

PLYMOUTH COLLEGE OF ART ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2020-25

Background

1. Plymouth College of Art (PCA) is a Higher Education (HE) Institute and specialist provider of education and professional formation in contemporary art, design and media practices. Alongside our HE offer, the College maintains a range of Further Education (FE) courses, primarily through Extended Diplomas in art and design subjects and a Foundation Art and Design Diploma, as well as Young Arts Clubs catering for ages from 4 to 18 years and short courses for the general local community. The majority of provision is within HE, offering a comprehensive range of Bachelor of Arts programmes across the breadth of art, design, and media, and an increasing range of Masters programmes. Our ethos and culture is strongly inclusive and supportive with a proactive approach to meeting the diverse needs of all students to progress successfully through their Degree and onwards into their chosen careers.
2. We are committed to extending our recruiting geographical boundaries and establishing good relationships with potential feeder courses on a national basis. However, we are also firmly committed to delivering to local and regional demand and remain strongly committed to supporting the progression of our own students in FE courses to HE.
3. Our vision implicitly includes supporting young people in the city of Plymouth and its most deprived boroughs to achieve their full potential by being both inspired and prepared to enter HE then graduate successfully into a professional career. Having created a new 4-16 inner city Free School in 2013 (Plymouth School of Creative Arts, PSCA) within one of the most deprived wards in Plymouth, we continue to work in a strong partnership with the school to promote a continuum of a creative arts based education experience from Primary School to Masters, making life-changing differences for under-privileged children in Plymouth. We also continue to work with the wider network of local schools and colleges in the region to promote access into HE and the pursuit of a professional career in the creative arts.

SECTION ONE - ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

General

4. This section summarises key factors on which PCA access and participation plan proposals for 2020-25 are based. It draws on access and participation data published by OfS, other published datasets such as those from HESA and the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), and internal PCA data. In terms of continuation, attainment and progression, as yet there is insufficient evidence from the data to single out any trends for particular types of disabilities, but we will start monitoring performance data across the different groups for students with disabilities from academic year 2019/20 onwards. We already monitor all performance data by individual categories for ethnicity and will continue to do so, but with low numbers there is also currently insufficient evidence to make any conclusions regarding trends based on ethnicity. We also already monitor performance data for care leavers as part of splitting all data by student characteristics, and will continue to do so, but the very small numbers have, to date, precluded any conclusions regarding trends.

Access

5. Key overarching widening participation statistics¹ related to access to HE are as follows for PCA.

¹ HESA Widening Participation UK Performance Indicators 2017/18

- The percentage of young full time undergraduate entrants from state schools/ colleges dropped from 98.5% in 2016/17 to 95%, but remains above the location adjusted benchmark of 94.2%
- The percentage of young full time undergraduate entrants from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPN) remains among the highest 20 of all UK HEI at 20.2% compared to 14.6% location adjusted benchmark
- The percentage of full time undergraduate entrants who are mature has dropped to 24% from 29% in 2016/17 but remains above the UK HEI average of 21% and remains the highest for specialist arts institutes
- The percentage of mature full time undergraduate entrants with no previous HE and from LPN remains high at 23.9% compared to 18% location adjusted benchmark (and among the 10 highest of all UK HEI).
- The number of our full time undergraduates across all years in receipt of Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) is very high at 22.6% compared to 11.3% location adjusted benchmark, second highest of all UK HEI
- The proportions of students from households with residual income less than £25K per annum has dropped slightly from 50% in 2016/17 to 45% in 2017/18, with a further 18% (20% in 2016/17) of all students from households with residual income between £25K and £42K²
- Typically, 10-15% of new entrants are enrolled on an extended 4-year programme

6. The key statistics above from 2017/18 published HESA data provide a picture of a student intake rich in widening participation backgrounds, as also reflected in previous years' data in PCA's previous OFFA Access Agreements and 2019/20 Access and Participation Plan. Statistics from OfS access and participation data for entrants from IMD³ and POLAR⁴ quintiles show broadly positive characteristics in terms of equitable access although with decreasing proportions from IMD quintiles 1-2 (Q1-2) recently caused by some significant (and different) variations in entrants from Q1-2.

7. Delving deeper into the statistics shows a drop in the proportions of entrants from IMD/POLAR Q1 to 16%/17% respectively before both recovered with 2% increase to 18% and 19% respectively for entrants in 2017. There is greater consistency for proportions of entrants from the 'mid' quintiles of Q2, Q3 and Q4 for both POLAR and IMD, broadly a total of 65% +/- 3% from 2013 to 2017. Over the same period entrants from POLAR and IMD Q5 have also fluctuated, rising to a peak in 2016 (and above Q1) before falling back and below Q1 proportions for both POLAR and IMD, and for both 18-year-old entrants and all ages.

8. Over the past 5 years, the proportions of male entrants that come from IMD Q1-2 has dropped to 13% of the total entrants. The percentage of male entrants out of all entrants from IMD Q1-2 is higher than for the overall male/female ratio (34% compared to 31%), indicating proportionally fewer females entering from IMD Q1-2 than for males. Over the past 5 years, the proportions of male entrants that come from POLAR Q1-2 has dropped to 11.5% of the total entrants, and the percentage of male entrants from POLAR Q1-2 is lower than for the overall male/female ratio (25% compared to 31%) indicating proportionally fewer males entering from POLAR Q1-2 than females.

9. The South West in general and Plymouth in particular shows lower statistics compared to the rest of England in terms of progression to HE⁵. This is also the case for proportions of

² Utilising Student Loan Company income distribution data for PCA for academic years 2016/17 and 2017/18

³ Index of Multiple Deprivation for areas in England

⁴ Most recent version of the classification for Participation (in HE) of local areas (POLAR4)

⁵ UCAS 2018 end of cycle report; OfS POLAR map of young participation areas

18-year-old entrants from POLAR/IMD Q1, remaining below OfS figures for populations in UK (16% and 19.5% compared to 18% and 22% respectively. These statistics demonstrate it remains pertinent to continue to work to ensure equitable access to HE at PCA for students from areas of low participation/high deprivation. This is further supported by PCA data for 2018 entrants which shows a drop from the 2017 OfS statistics for entrants from POLAR/IMD Q1, as below. Nevertheless, the figure of 14% in the table below for 18 year old entrants to PCA from POLAR Q1 remains above the 13% for acceptances by all 18 year old POLAR Q1 applicants for entry into UK creative art and design courses, which in turn is higher than the aggregate of 11% for all other subject groups⁶).

2018 entrants	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
by IMD quintile, all ages	15%	22%	23%	20%	20%
by IMD quintile, 18 year olds	11%	20%	26%	20%	23%
by POLAR quintile, all ages	16%	24%	25%	22%	13%
by POLAR quintile, 18 year olds	14%	26%	26%	23%	10%
by IMD Q1-2 all ages	37%		63%		
By POLAR Q1-2 ages	40%		60%		

10. Data pertaining to socioeconomic classification⁷ supports a broadly equitable intake from across the spectrum (based on PCA data obtained through UCAS for our enrolling students), with approximately equal proportions of students coming from NS-SEC groups 1-3 as from 4-7. There has been a slight drop in the proportions of students at PCA from backgrounds of low residual household income, but nevertheless this remains at a significantly high level and remains a factor the College will take into account in terms of supporting student success and progression to professional careers.

11. OfS access and participation statistics show that the proportion of mature entrants to PCA has dropped from 44% in 2013 to 24% in 2017 whilst the average for all English HE providers has increased through this period from 25% to 28%. That said, latest HESA data (2017/18) shows that PCA remains above the average in terms of proportions of mature student entrants for all UK HEI, ranked 45th and above the average of 21% in this grouping as well as being the highest for specialist arts HE institutes. During the years 2011-14 PCA was developing its portfolio with the introduction of new programmes and attracting larger numbers of mature students into subjects that, hitherto, perhaps had not been available locally. Part of the reduction in mature students since and towards 'average' levels is therefore understandable, and whilst the College will be working to ensure it continues to attract mature students into both full time and part time pathways, there is insufficient evidence to adopt specific objectives to eliminate a recognised gap in performance.

12. Our proportion of male students has dropped from 41% to 31% over the past 5 years and as a result has fallen significantly below the overall figures for HE providers (44%) whilst remaining broadly in line with the specialist arts sector (c. 34% male for 17/18⁸). Whilst not considered to be a sufficiently significant gap to make a priority, nevertheless this is a trend the College aims to counter.

13. The proportion of our entrants from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds has increased to 6% over the past 4 years, whilst the regional composition has increased to 7% based on statistics for state funded secondary schools in Devon and

⁶ 2018 UCAS end of cycle data resources table 2018-DR3-035-01

⁷ National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC)

⁸ OfS access and participation data for specialist arts HEI

Cornwall.⁹ Our statistics are not dissimilar to other relatively small providers in the local region (e.g. 7% for one provider and 5% for another). However, other specialist arts institutes outside London show 10% for overall proportions of non-white entrants, and clearly we remain significantly below the average for the English HE providers which has increased from 26% to 31% in the same period.

14. Apart from knowledge of a small number of entrants identified as care leavers, PCA has limited data relating to entrants from the wider set of student groups where national data indicates there are particular equality gaps (including carers, people estranged from their families, refugees, children of military families, people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities). However, where possible and relevant, the College addresses potential support for students from such groups within this access and participation plan.

Continuation

15. To date in OFFA Access Agreements and our first Access and Participation Plan for 19/20, PCA has specifically targeted retention for students with disabilities, students from low income backgrounds and mature students.

16. From OfS access and participation data, earlier years show close performance between young and mature students. For the last year of data, however, there is a significant drop for mature students (78% continuing past the first 12 months compared to 85% for young). Our own data indicates this primarily relates to mature students with disabilities (overall across all years of study for the last year of data, 79% of mature students with disabilities completing the year compared to 89% of mature students with no known disabilities; 92% young students with disabilities completing the year compared with 91% for young students with no known disabilities).

17. There is good correlation in previous years between overall OfS access and participation continuation data for students with disabilities and students with no known disabilities, with a gap of 3% however for the most recent year (81% c.f. 84%) reflecting the lower continuation statistics for mature students. Data for male and female students also shows closer correlation in past years, but with a significant difference evident in the most recent year with lower continuation for male students that is also impacted more by the lower retention for mature male students. Data for students from non-white ethnic backgrounds over the past 5 years varies from 72% to 96% but is based on low numbers and varies erratically between years. PCA data for continuation for students from low income households has been higher than for other groups (overall in-year retention for all students from low income backgrounds of 88% reported in PCA monitoring return against 2017/18 OFFA Access Agreement).

18. OfS access and participation data for students from areas high deprivation, IMD Q1-2, shows better continuation in earlier years than for IMD Q3-5, but with the gap in favour of the latter more recently, 10% and 6% respectively in the last 2 years of data. It is difficult to identify any underlying differences/trends for males and females within this data as there are variances between years for both. POLAR4 statistics are different, with generally lower continuation for students from Q1-2 than for 3-5 across the past 5 years that is driven mainly but not solely by males.

19. The small number of care leavers, typically between 12 and 15 based on the past 4 years (across all 4 years of undergraduate programmes including Extended BA entry year)

⁹ DfE Local Authority tables for Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics dated January 2018 (Table 9b State-funded secondary schools, number of pupils by ethnic group by local authority area and region – and aggregated data for Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth and Torbay)

makes trend analysis difficult. In-year retention for care leavers across all years was 80% in 2015/16, 92% in 2016/17, and 67% in 2017/18.

20. From this assessment, priority for improvement lies with mature students, students with disabilities, and students from both POLAR and IMD Q1-2.

Attainment

21. Taking all PCA students achieving 1st or upper 2nd degree classifications, there has been a very gradual increase to 61% in 2017 but with a drop in 2018 to 55%, whilst the average across the sector has generally increased (to 72% in 2018 for all UK HEI first degrees, 76% for creative arts and design subjects, or 73% for specialist arts HEI¹⁰). There has been generally higher performance by mature students (and closer to sector 'norms'), and generally lower performance for males, but with some variation away from these trends when considering different student groups as outlined below.

22. OfS access and participation data for attainment by students with disabilities shows large variation between years and with 10% lower attainment in the last year than for the counter category. Attainment for students from IMD Q1-2 is generally lower than those from IMD Q3-5 and is generally driven by the data for females. However, overall data is erratic between years with the latest gap being 3%, in comparison to the 12% gap for the sector (all English HEI). Comparison between POLAR quintiles shows both lower and higher attainment between students from POLAR Q1-2 and POLAR Q3-5, both overall and when splitting by gender. With low numbers of students from non-white ethnic backgrounds, and variable data from year to year, it is not possible to identify particular trends. PCA data shows attainment by students from low income is similar to attainment by students with residual household income over £25K.

23. Based on this analysis, the most distinct and significant gaps for under-represented groups relates to students with disabilities although we acknowledge the gap between attainment by students from IMD Q1-2 and those from IMD Q3-5, and are fully committed to its elimination. We will continue to promote improved attainment and closely monitor academic progress and ultimate attainment across student characteristics, keeping under review the need for specific targets for students from IMD Q1-2.

Progression

24. Data for PCA from the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey (DLHE) shows improvement in overall progression to employment/further study over the past 3 years (to 91%) but with progression to highly skilled employment/further study remaining relatively static at c. 50%.

25. OfS statistics and DLHE data (overall as well as the subset used in TEF) all indicate that mature students achieve better outcomes than young students. Students from areas of high participation or low deprivation achieve better outcomes than low participation or high deprivation, with the lowest progression to both employment and/or further study as well as to highly skilled employment and/or further study from students in POLAR Q1-2. For students in POLAR Q1-2, TEF Year 4 data shows 85% progression to employment and 42% progression to highly skilled employment (and/or further study for both), compared to the overall statistics of 91% and 50%. Next lowest statistics for progression to highly skilled employment are for young students (43%) and female students (47%), with the data for all other under-represented groups being closer to 50% (students with disabilities, from BAME backgrounds,

¹⁰ All from HESA HE qualifiers data

and from areas of high deprivation in TEF4 data). DLHE data confirms statistics for students from low income backgrounds are slightly better than statistics for the total student body. Overall, males achieve better outcomes than females and, from OfS access and participation data, this disparity is particularly evident for females from POLAR or IMD Q1. In summary, data indicates a need to prioritise the gap for students from LPN.

SECTION TWO - STRATEGIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Access

Students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPN)

26. Our strategic aim is to support access into HE for students from LPN primarily targeted at the local region around Plymouth and further afield in Devon and Cornwall to achieve sustained improvements in participation rates. This involves work with our own FE students, with our own Young Arts clubs, work in partnership with PSCA and outreach with other schools and colleges in the local region in addition to our work in collaboration with the Next Steps South West consortium (NSSW) of the ongoing National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). Strong commitment and investment is needed to provide the individual contact, advice and guidance in supporting potential entrants from LPN in developing their skills to be confident in making successful application for HE study, in alignment with OfS national key performance measure 1.

27. We propose to continue with our objective to increase engagement with PSCA in terms of interaction with increasing proportions of pupils each year, and introducing qualitative measurement of the impact of these interactions through student (and staff) feedback and utilising this in pursuit of continuous improvement. We propose to follow existing targets for increasing contact with students, aiming for meaningful engagement with 50% of students at the school by 2024/25, but with emphasis on positive impact for students in terms of sense of achievement and developing self-confidence that can help towards the higher attainment at GCSE that is the platform for further study and access into HE. The first year group to sit GCSEs and make choices for their study pathways to age 18 and beyond do so in summer 2019. From academic year 2019/20 onwards we will record numbers of students from PSCA gaining entry to our own 16-18 FE specialist provision and then later progressing on to HE (from 2021/22 onwards), and make comparison to non-PSCA students. Whilst monitoring any difference between progression rates, the ultimate impact of this work is therefore incorporated in the outcomes based target for our own FE students progressing to HE as described below (para 28).

28. Work with schools and colleges is aimed at delivering our own engagement activities alongside broader impact through our role as a partner with all regional universities and other HE providers in NSSW. The NSSW collaboration covers target areas in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset and focuses on pupils in years 9 to 13 identified as medium/high achievers with low HE aspiration and domiciled within the nominated postcodes. A diverse range of outreach projects are designed and delivered collaboratively by partners in the NSSW consortium, with robust evaluation of impact throughout. The funding for the programme sits outside the College's Access and Participation Plan but the contribution by the College sits directly within its access and outreach activity, comprising delivery by PCA of impartial advice and guidance to Devon schools, and engaging individual learners in activities such as mentoring and portfolio development to support their preparation for HE. However, we are unable to track learners with whom we have engaged who ultimately progress to HE and therefore propose to continue with evaluation of impact solely through qualitative methods.

29. With our portfolio of FE specialist courses we are able to support directly the progression of our own students into HE from their pre-Degree studies, either within the College or to another institution. Given our catchment area, this provides a measure of impact in terms of progression to HE by students from LPN, and will also include a measure of impact in terms of our collaborative work with PSCA and regional schools. Despite increase in progression to HE by our completing Level 3 students in 2017 to 78% from c. 70% for previous years, indications for entry to HE in 2019 are for a drop back to the region of 70%. This remains significantly higher than the average for the South West region which is still the lowest for all English regions at 29%¹¹ but indicates that increase over 70% is more difficult than originally envisaged. Ultimately, our long term target is for 85% progression to HE by 2030, with increase to 78% over the period to 2024/25.

30. The above objectives relate strongly to maintaining high levels of access into HE for students from LPN, with the aim maintaining equity of entrants to PCA across POLAR quintiles.

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students

31. There are significant barriers for BAME entrants to PCA. Nationally, participation in art and design subjects by students from non-white ethnic backgrounds is typically lower (17% compared to 30% across subjects other than art and design)¹² with arts subjects often perceived as lacking in diversity and having poor career prospects amongst non-white communities, parents, influencers and students¹³. Additionally, Plymouth is geographically distant from areas of higher BAME populations in England and, to the perception of a visitor, it's population is not demonstrably ethnically diverse; although clearly this is less of a barrier given the modestly higher proportions of BAME students at other Plymouth HE providers.

32. To date we have been aiming to address our proportions of BAME students naturally as we have developed increasing traction in national as well as regional recruitment markets, but with success clearly limited. Whilst there is a gap between our performance statistics and those for the sector overall, there is not a significant gap when considering our size, specialism and location. However, we are keen to do more to attract BAME students and, whilst not proposing to set specific targets, additional measures we will be pursuing are outlined in the next section.

Mature students

33. We remain committed to a strategic aim for maintaining access to HE for mature students, and outline the type of work this encompasses in the next section but, based on our assessment of performance are not proposing to set objectives for significant improvement.

Male students

34. We remain committed to a strategic aim with regard to ensuring gender inclusivity in our curriculum offer, but this does not form part of this plan other than as part of more broadly promoting access for students from LPN.

Continuation

35. From the previous assessment of performance, priority for improvement lies with the under-represented groups of mature students, students with disabilities, and students from IMD/POLAR Q1-2, with the latter (POLAR) being aligned with OfS national key performance

¹¹ UCAS 2018 end of cycle report

¹² 2018 UCAS end of cycle data resources table 2018-DR3-022-01

¹³ AccessHE report: The more colours you add the nicer the picture (2016)

measure 3. To date, the College has also been targeting improvement for student from households of low residual income, but the rationale has diminished with ongoing close comparison in continuation across different levels of household income. Also up to now, the College has set targets for continuation based on overall in-year statistics, but targets for 2020/21 onwards are revised to align with OfS access and participation data and the sector focus on continuation after the first 12 months in HE.

36. It is also pertinent to note the College has been placing increasing emphasis on measures to improve overall retention. Targets for improvement for mature students, students with disabilities, and students from POLAR/IMD Q1-2 are therefore based on improvement in absolute terms with the aim of tracking overall improvement (against young students, students with no known disabilities and students from POLAR/IMD Q3-5) as well as reducing the gap with these counter categories. In setting ambitious targets we aim to be able to build on current work such that targets for 2020/21 show improvement from our current position, and thereafter follow a trajectory to achieve further increase to 90% by 2025. Whilst there are different start points for the different priority groups, this is considered to represent the most ambitious approach to both minimise the gaps with their counter-categories and more closely match or surpass sector statistics (current whole-sector statistics are 89% for disabled students, 85% for mature students, 90% for students from POLAR Q1-2, and 87% for students from IMD Q1-2).

37. Targets will be kept under review on an annual basis, particularly in terms of ensuring absolute and comparative improvement to the counter categories and in terms of progress against national sector achievement.

Attainment

38. Based on the earlier assessment of performance, we propose targeting the most distinct and significant gap for PCA that is for students with disabilities compared to students with no known disabilities, and in alignment with OfS national key performance measure 5. The 2017/18 gap of 10% is significantly larger than the overall sector average (which has steadily reduced to 2.7% in 2018), and whilst initial indications of results this year indicate this may have been an anomalous statistic, until all outcomes for the current academic year are complete and fully analysed, it is difficult to make any assumptions in this respect. Historical data has varied significantly both up and down, and part of our aim is to ensure consistency into the future, aiming for sustained improvement with the measures outlined in the next section. Our ultimate target is to achieve reduction of the gap to within 2% during the period of this Plan, and completely eliminate the gap by 2030 between students with disabilities and those with none known, noting that we are also expecting gradual improvement in overall attainment through ongoing emphasis on overall improvements in quality of teaching, learning, assessment and academic support. Milestones reflect plans to achieve the most significant reduction in the performance gap as early as possible (to 3% in 2022/23) followed by a trajectory of smaller incremental progress to eliminate the gap by 2030.

39. Whilst this remains the sole target specified for attainment, we remain committed to ensuring elimination of any gaps between attainment across different student characteristics.

Progression

40. Assessment of performance identifies students from POLAR Q1-2 as those with lowest progression to employment and highly skilled employment. Whilst progression to professional careers and further study remains an area to which the College is strongly committed to improvement for all students, given a strong track record of attracting students from this under-represented group in HE to PCA, it is particularly important for us to aim for equitable employment outcomes. Targets are set both for the overall statistic for progression to

employment and/or further study, and for progression to highly skilled employment and/or further study, with the ultimate aim for statistics to eliminate gaps between students from POLAR Q1-2 and 3-5, and match benchmarks (acknowledging these will continue to gradually increase). Long term targets are 95% for employment and/or further study, and 70% for progression to highly skilled employment and/or further study, compared to our TEF4 benchmarks of 93.5% and 65% respectively, and noting the target of 70% matches the current average of English HE providers from OfS access and participation data. These are again ambitious targets, even more so given some of the specific challenges posed in making the transition to professional careers in the creative industries¹⁴ and are set for achievement by 2030.

41. Clearly, these targets will require review following the impact of the change to the Graduate Outcomes survey.

Measurable Objectives

42. In pursuit of the targets identified above, a summary of our measurable objectives for 2020/21 to 2024/25 is shown below.

Measurable objective	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Access					
Progression to HE from Pre Degree	72%	74%	75%	76%	78%
Continuation					
Students with disabilities	84%	85%	86%	88%	90%
Mature students	82%	84%	86%	88%	90%
Students from POLAR Q1-2	86%	87%	88%	89%	90%
Students from IMD Q1-2	82%	84%	86%	88%	90%
Attainment					
Students with disabilities (gap between students with no known disabilities)	7%	5%	3%	2.5%	2%
Progression					
Students from POLAR Q1-2 to employment/further study	86%	88%	89%	90%	91%
Students from POLAR Q1-2 to highly skilled employment/further study	50%	54%	57%	60%	63%

SECTION THREE - STRATEGIC MEASURES

PCA STRATEGIC APPROACH

Overview

43. PCA's overarching Strategic Plan identifies the aim to be a purposeful catalyst for social mobility, equality and access with an embedded ethos of inclusivity and accessibility to develop the cultural diversity of our creative learning community. The Plan includes the clear strategic aim to improve our delivery of widening participation objectives in HE, improving student success and progression to professional employment and/or further study. In the development of the Plan, it was clear that both staff and students identified strongly with the strategic aims, which were supported equally strongly by our Board of Governors.

¹⁴ PCA TEF3 submission

44. We can justifiably claim to have a full student lifecycle approach, with comprehensive pre-entry activity encompassing our ongoing support, through collaboration with PSCA that includes membership of its governing body, contributing to the NSSW partnership, conducting our own outreach, running young arts clubs, and providing our own FE courses. We enjoy early engagement with potential students through interviews, provide support for transition through pre-course orientation and induction activities, and are active in supporting students through their courses to graduation and progression to further study at Masters level and professional careers with both centrally organised support services and considerable enrichment activity in-programme.

45. A number of staff from across the College are actively involved in our access and participation plans (Registrar, Director of Learning Teaching and Enhancement, Heads of School, Head of Student Recruitment and Admissions, Head of Student Support, Head of Management Information and Data Services, Head of HE Quality). There is also significant additional activity by staff delivering against identified objectives (e.g. student and academic support staff, academic teams) and by members of specific groups or Committees either engaging in work associated with strategic objectives and measures and/or monitoring and assessing progress (e.g. Retention Working Group, Data Group), or engaging with development of the Access and Participation Plan itself (e.g. Equality and Diversity Committee). The approval process for the Access and Participation Plan includes Academic Board, and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with oversight by the Board of Governors. The nature of our Strategic Plan demonstrates the strength of College commitment from the Principal, SLT and Board of Governors to access and participation.

46. Students have been engaged in developing the access and participation plan, and we plan to utilise the Equality and Diversity Committee (which has strong and diverse student representation) as well as student groups and the Students' Union Executive more extensively in ongoing development of future plans and in supporting and evaluating access and participation across the College.

47. In developing this access and participation plan, we have taken an evidence-based approach and, as a relatively small HEI, we have adopted a simple overarching theory of change as follows and developing accompanying evaluation strategies to assess progress:

- identifying gaps in performance using statistics from a range of data sources including OfS, HESA, UCAS, and PCA
- specifying the desired end performance level related to our own context and benchmarks, comparator and sector performance, and OfS objectives and key performance measures
- setting out what we plan to do to make progress against the targets, as far as possible based on both qualitative and quantitative evidence for assessment of impact

Alignment with other strategies

48. There is alignment between this Access and Participation Plan and College strategies; new strategies are being developed to underpin the Strategic Plan, with 3 key strategies (Education Excellence and Innovation Strategy, Recruitment, Enrichment and Retention Strategy, and Resource and Learning Environments Strategy) all featuring strong links with access and participation objectives, aiming to embed our ethos of inclusivity and accessibility to develop the cultural diversity of our creative learning community and promoting social mobility, equality and access.

49. The Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy states that the College aims to ensure that provision is inclusive in design and orientated to the needs of all students and that positive efforts are made for those with need for additional or specific learning support. Staff are prepared to apply principles of inclusion and universal design to the curriculum and teaching and assessment strategies for the benefit of all students, and will be supported with resources, training and expert consultation.

50. The College's Single Equality Scheme has objectives that align with the College's Strategic Plan and its strategies for widening access and participation with emphasis on embedding creative learning and social justice. The Scheme, which also links to the public sector equality duty, ensures the College promotes an inclusive institutional culture that advances equality of opportunity and recognises the benefits of a diverse learning community for students and staff and the development of the institute. It has an objective to provide an excellent student experience through equality and inclusion alongside academic excellence. To eliminate unlawful discrimination, equality and inclusion are integrated into curricula and into College documentation. A further objective is to actively and positively promote people from different backgrounds in marketing media, events and activities and to interact with and encourage potential students from backgrounds not represented in certain areas, linked to research being done into subjects with (national) low non-white participation. Programme teams work with Student Support and Head of Facilities to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate needs of all students, such as through assistive technologies.

51. PCA Equality and Diversity Policy states that as an impact assessment, the College will:

- identify differences in the opportunities available to groups in comparison with others in relation to attendance, attainment/success, retention, progression and graduate outcomes
- investigate and evaluate the reasons for any differences and develop strategies to narrow and eventually eliminate the gaps

Strategic Measures

Access – students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPN)

52. Work with schools and colleges is aimed at delivering our own engagement activities with students from LPN as listed below alongside broader impact through our role as a partner with all regional universities and other HE providers in NSSW. Activities are evaluated using feedback from individuals engaged and, where possible, tracking to application:

- working alongside local community development organisations to reach potential students and their families in a relaxed and informal environment, providing contact with HE staff and students.
- identifying and delivering positive interactions at non-traditional events regionally to achieve a first point of contact in a familiar environment to the potential student.
- engaging with potential students at a national level in their own area, providing travel bursaries to Open Days where appropriate as well as alternatives to visiting PCA (i.e. interviews at alternative, closer locations or by skype) to reduce financial / geographical barriers
- providing 'myth-busting' workshops on HE, student finance and careers to schools and colleges
- developing more outreach engagement with Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils at schools that have a higher proportion of students in POLAR Q1.

53. The NSSW collaboration covers target areas in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset and focuses on pupils in years 9 to 13 identified as medium/high achievers with low HE aspiration and domiciled within nominated postcodes. A diverse range of outreach projects are designed and delivered collaboratively by NSSW partners, with robust evaluation of impact throughout. The funding for the programme sits outside the College's Access and Participation Plan but the contribution by the College sits directly within its access and outreach activity with targeted activity comprising delivery by PCA of impartial advice and guidance to Devon schools, and direct engagement with individual learners in activities to support their preparation for HE including mentoring and portfolio development. We evaluate the effectiveness of our activity through feedback from schools and individual learners, but cannot track ultimate progression to HE.

54. One of our (3) Heads of School takes overall responsibility for co-ordinating collaborative activities between our students and different year groups at PSCA across Key Stages 1 to 4. Activities are planned in advance for each year to build on the previous year and ultimately ensure engagement with 50% of all students. We will measure impact through evaluation incorporating case studies and student and staff feedback to evidence how and where activities help to increase the broader knowledge and confidence of pupils that can help towards higher attainment at GCSE. Additionally, for those with a desire to study creative subjects after the age of 16, our activities aim to provide the additional inspiration and understanding to do so through projects that include work in the creative disciplines of art, design and media, provision of advice and guidance in developing portfolios, and visits to the College that include workshops with access to specialist resources and events such as the end of year Degree Shows. Again, evaluation of impact will be through case studies and student feedback, with statistical data in terms of progression from PSCA to Pre Degree course at PCA and thereafter ultimately to HE, as below.

55. Work with our own Pre Degree (FE) students is aimed at supporting progression to HE through increasing contact with HE academic staff and students within the Pre Degree curriculum, developing additional workshops, presentations and discussions covering HE subject options and creative careers, as well as general HE areas of concern/interest such as student finance, student living. Activities include events for parents as well as 1:1 provision of impartial information, advice and guidance for students. Care will be taken to ensure all activities remain geared towards progression to HE anywhere and not to PCA in particular, whilst utilising HE resources to serve as showcases. Whilst student (and Pre Degree staff) feedback will continue to help to tailor ongoing work to best effect, measurement by numbers progressing to HE will remain the clearest indicator of overall impact, noting this will incorporate ultimate impact in terms of progression from PSCA to FE and then to HE at PCA.

Access – BAME students

56. The following measures are planned to support increase in entrants from BAME backgrounds, based on research material previously referenced (AccessHE) report.

- Positive representation in marketing and recruitment campaigns
- Increased focus on role models from students, alumni and staff, and career prospects/support in campaigns and student/influencer communications
- Increased work in areas/schools from 2019-20 onwards with high BAME population with a focus on careers
- Review of curriculum to take effect from 2021/22 to ensure it is diversely representative, which is also made clear in promotional literature

57. Building on the relationships developed through NCOP/NSSW, the College is also currently in discussion with other HE providers in Plymouth to develop a collaborative

programme to address the shortfall in BAME student access, which, as already noted, is a feature of our regional demographic.

Access - Mature students

58. For mature students without standard entry qualifications, we will continue to promote an alternative route to HE through entry into our extended Degree programmes, provided this remains viable under policies for government funding into the future.

59. We have healthy numbers of mature students in full time study and although we have maintained modest numbers in part time study years, we remain keen to do more to make part time study attractive and continue to make it available across all our Degree programmes. We are in the process of reviewing our part time offer and re-designing to make it more attractive and accessible.

60. Additionally, we aim to specifically attract mature students through presence at particular regional events attended more by adults over the age of 21 with an interest in creative industries/careers, and have developed specific mature student journey communication materials through experience of current mature student interns.

Access – gender

61. There have been a number of factors combining to discourage males from studying creative art and design subjects in HE. Whilst the decline of arts in schools affects both males and females, the promotion of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects that are already more traditionally male-dominated makes for even less chance of exposure to the breadth of the arts. Fewer males are choosing Group W subjects¹⁵ and fewer males are choosing A levels in art and design.¹⁶ Pursuing STEM subjects in HE offers more tangible career options, whereas art and design courses are perceived to have a less predictable outcome, despite growing evidence of the volume and variety of opportunities in the creative industries. There can be a lack of male representation as role models in specialist arts institutions.

62. Measures we are taking to address this include the following to ensure inclusivity across both male and female genders:

- Providing positive representation in marketing, communications and events
- Changing STEM to STEAM (e.g. participation in national STEM events such as British Science Week and the Big Bang Fair)
- Working in schools in LPN to demonstrate the importance of creative thinking across a range of sectors and support participation in creative subjects
- Reviewing the curriculum and subject titles to ensure gender inclusivity

Continuation

63. A significant amount of work has been undertaken and remains ongoing to support continuation for all students at PCA. Many of the further planned interventions and activities to support students with disabilities, mature students and students from POLAR/IMD Q1-2 will be useful also for all students, but the impact will be measured against the specific target groups to enable ongoing review and improvement. We will undertake detailed evaluation processes

¹⁵ 2018 UCAS end of cycle data resources table 2018-DR3-014-01 – reduction to 36% male acceptances from 39% in 2013

¹⁶ JCQ regional GCE entry, gender and regional charts summer 2018 – males/females choosing art and design subjects 25%/75%

to determine the efficacy of the interventions we are using, measure the impact of the work and support the allocation of resources to support these groups of students. For all activities, and in conjunction with quantifiable impact data, the end user experience will be determined using a mixed methods approach¹⁷. This will entail questionnaires, focus groups and/or mini interviews to explore and understand how our work is received and impacts our learners.

64. The college uses module evaluation surveys to receive feedback from students for each module undertaken. We will introduce a set of questions linked to inclusivity and accessibility, enabling evaluation of student perception of module inclusivity and accessibility. This form of student feedback is anonymous, so evaluation will be via the proportion of questions completed by students as a total, evidence to support module interventions and enhancements, and changes in module performance over time.

65. Designing for, and integrating the use of, learner analytics are essential to support students. Building on current work, we will deploy a student engagement dashboard to integrate and visually display the engagement of students and the targeted groups of students in terms of attendance, Library Management System (LMS) usage, library usage and assessment performance. We will link an early warning system to this which automatically notifies staff of students who are potentially disengaged or underperforming in relation to the cohort. The impact and evaluation of this work will be via: the number of times the dashboard is accessed by different student groups, recording the percentage engagement of targeted students as part of overall engagement, measuring engagement as part of our overall student population, attainment and continuation performance against our overall student population, and the mixed method approach as described above.

66. Our Academic Support team, Study Zone, will continue to offer personalised 1:1 support and group sessions, whilst growing provision to encompass new approaches, technologies and evaluation metrics. The Study Zone team are engaging students to support the re-design of online pages to promote an increase in usability and engagement, with web analytics to be used to measure the impact of their interventions. Building on this work and to support the continuation of our students, the following are being developed.

67. We will target mature students (including part time) and students from POLAR/IMD Q1-2 to engage with study zone and focus on the importance of support for academic skills and utilising library resources. This will also help to address additional needs for those returning to study and with non-traditional entry qualifications. Activities will include the creation of a 'writing corner' in the library, academic writing retreats, 'up-use' of learning technologies (see below) and integration of workshop sessions into the core curriculum. The impact and evaluation of this work will be through recording the percentage engagement of targeted students as part of overall Study Zone engagement, measuring engagement as part of our overall student population, attainment, progression and continuation performance against our overall student population and the mixed method approach as described above.

68. Mature students, students with disabilities and students from POLAR/IMD Q1-2 returning from an interruption to their study can face a challenging time, academically and personally. To support these students, a dedicated induction process is being developed including Student Support and Study Zone. Activities will be designed to support reintegration into the College, academic catch-up, transition activities and recap of previous study. The impact and evaluation of this work will be via recording % engagement of returning to study

¹⁷ Creswell, J. W., 2014. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approach. 4th ed. London: SAGE Publishers Inc

students, progression and continuation performance against our overall student population and the mixed method approach.

69. Resonance with characters in a book linked to wellbeing, resilience and other issues related to the student journey is termed bibliotherapy¹⁸ and has been shown to have a positive impact on students. Drawing from this research, our Head of Library Services will pilot a project to evaluate this in the creative arts. The impact and evaluation of this work will be via % engagement of target students as part of the overall pilot, continuation, progression and attainment performance against our overall student population and the mixed method approach.

70. Learning Technologies are deeply embedded into our infrastructure and we recently transitioned from Moodle to Google Classroom. This transition has been successful and seen an increase in online engagement. Building on this work and to support the continuation of our students, the following activities are planned.

71. All modules have a dedicated online reading list and the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) licence permits the online creation of one chapter per book per reading list. A digital chapter provides greater accessibility, with individuals having the flexibility to enlarge the page size. Through the reporting tools via the CLA we will track the engagement with each resource to determine its efficacy. All reading lists will be reviewed to ensure that our work represents our community. The impact and evaluation of this work will be via recording % engagement of target students as part of overall engagement, measuring engagement as part of our overall student population, attainment, progression and continuation performance against our overall student population and the mixed method approach.

72. Classroom (lecture capture) and multimedia resources support the student experience and afford a way for students to engage further with their learning material.¹⁹ Additionally, they can help to personalise the curriculum whereby students can choose the medium and modality to review material. We intend to introduce lecture capture into our main theatre and embed this into our theory-based modules. This implementation will include the physical process as well as practice and policy, further supported Study Zone and the library webcasts, support and discussion videos and discussion. The impact and evaluation of this work will be via % usage statistics, measuring engagement as part of our overall student population, attainment, progression and continuation performance against our overall student population and the mixed method approach.

73. PCA currently uses Google as its learning platform and a key part of this is Google Docs. Indeed, this technology is used to develop most student-facing material as well as students using it themselves. Part of the Google suite is a template function and we intend to create an inclusive set of templates coupled to staff development and guidance material. The impact and evaluation of this work will be via % of student-facing documentation using the templates and year on year comparison and the mixed method approach.

Attainment - students with disabilities

74. Whilst some of the above will also support improving attainment for students with disabilities, the following describes specific work in this respect. All our assessments support reasonable adjustment whereby students are able to engage with a different modality aligned

¹⁸ McNicol, S., and Brewster, L., (eds.) (2018). *Bibliotherapy*. London: Facet

¹⁹ F.C. Saunders & I. Hutt (2015) *Enhancing large-class teaching: a systematic comparison of rich-media materials*, Higher Education Research & Development, 34:6, 1233-1250, DOI: 10.1080/07294360.2014.911261

to the learning outcomes. Currently, these adjustments are not tracked and not used to support future action so we will undertake work to update our student database and record the application of adjustments. The impact and evaluation of this work will be via % engagement of target students engaging with assessment adjustments, attainment, progression and continuation performance against our overall student population and the mixed method approach.

75. We recognise that education is an individual experience and the personalisation of support is essential for student continuation and attainment. Whilst adhering to this ethos, we intend to develop and deploy a standard set of adjustments which can be adapted as needs required. Further, we will undertake a review of how all student support data flow through the institution to ensure students receive the support they need whilst still complying with GDPR. The impact and evaluation of this work will be via module evaluations questions related to the student experience, the mixed method approach, and staff experience of data flow and processes.

76. For students with disclosed disabilities but without recourse to additional support through the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA), we will review records of engagement with the Study Zone to identify any who have not received support and encourage those to do so. Whilst recognising the diversity in student needs ranging from a single appointment to ongoing support, the aim will be for Study Zone to see each of these students at least once to identify and put in place appropriate ongoing support. The impact and evaluation of this work will be via % engagement of target students, attainment, progression and continuation performance against our overall student population and the mixed method approach.

Progression - students from POLAR Q1-2

77. Graduate employability is a key focus of our work and we have an active team supporting our students. Further, we view employability and student enterprise as integral to the curriculum and it is embedded in our curricula. This will be strengthened further through our current review of all curricula between now and 2021, and with the following interventions and actions specifically promoted to, and measured in terms of impact for students from LPN. The impact and evaluation will be via % engagement of target students, the mixed method approach in terms of student feedback regarding preparation for transition to a professional career, and triangulation with subsequent statistics for progression to employment and highly skilled employment.

78. PCA has been focusing on developing its relationship with alumni and we intend to develop alumni mentoring (face-to-face and virtual) which has been shown to be impactful in other institutions. Mentors provide the opportunity for role modelling, employability advice/engagement as well as advice to students outside the main PCA structure.

79. Interview for a role can be challenging and preparation is key to support success. To support this, and linked to our enrichment series, we intended to develop and integrate mock interview training coupled to student recording and feedback. The aim of this work is to help students prepare successfully as well as develop strategies of coping with interviews.

80. We are also planning to improve our ability to monitor student engagement with specific initiatives/activities so that we can identify take-up and completion by student group. This will help us address the way these activities are promulgated, advertised, timetabled and organised with the aim of ensuring the value of activities in support of progression is understood by and readily accessible to all target groups. One example is through our work to embed digital badging; as part of a funded EU project we intend to embed digital badging into our future curricula, supporting micro credentialing, showcasing skills and providing a

framework and language for employability. Using digital badging data, we can also capture student engagement and relate this to key target groups. Additionally, we are planning to transition our Lynda.com platform to LinkedIn Learning, and integrate this new platform into our LMS and create playlists linked to employability. We will then be able to promote monitor engagement and completions, which is not possible currently.

Student Support

81. Support for student success includes study skills and comprehensive support from programme teams as well as central services such as counselling, student finance advice and support, health and wellbeing services, and support either provided directly or through Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) funding for specific students. To date we believe we have struck a good balance between specialist government funded support through DSA and our own institutional support mechanisms. With high levels of students with disclosed disabilities, we have continued to provide effective support for students over and above the minimum required in terms of reasonable adjustments. We appointed a team 2 years ago to drive forward the development of fully inclusive learning environments, working closely with programme leads and tutors as well as education specialists and the central academic skills team. As a result, we have made significant progress in embedding inclusive learning, teaching and assessment methodologies and adopting a more consistent approach across all programmes. This team included resource to provide individual reasonable adjustments where necessary, which has also helped in identifying inclusive learning approaches that can bridge the gap for many without the same severity of need but who need more individual guidance, particularly at the beginning of their studies in transition to HE. It has also helped in the drive for early referral of students to wellbeing student services where appropriate.

82. With increasing numbers of students presenting with anxiety, depression and other mental health conditions we have developed a range of health and wellbeing services to help combat difficulties arising from stress, anxiety, insomnia, panic attacks etc (counselling, 1:1 advisory sessions, lifestyle/dietary advice, solution focussed therapy, dō-in relaxation techniques, mindfulness/meditation training and acupuncture clinics). In summer 2018 we re-organised to introduce a Mental Health lead and implement a single-session therapy model alongside the more traditional counselling service which has proved very positive in addressing issues arising early.

83. Recognising that the initial period at College is of prime importance for future success, there is strong and close collaboration between central student support and individual programme teams from the outset to ensure students are aware of and able to access appropriate support for their needs. The diverse and often challenging backgrounds of some of our students make this particularly important in terms of initial orientation and inspiring a sense of belonging; clearly relevant for students with disabilities, but also for mature students and students from LPNs. We aim to ensure all new entrants feel a valued member of our community, and particularly those at potentially greatest risk.

84. We are firmly committed to continuing to provide a high level support according to the needs of our students, to ensure as far as possible individualised support geared to the needs of each student, which is reflected in our assumptions regarding financial commitment into the future and which will remain under close review.

Employability

85. We remain fully committed to continuing a strong emphasis on employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship across all our programmes; all our programmes have business and professional practice to engage with career goals, and a strong focus on the employability agenda in each subject area. Engagement with industry ranges from curriculum

development to extensive use of industry live briefs for projects. Students are supported by tutors who are actively engaged in the creative sector and through a broad range of additional activities outside the curriculum that are organised by our central careers and enterprise team that also provides 1:1 support for students in developing CVs, seeking work experience, graduate internships and career opportunities.

86. Additionally, we continue to promote the value of visits to national and international employers, professional practices and events. Exposure to such experiences enables an understanding of professional life in creative disciplines that is essential to developing a knowledge of relevant work opportunities. This knowledge coupled with experience from the activities mentioned above helps to build the aspiration and confidence for students to apply for the best jobs, and the competitive edge to be successful. This type of development is clearly useful for all but can be particularly valuable for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and specifically from LPN. Student feedback regarding educational visits is very positive, suggesting they help students to feel a part of their sector of the creative industries, and also help to raise their awareness and aspiration in both a professional and geographical sense for employment in their chosen career. We will therefore continue to invest in significant subsidy for educational visits.

Financial support

87. With high proportions of students entering PCA from households categorised as of low residual income, we remain keen to provide the most effective financial support for students. Over the 2018/19 academic year we have held further consultations with students with regard to the College bursary scheme, and also conducted the survey that is part of the OfS financial support evaluation toolkit. Although the response rate was relatively low (20%), 88% of respondents valued the bursary as important or very important for them financially to continue with their studies, with additional course costs identified by the most students (80%) as where they would need to spend less without the bursary, followed by essential living costs (53%). 82% agreed or strongly agreed that receiving financial support helps them to participate along with fellow students and be included in social and study trips. 80% agreed or strongly agreed that financial support helped them less anxious, and 78% less worried about finances. This is strong evidence in favour of the bursary, but it is also notable that 12% of respondents felt that the bursary was not important.

88. Financial support into the future has to be based on both affordability and impact. As a result, and for new entrants from 2020 onwards, the current bursary scheme will be replaced by bursaries that will be determined annually dependent upon budgetary constraints, and based on eligibility to support those who need it the most. For entrants in 2020, a bursary of £300 will be provided in the final, third year of study for students from households of lower residual income (up to £45,875) to offset costs of final project work in support of attainment as well as preparations for progression to employment. Means-testing will be by virtue of information provided by students to Student Finance England with consent to share with PCA.

89. The College will continue to subsidise the cost of materials within curriculum subject areas and the cost of educational visits. College hardship funds will be increased from 2020 onwards in support of retention; application has to be made for hardship funds which requires details from students of income and outgoings. Current estimates are for financial support through hardship funds and bursaries to be sustained to 2024/25 at c. £200,000.

Student consultation

90. We place great value on our partnership with students and the Students' Union and have consulted with both in the development of this Plan. We will continue to engage with students through a range of mechanisms, including termly programme Staff Student Liaison

Group meetings, termly 'Student Voice' meetings run by the Students Union for student representatives from all programmes and year groups, committees of Academic Board (Student Engagement and Experience, Learning Teaching and Curriculum, Academic Standards and Quality, Research and Scholarship) and the Equality and Diversity Committee. Students are also included in each of our current work streams for curriculum development. This breadth of engagement reflects our commitment to promoting and enhancing student participation for the benefit of the overall student experience, and this includes the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of Access and Participation Plans.

91. We have consulted with students on the proposals set out in this plan and discussed the wide range of measures encompassing support for access, continuation, attainment and progression to employment, including financial support. This has included meetings with the Students Union, representative groups of students, and student members of the Equality and Diversity Committee. Students supported the strategic priorities set out in this plan and the College has responded to their concerns over financial support in retaining bursaries in the final year of study when additional costs are highest.

Evaluation strategy

92. We already capture the range of data necessary to enable assessment of the success of measures included in this Plan. This data will be used to compute our performance against targets, which will continue to be reported formally to the Senior Leadership Team and through relevant committees to the Academic Board and to our Board of Governors.

93. Success in outreach is measured in terms of summary of activities undertaken, numbers engaged and resulting interest in studying at the College. All our outreach activities are evaluated for impact through feedback from those we engage with – school/college pupils involved in mentoring programmes, workshops, and portfolio reviews, and the liaison staff at schools/colleges. We are continuing to develop more comprehensive tracking through the student journey from initial point of contact to enrolment, and thereby aiming to better capture the success of different outreach initiatives. In terms of preparation for progression to HE for our own FE students, we seek feedback on specific activities such as advisory sessions and showcasing events, as well as more general feedback regarding their preparation for transition to HE as part of their academic and creative development.

94. Given the high proportions of students in the College from under-represented and disadvantaged groups, work in support of these students is a significant part of College business. Ultimately, impact from activities is evaluated in relation to progress against our specified milestones/targets and, for example, termly Programme Performance Reviews include monitoring retention by student characteristics. Particular activities (e.g. initial orientation, induction, inclusive learning initiatives) are monitored for impact on different student groups through student feedback and data where relevant (e.g. retention by WP category). The activities undertaken and evaluation of their impact will be reported to Committees of Academic Board to maintain emphasis on continuous improvement, including summary of termly student feedback and actions taken in response by the College. We acknowledge that we need to seek to improve impact of our activities and we have been developing our Retention Working Group (RWG) to this end, with changes for the coming academic year including greater liaison with students and their representatives to support evaluation of engagement and impact.

95. We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of our range of support mechanisms on student success in terms of retention, achievement and progression, including the use of funds to alleviate financial hardship.

96. In developing more robust evaluation of the financial support provided for students, we will continue to utilise on-line student survey and face-to-face meetings with students as part of the main mechanisms for assessment of the financial support we provide. We will also use PCA student data to triangulate performance outcomes with students from low income households in receipt of financial support and in comparison with other student groups, following the methodology of the OfS financial evaluation toolkit. On-line surveys will aim to capture more comprehensive and targeted feedback from students, with surveys tailored for different year groups, different subjects and for different targeted groups of students thereby aiming to obtain clear evidence regarding the perception of the measures taken to improve retention, attainment, and progression to employment as well as financial support from PCA. Where we provide subsidies or additional funds for students, the effective use of resources will be based on qualitative assessment based on the purpose of the funds and aligned activity, student feedback and, where relevant, student participation as some quantitative assessment of effectiveness. Outcomes from these activities with regard to financial support for students will be collated by Registry, presented for consideration through relevant termly meetings (of RWG, Programme Performance Reviews (PPR), and Staff Student Liaison Groups (SSLG)) with findings summarised and presented in reports to SLT for consideration and decision regarding any changes to future financial support packages.

97. We have completed the OfS evaluation self-assessment tool which indicated that, overall, our evaluation practice is 'emerging or in development'. Highest scoring sections are strategic context and programme design with both sections currently assessed as 'emerging' but with both being one different score away from advanced (strategic context) or good (programme design). Sharing existing identified expertise to support evaluation and accruing greater experience of programme design over the coming year will achieve these higher assessments. Current assessment for evaluation implementation is the third highest scoring section but results in a 'good' score. The lowest scoring sections are evaluation design and learning for evaluation. During the course of this year we have encouraged more consistent adoption of commended practice in measuring the position for participants before and after intervention. Additionally, whilst we identify clearly the roles and responsibilities associated with evaluation of our activities, we are also encouraging the use of more formal evaluation plans. Under learning for evaluation and as set out in this APP, we are establishing greater clarity about how we will use our findings and also planning to be able to definitively attribute impact to our programmes. Additionally, we will be considering how best to share our evaluations externally. These measures are expected to raise these sections' scores and with them therefore the overall assessment from 'emerging' to at least 'good' in the short term. We will keep our self-assessment under annual review to ensure ongoing improvement over the time span of this APP.

Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

98. The Registrar as senior post holder and member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) takes overall responsibility for the co-ordination of the provisions of, and monitoring of performance against our access and participation plan (APP). The Board of Governors has oversight of the provisions of access and participation plans and will continue to receive annual report against the performance and provisions of the plan, as approved by SLT. These reports are co-ordinated by the Registrar with input from other members of SLT and other line managers as appropriate, all of whom have contributed to the development of this APP.

99. Monitoring progress against this APP and achievement of our strategic aims and objectives will be embedded into PCA management processes and procedures. Monitoring progress against access objectives will be covered at operational level by our Data Group, which meets monthly, considering outreach and student recruitment and feeding into report to Senior Leadership Team and Academic Board. Monitoring against student continuation is part of the work of RWG which monitors non-continuation overall and by student characteristic.

RWG meets termly, feeds into termly Programme Performance Review (PPR) meetings and SSLG and into academic performance reporting to Academic Board through both Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC) and Learning, Teaching and Curriculum Committee (LTCC).

100. Academic performance report to termly ASQC, Academic Board and Board of Governors meetings includes recruitment, non-continuation, attainment and progression to employment with statistics broken down by student characteristic. This will be strengthened by monitoring these performance statistics against the targets in this APP for the specific groups identified, providing clear oversight of progress or otherwise from working level (e.g. RWG) to Academic Board and Board of Governors. This will incorporate monitoring of absolute performance for target groups as well as the gap in performance between target groups compared to their counter-categories, thus ensuring that performance is understood in its full context (i.e. change in both absolute performance and gap).

101. Such monitoring aims to ensure that any lack of progress against APP targets will be identified swiftly and, where applicable, at individual course level through the data prepared for and considered at meetings of Data Group, RWG and PPR. Where lack of progress is identified, remedial action will begin with detailed review of the measures undertaken at pan-College and course level as applicable. Action plans at course and/or school/department level will be developed setting out details of immediate recovery measures and any proposed new initiatives. These will be prepared for approval through line management by the appropriate member(s) of SLT, and incorporated in future planning regarding Access and Participation Plans as well as report to Academic Board and Board of Governors for note.

102. Students are engaged with the monitoring of performance and provisions of our APP through their involvement in SSLG, College Committees, Academic Board and the Board of Governors. As mentioned previously, we plan to utilise the Equality and Diversity Committee with its strong and diverse student representation as well as student groups and the Students' Union Executive more extensively in ongoing developments and evaluating access and participation. As part of this, Equality and Diversity Committee will be incorporated in formal monitoring of performance and provisions of this APP.

SECTION 4 - PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO STUDENTS

Information for students

103. We are committed to ensuring information for both existing and prospective students is clear and accessible, including the fees we intend to charge and details of financial support that we offer, as well as the costs associated with their life as a student on their chosen programme at the College. We achieve this through a mixture of media including our website and prospectus, through specific information included at Open Days, through information accompanying our offers that we make to students and that we impart to students at initial registration and induction, and that we make available on-line through our student portal. We will also continue to seek to enhance the general information and guidance made available and provided to potential applicants, applicants and students. Following approval, this Plan will be published on our website.

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
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0		£9,250
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
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		£4,625
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Plymouth College of Art

Provider UKPRN: 10005127

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 (£)	£332,000.00	£332,000.00	£332,000.00	£332,000.00	£332,000.00
Access (pre-16)	£60,000.00	£60,000.00	£60,000.00	£60,000.00	£60,000.00
Access (post-16)	£227,000.00	£227,000.00	£227,000.00	£227,000.00	£227,000.00
Access (adults and the community)	£45,000.00	£45,000.00	£45,000.00	£45,000.00	£45,000.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£385,000.00	£200,000.00	£200,000.00	£210,000.00	£220,000.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HF1%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HF1)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HF1)	£3,408,925.00	£3,486,050.00	£3,763,700.00	£4,133,900.00	£4,442,400.00
Access investment	9.7%	9.5%	8.8%	8.0%	7.5%
Financial support	11.3%	5.7%	5.3%	5.1%	5.0%
Research and evaluation	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%
Total investment (as %HF1)	21.9%	16.1%	14.9%	13.8%	13.1%

