

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY

ACCESS AGREEMENT

2016/17

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LEEDS
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UNIVERSITY

Opening minds
Opening doors

Executive Summary

- 1 This access agreement for 16/17 has been developed following internal and external review of our university's performance in our role to promote aspiration and motivation among learners of all backgrounds to consider higher education: support their transition into higher education and success. We have a varied and sustained programme of activity that reaches learners at all stages of the student lifecycle. This has been developed by faculties and services to sustain our support for student retention and success. The trend data presented in this agreement demonstrates we need to do more in diversifying our student body in line with the HESA benchmarks. It also provides encouraging evidence of where we meet our benchmark for student employability, and where we outperform our benchmark on student non-continuation. This access agreement demonstrates Leeds Beckett University's strong tradition of, and continuing commitment to, provide socially inclusive and life enhancing higher education opportunities for all our students, regardless of background. It reaffirms our commitment to raising aspirations working with local, regional and national partnerships across the whole educational lifecycle. It demonstrates our successes, our progress and our aspirations for building upon the significant foundation we have developed in outreach and student success.

Introduction

- 2 This agreement for 16/17 will apply as we come to the end of our current strategic plan for our university; *Quality, Relevance and Sustainability 2010-2015*, and the period of transition to our new strategic plan. We will, however, continue to build upon our excellent reputation for delivering a high quality student experience as demonstrated within the outgoing strategic plan. Our achievements under our outgoing strategic plan include:
 - ❖ Continue to hold *both* the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard *and* the Investors in People Gold award (currently the only UK University to hold both awards);
 - ❖ significant investment in both Headingley and City Campus sites resulting in numerous national awards for design and innovation;
 - ❖ rising 117 places in the stonewall workplace equality index entering the top 100 at 51 to further promote our profile as an inclusive organisation to work and study;
 - ❖ significant growth in our research profile within our region, nationally and internationally as confirmed in the 2014 *research excellence framework (REF)* results;

- ❖ becoming *Leeds Beckett University* to ensure we continue to develop our distinctive brand and positioning of our university within a complex UK and global context.

National Recognition for Academic Quality

- 3 In April 2014 we were pleased to be the first UK higher education institution to be reviewed under the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAAHE) new Higher Education Review (HER) methodology. As a result of this review the QAAHE confirmed we had met UK expectations in all four areas of assessment: the setting and maintenance of the threshold academic standards of awards; the quality of student learning opportunities; the information provided about higher education provision and the enhancement of student learning opportunities. The review report also confirmed two areas of good practice in relation to the embedding of employability across our curriculum and our management of partnerships and collaborations. The report is a positive endorsement of the work we have undertaken to enhance our courses, to prepare all our graduates for the world of work and undertake continuous improvement in our quality assurance systems. This is supplemented by on-going professional accreditations of our courses from 58 different professional, statutory or regulatory bodies.

Our Vision and Values: the Leeds Beckett University Context

- 4 Our vision statement demonstrates that all our students are at the heart of our university and work with us to realise our ambitions in promoting excellence in learning, teaching, innovation and enterprise:

Vision: *To be acknowledged for our commitment to student success, our innovation and enterprise, our global reach and strong local impact*

- 5 Our values demonstrate how we work with students, staff and stakeholders in promoting a collaborative and collegial environment that supports our students to realise their academic and professional ambitions:

Values: *Inspiring, Creative, Enterprising, Purposeful, Professional, Respectful*

- 6 During 15/16, we will be seeking to build upon our current successes by improving our internal data reporting and evaluation strategies for measuring the impact of outreach and student intervention measures to ensure investment continues to be allocated effectively.

Summary of Institutional Performance

- 7 The following section highlights our university's performance to date in promoting student access, support and success. Overall our performance demonstrates continuing improvement in most of our target areas by meeting our benchmark for part-time student numbers from low participation groups and meeting our benchmark

for overall graduate employability. All data provided in this section has been taken from the last three years of Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) benchmark data, where available.

Student Participation

- 8 The following tables provide the three year trend data for our university's profile of student participation from low participation groups as defined by HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency) with the location adjusted benchmark for comparison.

Participation of under-represented groups (%)

From state schools or colleges		Indicator (%)				Location adjusted benchmark			Difference from benchmark				
		2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	
T1a	Young full-time first degree entrants												
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	93.1	94.0	94.3		94.9	95.3	95.7	-1.8	-1.3	-1.4		
T1b	Young full-time undergraduate entrants												
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	93.1	94.0	94.3		95.0	95.3	95.7	-1.9	-1.3	-1.4		
T1c	Young full-time other undergraduate entrants												
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	92.5				95.8	..	..	-3.3	#N/A	#N/A	
From NS-SEC classes 4,5,6 & 7		Indicator (%)				Location adjusted benchmark			Difference from benchmark				
		2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	
T1a	Young full-time first degree entrants												
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	32.5	35.0	35.7		37.5	40.5	40.7	-5.0	-5.5	-5.0		
T1b	Young full-time undergraduate entrants												
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	32.4	34.9	35.7		37.8	40.6	40.8	-5.4	-5.7	-5.1		
T1c	Young full-time other undergraduate entrants												
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	31.3				40.5	..	..	-9.2	#N/A	#N/A	
From low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3)		Indicator (%)				Location adjusted benchmark			Difference from benchmark				
		2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	
T1a	Young full-time first degree entrants												
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	13.0	14.5	15.6		15.8	17.4	17.8	-2.8	-2.9	-2.2		
T1b	Young full-time undergraduate entrants												
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	12.9	14.5	15.6		15.8	17.4	17.9	-2.9	-2.9	-2.3		
T1c	Young full-time other undergraduate entrants												
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	11.9				15.7	..	..	-3.8	#N/A	#N/A	
Participation of under-represented groups													
Percentage with no previous HE and from low participation neighbourhood (POLAR3) (%)													
T2a Mature full-time undergraduate entrants		Indicator (%)				Location adjusted benchmark			Difference from benchmark				
		2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	
First degree entrants													
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	13.1	12.4	12.9		13.6	12.8	13.8	-0.5	-0.4	-0.9		
All undergraduate entrants													
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	14.4	12.7	13.2		14.7	12.9	13.9	-0.3	-0.2	-0.7		
T2b Part-time undergraduate entrants		Indicator (%)				Location adjusted benchmark			Difference from benchmark				
		2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	
Young entrants													
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	7.6	7.6	16.1		11.7	13.8	12.0	-4.1	-6.2	4.1		
Mature entrants													
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	3.2	3.0	4.5		3.9	3.3	4.7	-0.7	-0.3	-0.2		
All entrants													
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	3.4	3.3	4.9		4.3	3.8	4.9	-0.9	-0.5	0.0		
T2c Mature full-time other undergraduate entrants		Indicator (%)				Location adjusted benchmark			Difference from benchmark				
		2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	
Young entrants													
	<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	25.8				29.1	..	..	-3.3	#N/A	#N/A	

- 9 A modest growth in participation from state schools/colleges and NS-SEC (national statistics socio-economic classification) classes 4, 5, 6 and 7 can be seen for our university but this level of growth is equally reflected in our benchmark. In 13/14, we experienced a 1.1% growth in participation from students coming from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) which follows the benchmark growth of 0.4% demonstrating we continued to meet sector expectations for growth but remained overall behind the benchmark group by -2.2 percentage points.
- 10 The data also demonstrates our growth in undergraduate part-time student participation (for both young and mature students) and for the first time in three years we have met our locally adjusted benchmark for the part-time participation of students from low participation groups. This follows our continuing commitment to offering flexible pathways and programmes for undergraduate study and through dedicated communication strategies.

Non-continuation of Student Participation

- 11 For students who withdraw from studies after one year, our university trend data demonstrates that until 11/12 we previously outperformed our locally adjusted benchmark. In this category a negative difference between benchmark and our institutional performance shows we are now underperforming in our HESA benchmark for full-time students. However, we do outperform our benchmark for part-time student non-continuation. For the last two years our full-time student non-continuation performance has demonstrated that we have started to fall behind on our previously excellent performance. This is of significant concern to our university and through a number of initiatives we are seeking to both understand and therefore reverse this trend through strategic initiatives developed during 14/15. This includes the development of a student attendance monitoring policy and the commencement of a significant review and re-implementation of our student information systems. This work has also been supplemented with substantial data investigation at both institutional and course level through our participation in a KPMG national project to develop a framework for predicting and preventing student withdrawal. The objectives of this project are:
- 11.1 To identify the contributing factors for students' potential withdrawal
 - 11.2 To create a model based on our research which can predict students at risk of withdrawal and raise an alert
 - 11.3 To develop strategies for interventions to support at-risk students in either re-engaging or taking appropriate steps

Non-continuation following first year of entry
Percent no longer in HE (%)

T3a Full-time first degree entrants	Indicator (%)				Benchmark			Difference from benchmark				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend	
Young entrants												
Leeds Beckett	8.1	8.3	9.4		8.6	7.6	7.8	-0.5	0.7	1.6		
Mature entrants												
Leeds Beckett	11.8	10.7	12.2		12.6	11.9	13.2	-0.8	-1.2	-1.0		
All entrants												
Leeds Beckett	8.8	8.7	9.9		9.4	8.3	8.8	-0.6	0.4	1.1		

T3b Young full-time first degree entrants	Indicator (%)				Benchmark			Difference from benchmark				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend	
From low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3)												
Leeds Beckett	10.7	11.2	10.5		10.7	9.2	9.2	0.0	2.0	1.3		
From other neighbourhoods (POLAR3)												
Leeds Beckett	7.7	7.9	9.2		8.0	7.2	7.4	-0.3	0.7	1.8		

T3c Mature full-time first degree entrants	Indicator (%)				Benchmark			Difference from benchmark				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend	2010/11	2011/12	2011/12	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend	
With previous higher education qualification												
Leeds Beckett	11.4	10.1	11.2		12.2	11.1	12.5	-0.8	-1.0	-1.3		
With no previous higher education qualification												
Leeds Beckett	12.0	11.2	13.2		12.9	12.5	13.8	-0.9	-1.3	-0.6		

T3d Full-time other undergraduate entrants	Indicator (%)				Benchmark			Difference from benchmark				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend	
Young entrants												
Leeds Beckett	14.8	13.9	#N/A		17.5	13.1	..	-2.7	0.8	#N/A		
Mature entrants												
Leeds Beckett	17.4	19.4	#N/A		17.3	15.6	..	0.1	3.8	#N/A		
All entrants												
Leeds Beckett	15.5	15.0	#N/A		17.5	13.7	..	-2.0	1.3	#N/A		

Non-continuation two years following year of entry
Percent no longer in HE (%)

T3e Part-time first degree entrants	Indicator (%)				Benchmark			Difference from benchmark				
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Trend	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Trend	
Entrants aged 30 and under												
Leeds Beckett	15.3	17.9	11.0		25.6	21.3	16.4	-10.3	-3.4	-5.4		
Entrants aged over 30												
Leeds Beckett	16.8	12.3	7.1		28.2	23.7	22.5	-11.4	-11.4	-15.4		
All entrants												
Leeds Beckett	16.3	15.0	9.2		27.4	22.4	19.4	-11.1	-7.4	-10.2		

12 In addition to new strategic initiatives, we continue to review our current range of student-centred operational activities to support our students to engage with their studies and achieve success. For example,

12.1 Monitoring engagement through academic pastoral support at school and faculty level;

- 12.2 Support for developing skills for learning through our *libraries and learning innovation* teams;
- 12.3 Our *Services for Students* support for developing skills for life and its centralised *Student Hub* facility on both campuses;
- 12.4 Local level support in tracking student progression working with dedicated Student Liaison Officers for non-academic support at faculty level.

Services for Students

- 13 We have now fully established a central service called *Services for Students* with the mission to secure excellence and innovation in the delivery of student facing services and to place our university as a forerunner in the delivery of an outstanding student experience in the UK. This service is committed to the concept of supporting a holistic student experience working in partnership with faculties, our Students' Union, and all other professional services across our university, external agencies and students. The aim is to offer a wide range of relevant services and support throughout the student lifecycle which enable student engagement and success. The service portfolio comprises: Student Wellbeing (Counselling, Mental health and Inter-Faith); Student Information and Advice (including financial advice, financial support international advice, Student Hubs & Student Liaison Officers working in faculty); Employability and Job Shop services; Disability Advice and Disability Assessment Centre; all delivered through a student facing *Student Hub* on both campuses. This combined service is now fully embedded as a central student service providing proactive support for our students throughout their time at our university. The Service also acts as a consultancy for staff teams across the University and delivers a range of development opportunities to up skill faculty and service teams regarding at risk student groups, student life issues and routes to appropriate support mechanisms.

Support for Disabled Students

- 14 We reported in our last access agreement the need to understand the student support journey for newly enrolled disabled students and to ensure interventions were timely with clear communication to confirmed applicants to declare any disability upon enrolment. During 13/14, we began a business process review project to investigate the student experience of our business processes from declaration of a disability upon application through to the appropriate intervention(s) being in place in a timely manner. The results of this project are now being taken forward and during 14/15 we will continue this work through reviewing the student experience of our disabled student support worker model. Furthermore, we will continue our work to enhance and embed inclusive practices across the student lifecycle through the use of assistive technologies, reframing pedagogical practice and reviewing specific support pathways for students with Specific Learning Difficulties. This will involve working in partnership with faculties, professional services, and our Students' Union.

The Disability Assessment Team have started work with our Outreach and Access Team to visit schools and colleges to encourage them to consider early planning for their transition into university as a disabled student and ensuring they are aware of how to access the support available via Disabled Students Allowance and university when they do progress to university.

- 15 We are one of 25 universities providing evidence of student support models for a HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England) funded research project and our business process review work has been identified as good practice to be shared with the sector. Throughout our work with disabled students we apply the definition of disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010: a disability is a physical or mental impairment that has lasted or is likely to last for more than 12 months which has an adverse, substantial impact on ability to perform activities of daily life.
- 16 The table below demonstrates we had a 1% decrease in full-time students declaring a disability in 13/14 against an increase in the benchmark group by 0.3%. Conversely, we outperform our benchmark by 0.9% for part time undergraduate students declaring a disability in 13/14.

Participation of students in higher education who are in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) (%)

T7 All undergraduates	Indicator (%)				Benchmark			Difference from benchmark			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Trend
Full-time first degree											
<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	5.5	5.8	4.8		5.9	6.4	6.7	-0.4	-0.6	-1.9	
Full-time all undergraduate											
<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	5.5	5.7	4.8		5.8	6.2	6.6	-0.3	-0.5	-1.8	
Part-time all undergraduate*											
<i>Leeds Beckett</i>	3.6	4.9	5.6		3.0	3.8	4.7	0.6	1.1	0.9	

Student Success: Attainment for All Students

Student degree classification

Year	% Good honours	% Benchmark
2011/12	58.1	63.8
2012/13	62.3	67.7
2013/14	62.5	70.5

- 17 We continue to see an improvement in the % of our students who graduate with a good honours degree but our year on year improvement was much slower in 13/14 with our benchmark experiencing 2.8 percentage points increase on attainment compared to our 0.2 percentage points improvement. Following a review of sector

practice concerning methodologies for determining degree classifications, we were concerned our students could be unfairly disadvantaged as we appeared to be operating at higher than usual sector norms. A new methodology has been introduced which is now more in line with sector standards. However further investigations into how we are supporting our students to achieve academic success will continue as part of increasing our institutional oversight of our student access, support and success work.

Student Success: Attainment by Ethnicity

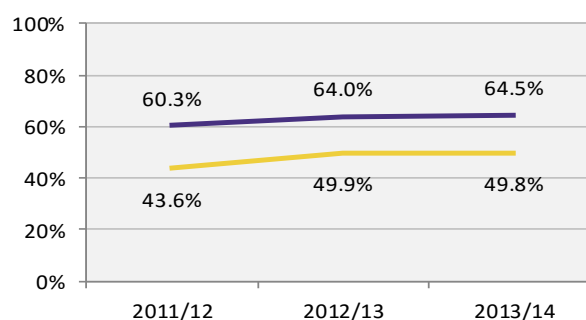
- 18 The gap between white students and BME students in terms of attainment has been slowly closing but in 13/14, our progress to improve student attainment remained static for both white and BME students. As part of our continuing commitment to both increase overall student attainment and close the attainment gap between white and BME students, we are developing proposals to undertake a series of 'deep dive' review and enhancement projects working with current student cohorts to understand local support issues with reference to sector wide research in this area. A further driver to this project work will be through being one of 30 higher education institutions participating in the trial of the Equality Challenge Unit's Race Charter Mark. The process to prepare our submission has involved extensive data collection and monitoring of staff and student engagement. The action plan arising from this work concerning student recruitment, progression and success will complement the work we are undertaking to address BME student attainment.

Attainment by Ethnicity

Leeds Beckett

	White	BME
2011/12	60.3%	43.6%
2012/13	64.0%	49.9%
2013/14	64.5%	49.8%

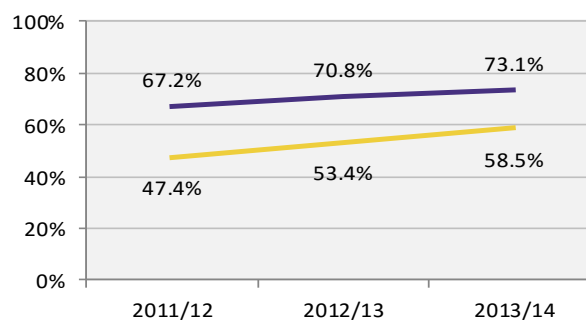
— White
— BME



Benchmark average

	White	BME
2011/12	67.2%	47.4%
2012/13	70.8%	53.4%
2013/14	73.1%	58.5%

— White
— BME



Student Success: Employability

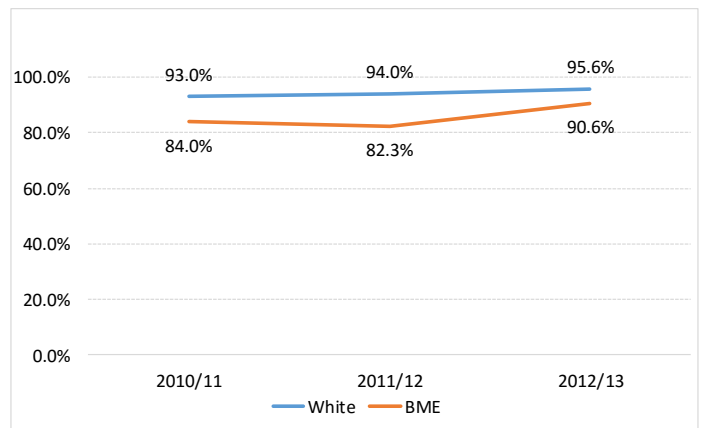
- 19 We have continued to see an increase each year over the last three years in our graduate population achieving graduate jobs or further study six months after graduation (as per *the destination of leavers in higher education survey* definition). The data given below refers to the year of graduation for the student cohorts surveyed. In the 11/12 survey, we met the benchmark expectation of 90.9% and we outperformed our benchmark for the first time by 1.6 percentage points.

Year	% in work and/or further study	HESA Benchmark
2010/11	89.9	90.1
2011/12	90.9	90.9
2012/13	93.7	92.1

Student Success: Employability by Ethnicity

- 20 The data concerning student employability by ethnicity demonstrates significant improvement in BME employability with an increase of 8.3 percentage points for those graduating in 12/13. In the previous year, a decline of 1.7 percentage points was reported. Despite the increase, we are still experiencing a 5 percentage point gap in employability between white and BME students.

Year	White	BME
2010/11	93.0%	84.0%
2011/12	94.0%	82.3%
2012/13	95.6%	90.6%



- 21 We have a proactive team supporting and promoting employability choices, support for skills development and guidance on accessing graduate employment opportunities working across all student groups. Resources are provided both on campus and through the student intranet. During 14/15 we are developing a new employability framework moving to a targeted intervention model which leverages a tripartite approach between Careers, Employer Engagements and faculties to provide targeted and timely support for our students in order for them to realise their long term graduate ambitions. Our new framework for employability will take a whole student lifecycle approach from pre-enrolment support for subject choices through to

in-year activities at subject level every year a student is with us. Individual student interaction levels with these activities will be monitored, and non-engaging students will be supported with targeted interventions. Core activities include local subject-based careers guidance, advice and information will be provided through a programme of seminars and workshops for our students to meet with employer organisations, consider further study options and enterprise and entrepreneurial opportunities in their chosen field(s).

- 22 A key partner in the development of the employability framework is our Students' Union and the role they have in supporting students to engage with our course representation system, the leadership development they provide for students running societies and clubs, and for their proactive role in supporting our students to engage in various community volunteering initiatives. Such activities provide further personal and professional development opportunities for all our students and further work to develop accredited recognition for students in these activities will be considered as part of the new employability framework.
- 23 Our employability team have taken part in the undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum reviews, commenting on and making recommendations concerning employability and work-related learning within the new curricula. The team continue to work with our outreach and access team, to embed the employability agenda within outreach sessions and on campus visits/summer schools/residential activities with access groups to encourage them to consider early planning for their career when applying to university and to access the support available when they do progress to university.

Target Setting and Performance Measures for 16/17

- 24 The data provided demonstrates variability in our success in meeting our benchmark targets. We continue to work to address our achievements based on the four high level targets outlined below and commit to associated performance monitoring, evaluation and action plans to ensure we continue with our development of a more informed approach to understanding the evidence basis which will inform our future strategic approach to student access, support and success.
- 25 **By 16/17 we will meet all HESA benchmarks for the recruitment of students from state schools/colleges, low socio-economic groups and low participation neighbourhoods, and for students with disabilities.**

This will be achieved by:

- 25.1 The further implementation and evaluation of action plans to widen our outreach activity to community groups, third sector organisations and other mature learner groups where higher education aspirations have been traditionally lower than other socio-economic groups. This will also include adopting a sector wide tool to track students who engaged with our university's access interventions.

- 25.2 Continue to develop our support structures and processes for disabled students from pre-entry through to graduation.
- 25.3 Develop our summer school for students with disabilities to develop skills and knowledge relevant to the first year at university to increase participation of students with disabilities in higher education.

26 By 16/17 we will exceed our non-continuation HESA benchmark again at 11/12 levels or above.

This will be achieved by:

- 26.1 Implementing a student attendance monitoring policy to increase our data monitoring of student engagement and progression allowing for more targeted interventions. This work will be informed by our university's involvement in a national research project led by KPMG to identify and support students at risk from early withdrawal from their studies.
- 26.2 We will be developing our own local projects to understand the impact of our financial support schemes on students including where they have supported (or not) student continuation with their studies.

27 By 16/17, we will have met our benchmark for students who achieve 1st or 2:1s.

This will be achieved by:

- 27.1 Developing and implementing a series of 'deep dive' review and enhancement projects to understand the BME student experience with specific reference to accessing academic support systems, undertaking work based learning as part of their curriculum and experiences of transition into the employment market. These projects will be focused on cohort experiences to understand how we can increase targeted interventions for BME students thereby seeking to address the attainment gap. Our work will be informed by sector wide research and other examples of best practice in the sector.

28 By 16/17, we will continue to exceed our graduate employment HESA benchmark.

This will be achieved by:

- 28.1 The development and implementation of our employability framework through a proactive whole student lifecycle approach working in partnership with faculties, professional services and our Student's Union in order to enhance our support for student employability. Targeted interventions at cohort level will be informed by the outcome of our 'deep dive' projects.

Institutional Oversight of Performance

- 29 Towards the end of 13/14, we improved our institutional oversight of all student access, support and success (SASS) activity by forming a SASS Steering Group of key strategic leads from across our university, including the relevant Student Union sabbatical representation, to develop an institutional evaluation framework and maintain oversight of all SASS activities including subsequent reporting to OFFA. The group is currently chaired by our Pro Vice Chancellor and Dean who has been the strategic lead for all SASS activity since January 2014. The group was established in May 2014 and reports directly into the university executive management group with additional reporting and data monitoring through our Academic Board and its appropriate sub-committees. The SASS group established a short life working group to develop an institution wide data monitoring framework to develop a deeper understanding of the impact of all our SASS activity to support future strategies, evaluation and action planning. While this work is still in the early stages of development and implementation, it has already enabled us to more closely monitor specific support streams, for example, our national scholarship programme (NSP) allocations against in year and end of year student non-continuation data. The group will also oversee the internal monitoring, evaluation and review of our financial support programme for our students.
- 30 In line with the early development of our institutional data monitoring framework, a SASS audit was carried out across all faculties and professional services in order to significantly increase our understanding of the contribution our university makes to the whole student lifecycle from access to student success. The information compiled from this audit will underpin our future action planning and align our performance measures against future activity.

Finance, Fees, Bursaries and Financial Support for 16/17

Finance

- 31 Across our university, our expenditure on access and outreach activities has increased over the last three years in line with our fees strategy to expenditure levels of 22% of premium fee income in line with OFFA guidelines. We anticipate our expected total expenditure on outreach and student success in 16/17 will increase by £2.6m to £11 million. The financial summary attached demonstrates how our university has increased its expenditure each year on access, retention and student success in line with our fee income profile.

Fees

- 32 We have set our fees to enable our university to continuously enhance our academic and pastoral support to our students to promote their retention and success. The fee for all home/EU students beginning a full-time undergraduate bachelor's degree at our university in the academic year 16/17 will be £9,000. This same fee level will be charged on a pro rata basis for all home/EU students beginning a part-time undergraduate bachelor's degree at our university in the academic year 16/17. In line with the fees regulations we will not charge any part-time student tuition fee greater

£6,750 in any academic year. It is our intention to review and set our fees in line with the amount set in government regulations each year. If a course includes a placement year there will be no charge to the student because we wish to encourage them to invest in this experience. This is priced as 20% of full time fee, in line with external requirements, and is then waived.

- 33 We have determined a single fee rate for our undergraduate provision and will not charge variable fees based on subject area. We are a university community in which every element of our professional portfolio plays an important role in enabling students to fulfil their career ambitions. We believe this pricing structure is simple to understand and will have a neutral impact on students who choose to transfer courses.

Bursaries and Financial Support for 16/17

- 34 We wish to encourage students from backgrounds which traditionally do not participate in higher education but who have the ability to succeed in a challenging funding environment and who we believe can benefit from our employability focused curriculum. Our financial support for students will be more focussed from 16/17 following the withdrawal of national scholarship grants and access to learning grants to universities. We are committed to maintaining an access to learning fund scheme because this has been an important part of our student retention activities. In 16/17, we will fund the following:

34.1 *High achievers scholarship*

The high achievers scholarship is a fee waiver of £1,000 to reduce a student's tuition fee in their first year of study only (2016-17 academic year).

To be eligible for a high achievers scholarship students are required to:

- a) Be registered on a full time undergraduate programme that is funded by HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England. Students studying on courses funded by the NHS (National Health Service) or the NCTL (National College for Teaching and Leadership) are not eligible as they have access to subject specific funding streams.
- b) Be enrolled on year one of an undergraduate course in the 2016-17 academic year.
- c) Be charged tuition fees of £9,000 in 2016-17.
- d) Achieve three A level grades at ABB+ or above or equivalent.

34.2 *Leeds Beckett University hardship fund*

All enrolled students can apply to the fund, which is intended to support unexpected financial hardship. Assessments of applications are completed on a means-tested basis, the details of which are included within the application form and follow previous guidance from HEFCE related to the (now closed) access to learning fund. Students can apply in any year of their course, but there can be no guarantee of an award until an assessment has been

completed. Awards are made based on individual circumstances and eligibility assessment is required for each application made to this fund. Unless specifically awarded as a short-term loan to bridge a gap in receipt of statutory funding, any award made is likely to be made as a grant and therefore be non-repayable. Payments are made directly into the student's nominated bank account.

34.3 *Associate Schools and Colleges Bursary*

The Associated Schools and Colleges Bursary is made in the form of a £300 cash payment to students in their first year of study only who meet the following criteria:

- a) Have studied full-time at one of Leeds Beckett University's Associate Schools or Partner Colleges in the 2015-16 academic year.
- b) Have applied for a full time undergraduate course funded by the HEFCE, NHS or NCTL.
- c) Have made Leeds Beckett University your firm choice of institution on the UCAS application system.
- d) Be registered and enrolled on year one of the course in the 2016-17 academic year.
- e) Have applied and qualified for student support under the current Education (Student Support Regulations) 2011 Act and consented to share financial information with the University.

34.4 *Care leavers bursary*

The bursary is intended to assist UK and EU students under the age of 25 who are leaving care, or who have been living independently since leaving care to attend university full time. The amount payable is £1,500 per year, which will be paid by bank transfer in two instalments directly to the student. Following assessment of eligibility in the first year, eligible students will automatically qualify for the bursary in each subsequent year that they are in attendance on their course until they either graduate or leave the course.

- 35 Where the high achievers scholarship and the associate schools and colleges bursary are awarded to a student, we will continue to work closely with the Student Loans Company to ensure these awards are duly recognised within the fee and maintenance payments made and where possible reduce tuition fee liability for our students as quickly as possible.

Further support for our students with their finances

- 36 We will continue to help students support themselves financially by offering a range of careers advice and guidance and by providing practical support into paid part-time employment and internships through our well established Job Shop. During 13/14 we introduced a dedicated Bursary and Scholarship Officer role within Services for

Students to increase the financial information, advice and guidance we offer both directly to students and through developing faculty support staff knowledge and expertise in their role in supporting students. During 15/16 we will be developing a local project to understand the wider impact of all our financial support packages drawing upon national initiatives and sector practice.

Outreach and Access Initiatives for 16/17 Entry

- 37 Our Access and Outreach team have developed a structured outreach programme working with faculties and professional services which is accessible to potential higher education learners from all backgrounds. The programme is built around our learner progression framework ensuring robust advice and guidance at key transition points is available. In the last academic year, we delivered in excess of 487 WP/outreach events and engaged 31,560 learners. We expect this level of engagement to be sustained and indeed grow by 16/17 as we increase our evaluation and impact activities over the next twelve months. Throughout these programmes and interventions, work is embedded to include parents, guardians, carers and other influencers of potential higher education learners in these activities to develop their knowledge and understanding of higher education and increase support for progression into higher education. Appendix A provides further information concerning how we follow the student lifecycle at all stages from primary to transition into higher education and how we are developing a more systematic evaluation and tracking mechanisms to inform our programme for 16/17.

Working with Low Participation Groups

- 38 In support of our continuing commitment to access and outreach, we also focus on specific target groups to increase their aspirations to consider higher education.
- 39 Care Leavers and Looked After Students: We are recognised by *Buttle UK* for our work with care leavers and looked after students. We will continue to offer a bursary of £1,500 as previously agreed with our Students' Union. We will continue to work with this group in the pre-entry phase utilising an established mentoring programme called *Next Step*. Mentors provide academic support and pastoral care to foster a sense of continuity and stability for the looked after students. Information events for carers are linked to this programme to ensure that looked after students receive the support and guidance needed to progress into higher education. We are committed to offering an on-course support contact point in faculty for our Care Leavers utilising the skills and expertise of the Student Liaison Officers.
- 40 Young Carers: We support our students who are young carers with individual level support as required through the academic pastoral programme, student engagement monitoring and advice, information and guidance offered by the teams in Services for Students' in order to enable such students to fully engage with their studies and university life. We are committed to developing a much more systematic approach to identifying such students through access initiatives, at pre-enrolment and in tracking their progress to ensure targeted support is proactively in place when they first arrive.

Our work on the KPMG project and in the review of our student information system will also help us to identify these students in the longer term.

- 41 Students from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Groups: We have a successful track record of working with students from BME groups to raise aspirations to pursue higher education and are committed to ensuring we increase this pool of students into higher education. Examples of interventions have included the Larkia, the UJIMA and Junior Fellowship programmes. *The Larkia programme* seeks to raise the confidence and motivation of young Asian girls through a three day residential programme focussing on the creative arts. The *UJIMA programme* targets young black males, currently under-represented at our university, and enables participants to gain inspiration and motivation from student ambassador role models who mentor the participants through the three day programme. The *Junior Fellowship Programme* develops programmes to raise the attainment of students from BME backgrounds. Students supported through the scheme take part in Saturday study sessions where they complete the Level 2 ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness qualification. Students who complete the programme and progress into Post-16 Education are invited to take up the *Progression Module*. Throughout these three programmes, parents, carers and guardians are invited to join information and guidance sessions to influence their support for progression into higher education.
- 42 Disabled Students: We encourage students with disabilities to consider progression into higher education and have worked extensively with key stakeholders to maximise uptake within this group. Specific actions have been included in our performance monitoring to increase progression within this student group with our continuing commitment to pilot a summer school in 14/15 for disabled students to help them experience aspects of university life and support them to consider higher education to support their long term career ambitions. Whilst our disabled student attainment is on a par with other non-disabled students, we are committed to reviewing and enhancing our inclusive course delivery and non-course related tuition for our disabled students to maximise its impact and outcomes at an individual level, in light of changes to Disabled Students' Allowance in 2016/17.

Applications and Admissions for 16/17

- 43 We will maintain our fair access policy as outlined in our previous agreements and continuously review our entry criteria to encourage applicants to demonstrate a personal and/or professional aptitude for the subject as well as academic potential. As part of our data monitoring for access and student success, we are increasing our internal evidence base for tracking applicants from low participation groups. This will include the following categories:
- 43.1 Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR2, 3, NS-SEC classes 4,5,6,& 7)
 - 43.2 Care leavers and Looked after applicants (self-declared)
 - 43.3 BME groups (self-declared)
 - 43.4 Applicants with a disability (self-declared)

- 44 In year tracking and end of cycle monitoring reports will inform future targeted activities for outreach and access programmes and provide a further evidence base for our extensive outreach programme. Furthermore, this will increase our understanding of conversion rates across the different groups from offer to acceptance and provide comparative data with enrolled student data.
- 45 In our last access agreement, a pilot project to support the access and admissions process for students from low participation groups was given. This project has been paused pending the full outcomes of the audit of our SASS activity across our university with a view to implementing pilot projects in 2016/17.

Equality and Diversity

- 46 We are committed to ensuring we meet our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and have given due consideration to the impact of these proposals and continuing activities on groups of students and potential students with protected characteristics and to those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Whilst many activities under our access agreement are targeted at specific groups we take an inclusive approach to those within cohorts whether they share protected characteristics or not. Targeted outreach work and internal initiatives to promote student success take an integrated approach so as to benefit as broad a range of students as possible. Programme level initiatives to promote student success engage the cohort as a whole so as not to be selective and isolate those from under-represented groups. All activity is underpinned by monitoring data arising from student progression and attainment in order to inform targeted activity and future action planning.

Working in Partnership with Current Students and our Students' Union

- 47 We have consulted with our Students' Union who has advised on this agreement. The Students' Union work closely with the university to support a wide range of activities within this access agreement including supporting access initiatives, volunteering programmes and projects to support student employability. Our Students' Union provide key support for our student course representative system and work with our university to ensure the student voice is fully represented. In establishing our Strategy for Access, Support and Success (SASS) group, the Students' Union have been represented on this group from its establishment during 13/14. Evidence of our continuing partnership work with our Students' Union can be found throughout this agreement and at all stages of the student lifecycle.
- 48 In 16/17, students will continue to be centrally involved and have representation within our university's governance structures where key decisions, such as fees, finance and support packages are discussed. They will continue to be supported in taking an active role as Student Ambassadors to promote student success within their faculties and with the *outreach and access team* to promote student-centred activities. Continuing student representation on our governing body will ensure students are represented at all levels of decision making and in the oversight of governance in our university.

Provision of Information to Prospective Students for 16/17

- 49 We will provide information concerning tuition fees, our university financial support schemes, and other information on student finance on our university website. We will also make this information available through leaflets, direct information and advice sessions for prospective students. Information will also be included in offer letters to applicants. Information about tuition fees and financial support will also be provided to UCAS as soon as it is reasonable to do so for 16/17 entry. Existing students will benefit from publications and direct advice provided by our Services for Students' teams. Both current and prospective students can access up to date information on the bursaries and scholarships we offer at <http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/undergraduate/scholarships/> with further financial support guidance at <http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/studenthub/full-time-funding.htm>.

Appendix A – Overview of Access and Widening Participation Programme

This section highlights how we continue to grow our access and widening participation work year on year.

Primary: We provide a wide range of primary programmes aimed at schools within areas of socio-economic disadvantage. For example, our central programme *kids@uni* engages with 15 primary schools each year with targeted activities delivered in school and on campus. Events have included workshops, campus tours and a mini-graduation. A range of school based activities are supported through our Students' Union with support from faculties and the outreach and access team to promote higher education in schools with current students working with primary schools. For example, The *Let Leeds Read* project is delivered in partnership with our Students' Union and local businesses. It develops reading skills by providing weekly reading support from our undergraduate students. This has been a very effective way of bringing our current students into widening participation activities to inspire future higher education learners but also build confidence and skills within our existing student population to work with such groups in disadvantaged areas.

Pre 16 Secondary Activity: We provide a number of activities for years 7, 8 and 9 students from schools. For example, students are invited to attend our *Arts and Science Circus* events. These events promote the relevance and importance of higher education, allowing students to engage in multi-sensory workshops to inspire and motivate. For example, to develop skills and aptitude in Business and Mathematics we have hosted an annual *Stock Market Challenge* involving 15 schools in competition in a simulated trading game. Schools from across the region are invited to attend an on-campus university day targeted at students in Years 7, 8 and 9. The events have included subject specific workshops developed and designed by our Student Ambassadors (current undergraduate students). In 13/14 we engaged over 2,950 students in this age-group through on-campus university days.

Work in key stage 4 is focussed on our *Young Professionals* programme, a long-term initiative targeting young people from key target groups who demonstrate the potential to progress to university. In 13/14, we offered the programme to 150 students from 15 schools. The programme included a number of co-ordinated interventions beginning in Year 10. We recognise the importance of the transition phase between Key stage 4 and 5 and consequently build information, advice and guidance sessions into the programme. We will continue to provide additional enhancement work through study skills workshops delivered in schools during Year 10 and prior to GCSE examinations in Year 11. Students who successfully complete the programme are tracked through to Key Stage 5 and are invited to join our post -16 initiatives including the *Tomorrow's Professionals Programme* and the *Progression Module*.

Post 16: We have worked in collaboration with the University of Huddersfield since 2008 on the *Progression Module*, an accredited HE guidance module for Year 12 students in the region. The module works with around 2,500 students led jointly by the two institutions. Students who successfully complete the module are awarded 30 UCAS points for courses at

Leeds Beckett University and the University of Huddersfield. Schools in low-participation neighbourhoods are prioritised to take part.

FE Colleges and Sixth Forms: We will continue to offer a range of workshops and talks to Schools with Sixth Forms and FE Colleges to ensure effective information, advice and guidance is delivered to Post -16 students. In 2013/14 we engaged with 18,205 Year 12 and Year 13 students through careers and HE events held within schools. We have a number of specialist events targeting FE colleges. In 2013/2014 we delivered 40 events for this sector, including focus days, HE talks and careers conferences. These events reached 5,072 FE students. In addition to this, we have established a collaborative forum for practitioners from our partner schools and colleges to share best practice relating to access and progression.

Access to the Professions and Tomorrow's Professionals Programmes: In our 14/15 access agreement, we outlined our plans for an Access to the Professions project and further developments on our Tomorrows Professionals project. The *Access to the Professions* project has been slow to gain ground and we anticipate future agreements will bring forward its early outputs. *The Tomorrow's Professionals Programme* has been developed to identify and engage students who have the potential to progress to university but are disadvantaged due to socio-economic factors. The programme offers participants the chance to take part in a year-long programme, specific to each faculty. This includes focus days, guest lectures and subject talks. The programme includes a 3-night residential event which allows individuals to increase their confidence in applying to, and progressing into higher education. Subject specific work ensures that students gain practical experience in their chosen field which includes clinical workshops in dietetics, speech & language therapy, and nursing. Employer partners, such as local NHS Trusts, contribute to the programme to assist participants in recognising the professional world they would be entering upon graduation. In our Education strand of the programme, students are given the opportunity to teach a lesson to Year 6 pupils within local primary schools. Students on the programme are given additional support through the application process through our *Onwards to Offers* event and are tracked through the UCAS process to monitor the impact of the programme. For 16/17 entry we will seek further evidence of impact of this programme and consider how it could be extended to other groups from low participation areas.

Collaborations:

HEART Partnership: We continue to be an active partner in the HEART (Higher Education Access Rewarding Transforming) consortium in West Yorkshire (see appendix B). The partnership facilitates a number of activities with looked after children including networking events and information programmes for foster carers.

Routes into Languages Consortium: Our university has been involved in the *Routes into Language* project since its inception in 2006. We are an active partner in the Yorkshire and the Humber Consortium. The Routes into Languages project aims to promote language learning, increase pupil motivation and uptake of languages and enhance employability. Stage two of the project commenced in September 2013 for three years. Stage two will concentrate more specifically on the impact of sustained interventions with schools in low participation neighbourhoods. We have worked with 35 of our current students to become

'Language Ambassadors' to promote learning languages to the schools and colleges we work with, targeting low participation areas and arranging visits to our university to explore the possibilities language learning at university can offer. We will continue to be an active member of this group, and seek increased evidence of students entering higher education through such subject specific outreach activities by 16/17.

Languages for All: For all students who come to our university, we offer free language classes to full time and part time students under the *Languages for All* programme. Courses are offered in nine languages and are offered for 26 weeks with 2 hours a week face to face contact. These sessions are open to all students regardless of level.

Accredited IT qualification for students: From 2012-13 students have been offered the opportunity to accredit their IT skills with the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) qualification. This comprises a set of online IT training materials which students can study at their own pace, followed by an exam when they feel they have reached the required level. A MOS certificate is available in MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Accrediting their IT skills allows our students to enhance their digital literacy, one of our university's graduate attributes, and to demonstrate a key graduate skill to potential employers.

Working with Alumni: We have developed a number of ways to both support our recent alumni students, as well as seek their involvement in our outreach activities and support for current students. Our career mentoring scheme is a voluntary programme that Alumni can engage with. Students are matched with a career mentor i.e. an alumnus who is a professional in a job role of interest to the student. It provides an opportunity for students to gain 'real world' insights into their chosen profession. Mentoring offers scope for the personal and professional development of both parties, especially in areas such as leadership and communication.

Our *careers services team* offers free career advice and guidance to recent graduates, (those that graduated within the last five years), covering; career choices, writing a CV, interview skills, part-time work, graduate opportunities and employer engagement. As part of our annual giving campaign *what would you give?* Recent alumni are invited back to engage with final year students to talk them through the journey from graduation to graduate career.

Tracking/Monitoring and Evaluation: The access and outreach team have developed a strategy to effectively target students for each outreach programme. Based on the guidance from HEFCE our programmes are targeted in three specific strands. Careers fairs, talks and general workshops are targeted globally at all students within our partner schools. Our subject based activities are targeted at specific niche groups within schools. More focused, tailored activity including residential programmes and mentoring are targeted at learner level.

Our evaluation policy for 2015-16 will include the following:

- Extending the use of pre and post questionnaires to gauge changes in the attitude and attainment of students, particularly through long-term projects such as the Progression Module
- Compiling case-studies and conducting focus groups to gain more in-depth knowledge about student experience and changes in behaviour

- Creating bespoke evaluations to monitor the impact of specific programmes e.g monitoring changes to views and knowledge on options choices between Key Stage 4 and 5 for students on the Young Professionals Initiative.
- Improving our system of data-collection to include collecting demographic and personal data within the existing evaluation documentation.

Appendix B

2016-17 HEART Partnership Statement for 16/17 Access Agreements

Leeds Beckett University is committed to the Higher Education Access Rewarding Transforming (HEART) partnership established by twelve HE providers in West Yorkshire (FE Colleges providing HE, HEIs and Universities) until December 2015. We are also committed to the Single Point of Contact (SPoC) secured by HEART which operates to December 2016.

HEART's mission remains to work in partnership to improve access to, and achievement in, Higher Education to enhance individual and economic development.

Strategic target groups for core HEART activity are established as Looked After Young People (LAYP) and Care Leavers and further strengthening relationships with Leeds City Region (LCR) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and through this addressing issues relating to higher level skills required for economic growth and therefore including mature and part-time learners.

HEART will act as the Single Point of Contact (SPoC) and coordinate the collaborative outreach being provided by partners and contributing to the National Network for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO). We are committed to utilising a proportion of formula funding toward outreach which engages a number of schools in HEFCE Cold Spot areas with targeted collaborative outreach activity.

HEART's approach to engaging with LAYP/Care Leavers working through the intermediaries (local authorities, social workers, foster carers and independent fostering agencies) has strengthened considerably and has led to an increase in activities and attendance at these activities. HEART will continue to manage relationships with local authorities, foster carers and independent fostering agencies leading to a sustained range of activities targeting intermediaries and the young people in care (approximately 3,500 in West Yorkshire)/leaving care. The HEART Manager, in the role as representative for Yorkshire and Humber on the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers, supported the successful application for the NNECL SPoC and continues to ensure that activities in West Yorkshire are reported to the NNECL.

The LCR LEP continues to attract devolved funding and HEART is the representative for all partners on the Leeds City Region Skills Network. HEART continues to lobby for greater emphasis on Higher Level Skills in the LEP Strategy and Skills Plan and has informed development of the LEP Skills Service and the proposed interventions for ESF funding within the European Single Investment Framework including specific mention of outreach and access. We expect HEART to continue performing this role and ensuring the outreach and access agenda remain in the LEP thinking and plans.

HEART Higher Level Skills Ambassador (HLSA) scheme continues to recruit additional business leaders able to disseminate the value of higher education and higher level skills to their own workforce and throughout their business networks.

Mature and part-time learner recruitment and progression remains a concern within West Yorkshire as it is nationally. HEART produces regular reports for the Board advising strengths and weaknesses in partner presentation of part-time courses and this is leading to improvements such that genuine part-time provision is simpler to find for mature and part-time learners. HEART will, subject to the organisers agreeing the new format, continue to sponsor the regional Adult Learners Week awards and to support the Adult Learners' Festival.

HEART continues to be monitored carefully for effectiveness and impact by the Board (comprised of senior managers from all twelve partners and representatives from HEFCE and LCR) with strategy and priority activities informed and agreed by the Board. Operational activity is overseen and guided by members of HEART planning groups (comprised of senior practitioners working in outreach/widening participation and business engagement).