

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY

Access Agreement

2017/18

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Executive Summary

- 1 This access agreement for 17/18 has been developed following internal review of our University's performance in our role to promote aspiration and motivation among learners of all backgrounds to consider higher education; and support their transition into higher education and success. We are fully aware of Prime Minister's commitment to attract more students into higher education from low participation groups and associated evolving government policy as we plan ahead for further enhancements to our strategy for student access, support and success. Our performance outlined in this agreement shows where Leeds Beckett University continues to make significant progress against our benchmarks and how we are addressing the areas where our performance is not where we wish it to be. We have a varied and sustained programme of activity that reaches learners at all stages of the student lifecycle. This access agreement demonstrates Leeds Beckett University's strong tradition of, and continuing commitment to, providing 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 partners and networks across the whole educational lifecycle. It demonstrates our successes, our progress towards meeting our targets and our aspirations for building upon the significant foundation we have developed in outreach and student success.

Introduction: the Leeds Beckett University Context

- 2 At Leeds Beckett University, our mission is to ensure we use our knowledge and resources to make a positive and decisive difference to people, communities and organisations. Our most recent achievements include:
 - ❖ 93.4% of our 2014 graduates are now in graduate employment or pursuing further study (*Destination of Leavers in Higher Education Survey 2015*);
 - ❖ 84% of our final year undergraduate students in 2014 were satisfied with the quality of teaching received; 90% satisfied with the quality of the resources offered by our Libraries; and 82% of our students satisfied with their overall experience (*National Student Survey 2015*);
 - ❖ significant growth in our research profile and research power within our region, nationally and internationally as confirmed in the 2014 *research excellence framework (REF)* results;
 - ❖ significant investment in both Headingley and City Campus sites resulting in numerous national awards for design and innovation; with further investment planned over the next five years;

- ❖ listed in the Stonewall top 100 employers index in 2015 and retained our top 100 position in 2016 to further promote our profile as an inclusive organisation to study with and work for;
- ❖ continue to hold the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard for the whole University; currently only one of two universities in the UK to hold this standard for all services and faculties.

National Recognition for Academic Quality

- 3 In April 2014 we were pleased to be the first publically funded UK higher education provider 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 employment skills and attributes 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 55 different professional, statutory or regulatory bodies. We are now very well placed to respond positively to future policy changes within the higher education quality assurance landscape in England.

Our Vision and Values

- 4 This agreement for 17/18 will apply in the second year of our new Strategic Plan 2016-2021 through which we are continuing to build upon our excellent reputation for delivering a high quality student experience. Our vision statement demonstrates our commitment to being accessible whilst striving for excellence in all that we do in learning, teaching, research and enterprise:

Vision: *To be an excellent, accessible, globally engaged university which contributes positively to a thriving Northern economy*

- 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: *Student focus, excellence, inspiration, creativity, professionalism, enterprise, integrity*

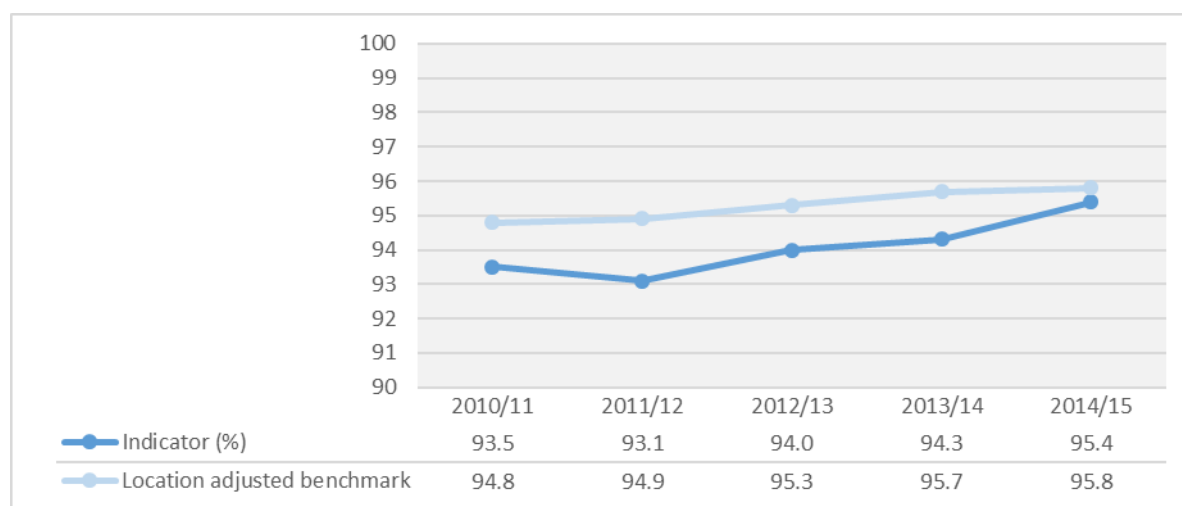
Summary of Institutional Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation

- 6 The following section highlights our University's performance to date in promoting student access, support and success. 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: Young full-time entrants

- 7 For our young full-time first degree entrants, proportions from state schools and colleges, as well as low participation neighbourhoods (LPN) have increased. By 14/15 we were only 0.4% behind our location adjusted benchmark.

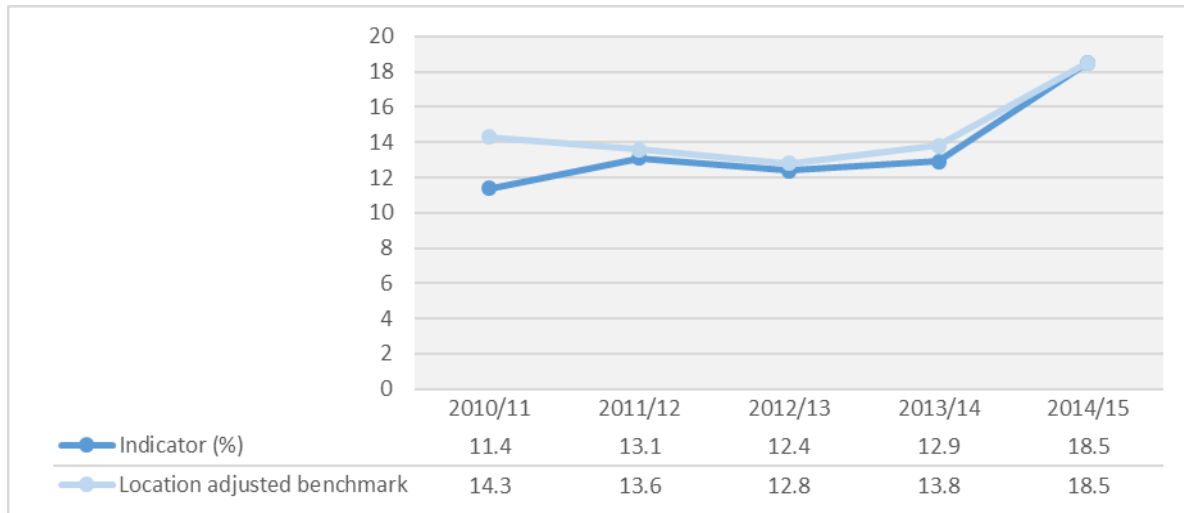
Percentage of young full-time first degree entrants from state schools and colleges



Mature full-time undergraduate entrants

- 8 Our proportion of mature full-time first degree entrants in this group has increased to 18.5% from 12.9% in 13/14. We have also met our benchmark for this indicator. We are slightly below our benchmark for mature full-time all undergraduate entrants, however the number of students included in this indicator who are not on a first degree is fewer than 20. Therefore, the under-performance is limited to a very small population.

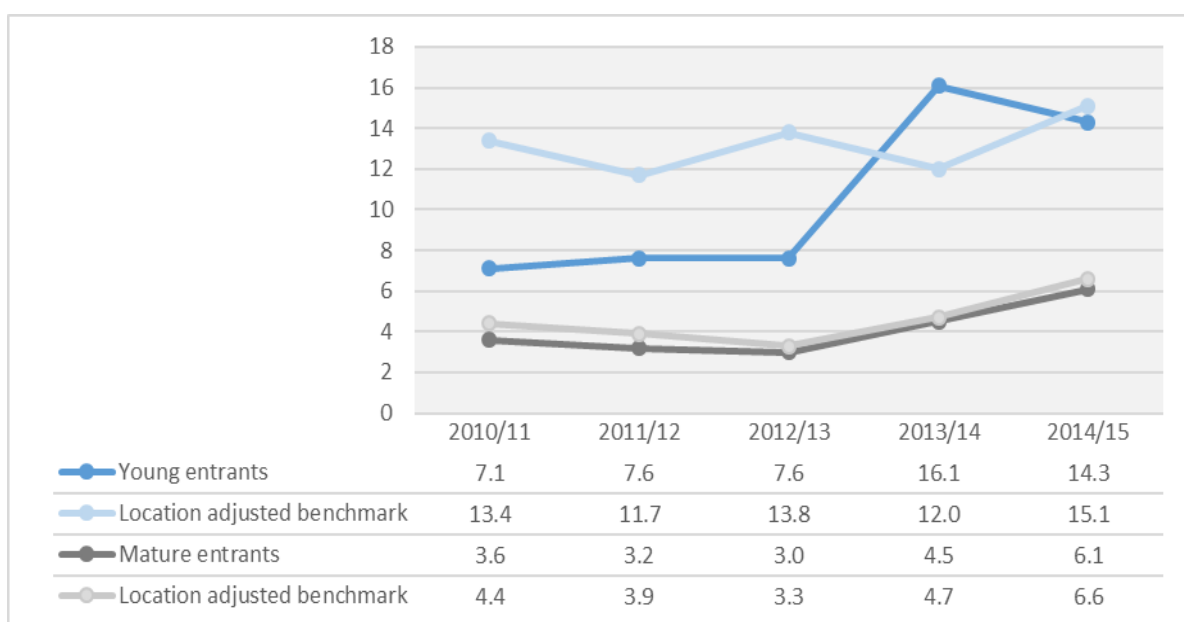
Percentage of mature full-time first degree entrants with no previous HE and from LPN



Part-time undergraduate entrants

9 The proportion of our part-time undergraduate entrants with no previous HE and from LPN has increased for our mature entrants, but decreased for young entrants. The indicators for both young and mature are below the benchmark, but not significantly.

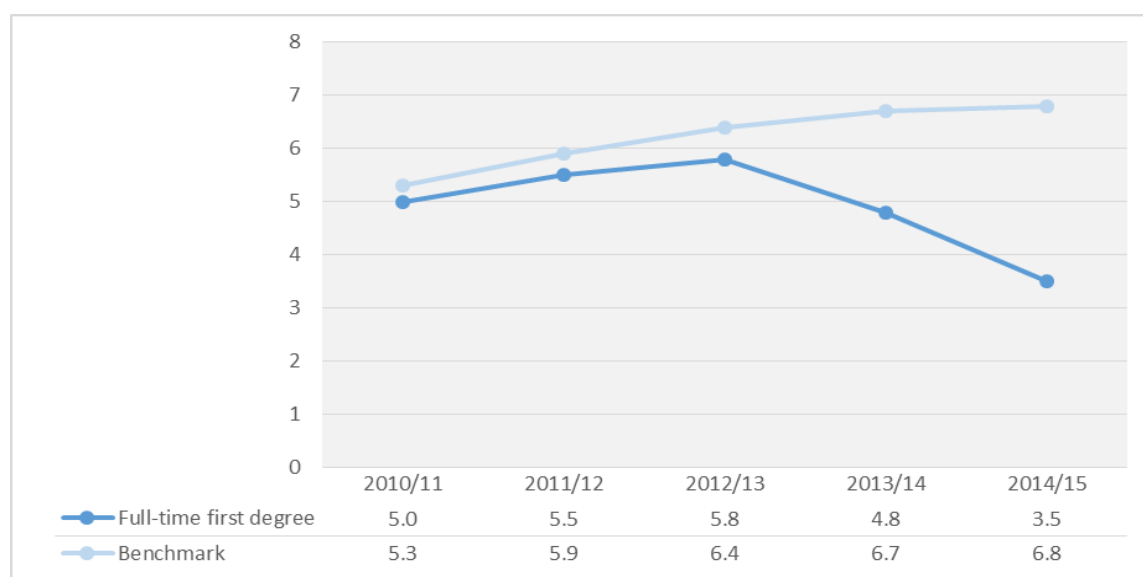
Percentage of part-time young and mature undergraduate entrants with no previous HE and from LPN



Students who are in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

- 10 Our reported proportion of students in receipt of DSA has fallen this year, both for full-time (3.5% down from 4.8%) and part-time undergraduates (4.9% down from 5.6%). Our HESA benchmark has increased year on year. Our proportion of first degree students receiving DSA is 3.3 percentage points below the benchmark, which has widened the gap from 13/14, where we were 1.9 percentage points below. During 15/16 we commenced a deep dive enhancement project to increase our understanding of the disabled students' experience of our University and seek to encourage more specific targeted support for these students.
- 11 Our Disability Advice and Student Wellbeing teams merged under one Head of Service in 15/16 to enhance holistic, integrated approaches to support for students, particularly those experiencing mental health difficulties and those with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The Student Wellbeing team, consisting of counsellors, mental health practitioners and chaplains, provides one-to-one and group interventions, as well as extensive online resources and support which are accessible to all students. In line with the sector, there has been an annual increase of approximately 30% take-up of this support over the past 3 years. The majority of these students are experiencing and/or disclosing mental health difficulties for the first time and do not meet the Equality Act definition of a disability and therefore do not qualify for DSA. Those who declare a mental health difficulty as a disability at any stage of the student journey and provide appropriate evidence will be allocated one-to-one support from a specialist mentor and other DSA-funded support. The closer working of these 2 teams will result in improved support for students with mental health difficulties, including increased take-up of DSA, where applicable. While this may affect our future performance under this target, we are fully aware of the pending government changes in the reduction of the DSA allowance. We outline further support in place for disabled students later in this document.

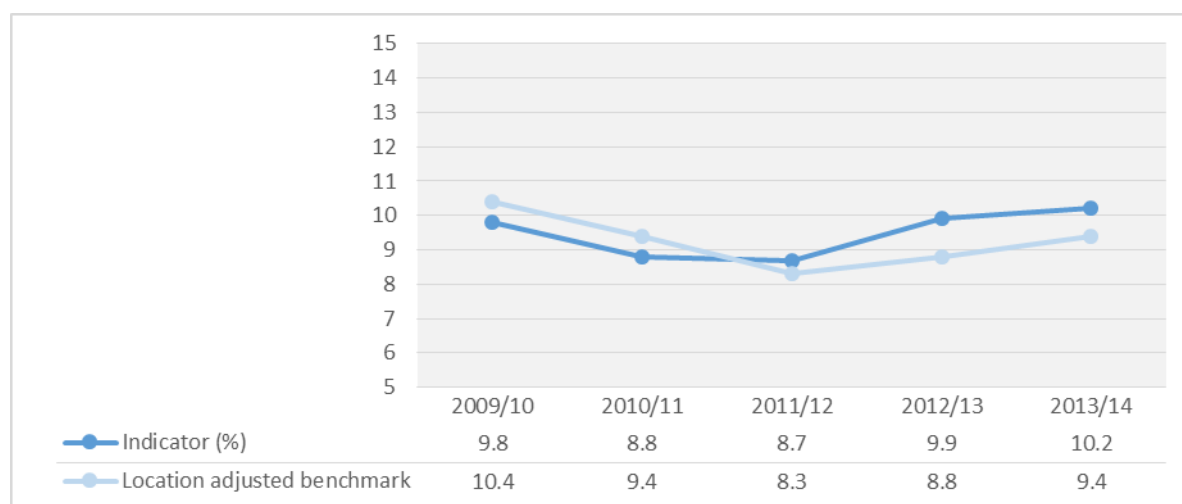
Percentage of full-time students in receipt of DSA



Non-continuation of student participation

12 The overall trend shows an increasing non-continuation rate higher than the HESA benchmark over the last three years. The chart below visualises the trend over a 5 year period which shows that, prior to 2011/12 data, there was a period where the non-continuation rate was decreasing as well as being below the benchmark. We are working to improve our student retention through a number of pilot projects focussed on proactive monitoring and early intervention with students whose engagement with their studies lacks consistency and focus and therefore places them at risk of academic failure and early withdrawal from their studies. We are committed to ensuring our students have every opportunity to succeed with their chosen path of study and provide support for those who are struggling to realise their ambitions. Pages 10 to 14 highlights some of the new interventions available to increase our students' opportunities of realising their graduate ambitions.

Non-Continuation – All Entrants



Long Term Access and Outreach Working with Low Participation Groups

13 Our Access and Outreach team have developed a structured long term outreach programme working with faculties and professional services which is accessible to potential higher education learners from all backgrounds. The programme is geared to providing events and activities to increase aspirations and provide robust advice and guidance at key transition points. In the last academic year, we delivered in excess of 571 outreach events and engaged with 33,882 learners. Throughout these programmes and interventions, we seek 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 more systematic evaluation and

tracking mechanisms to inform our programmes. We will also continue to focus on specific target groups to increase their aspirations to consider higher education.

- 14 Care Leavers and Looked After Students: We are recognised by Buttle UK (a national charity that supports young people and families in crisis) to July 2017 for our work with care leavers and looked after students. We will continue to work with this group in the pre-entry phase with our established mentoring programme called *Next Step* which provides academic and pastoral support for these students after-school. As part of the initiative we have scheduled a number of events to engage foster carers to ensure that 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 through our Student Liaison Officers.
- 15 Students from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Groups: We have a successful long term 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 include the *Larkia*, the *UJIMA* and *Junior Leadership* 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 and enables participants to gain inspiration and motivation from student ambassador role models who mentor the participants through the three day programme. Our *Junior Leadership* scheme develops students' confidence and study skills. In line with other pre-16 programmes all students who graduate from these initiatives are encouraged to progress onto our post-16 programmes including the *Progression Module* and *Tomorrow's Professionals*. Throughout each programme, we provide parents and teachers with access to advice and guidance to enable them to support students into university.
- 16 White Working Class Boys: We continue to use a combination of interventions to engage this group, adopting a long-term strategy beginning with our primary-aged pupils to encourage interest in Higher Education at an early age. Existing subject specific one-day events form the basis of our work within Key Stage 3 to open up potential career choices and increase motivation through innovative and engaging subject workshops. The most sustained intervention is in Years 10 and 11 through our *Young Professionals* initiative. By 17/18, we will have expanded this programme to target an additional 30 white boys from disadvantaged areas, recruited through schools from low participation neighbourhoods. The programme includes subject taster days, in-school revision workshops and a one-night residential. In recognition of the need to engage parents and teachers, information sessions will be integrated and embedded into the programme which will be hosted on campus, within schools, and through partner organisations such as Leeds Rugby. In the longer term, we will continue to work in close partnership with our schools to develop peer mentoring schemes to create a sustained and coherent model of engagement.

- 17 Gender specific activity: We continue to run a number of outreach activities aimed at addressing any perceived gender bias in particular academic subjects and future professions. For example, our *STEM for Girls* sessions are aimed at attracting more females to consider higher education subjects in science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) to inform their future career choices in STEM related areas. Work is currently progressing to develop *Healthcare for Boys* outreach sessions to attract more boys to consider higher education study towards a career in the healthcare professions such as Nursing, Physiotherapy and Speech Therapy.
- 18 Collaborative activity: We continue to build on our partnership activities working with NEON (The National Educational Opportunities Network) and within the HEART (Higher Education Access Rewarding Transforming) consortium in West Yorkshire (see appendices A and B). We are also leading on a Yorkshire Universities project on how to engage with hard to reach groups. Our portfolio of collaborative activities include *Conversation Cafés* with parents at school open evenings, *Passport to Uni* experience days held on campus and *Flood a School* days where students from all higher education institutions within West Yorkshire spend a day within a school to meet with and talk to pupils. In July 2015 we hosted a collaborative summer school with four partner higher education institutions. The event allowed students to visit each institution and engage in an academic workshop linked to courses in Health. In total 50 young people from five schools attended the event which will be repeated and expanded to include more subject areas from 16/17.

Support for Student Progression

- 19 Our academic teams and central support services work collaboratively to support student progression; whether through academic support issues or through other student life issues that can have a bearing on overall student wellbeing and therefore their academic progression. Our central service *Services for Students* is well established with a 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 the whole 'Leeds Beckett student experience' by working in partnership with all our academic teams, our Students' Union, and all other professional services across our University and external agencies to support our students. The aim is to offer a wide range of relevant services and support to all our students throughout the student lifecycle which enable student academic engagement and future success. The service portfolio comprises: Student Wellbeing (Counselling, Mental health, Multi-Faith and Disability Advice); Student Information and Advice (including financial advice and support, international student advice, Student 'Hubs' and Student Liaison Officers working in academic areas); Graduate Employment and Job Shop services; and a Disability Assessment Centre; all accessible through a *Student Hub* on both campuses. The Service also acts as a consultancy for staff teams providing a range of development opportunities to support academic and professional service teams regarding 'at risk' student groups, student life issues and routes to appropriate support channels.

- 20 We have worked with Thomas International Ltd to pilot the use of their *personal profile analysis* tool with over 900 of our students in their first year induction to see if the outcomes supported the students, and their personal academic tutors, to gain a greater insight into the student's preferences concerning how they prefer to work and study. Plans are in place to roll out this approach during 16/17 as our early evaluation of the pilot has suggested it has been extremely beneficial in the early establishment of the academic tutor and student relationship and has also helped staff to determine which students were vulnerable and 'at risk' of early withdrawal from study. This has ensured timely interventions to support such students and therefore increase the likelihood of their progression. Further evaluation of the longer term impact of using the tool will continue over the next academic year. We are currently the only university to offer this opportunity free to students.
- 21 During 15/16 we piloted a new system and associated policies to monitor student retention, engagement and attendance (the StREAM project) which has demonstrated excellent early indicators of where students may suddenly disengage or only intermittently engage with our University, thereby putting them at risk of early withdrawal or academic failure. The pilot project has demonstrated how early alerts to staff of non-engagement can help our students receive relevant information, advice and guidance at the point of need to bring them back on track with their academic studies. We are currently planning to roll out this system across our University.

Support for Disabled Students

- 22 Over the last three years, we have worked to increase the range of support available to students declaring a disability throughout the student lifecycle. The Disability Assessment Team 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 through the Disabled Students Allowance and our own internal support mechanisms when they progress to university.
- 23 We acknowledge and have prepared for the forthcoming changes to the disabled students' allowance (DSA) and are fully committed to the continued provision of appropriate and personalised support to ensure our students are able to fully engage with their studies. We will be enhancing our communications to prospective disabled students concerning how they can still receive support for their studies within our University despite the pending reduction in government funding. Further recent enhancements to support our disabled students include:
- a) Commencement of a University-wide 'deep dive' enhancement project to understand the student lifecycle of disabled students from enrolment to graduate employment and to work towards embedded inclusive practice across all areas of our University. The project is now taking forward its evaluation findings through the development of a targeted *Welcome* campaign for newly enrolled disabled students; transition events into higher education;

establishing disability champions in each school; and development of more inclusive academic practice in learning, teaching and assessment of disabled students.

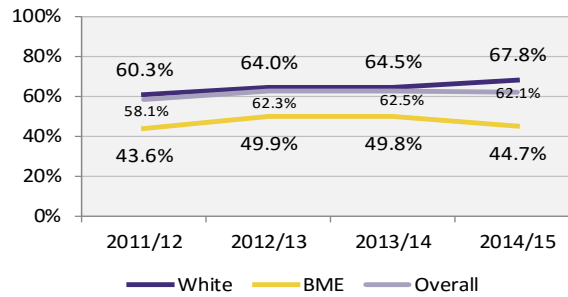
- b) The establishment of a Disability Support Team in our *Libraries and Learning Innovation* service; dedicated disability resource areas in both Libraries with a wide range of assistive hardware and software with staff on hand to support its use; complemented with periodic staff training to be 'disability confident' in supporting these students.
 - c) The current partnership pilot project with The National Autistic Society (NAS) to review and enhance our service provision to students declaring autistic spectrum conditions (ASCs); development of peer support groups for students with ASCs; autism awareness sessions for staff; formal recognition by NAS that our Disability Assessment Centre service is 'Autism Friendly' and the development of autism champion roles. To date we are the only University to work in collaboration with NAS. The Student Wellbeing and Disability Advice Team are working with the Disability Assessment Centre team in the next phase of the NAS Project, which is the roll out of Autism Awareness training for staff, as well as regularly liaising around the complex ASD student casework.
 - d) Continuous improvement of our business processes to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our disability assessment and registration processes to improve the timeliness through which effective interventions are in place to ensure students get the right support.
 - e) Students declaring Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) remain the highest proportion of the overall declared disabled student population at over 50%. A significant focus of the work in developing and embedding inclusive practice in learning, teaching and assessment is to improve access for this group. Measures include: the use of lecture capture facilities; learning resources being available in advance of sessions; the production of good practice guidelines in the development of accessible resources.
- 24 Throughout our work with disabled students we adopt the social model of disability and 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.

Student Success: Attainment for All Students and by Ethnicity

- 25 We closely monitor student success each year based on the percentage of students who achieve a good honours degree, either a first or upper second class degree, against sector benchmarks as follows:

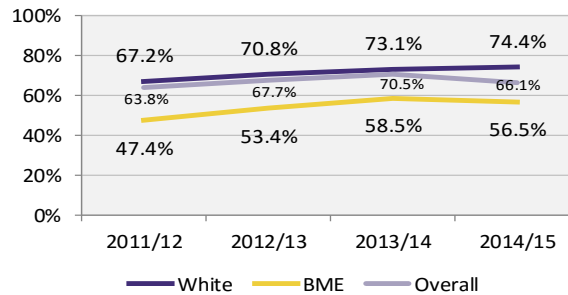
Leeds Beckett

	White	BME	Overall
2011/12	60.3%	43.6%	58.1%
2012/13	64.0%	49.9%	62.3%
2013/14	64.5%	49.8%	62.5%
2014/15	67.8%	44.7%	62.1%



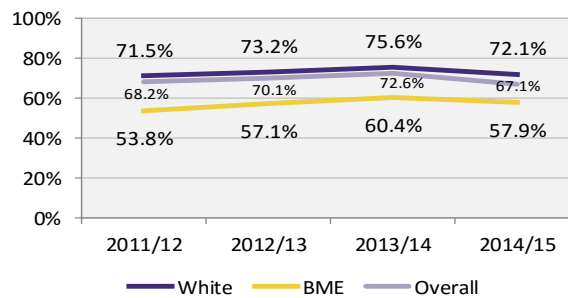
Benchmark average

	White	BME	Overall
2011/12	67.2%	47.4%	63.8%
2012/13	70.8%	53.4%	67.7%
2013/14	73.1%	58.5%	70.5%
2014/15	74.4%	56.5%	66.1%



Sector average

	White	BME	Overall
2011/12	71.5%	53.8%	68.2%
2012/13	73.2%	57.1%	70.1%
2013/14	75.6%	60.4%	72.6%
2014/15	72.1%	57.9%	67.1%



- 26 There is still further work to be done to meet sector averages for good honours degrees despite a review of the algorithms for the awarding of degree classifications in line with sector norms three years ago. This will remain high on our agenda as we review our teaching, learning and assessment practices over the next twelve months through a number of enhancement initiatives across our University.
- 27 The gap between white students and BME students in terms of attainment remains of significant concern to us despite our performance tracking that of the sector as a whole. As part of our continuing commitment, we are undertaking a further ‘deep dive’ enhancement project to seek a clear evidence base to close the attainment gap between white and BME students working with current student cohorts to understand local support issues with reference to sector wide research in this area. Some examples of the future action plans we are putting in place include:
- Increase participation of BME students as course representatives;
 - Provide targeted support for BME students to increase up take of placements as part of their academic programmes;

- c) Build upon the successful BME student mentoring scheme already in place locally in Schools and extend this scheme across our University;
- d) Broaden our review of regulations and learning, teaching and assessment practices to ensure inclusivity is clearly embedded for BME students including reviewing our marking policies;
- e) Pilot the role of 'BME Student Champion' in each academic School;
- f) Increasing the number of BME student role models to undertake access and outreach work and be part of the team raising aspirations amongst BME school pupils to consider university.

28 These and other activities will be introduced and evaluated to increase BME student participation in student life and encourage their access to all opportunities available to succeed in their chosen field of study and their graduate outcome. We are continuing to develop and implement our action plan towards a future application for the Race Chartermark following our initial submission to the Equality Challenge Unit in 2015.

Student Success: Towards Graduate Employment and/or Further Study

29 We have continued to see an increase each year over the last three years in our graduate population achieving graduate jobs or progressing to 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. Over the last three years we have either met or exceeded the benchmark for this performance measure for all students.

Year	Leeds Beckett Students: % in work or further study	Benchmark: % in work or further study
2011/12	90.9	90.9
2012/13	93.7	92.1
2013/14	93.4	93

Student Success: Graduate employment and/or further study by ethnicity

30 The data concerning student employment by ethnicity demonstrates improvement in BME employability but our most recent survey findings demonstrate BME student success remains 6.3 percentage points behind that of white students.

Year	Leeds Beckett Students: % in work or further study (white)	Leeds Beckett Students: % in work or further study (BME)
2011/12	94	82.3
2012/13	95.6	90.6
2013/14	95	88.7

- 31 We have a proactive team supporting and promoting future graduate employment 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. We have a student employment framework based on targeted interventions which leverages a tripartite approach between Careers, Employer Engagements and academic teams to provide targeted support for our students to realise their long term graduate ambitions. Our framework takes 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 are monitored, and non-engaging students receive targeted communications to encourage engagement. Core activities include local subject-based careers guidance, advice and information 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).
- 32 A key partner in the development of our student employment skills and attributes 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.

Target Setting and Performance Measures for 17/18

- 33 The data provided demonstrates significant progress in meeting our benchmark targets. We continue to work to address our achievements as evidence in this agreement based on the four high level strategic targets outlined below. We are committed to increasing our evaluation, monitoring and action planning to establish a long term evidence base which will inform our future strategic approach to student access, support and success.

By 17/18 we aim to meet all benchmarks for the recruitment of students from state schools/colleges, low socio-economic groups and low participation neighbourhoods, and to encourage disabled students to declare their disability at first time enrolment.

32 *This will be achieved by:* 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. Continue to develop our support structures and processes for disabled students from pre-entry through to graduation. Continue to enhance our access and outreach work to increase participation of BME students, disabled students, white working class boys, care leavers, students estranged from their families and students who are carers of another adult.

By 17/18 we aim to meet the benchmark for student non-continuation and to have exceeded the benchmark by 20/21

33 *This will be achieved by:* Evaluation and full implementation of the current pilot project to monitor student engagement throughout their studies. Continuing to evaluate the impact of our financial support schemes on students. Implementation and longer term evaluation of the outcomes of our 'deep dive' enhancement projects to support student retention

By 17/18, we aim to have met the benchmark for students who achieve 1st or 2:1s for both white and BME students.

34 *This will be achieved by:* Implementing and evaluating the outcomes of our 'deep dive' enhancement projects for both BME students and disabled students where outcomes refer to learning, teaching and assessment and inclusive curricula. This will include improvements to accessing academic support systems, undertaking work based learning as part of their curriculum and experiences of transition into the employment market. Our work will be informed by sector wide research and other examples of best practice in the sector. Wherever possible we will seek to apply enhancements that support all our students in achieving their graduate ambitions.

By 17/18, we will continue to exceed our graduate employment and/or further study HESA benchmark.

35 *This will be achieved by:* The development and implementation of our graduate employment 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 graduate employment. Targeted interventions at cohort level will also be informed by the outcome of our 'deep dive' projects as they relate to both all students and those with protected characteristics.

36 We recognise the growing competitive nature of the graduate employment job market and will seek to consider further support for students from low participation groups going into postgraduate study upon or shortly after graduation to increase their long term graduate employment prospects beyond the current alumni discount offered of 10% on tuition fees. During 15/16 we are commencing a conversion campaign targeted at all final year

undergraduate students to encourage them to consider postgraduate study at our University.

Institutional Oversight of Performance

- 37 We have 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 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 chaired by one of our Pro Vice Chancellors. The group reports directly into our University corporate management group with additional reporting and data monitoring through our Academic Board and its appropriate sub-committees. In September 2015, the group held an internal staff conference with the Director from the Office for Fair Access as the keynote speaker. As a result of this conference, a number of 'deep dive' strategic enhancement projects commenced which aim to evaluate a number of strands of our access, support and success activities and make evidence-informed real and sustainable long term enhancements to supporting all our students and through targeted interventions to support students with protected characteristics. This will include interventions seeking to close the attainment gap between white and BME students. The group will also oversee how such activity will be evaluated locally to ensure continuous improvement in our performance year on year. Annually, our Access Agreements are approved at the highest levels of management, academic and governance oversight in our University; our Corporate Management Team, Academic Board and Board of Governors respectively.

Finance, Fees, Bursaries and Financial Support for 17/18

Finance

- 38 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 22.5% of premium fee income in line with OFFA guidelines. We anticipate our expected total expenditure on outreach and student success in 17/18 will be £10 million. The financial summary attached demonstrates how our University will profile its expenditure each year on access, retention and student success in line with our fee income profile.

Fees

- 39 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 17/18 will be £9,250 (subject to any national changes in the review and regulation of tuition fee level setting). 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 17/18. In line with the fees regulations we will not charge any part-time student tuition fee greater £6,935 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.

- 40 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 17/18

- 41 We wish to encourage students from all low participation backgrounds who have the ability to succeed in a challenging funding environment. Our financial support for students will be more focused from 17/18 following a systematic internal evaluation of the hardship, bursary and scholarships we have offered in previous access agreements. Through our internal evaluation, we have found financial support needs to be available throughout the student lifecycle at the point of need and related to individual student circumstances. Our evaluation found a positive local relationship between student retention and success where financial concerns had been alleviated through the support we offered. In addition, we also recognise that the withdrawal of national scholarship bursaries, student opportunity funding and potentially NHS funding to those on healthcare professional programmes, student financial demands and needs will increase. We continue to use the Student Loan Company HEBSS scheme (higher education bursary and scholarships scheme) so that we receive enhanced information concerning student financial backgrounds which ensures we can allocate financial support to those students who need it. We are therefore committed to maintaining a range of student financial support schemes which are focussed and aimed at supporting retention and student outcomes. In 17/18, we will fund the following:

Funding Stream	Summary and Eligibility for Funding
General Hardship Fund (cash based support)	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

	<p>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.</p>
<p>Annual Cash Bursary for Care Leavers and Estranged Students</p>	<p>This bursary is intended to assist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Students who are leaving care to attend university; or b) Students who have been living independently since leaving care; or c) Students estranged from their family. <p>The amount payable each year (subject to meeting the criteria each year) would be £1,000 at level 4, £1,500 in level 5 and £1,000 at level 6 in two instalments (at November and February). Students will need to be fully enrolled on a full time course and not in receipt of any other bursary or scholarship. Payments will be made into the student's nominated bank account.</p> <p>Increased targeted support for these students will also be in place to support their access to part-time working opportunities through the Job Shop team. In addition, <i>Services for Students</i> will work with our Campus Accommodation Services to provide care leavers and students estranged from their families with the option of a 52 week accommodation contract if they do not have an alternative address outside of term time.</p> <p>From 17/18, we will include within our online enrolment portal the option for students to self-declare their status as estranged from their families (as they currently do if they are Care Leavers). Staff will use this data to approach these students to offer support in checking and securing accurate statutory student funding for them.</p>
<p>Support fund for Students who are primary Carers of another adult (cash based support)</p>	<p>From 17/18, we will invite students to self-declare via the online enrolment portal whether they are a Carer of another adult, and follow the same process as described for Care Leavers and Estranged Students.</p> <p><i>Services for Students</i> will alert the relevant Academic Tutors to this status so they may undertake an early conversation with the student concerning whether any additional academic support is required should the student find some timing of lectures/seminars clash with caring responsibilities.</p> <p>Eligibility for this fund will be based on students living in households with less than £25k per annum income; is fully enrolled on a full time course and not in receipt of any other bursary or scholarship. Awards will be made based on assessed need up to a maximum of £1,500 per academic year. Where students are eligible to do so, they may apply for funding through this scheme each year they are enrolled as a full time student with us. Payments will be made into the student's nominated bank account.</p>

<p>Support fund for Students Accessing Placements (cash based support)</p>	<p>From 17/18, we will have a funding stream in place to provide students with support for accessing placements where support for travel and/or accommodation is provided based on similar criteria to that of the hardship fund. This would be open to students accessing both short (for example 4-8 week placements) and sandwich/year-long placements. There is no fixed amount per student application as each application will be assessed based on individual circumstances and the academic demands of the course they are following.</p> <p>Eligibility for this fund will be based on students living in households with less than £25k per annum income; is fully enrolled on a full-time course; and not in receipt of any other bursary or scholarship. Payments will be made into the student's nominated bank account.</p>
<p>Beckett Achievement Award</p>	<p>We are currently developing a one-off award for all students who have achieved an average of 60% or more at the end of level 4 (usually year 1), with no repeat year required, and who have fully re-enrolled for level 5.</p> <p>This is likely to be a range of incentives (for example pre-paid services on campus or services from a partner organisation) to both acknowledge our students' achievements and contribute to their transition into level 5 (usually year 2). Final details of this award scheme will be made available on our bursaries and scholarships website no later than 1st October 2016.</p>

42 In 17/18 we will invest £1 million to be allocated across the five strands of financial support activity listed above and managed through a central disbursement team. In addition, we will allocate up to £250k in fee waivers to support students undertaking year out placement opportunities as part of their programmes of study. We are also working with our Alumni team to develop further scholarship and bursary schemes and related alumni mentoring programmes which will be aimed at fully enrolled full time students from low participation groups.

Further support for our students with their finances

43 To support the implementation of all financial support funds, *Services for Students* will be working on briefings and guidance for academic colleagues providing academic pastoral support so that early interventions can be made when a student becomes 'at risk' of early withdrawal or academic failure due to financial pressures. This will ensure financial support is part of a wider integrated approach to supporting our students during their academic journey, with a particular emphasis upon financial capability in the first year of study as part of wider extended induction activities.

44 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 through our well established *Job Shop*. We have a dedicated Bursary and Scholarship Officer based 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.

Applications and Admissions for 17/18

- 45 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. We are fully aware of the national debate concerning a move to 'name blind applications' by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and support any policy change to further improve the opportunities for all applicants, regardless of background, to have equal access to higher education programmes. We will continue to review our internal evidence base for tracking applicants from low participation groups. This will include the following categories:
- a) Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR2, 3, NS-SEC classes 4,5,6,& 7)
 - b) Care leavers and Looked after applicants (self-declared)
 - c) BME groups (self-declared)
 - d) Applicants with a disability (self-declared)
- 46 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.

Our Commitment to Equality and Diversity

- 47 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. This includes age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation including whether they are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or trans. Our commitment goes beyond compliance in terms of seeking to adopt progressive best practice and we use a number of external equality benchmarks such as Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index, Athena Swan and the Race Charter Mark to validate and shape our equality objectives. This includes developing codes of practice which support an over-arching equality policy and provide an institutional position for example in relation to gender segregation or around faith and belief. We have an established Equality and Diversity governance structure and clearly defined equality targets shape our institution-wide agenda to ensure that we are an inclusive and diverse place to work and study.

- 48 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. We currently have a university-wide group reviewing our approaches to assessment including marking, moderation and accessibility of assessment to develop more inclusive assessment practices identifying current good practice and sector wide research to inform future change.

Working in Partnership with Current Students and our Students' Union

- 49 We have consulted with our Students' Union who has advised on this agreement. The Students' Union work closely with our 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.
- 50 In 17/18, 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 17/18

- 51 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 17/18 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 every year including where we work collaboratively with partner organisations.

Primary: We continue to provide a wide range of primary programmes aimed at schools within areas of socio-economic disadvantage. In 14/15 our flagship primary programme *kids@uni* engaged with 350 pupils from 14 schools. To introduce them to university pupils took part in school-based workshops led by our student ambassadors and were then invited to an activity day held on campus which included a mini-graduation ceremony. 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. In addition to this programme we are hosting for the first time in 15/16 a project entitled *African Voices* which is a collaborative project with Leeds University Centre for African Studies. Through the project, African Postgraduate students deliver workshops in local primary schools to promote a greater awareness of contemporary Africa amongst young people in Leeds. Their stories also aim to inspire school children to continue to higher education. All projects are 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: Our focus on subject-specific events has continued to increase for students in Key Stage 3 and 4. Events such as *the science circus* and *STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) challenge* promote the relevance and importance of higher education and the range of subject options available. We have added to our portfolio of course based activities by broadening the range of subjects offered to include events including *Year 10 Politics Matters Day*, *Year 8 Spanish Drama Day*, *Year 9 Stock Market Challenge* and *Year 10 Girls into PE*. As part of our commitment to expand our long-term outreach projects we are engaged in a collaborative project entitled *the Wearable Technology Challenge*. This is a three stage project in collaboration with our Arts, Engineering and Technology Faculty, Premier Farnell (a local electronics distribution business) and Ahead Partnership (an education broker). Schools are set the challenge to design a new piece of wearable technology and take part in on-campus events, in-schools workshops and a final showcase over the course of three months. The aim of the project is to encourage young people to pursue a career which utilises a STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) discipline. This year ten schools from West Yorkshire have been involved the project which targets year eight students.

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 14/15, we offered the programme to 150 students from 10 schools. The programme includes a number of co-ordinated interventions beginning in Year 10. In 2015, in recognition of the important transition phase between Key stage 4 and 5 we added a one-night residential to the programme. 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: *The Progression Module* is a year – long formal programme of study, delivered in schools, allowing Year 12 students the opportunity to investigate progression routes into Higher Education. The programme is a collaborative venture between Leeds Beckett University and the University of Huddersfield. In 14-15 2,600 students enrolled onto the module across the two institutions. Students who successfully complete the module are awarded UCAS points which can be used across the two institutions when applying for a place at the two universities.

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 14/15 we engaged with 10,335 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 14/15 we delivered 35 events for this sector, including focus days, HE talks and careers conferences. These events reached 5,239 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.

Advantage programme: We introduced our school based lecture series *the Advantage Programme* in 2015. It aims to deliver an extensive range of subject-specific lectures to partner schools and colleges using the expertise of academic staff to inspire potential students. Throughout the school year we will deliver a wide range of topics from across all academic areas to inspire young people aged 14-18 to consider degree courses offered by Leeds Beckett University. The Advantage Programme is targeted specifically at schools within low participation (POLAR quintile 1 and 2) areas. To date we have delivered 22 lectures within schools.

Tomorrow's Professionals Programme: The 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. The residential offers participants the chance to take part in academic workshops and lectures linked to each of our four faculties. Students on the programme are given additional support through the application process and are tracked through the UCAS process to monitor impact and progression into university.

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.

The National Education Opportunities Network (NEON): NEON is the professional organisation for access to HE in England with over 60 Higher Education Institution (HEI) members. It represents the only member-based national vehicle developing collaborative relationships through professional development specifically focused on widening access to HE. In 2017-18 NEON will be providing opportunities for professional development and collaboration in the government key priority areas of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) learners, supporting those with disabilities, enabling greater progression for white disadvantaged males, as well as in the ensuring improvements in the evaluation of access to higher education work. Membership of NEON allows our University to improve the quality and range of its access work by being part of a collaborative national community of practice. NEON will be extending its work through to 2017-18 providing its members the opportunity to draw on the strength of collaborative working to strengthen their work across the student lifecycle encompassing success, retention and progression work as well as outreach.

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 University has a variety of mentoring schemes available where we invite our Alumni to participate. 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.

We have set up a Special interest group (SIG) which is considering long term responses to the migrant crisis and how to support Asylum Seekers and Refugees in the Leeds communities. The group is working with third sector organisations and local authorities to support outreach work.

Tracking/Monitoring and Evaluation

We continue to target participants using low participation neighborhood postcodes and socio-economic class data and have put specific strategies and performance targets in place to recruit more students from our key target groups including students with disabilities, students from BME communities and white working class boys.

In 17-18 we will continue to place more emphasis on increasing the numbers of students entering university from areas designated as Higher Education cold spots linked to low participation neighborhood data. In order to achieve this we have extended the catchment area for our residential event *Tomorrow's Professionals* to include schools in low participation areas in the North West and in coastal areas of East Yorkshire. We will continue to develop partnerships with schools in these areas in order to meet our targets.

The *Access & Widening Participation team* have recently purchased the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) to support our targeting, monitoring and evaluation strategy. Through this we aim to develop our longitudinal tracking systems and take an evidence based approach to widening participation planning and outreach delivery. For example, we are currently using data from our *Progression Module* to look at destination statistics for students who completed the module between 2012 and 2015 in order to assess impact.

Appendix B - 2017-18 HEART Partnership Statement for 17/18 Access Agreements

Outreach, Raising Aspirations and Awareness

The HEART partnership has, over the last three years, developed a network of partners who work together to provide bespoke and relevant activities for both young people in care and their carers. The network includes colleagues from each partner institution and representatives from Children's Services and the West Yorkshire Local Authorities. The network has consulted foster children and their families from the outset in order to ensure that the needs of the young people are addressed and the activities developed with these needs in mind. This collaborative approach attracted the backing of local authority partners who work with the network to promote events and signpost service users to the HEART network.

Collaborative Work

HEART has acted as the Single Point of Contact (SPoC) for the West Yorkshire National Network for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO). Since its inception, the NNCO has co-ordinated the delivery of WP outreach activity from the 12 partner institutions, including the provision of Conversation Cafes (aimed at parents and learners), Courses Carousel, Broadening your Horizons, and Flood a School events in schools, as well as Passport to University events on partner campuses. The partnership has also delivered a two day collaborative residential summer school involving five HE partners. Building upon the success of this pilot, a three day collaborative summer school is planned for July 2016, which, in addition to the partner institutions involved last year, will comprise seven HE partners.

In addition, the NNCO has developed an interactive, online CRM with areas designated for schools, businesses and partners. Schools can access information including upcoming collaborative and institutional events, open days, course details and information for care leavers. Businesses can access information on developing work around higher level skills, and the NNCO partnership with Leeds City Region and the LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership).

Monitoring and Evaluation

In late 2015, HEART commissioned a review into the impact of Foster Family Fun Days, a series of interactive, aspiration raising activities aimed at children/young people in care and their carers. Carers and partners in the local education authority and HEIs were surveyed to see whether these events specifically aimed at young people in care, had any impact on their aspirations and confidence. The review found that of those that responded, 100% of the carers believed the children/young people viewed universities positively, 100% thought that the children/young people saw university education as a possible option for them in the future and 83% believed that the events helped to increase the confidence of the children/young people (33% 'very much so'; 50% 'in the main').

The review considered how evaluation of these events might be conducted more effectively in future, and given the very wide age range of the children/young people participating and the problems that those in public care often experience, concluded that it would be difficult to ask children/young people directly about the events. As a result, foster carers will be asked to estimate the impact on their children/young people using a standardised questionnaire, with the questions aligned to the current operational targets in the Access Agreement.