graduate portfolio.

¹ Recognising achievement beyond the curriculum QAA 2012/13

- **Deliver an enhanced employability offer:** - additional support aimed at assisting programmes with variances in graduate employment outcomes across all BAME and IMD Q1 & 2 student groups greater than 10% of internal threshold.
- **Career registration surveys:** - identifying student needs and expectations to inform the work of the employability team, access to relevant employers and work experience opportunities.
- **Increase access to work experience opportunities:** - aligning with the Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) industrial strategy to improve student access to SME's in the county, Unitemps recruitment agency, work-based learning opportunities, Santander Internship programmes, and Start-up support.

Collaborative Progression Activities

- **Midlands International Group:** - working with Midlands based HEIs to provide enhanced opportunities for International students and best practice sharing.
- **East Midlands heads of service group:** - working with HEIs in the East Midlands to deliver collaborative approaches to post study progression
- **Northamptonshire Chamber of Commerce:** - offering students access to the Next Generation Chamber, networking, and development workshops.
- **County Employer Forums/LEP:** - bringing employers from different sectors together to advocate and promoter their sector

- a) PTP 1 % of BAME students IMD Q3 to Q5 completing an Employability Plus award (Ls 4-6)

Year	Outcome measure
Base line 2017/18	15%
2020/21	25%
2021/22	35%
2022/23	45%
2023/24	55%
2024/25	60%

- b) PTP 2 % of students from IMD Q1 & Q2 completing an Employability Plus award (Ls 4-6).

Year	Outcome measure
Base line 2017/18	21%
2020/21	26%
2021/22	35%
2022/23	45%
2023/24	55%
2024/25	60%

Targeted Financial Support

In 2018/19 UoN introduced a **Student Success Package** that will be continued to apply during the period covered by this APP. All full-fee paying students from a Low-Income Family i.e. below £25,000, enrolled on a UoN three or four-year undergraduate programme or Foundation Study Framework programme, will receive a free laptop and software valued at £500 in their first year. In Years 2 and 3 qualifying students have a choice of receiving a £400 contribution towards the cost of study related trips, UoN student accommodation, travel or parking costs for. **Care leavers** aged under 25 at the start of their course are entitled to an additional non-means tested bursary of £1,000 per year each year of the full- time degree.

UoN continues the **Alumni PGCE Bursary Award** at £500 to UoN graduates who progress to a Postgraduate ITT (PGCE) course. Students with a household income of less than £25,000 will also receive a further £500 **Northampton Bursary Award**. All UoN Graduates who enrol on a Full time, Part time or Distance Learning MA/MSC will receive a **20% tuition fee discount**

UoN continues to invest in the **Financial Assistance Fun (FAF)** through this APP to help any student experiencing financial hardship to access t appropriate financial support to address their difficulties and continue their studies. **The Financial Guidance Team** continue to provide specialist financial counselling,

budgeting advice, and tailored financial support. Continuing students who started their studies before 2020/21 receive financial support based on the package as advertised and included within the Access Agreements and APPs in place at the commencement of their studies. Any changes will be consulted upon with the Northampton Students' Union and communicated with those students involved in line with UoN's commitment to student voice.

UoN will charge £9,250 for all fulltime UG students commencing study in 2020/21 including HND & Foundation degrees and Top Up courses. UoN applies an annual increase to the tuition fee in line with RPI-X for students commencing study in 2020/21 in their subsequent years subject to Government fee caps. For students studying Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE) & Diploma of Higher Education (Dip HE) these will be charged at £6,750 The Foundation Framework fee will be £6,750 in 2020/21, subsequent years will be charged at the applicable UG fee for the year of study.

All three-year undergraduate students who elect to undertake a 'sandwich' year at the end of their second year of study will be charged a reduced fee of £1,000 for that year. At the end of the Sandwich year, the student will complete the third year of their course (during their fourth year at the University) at the full fee applicable to the course. For courses with an overseas 'sandwich' year, students will be charged at the full fee applicable to the year of study. The University has set its maximum part time undergraduate fee at £6,525 (for 90 credits) for 2020/21.

UoN's Financial Support is designed in consultation with SU, wider student input through the committee structure of the University, and evaluation of previous an existing provision utilising the Office for Students (OfS) Financial Support Evaluation Toolkits. Monitoring of Financial Support is undertaken termly by ISEG and reported to SEC, UMT, and BGs. Evaluation informs UoNs' annual strategic financial planning and recruitment plans. A review of the policies and processes related to Financial Support are included in UoN's internal audit protocols and reported to the internal audit committee of the BGs. Continuous improvement is achieved through ISEG's termly monitoring and the annual evaluation report. Student voice through the committees of the SU, student representatives, and SU representation on UoN committees provides real term feedback to enhance understanding of student needs.

Whilst the % of APP investment in Financial Support reduces over the period, the funding has been redistributed to enhance the support services valued by students. UoN commits to maintaining an overall APP investment of 16.2% of higher fee income for the period of the APP.

3.2 Student consultation

The SU have contributed to the development of the APP through the dissemination of their own research, advocacy, and student engagement to the agenda. The SUs research into the challenges faced by BAME students and those from low socio-economic groups was undertaken by its officers, the work of the BAME Forum and Education Committee. This APP programme represents a collaborative outcome of close SU/ UoN working and a shared commitment to maximising student outcomes based on the research.

All sabbaticals and SU Equality Officers contributed to the development of the APP as members of ISEG, with the Sabbaticals ensuring that the student voice related to the plan was raised at all UoN academic committees and senior Boards where the plan was discussed and approved. The APP was signed off by the outgoing and incoming SU President after SU committees had recommended approval The SU input determined the priorities for the plan including the strong focus on BAME attainment and graduate employability. Course representatives provided valuable student insight into the challenges faced at programme level and reported into the SU Education Committee to inform the APP and wider EDI priorities. Feedback from across these mechanisms was incorporated into the design of the APP programme, e.g. the design of the Student Success Package, the focus on inclusive practice, and the wider investment in services to support student well-being.

Student representation is on all UoN governance and academic committees ensuring student scrutiny of delivery, evaluation, and impact of the APP investment. Student voice at every level of the University informs continuous improvement. Student voice is central to the Evaluation Framework and the use of the OfS Toolkits on Evaluating Financial Support captures insight from alumni as part of the assessment. With both formal and informal consultation mechanisms and student voice channels in place, alongside an Evaluation Framework that applies a mixed research methods approach and formal SU structures to inform

and hold the University to account, UoN fulfils its commitment to engaging students as partners in a meaningful way.

3.3 Evaluation Strategy

UoN assessed the APP evaluation using the OfS Evaluation Self-Assessment Toolkit. This was undertaken through focus groups, discussion forums at faculty and departmental level, through mapping the existing APP evaluation practice, and in the context of UoN's commitment to reporting its Social Impact. In 2015 UoN identified the need to implement a step change in evaluation of the APP and commissioned a three-year PhD study to identify, design and project plan the implementation to an APP Evaluation Framework. This approach ensured an evidence-based framework was developed that contributed to existing practice providing a longitudinal commitment to excellence in APP evaluation. The study reported in May 2019 and set out the UoN Evaluation Framework implemented from 2019/20. UoN is at early stages of implementing this institution-wide Framework to achieve transformational change in the way the APP is evaluated over the period 2019-2025 in a way that informs practice, demonstrates impact to inform investment, and adds to the body of literature and practice in APPs.

Strategic context

The self-assessment identified UoN strengths in the commitment to a whole institutional approach and having skills in place to undertake meaningful APP evaluation. Governance structures and space for meaningful dialogue, shared best practice is secured, with accountability on EDI and APP through formal and informal UoN and SU mechanisms. UoNs strategic plan prioritises the provision of a Super Supportive environment to ensure success for all. The infrastructure is in place to strategically monitor and act upon the evaluative work of the APP in a comprehensive way. The topic is a regular item on the ISEG, and all UoN committee agendas and is reported against in Annual reviews of programme performance. The BGs require an annual EDI and APP report on progress and have a champion who takes a strategic interest in supporting effective APP delivery.

UoN monitors a basket of output data for example numbers of students accessing services, attendance, submission rates, admission data. Comprehensive outcomes data across the student lifecycle including continuation, withdrawal, attainment, and progression data by protected characteristic is produce by Business Intelligence and Market Information (BIMI) department and reviewed through the committee structure of the University.

Greater focus in needed to improve the way evaluation informs resource allocation and awareness across all professional service staff of the importance of evaluation. The prior lack of a co-ordinated approach to data capture and Theory of Change have been areas of improvement, with the weaknesses being the lack of a coherent approach to evaluating the whole institutional delivery of APP and lack of support for staff to reflect on practice and continuous improvement. UoN recognised these weaknesses when commissioning the PhD study and the implementation of the Evaluation Framework provides the catalyst to improve the strategic context for evaluation.

Programme design

Programme design is a strength at UoN. The strategic context enables expertise from across academic disciplines to inform practice and the design of interventions. Expertise in professional services ensure the highest standards of delivery and their expertise from outside the sector provides an opportunity for everyone to innovate and adapt delivery to meet the changing needs of students. Action plans are in place to address under-performance across the student life-cycle at institutional, departmental/ faculty, and service/programme levels all of which provide a coherent approach to achieving shared objectives. Evidence of ' what works' from across the sector and literature is the cornerstone the APP programme for example the development of the Evaluation framework was undertaken as a PhD study for this reason. However, whilst the programme has clear outcomes agreed at all levels of the University more investment is needed to articulate the importance of achieving these to staff and to scope delivery across departments and Faculties to show how they contribute to achievement of these objectives. The development of the Evaluation Framework requires keeping outcomes under review to ensure the continuous improvement needed to refine the programme in light of findings is achieved.

Evaluation design

This has been a weakness and prompted the commissioning of the PhD study. Historically, evaluation design has been ad hoc and has focussed on individual intervention appraisal rather than the contribution to an over-arching Theory of Change. Publications and conference presentations have been achieved; however, the lack of an agreed set of shared objectives and measures has resulted in a patchwork quilt approach to evaluation that reports outputs and outcomes rather than impacts. As the Framework is new it is anticipated that there will be continuous learning and improvement as we refine the model. UoN continues to provide funding to support individual initiative/service evaluations that provide alternative measures of success and evaluations to enhance the Framework. The APP Theory of Change is underpinned by a Logic Model that allows UoN to review its performance against the strategic aims and objectives and ensures an effective evaluation. Raven's framework is integrated into the design to provide a robust evidence and data gathering protocol and demonstrate impact of the APP across the whole student life cycle. The Logic Model is presented below.

The Framework utilises a mixed-methods approach that captures quantitative and qualitative data, including an online survey of students from underrepresented groups at the UoN; interviews with staff, students, and employers, and analysis of primary and secondary data. This ensures rigorous evaluation, that methodological weaknesses are minimised, and findings are robust and acceptable to stakeholders.

Evaluation implementation

The assessment identified strengths in the implementation of UoN's Evaluation Framework. Data sharing agreements (DSA) are in place with external partners for our outreach work and, where there are collaborations in student success and progression these are in development. The Data Protection Officer contributed the development of the Evaluation to ensure GDPR compliance. Ethical approval is in place for existing and will be sought for future evaluation work. The PhD study identified a clearly defined methodology with investment needed to ensure longitudinal impact and individualised change are identified. The Implementation plan prioritises Access and Financial Support in **Phase 1** (2019/20 academic year) and prioritises alignment of APP Access evaluation with that planned for NCOP Phase 2 and expands the existing evaluation of Financial Support provision. **Phase 2** extends the Framework to student Success and Progression from 2020/21 to enable internal data sharing and reporting mechanisms to be formalised. Resources are secured as identified in the investment plan with a paper outlining the approach post 2020/21 produced and approved by UoN committees by December 2019. The implementation of the UoN Evaluation Framework across all APP priorities will commence 2020/21.

Learning to shape improvements

Internal processes and mechanisms such as ISEG, SEC, Action Planning Cycles, SU engagement in APP, and a strong strategic and Governor level commitment provide a strong platform for UoN to share best practice and design its APP and wider EDI provision. A strong infrastructure in place through which learning from evaluation can influence practice and strategic planning. There is a robust institutional annual reporting mechanism through which continuous year on year improvement can be identified, actions agreed, and resources allocated. UoN's commitment to Social Impact Reporting provides a mechanism to capture the APPs impact on UoN's wider objectives and disseminate to staff, students and stakeholders. Whilst there is clarity over reporting mechanisms responsibilities are distributed across a range of actors; confusing decision making and responses to address continuous improvement. The Framework clarifies the decision-making processes needed to create a learning culture in APP and has redefining committee responsibilities. The existing approach to APP Evaluation has limited UoN's contribution to knowledge in Access and Participation. UoN has provided limited evidence of impact and longitudinal outcomes from its APP investment, and as a result UoN has not consistently contributed to knowledge exchange mechanisms. The academic integrity of the Evaluation Framework provides a platform upon which UoN will influence and inform the wider sector as well as enhance all aspects of UoN's APP development, delivery, monitoring, and longitudinal impact.

Table 1 Theory of Change evaluation framework

APP themes & activities	Theory of Change Factors			Impact		
	Institutional approach	Student agency & decision making	Forms of capital	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
WP	Faculty links with secondary schools	Improved resilience General Self-efficacy Higher Aspirations	Bridging Social Capital Linking Social Capital Intellectual Capital	N.O. of young people (IMD 1+2) attending N.O. of young people accessing STEAM activities	Maintain proportion of white working-class males from IMD 1 + 2 Improved general self-efficacy Increase NO of white working-class males from IMD 1 + 2	Reduced N.O. of discontinuations Overcoming barriers to access Enhanced Employability
	Summer school/REACH					
	Enrichment resources for schools Level 3 resources (STEAM) available for local schools Subject networks/research days					
Success	Inclusive Academic practice LEARN analytics	Student voice – BAME forum Mentoring for success Learner support model	Transition to HE packages Attainment & aspirations (expectations) Targeted social & cultural events	Reduce withdrawal of white working class male undergraduates (UGs) N.O good degrees Reduce withdrawal rate of BAME UGs Increased BAME level 4- Level 5 Increased BAME progression to Level 6 N.O. of BAME of completed employability awards	Reverse negative trends in continuation Warwick/Edinburgh Wellbeing scale Flourishing scale Close continuation gap	Improve white working-class male and BAME attainment & completions
Progress	Enhanced employability offer Career registration programme to gauge employability Review of policy to be more inclusive.	Increase joint accreditation	SME internships Integrate specialist employability offer into ASSIST to increase employability	Close employability gap between IMD 1 +2 and all UGs Close graduate employability gap for those with a declared disability	Close continuation gaps	Reduce the gap in graduate employment for those with a declared disability

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The SEC has strategic responsibility for the entire student experience and is an academic committee of the University reporting directly to Senate to the BGs. Governors receive an annual report on progress against the EIAP and APP as well as regular updates on progress against milestones through the committee reporting structure. The BGs monitor UoN outcome data against protected characteristics and require action to be taken to address differential outcomes, gaps in performance, and worsening trends. SEC, UMT, and ISEG are responsible for identifying appropriate corrective actions and reporting back to Governors on progress. Students are represented, through the SU, on all committees of the University including UMT, Senate and BGs and receive all monitoring reports and documentation related to the EDI and APP performance. These are discussed at SU committees and student voice feeds back into the University committees. The role responsible for APP is also a Governor of the SU and meets with the Sabbaticals and Equality Officers termly to review progress and agree changes based on the monitoring data. Progress against the APP is reported termly to ISEG with the report going to SEC, Faculty Deans, department heads, Senate, UMT and Governors. Corrective action is identified based on the context of any variance against plan and the reasons identified for under-performance with resources identified to enable continuous improvement. UoN has an embedded culture of monitoring that will be enhanced by the adoption of the Evaluation Framework.

4. Provision of information to students

UoN acts in an open and transparent way in the provision of information related to tuition fees and financial support provision outlined in this APP through the University’s website. Details are included in the prospectus and made available at open days and within communication with prospective students during the enrolment process. Reference to the provisions of this APP, including financial support, are included in the Terms and Conditions supplied to students. UoN commit to the assurance that the provisions of this APP remain in force for the cohort for which it applies. If there be a need to reconsider the provisions of this APP this will be undertaken with full consultation with the Students’ Union and the student body more widely. Any changes will be communicated effectively and with appropriate notice being given of any proposed changes.

5. Appendix

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

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
First degree	Top Up Courses	£9,250
Foundation degree		£9,250
Foundation year/Year 0		£6,750
HNC/HND		£9,250
CertHE/DipHE		£6,750
Postgraduate ITT		£9,250
Accelerated degree		£9,250
Sandwich year		£1,000
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	Activate Learning 10004927	£7,350
First degree	Bedford College 10000610 - Top Up Courses	£8,000
First degree	Brit College Limited 10028216 - Top Up Courses	£9,250
First degree	RTC Education Ltd 10008455 - Top Up Courses	£7,500
First degree	South Thames Colleges Group 10003674	£6,000
First degree	Stella Mann College of Performing Arts Limited 10047049 - Top Up Courses	£9,250
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£6,525
Foundation degree		£6,525
Foundation year/Year 0		£5,062
HNC/HND		£6,525
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: University of Northampton, The

Provider UKPRN: 10007138

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
Total access activity investment (£)	£930,000.00	£930,000.00	£930,000.00	£930,000.00	£930,000.00
Access (pre-16)	£212,000.00	£212,000.00	£212,000.00	£212,000.00	£212,000.00
Access (post-16)	£718,000.00	£718,000.00	£718,000.00	£718,000.00	£718,000.00
Access (adults and the community)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£2,438,600.00	£2,438,600.00	£2,418,600.00	£2,418,600.00	£2,418,600.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£70,000.00	£70,000.00	£70,000.00	£70,000.00	£70,000.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£21,367,080.00	£21,367,080.00	£22,138,330.00	£22,138,330.00	£22,138,330.00
Access investment	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%
Financial support	11.4%	11.4%	10.9%	10.9%	10.9%
Research and evaluation	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Total investment (as %HFI)	13.2%	13.2%	12.7%	12.7%	12.7%

