Wirral Met College
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Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 – 2024-25

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1. Background

Wirral Metropolitan College ('the College') is the only College of General Further Education in Wirral and has developed a small but critical higher education (HE) curriculum, to provide seamless pathways to learning from Level 1 to Levels 5/6. The borough of Wirral has a population of 330,000 containing some of the most deprived wards in England in the east of the borough, contrasting some of the most affluent wards in England to the west of the borough. The College's vision **'to be an inclusive, outstanding College'** reflects the drive to ensure that the local population, particular those in wards reflective of POLAR4 Q1, are provided with pathways to learning that can lead to rewarding professions and careers. The College's Mission **'to enhance economic prosperity through high quality work related education and skills'** expresses the essence of the College's key strategic aims, to provide pathways to the world of work and the College's HE offer provides professional pathways that transform lives. This document is the College's Access and Participation Plan that underpins the HE Strategy and related suite of policies and procedures.

2. Assessment of performance

As a College of FE, that provides an HE offer, the total cohort of students in Higher Education (HE) at the College is under 500 and therefore small, compared to the wider higher education sector. The summary of findings is therefore, analysed in relation to 'All undergraduates' with splits in analysis between types of provision summarised where appropriate. Evaluation of performance focuses on gaps between different underrepresented groups and their peers, as well as progress over time in closing those gaps. The assessment of performance is based on the most recent year of available data (2017/18) and progress over time in closing gaps (2013/14 – 2017/18). The Office for Students (OfS) uses a number of Key Performance Measures (KPM). KPM 1 and 2 relate to participation rates, and refer to the proportion of people aged

18-30 who have been in, or are currently in, higher education. The KPM currently considers underrepresented groups based on the participation of local areas (POLAR) classification, which categories areas across the UK based on the proportion of the 18-30 year-old population, that participate in HE.

2.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

ACCESS

There has been a steady increase of young students participating (aged 18-30) from POLAR4 areas over the observed 5 year period of 2013/14 to 2017/18 (see table 1, green highlights increased participation or POLAR4 population). The College's provision is based in a deprived area where there are 12 areas POLAR4 Quintile 1 within its catchment. In 2017/18 the full-time, all undergraduates, POLAR4 population was (45 student entrants), of which 33.3% were from POLAR4 quintile 1 (Q1) areas, and 11% were from POLAR4 quintile (Q5) areas. Table 2 gives actual numbers from raw OfS data, including <10 which is not included in OfS summary analysis.

Table 1: WMC Population of students in POLAR4 cohort (actual numbers) 2013/14 to 2017/18

Young participation POLAR4 population			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Change Y1 to Y5	Change Y4 to Y5
Full-time	All Undergraduates	WMC	30	50	40	35	45	15	5
Part-time	All Undergraduates	WMC	25	25	15	15	N	N/A	N/A

N = less than 10 in population   *N/A = no students reported in population*

Table 2: Analysis of students in POLAR4 Q1 and Q5

Young participation POLAR4 population			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Change Y1 to Y5	Change Y4 to Y5
Full-time	All Undergraduates	Q1	5	15	5	15	15	10	0
		Q5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0
Part-time	All Undergraduates	Q1	10	5	5	5	N	N/A	N/A
		Q5	5	5	0	5	N	N/A	N/A

N = less than 10 in population   *N/A = No students reported in population*

POLAR4 Q1 participation is considerably higher than Q5 participation, against a sector that has underrepresentation of students from more deprived backgrounds. This highlights the College's success in targeting higher education opportunities for young students, with the right level of GCSE's, from areas of low participation. The College's FE offer provides progression pathways for students to acquire the necessary HE entry qualifications at the College. Success in improving fair access for students from more deprived backgrounds is also reflected for 'Other Undergraduates'. Building on this positive position, the College will continue to work to increase the overall population of young students, who can take full advantage of the College's location and offer. The College has continued to improve its proportion of Q1 students in line with the sector. This increase will be monitored monthly, from September 2019, through the College HE Quality and Participation Cycle, any emerging gaps will be addressed with intervention actions. Table 3 uses KPM 1 and 2 as a comparison of performance of the College and the wider sector. Graphs 1 and 2 illustrate the percentage gap between Q1 and Q5 for the College (Graph 1) and the wider sector (Graph 2).

Table 3: OfS Key Performance Measure 1 and 2. Gap in participation rates of young entrants from POLAR4 Q1 (least represented) areas compared with Q5 (most represented) areas. WMC verses Sector

% Gap in participation (POLAR4) Between Q5 and Q1			Year 1 13-14	Year 2 14-15	Year 3 15-16	Year 4 16-17	Year 5 17-18	CHANGE Y1 -Y5	CHANGE Y4 -Y5
Full Time	All undergraduate	WMC	-10.7	-18	-4.8	-25	-20.9	-10.2	4.1
		Sector	19.9	18.9	18.7	18.6	18.3	-1.6	-0.3
	First Degree	WMC	N	N	8.7	-16.7	-21.4	N/A	-4.8
		Sector	20	19.1	18.8	18.8	18.5	-1.5	-0.3
	Other Undergraduate	WMC	-12.5	-20.5	-21.1	-33.3	-20.7	-8.2	12.6
		Sector	1.4	-0.1	0.5	-0.7	-2.3	-3.7	-1.5
Part time	All undergraduate	WMC	-25.9	12.5	-11.8	N	N	N/A	N/A
		Sector	3.3	4.8	3.7	3.6	2.9	-0.4	-0.6
	First Degree	WMC	N	N	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Sector	4.3	7.4	5.8	4.2	4	-0.3	-0.2
	Other Undergraduate	WMC	-25.9	12.5	-11.8	0	N	NA	NA
		Sector	2.5	3.1	1.9	2.9	1.7	-0.8	-1.2

- *Minus indicates there are less of Q5 in population*
- *N = least than 10 students in cohort*
- *N/A = No students reported in population*

The nature of 'HE in FE' attracts, by design, older students who return to learn often starting from a Level 2 base before progressing to HE. However, linked to KPM1 and 2, the College is actively targeting young people, to grow and develop this market.

Graph 1: WMC Percentage gap in participation rates between students from POLAR4 Q1 and Q5

Percentage point gap between Q5 and Q1 WMC
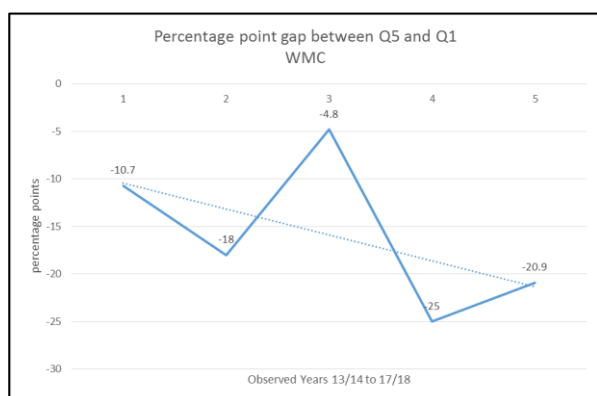
Minus indicates there are less of Q5 in the population

Graph 2: Sector percentage gap in participation rates between students from POLAR4 Q1 and Q5
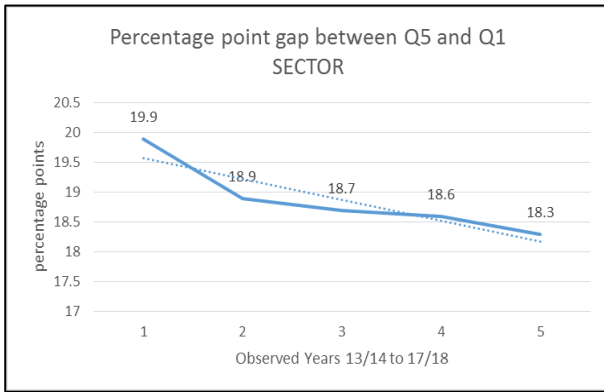
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD):

Another way of measuring the gap in participation is to use the IMD. Comparing students of all ages who study at the College. Table 4 describes participation gaps using the English IMD as a comparator, to measure the gap between those in the bottom 20%, from lower household income or socioeconomic status backgrounds (IMDQ1), compared with those in the top 20% from higher income and socioeconomic status (IMDQ5). Table 5 gives actual numbers in each population.

Table 4: Gap in participation rates of entrants from IMDQ5 compared with IMDQ1

% Gap in participation between IMD Q5 and Q1			Year 1 13-14	Year 2 14-15	Year 3 15-16	Year 4 16-17	Year 5 17-18	CHANGE Y1 -Y5	CHANGE Y4 -Y5
Full Time	All undergraduate	WMC	-46.8	-37	-37.8	-42.4	-33.3	13.5	9.1
		Sector	4.4	1.6	0.7	0.2	-0.6	-5	-0.9
	First Degree	WMC	-46.5	-42.4	-34.9	-40.4	-31	15.5	9.4
		Sector	4.6	2.8	1.8	1.2	0.4	-4.2	-0.8
	Other Undergraduate	WMC	-47.5	-32.9	-42.9	-45.7	-35.7	11.8	10
		Sector	-8.5	-17.2	-16.3	-16.2	-17.5	-9	-1.3
Part time	All undergraduate	WMC	-20.7	3.2	-9.6	-8.6	-7.4	13.3	1.2
		Sector	-0.4	-0.3	-0.4	-0.8	-1.1	-0.6	-0.2
	First Degree	WMC	N	N/A	N/A	N	N	N/A	N/A
		Sector	-3	-1.7	-2.5	-2.8	-3.1	-0.2	-0.4
	Other Undergraduate	WMC	-20.4	3.2	-9.6	-4.8	-14.6	5.8	-9.7
		Sector	1.2	0.1	1.5	0.7	1	-0.2	0.4

Minus indicates there are less of Q5 in population   *N = least than 10 students in cohort*

N/A = No students reported in population

Table 5: Population of entrants from IMD Q1 compared with Q5 for full and part time students

WMC Population of IMD Q1 and Q5		Year 1 13-14	Year 2 14-15	Year 3 15-16	Year 4 16-17	Year 5 17-18	CHANGE Y1 -Y5	CHANGE Y4 -Y5
Full Time	Q1	60	60	60	45	35	-25	-10
	Q5	5	10	5	5	5	0	0
Part Time	Q1	45	15	15	20	15	-30	-5
	Q5	20	15	10	10	10	-10	0

SUCCESS

Non- Continuation:

Numbers are too few for any meaningful analysis of POLAR4 cohorts, to compare Q1 areas with Q5 areas non-continuation rates. Subsequently, the College's performance using the KPM 3 (Gap in non-continuation between most and least represented groups) has been split for assessment between POLAR4 Q3 to Q5 and Q1 to Q2. Table 6 illustrates the gap in non-continuation rates for these populations. In 2017/18, the gap was 0.7%. This gap is smaller than the 2017/18 sector gap of 2.7% for this particular data comparison. In 2013/14, those from Q3 to Q5 areas out performed those from Q1 to Q2, by 15pp on continuation rates at the College. This gap has now significantly reduced by -14.3pp over the observed 5 years.

Table 6: Gap in continuation rates of young entrants from POLAR4 Q3-5 compared with Q1-2

% Gap in participation (POLAR4)Q3 - 5 compared to Q1 - 2			Year 1 13-14	Year 2 14-15	Year 3 15-16	Year 4 16-17	Year 5 17-18	CHANGE Y1 – Y5	CHANGE Y4 -Y5
Full Time	All undergraduate	WMC	15	N	16.7	-13	0.7	-14.3	13.7
		Sector	2.4	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	0.4	0

Minus indicates there are less of Q3 – 5 in the population / N = least than 10 students in cohort

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD):

Using the IMD for all undergraduate continuation rates at the College, the gap for full-time students in 2017/18 was -1.3%, a reduction of 5.9pp on the previous year. Meaning, in 2017/18 those students from IMD Q1 and Q2 out-performed those from Q3 and Q5 in relation to non-continuation rates. This gap has closed over the observed 5 year period by 1.6pp. For part-time students the gap has significantly increased, for 'all undergraduates' the gap was 23.8% in 2017/18, where IMD Q3 to Q5 out-performed Q1and Q2 on non-continuation rates. This will be a focus for the College to close this statistically significant gap. However, it should be noted that the numbers of students are low, leading to significant variation between years. Overall, the data suggests that support/engagement mechanisms at the College are having a positive impact. This highlights the College's success in targeting higher education opportunities for young students from underrepresented backgrounds, as highlighted in table 7.

Table 7: Gap in continuation rates of IMD Q3-5 compared with IMD Q1-2 at WMC

% Gap in continuation of IMD Q3 - 5 compared to Q1 - 2			Year 1 13-14	Year 2 14-15	Year 3 15-16	Year 4 16-17	Year 5 17-18	CHANGE Y1 – Y5	CHANGE Y4 -Y5
Full Time	All undergraduate	WMC	-2.9	-1.2	5.9	-7.2	-1.3	1.6	5.9
		Sector	4.2	4.2	5.1	5.3	5.4	1.2	0.1
Part Time	All undergraduate	WMC	-8.4	6.8	9.2	-10.4	23.8	32.2	34.2
		Sector	3.7	3.9	5	4.8	5.1	1.5	0.3
	Other Undergraduate	WMC	-7.7	6.9	8.8	-10.4	23.8	31.5	34.2
		Sector	3.1	3.3	3.7	5	3.9	0.8	-1

- *Minus indicates there are less of Q5 in population*
- *N = least than 10 students in cohort*
- *N/A = No students reported in population*

Attainment:

Numbers of students awarded firsts or upper seconds is less than 10 for POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 and IMD cohorts. However, This is in context of a relatively small overall population. Therefore, there are too few students for any meaningful analysis. The majority of our POLAR4 population are studying on the FD Computer Science programme or the BSc Psychology programme, of which foundation and level 4 that are both delivered by the College. BSc Psychology student's progress to level 5 and 6 at the University of Liverpool (UoL) to complete their programme. They are therefore counted in the UoL data for attainment. The University of Chester (UoC) collects data for those progressing from the FD Computer Science programme and again, these students are counted in their attainment data. Moving forward, the College will work with its partner Universities to gather intelligence in relation to final attainment and outcomes in relation to the performance of these students.

The College is committed to improving attainment rates for all POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 students. This will be achieved through the implementation of the College's HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) Strategy, which is currently being reviewed as part of the annual self-assessment process, the focus of which is to ensure each student reaches their full potential through high quality, standardised, consistent, stretch and challenge approaches to HE teaching, learning and assessment, to create an exceptional learning experience for all learners.

PROGRESSION to employment or further study:

There are limited data sets available for the attainment and progression of POLAR cohorts. The data for POLAR4 progression from the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey did not meet the response rate threshold required to report on. Numbers are too few for any meaningful analysis of POLAR4 cohorts, therefore baseline data is not currently available. The College is committed to collecting and analysing data through every stage of the student life cycle. Tracking and measuring impact of activities will start from the point of application, and data is currently being collated to measure success of students. Further tracking of POLAR4 cohorts through college systems will enable the College to improve analysis and measures of student progression. The use of data will adhere to General Data Protection Regulations (2018) and the Data Protection Act (2018). Where students' progress from the College's degree provision onto a level 5 at a partner University, the College will work with the partner University to ensure students' progression into employment or further study is captured for the purposes of data analysis.

The College is committed to improve progression to employment or further study for all POLAR4 Q1 - Q2 students. The College will develop a number of projects and activities, in line with the College's new HE Employability Strategy. The focus of this strategy is to ensure students have fair access to, and engage in, specific and individualised careers advice, relevant work experience and opportunities to engage with professionals and employers. This strategy will drive forward a college wide approach and inform activities at programme level.

2.2 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Students

ACCESS

In 2017/18, for all full time undergraduates, 11.8% of the total population of the College's entrants were Asian, Black, Mixed or Other (ABMO). The College draws its students from the local catchment area and in 2011, 3% of the total population of Wirral were ABMO (source: Wirral Intelligence Service - see table 8). Although the College's 2017/18 ABMO intake represents an increase of 6.2 pp on the previous year, it only represents 10 students out of 85 entrants (see table 9). Over the observed 5 year period this equates to an increase of 3.1 pp. For part time, all undergraduates, there were no ABMO students in 17/18, or the previous 3 years. Wirral has a population of 97% white (2011), which is significantly higher than the national average, which is 86% white. Wirral Intelligence Service predict thea Wirral population growth between 2016 and 2031 of plus 4%.

Considering the context within the local catchment area, Graphs 3 and 4 compare the College to the Sector in participation rates and gaps. The College will continue to monitor projected population data, as there is a projected increase of ABMO students within the local demography over the time period 2021-2031. The College also provides an active English for Speakers of Other Languages provision, which serves the ABMO local population to include vulnerable adults with refugee and asylum seeker status. With this in mind, from September 2019, the College will endeavour to ensure fair access through direct promotion of the benefits of HE qualifications, to students within this cohort of who have HE aspirations, supporting a positive impact of a proposed 3pp increase of ABMO participants by 2025.

Table 8: Projected Population of Wirral ABMO between 2016-2031 (Population data from Wirral Intelligence Service 2019)

PROJECTED POPULATION OF WIRRAL BY ETHNICITY AND CHANGE IN POPULATION BETWEEN 2016 TO 2031

| Ethnic Group	2016	2021	2026	2031	Number change	% change 2016-31
White: British, Irish, Gypsy, Irish Traveller	308,343	310,265	311,349	311,530	3,187	1.0
White: Other White	5,283	6,803	8,313	9,850	4,567	86.5
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	3,939	4,641	5,359	6,116	2,177	55.3
Asian / Asian British: Chinese	1,747	2,000	2,317	2,703	956	54.7
Asian / Asian British: Indian	1,412	1,565	1,752	1,938	526	37.2
Asian / Asian British: Bangladeshi	1,016	1,189	1,372	1,570	554	54.5
Asian / Asian British: Pakistani	187	177	185	199	12	6.7
Asian / Asian British: Other Asian	1,425	1,777	2,100	2,416	991	69.6
Black / Black British: Black African	367	371	403	446	79	21.5
Black / Black British: Black Caribbean	216	239	253	260	44	20.4
Black / Black British: Other Black	117	127	140	156	39	33.3
Other Ethnic Group	528	551	583	621	93	17.7
Total Population	**324,580**	**329,706**	**334,127**	**337,805**	**13,225**	**4.1**

Notes and Definitions

1. Percentage change is proportional to the population sizes e.g. the White: Other White group in 2016 is 5,283 and for 2031 it is 9,850. There is a difference of +4,567 which equates to 86.5%

**Source:** Ethnicity Population Database (ETHPOP)

Table 9: Population of White and ABMO students over the observed 5 year period (actual numbers)

Population of White students and ABMO students			Year 1 13-14	Year 2 14-15	Year 3 15-16	Year 4 16-17	Year 5 17-18	CHANGE Y1 – Y5	CHANGE Y4 -Y5
Full Time	All undergraduate	White	105	140	125	85	75	-30	-10
		ABMO	10	10	10	5	10	0	5
Part Time	All undergraduate	White	110	65	50	70	55	-50	-10
		ABMO	5	0	0	0	0	-5	0

Graph 3: Participation gaps between White and ABMO (WMC vs Sector, full time, all undergraduates)
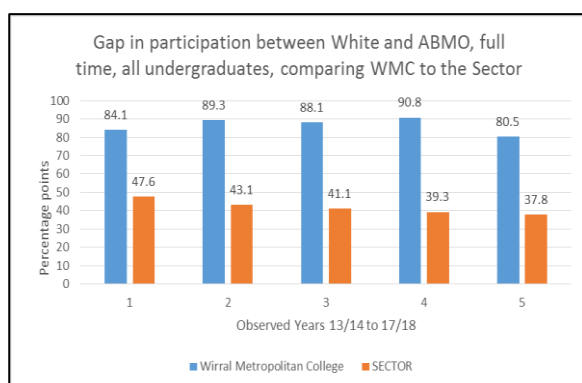
Graph 4: Proportion of ABMO in population (WMC vs Sector, full time, all undergraduates)
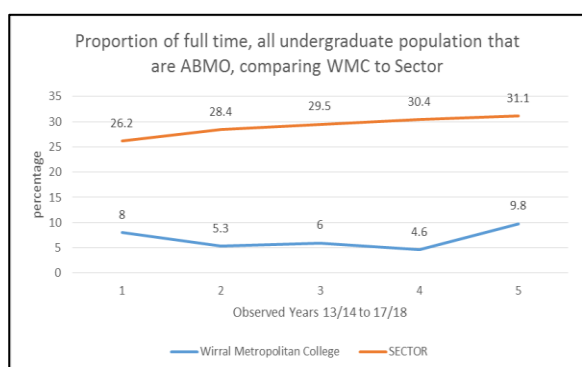
Mindful of the context of the Wirral population, the College recognises there is still a significant gap in access between ABMO and White British students. Although this gap has been closing, it is closing in a negative direction due to a decrease in the white population. Although it would be expected to see some degree of gap in participation, due to the demography of the Wirral, the gap in participation will be a focus for improvement for the College. WMC is significantly worse than the sector in recruiting ABMO students, although this must be taken in context of the community it serves, the College aims to increase this population by 3 pp by 2025.

The College will address this from September 2019, by further engaging with English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students within WMC further Education programmes. From September 2019, we will identify and target potentially able students, within the College, who are currently studying ESOL level 2 and level 3 programmes. We will then work to support and mentor these students to provide further opportunities to progress into higher education at WMC. We will engage in local community and outreach work by building on current partnerships with external agencies.

SUCCESS:

Non-Continuation

The continuation rates for ABMO is difficult to assess as there are less than 10 in the population for each year observed. Whilst this is a factor that will be addressed through growth of ABMO student population, it is also within a context of the reality of the College's student population being reflective of the borough's population. To address this, from September 2019, the College will track the performance of each ABMO student individually.

Attainment

There are too few students in the KPM 4 indicator (Gap in attainment between white students and black students) to provide a meaningful comparison. This is also true in relation to the assessment of the data for numbers of students awarded firsts or upper seconds, which is less than 10 in the population of ABMO. Because the ABMO student population will be statistically small, as a reality of the demographic profile of the local population, the College will track every ABMO student to inform progress and target growth in participation through any intelligence learned from this analysis. This is an area for development that will develop and support the target to increase the population of ABMO students within the College. The College is committed to improving attainment rates for all ABMO students. This will be achieved through the implementation of the new (December 2019) WMC HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy. The purpose which is to ensure each student reaches their full potential.

PROGRESSION to employment or further studies

KPM 4, (which relates to the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between white students and black students) is reducing across the wider sector, but still remains large. For the College, the numbers of students progressing to employment or further study is less than 10 in the population of ABMO restricting meaningful, statistical analysis. Due to this small overall population, the data for ABMO progression from DLHE survey did not meet the response rate threshold required to report on. The College is committed to improve progression to employment or further study for all ABMO students. From December 2019, the College will develop a number of projects and activities, in line with the College's HE Employability Strategy and actively target the ESOL provision to provide bespoke HE advice for this student cohort. This will provide specific and individualised careers advice, relevant work experience, opportunities to engage with professionals and employers and will be at the core of all progression activities.

Limited data sets for BAME cohorts

As referenced above, the College's data sets are too small to disaggregate BAME further into separate groups to analyse. The College is committed to collecting and analysing data through every stage of the student life cycle. Further tracking of disaggregated BAME cohorts, and individual BAME students, through internal college systems, will enable the College to establish better intelligence in relation to measures of progress of BAME students. The use of data will adhere to General Data Protection Regulations (2018) and the Data Protection Act (2018).

2.3 Mature students

ACCESS:

In 2017/18, 47% of the whole full-time 'all undergraduate' student population were 'Mature aged 21 and over', this equates to 40 students out of 85, a reduction of 16 pp on the previous year. For part-time 83.3% of the population were Mature aged 21 and over and over, an increase of 4.8 pp on the previous year. Over the observed 5 year period there has been a reduction in mature full time students, 'all undergraduates' by 53pp. Part-time has also reduced in this population over the 5 years of 41pp.

Table 10: Population of Young under 21 entrants and mature aged 21 and over entrants

Population of Young Under 21 and Mature Students			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	CHANGE	CHANGE
			13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	Y1 -Y5	Y4 -Y5
Full Time	All undergraduate	Under 21	30	55	40	35	45	15	5
		21 and over	85	100	95	60	40	-45	-15
Part time	All undergraduate	Under 21	25	25	15	15	10	-20	-5
		21 and over	85	40	35	55	50	-35	-5

The population of 'Mature aged 21 and over' is in decline. Although this is not significant, the downward trend in this population is something the College will focus on to improve by growing the curriculum on offer. The College is committed to ensuring fair access for mature students and will continue to maintain its current position of no significant gaps in access. The College will achieve this by continuing to target mature students, within the College, who are currently studying level 2 and level 3 Access to Higher Education programmes. From the start of their course in September, each academic year from 2019 – 2025, these FE students will have access to individualised information, support and advice and guidance about progression which will be delivered as part of their programme. The College will also continue to engage in community and outreach work, by building on current partnerships with the Wirral Borough Council, Life Long Learning provision.

SUCCESS:

Non-continuation:

In 2017/18, the gap for all under-graduate students representing continuation was 1.5 pp. Young under 21, all undergraduates had slightly higher continuation rates. This gap has closed by 3.1 pp on the previous year, where young under 21 students out-performed mature 21 and over. 17/18 was the first time in the observed 5 year period that mature over 21 students had a lower continuation rate than young under 21 students (see table 11). Although the College continuation rates for mature learners are significantly higher than the sector average for 16/17 – 17/18 (see Graph 5).

Table 11: Continuation gaps of young under 21 and Mature 21 and over students

% Gap in continuation rates between Young under 21 and Mature 21 and over			Year 1 13-14	Year 2 14-15	Year 3 15-16	Year 4 16-17	Year 5 17-18	CHANGE Y1 -Y5	CHANGE Y4 -Y5
Full Time	All undergraduate	WMC	-5.9	-1.8	-1.5	-1.6	1.5	7.5	3.1
		Sector	6.7	6.8	7.1	6.8	7.4	0.7	0.6
	First Degree	WMC	0.1	N	N	-3.1	4.9	4.8	8
		Sector	6.7	6.8	6.1	6.5	7	0.3	0.5
	Other Undergraduate	WMC	-6.5	-4.2	1.9	-1.4	-5.4	1.1	-3.9
		Sector	-0.2	-0.3	1.4	-1.2	-1	-0.8	0.2
Part time	All undergraduate	WMC	1.6	12.9	8.4	-3.2	-6.6	-8.3	-3.4
		Sector	6.2	7.2	9.3	10.8	12.7	6.5	1.9
	First Degree	WMC	N	N	N	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Sector	4.6	-0.2	1.8	5.7	5	0.5	-0.6
	Other Undergraduate	WMC	3.9	15.2	9.8	-3.2	-6.6	-10.5	-3.4
		Sector	7.7	12.8	14.9	14.6	19.2	11.5	4.6

N = less than 10 in the population – NA = no students reported in the population

Graph 5: WMC continuation rates of all undergraduates 'mature aged 21 and over' compared to Sector for full time students
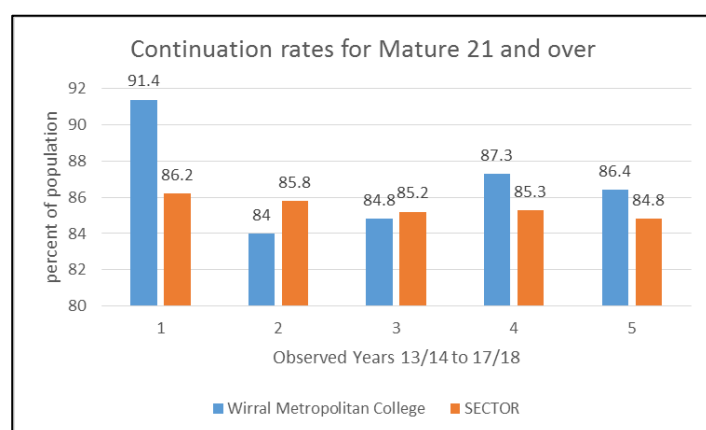
Attainment:

Assessment of the data is limited as numbers of students awarded firsts or upper seconds is less than 10 in the population. This will be addressed by increasing the population of mature students, per the College's strategy, increasing access for this group. The College is committed to improving attainment rates for all mature students. This will be achieved through the implementation of the College's HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy (December 2019), the focus of which is to ensure each student reaches their full potential through stretch and challenge.

PROGRESSION to employment or further study:

The data for Mature (aged 21 and over) progression from the DLHE survey did not meet the response rate threshold required to report on. The College is committed to improve progression to employment or further study for all mature students. From September 2019, the College will develop a number of projects and activities, in line with the College's HE Employability Strategy. Specific and individualised careers advice, relevant work experience, opportunities to engage with professionals and employers will be at the core of all progression activities.

Limited data sets for mature students progressing:

The College is committed to collecting and analysing data through every stage of the student life cycle. From September 2019, further tracking of mature students through college systems, and external data sets, will enable the College to establish better measures of students' progress. The use of data will adhere to General Data Protection regulations (2018) and the Data Protection Act (2018).

2.4 Disabled students

ACCESS:

In 2017/18, 42.9% of the full time 'all undergraduate' student population at the College were known to have a disability, equating to 43 students. This is an increase of 5.6 pp on the previous year. Over the 5 observed years this population has increased by 16.3 pp. Therefore, gaps in participation have been closing. In 2017/18, for full-time students, the gap was 14.3%, a decrease of -11.2 pp in the previous year. Over the observed 5 year period, this gap has significantly closed by 32.6 pp (see table 12).

Table 12: Gaps in participation between No Known Disability and students with a Disability

| % Gap in participation btween No known Disability Students and Disability			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	CHANGE	CHANGE
			13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	Y1 -Y5	Y4 -Y5
Full Time	All undergraduate	WMC	46.9	46.4	10.3	25.5	14.3	-32.6	-11.2
		Sector	76.4	75.3	74.1	72.5	70.9	-5.5	-1.7
	First Degree	WMC	44.4	40.5	-5.7	22	0	-44.4	-22
		Sector	76.6	75	73.6	72.1	70.4	-6.2	-1.7
	Other Undergraduate	WMC	51.2	51.9	38.8	31.4	28.6	-22.6	-2.9
		Sector	70.4	74.1	74.5	72.1	71.2	0.8	-0.9
Part time	All undergraduate	WMC	80.2	90.8	76.9	66.2	64.9	-15.3	-1.3
		Sector	79.4	77.2	75.5	73.7	70.4	-9	-3.3
	First Degree	WMC	N	N	N	N	N	N/A	N/A
		Sector	73.9	70.5	68.8	66.7	63.5	-10.4	-3.2
	Other Undergraduate	WMC	83.3	93.8	76.9	74.6	64	-19.3	-10.6
		Sector	84.7	82.9	81.7	80.8	79.3	-5.3	-1.5

N = less than 10 in the population – NA = no students reported in the population

Whilst the sector trend is improving (see graph 6) the College has closed the gap significantly further than the sector. For part-time 'all undergraduates' the gap has also reduced, there are only 10 students in this population, so the gap is not statistically significant. Over the 5 year period this gap

has closed by -15.3 pp for all undergraduate (part time). For the part time 'other undergraduates' the gap has significantly closed over the observed 5 year period by -19.3 pp.

The proportion of full time, all undergraduate students with a disability has increased over the observed 5 year period, and is now much higher than the sector average (see graph 7). Participation gaps are also consistently smaller than the sector average over the 5 year period

Graph 6: Participation gaps between No known disability and Disability (WMC compared to Sector)
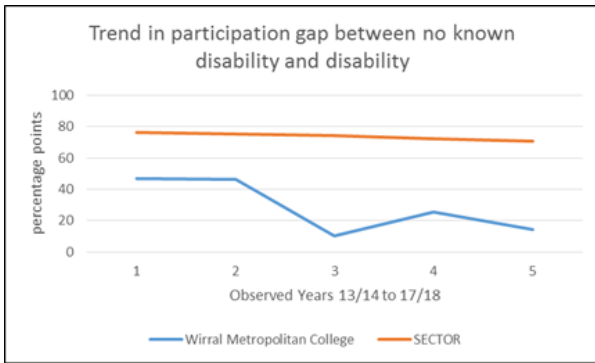
Graph 7: Proportion of entrants with disability (WMC compared to Sector)
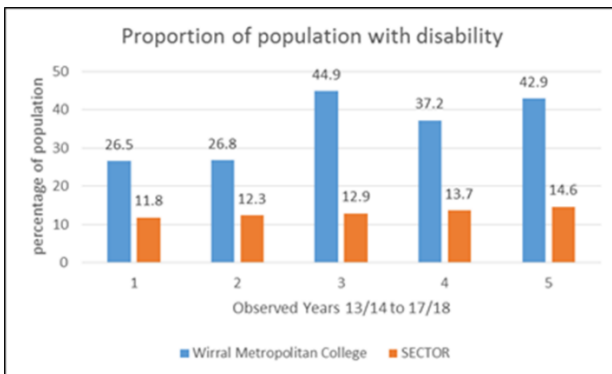

SUCCESS

Non-continuation

The gap in continuation rates between those with no known disability and those with a disability was -2.2 pp in 2017/18. Those with a disability had a higher continuation rate those with no known disability. In 2013/14, those with no known disability did better than those with a disability by 4.4 pp. Therefore, over the observed 5 years we have seen an improvement for those with a disability in continuing on their chosen programme. The College provides very good support for this particular group of students to enable them to continue on their chosen programme. The College will closely monitor, from September 2019 onwards his gap to ensure it maintains the current success which is better than the sector. The wider sector has slightly higher continuation rates for those with a disability, For those on a first degree the picture is still good, but the continuation gap is greater than the sector over the 5 year period (see graph 8).

Table 13: Gap in continuation rates (WMC compared to the Sector)

% Gap in continuation rates between No Known Disability and Disability			Year 1 13-14	Year 2 14-15	Year 3 15-16	Year 4 16-17	Year 5 17-18	CHANGE Y1 -Y5	CHANGE Y4 -Y5
Full Time	All undergraduate	WMC	4.4	1	5.2	-2.3	-2.2	-6.6	0.1
		Sector	1.5	1.3	0.9	1	1	-0.5	-0.1
	First Degree	WMC	-1	11.1	5.1	1.1	5.8	6.8	4.8
		Sector	1.2	0.9	0.9	1	0.8	-0.4	-0.2

Graph 8: Disability continuation rates, full time, all undergraduates (WMC compared to Sector)
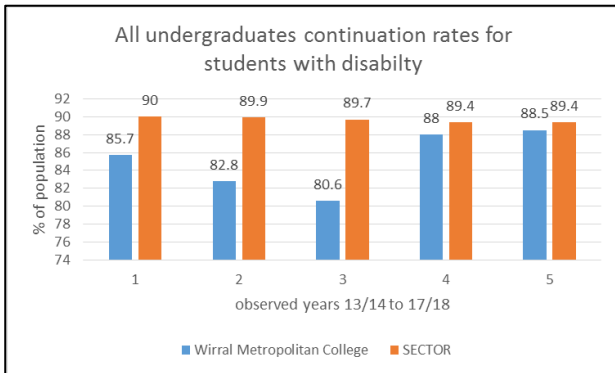
Graph 9: Disability continuation rates, full time, first degree (WMC compared to Sector)
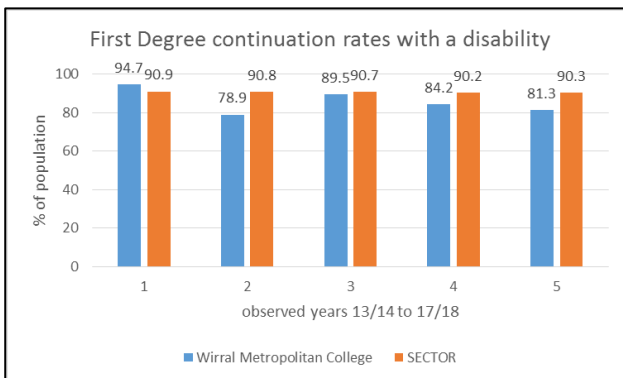
Attainment

The KPM 5, relates to the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between disabled students and non-disabled students. For the sector, in 2017/18, there was a gap of 2.8 pp in outcomes, and there has been no further reduction of the gap in degree outcomes since 2015-16.

Assessment of the gap in this data at the College is limited, as numbers of students awarded firsts or upper seconds is less than 10 in the population. This will be addressed by increasing the population overall. The College is committed to improving attainment rates for all disabled students. This is be achieved through the implementation of WMC Teaching, Learning Assessment Strategy (December 2019). As discussed in previous sections of this plan, the focus of the TLAS is to ensure each student reaches their full potential through stretch and challenge.

PROGRESSION to employment or further study

The data for progression of disabled students from the DLHE survey did not meet the response rate threshold required to report on. The data set also indicated suppression of results for data protection reasons. This is applied where the numerator is two or less or differs from the denominator by no more than two students. The College is committed to improve progression to employment or further study for all disabled students. From September 2019, the College will develop a number of projects and activities, in line with the college HE Employability Strategy. Specific and individualised careers advice, relevant work experience, opportunities to engage with professionals and employers will be at the core of all progression activities.

Limited data sets for disabled cohorts

Data sets are too small to disaggregate disability into separate groups for the purposes of analysis. The College is committed to collecting and analysing data through every stage of the student life cycle. For disabled students there is a gap in data for attainment and progression. This will be a focus for the College. From September 2019 the College will be analysing and disaggregating further, different disability types, through College systems. This will enable the College to establish more detailed measures of student progress, evaluate the data and measure impact of activities. The use of data will adhere to General Data Protection Regulations (2018) and the Data Protection Act (2018).

2.5 Care leavers

According to the Wirral Intelligence Service (2019), Wirral has a high number of Care Leavers (defined as aged between 18 - 21 years). Of these care leavers, 52% are in education, employment and/or training. Whilst the College is the largest provider of education and training for Care Leavers in Wirral, the College has a very small population of care leavers studying Higher Education.

Table 14: Wirral Care Leavers aged 18-21 and their education, employment and training status as recorded in August 2017*

Type	Number	Percentage
In Full Time/Part Time Employment	115	52%
Not in Education Employment or Training	102	48%
Total Cohort Size	**217**	**100%**

Source: Liquid Logic Internal data, Wirral Council, Wirral Intelligence Service

Notes: *This is using current real time data and does not include the number of 17 year olds who have Care Leaver status as it is below 5

Data for this particular HE group has only been recorded at the College since 2014/15. In between, 2014/15 and 2018/19 there were too few entrants to report in the population. This particular underrepresented group will be a focus for the College. From September 2019, the College will work to ensure equality of opportunity for access, success and progression for care leavers. A programme will be developed in September 2019 to identify care leavers within the FE population. Those who have the aspirations and potential to progress will be supported through to their chosen HE pathway.

In September 2020, the College will develop a corporate partnership with the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral Council, as corporate parents of care leavers. The impact of this programme will be measured by the increase in population, non-continuation rates and degree outcomes of this group compared to general population.

From 1st September 2019, there will be more detailed tracking of care leavers, ensuring anonymity of students, through college systems. This will enable the College to establish better measures of progress of students who are care leavers. The use of data will adhere to General Data Protection Regulations (2018) and the Data Protection Act (2018).

2.6 Intersections of Disadvantage

As numbers are small, any meaningful analysis of any intersections is limited based upon OfS data sets. From December 2019, College will develop its own ways to record progress of underrepresented groups, to better understand the impact of the intersections of different measures. The College has the capability within its own systems to analyse intersections of disadvantage and this will be further developed to enable clear reporting mechanisms. The creation of tracking reports that will anonymise the data.

2.7 Other Groups Who Experience Barriers in Higher Education

Estranged Students: From September 2019 we will seek to identify students who are estranged from their families. The College has vast experience of supporting young students within Further Education and understands the additional support needs of students who are estranged from their families. The College will use this expertise to further develop support packages for HE students. There is however, a requirement for students to self-declare their support requirements so the respective support can be identified and actioned and the College must respect the students' position on this.

3. Strategic Aims and Objectives

3.1 Target Groups:

The College's overarching vision, mission and strategic intent is to provide opportunities for under-represented groups in the local community. In line with the OfS strategic objective, the College aims to ensure that all students from all backgrounds, with the ability and desire to undertake higher education, are supported to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

The College has a responsive curriculum that meets the needs of local employers and wider government agendas. As a result, the College is successful in supporting the local economy with a well-qualified and highly skilled workforce. However, there is still work to do. Although the College has a higher proportion of under-represented groups within its HE student body than the national position, there are still gaps.

All identified target groups will be monitored from September 2019 onwards, in terms of closing gaps and improving performance. Impact measures of any activities and evaluation of the College's performance will inform future practice. This, in turn, will shape college strategies to ensure students are receiving the best possible value for money, fair and indiscriminative access to higher education, the highest quality teaching, learning and assessment and opportunities for progression to further study or graduate level employment.

WMC targets groups are summarised below

- **POLAR4 Q1-Q2 populations**: Although this group is well represented in the College, as a proportion of the student body, numbers are low overall. Therefore, the College will continue to ensure fair access and work to increase the entrant population of POLAR4 Q1 – Q2 participants. Another key focus for this group is to raise attainment levels and improve progression to graduate level employment or further study.

- **ABMO:** Numbers of ABMO students are greater in the College than the local Wirral population. However, the College will work to support this nationally underrepresented group to ensure fair access and increase the entrant population of ABMO. Another key focus will be to raise attainment levels and improve progression to graduate level employment or further study for the ABMO population. The College will also disaggregate the data to further analyse performance of different groups within ABMO.

- **Mature Students:** The population of mature students has decreased over the last few years at the College, as well as nationally. Therefore, the College will work to increase the population of mature students, aged 21 and over. The College will continue to engage with the local community and external agencies and organisations to ensure fair access to HE. A key focus will also be to raise attainment levels and improve progression to graduate level employment or further study. The College will ensure mature students can access lower fees, financial support, a family and work friendly timetable and pastoral support to achieve this aim.

- **Disabled Students:** Continuation rates for disabled students is slightly lower compared to the sector as a whole. Therefore the college is committed to raising continuation rates for this group. Another key focus will be to raise attainment levels and improve progression to graduate level

employment or further study for this population. The College will also disaggregate the data to further analyse performance of different groups within this group.

- **Care Leavers:** The population of care leavers in Wirral is slightly higher than the national figure, yet progression of this particular under-represented group is significantly low. The College is therefore committed to identifying potential and raising aspirations in order to secure greater participation and progression. As the College is the largest single provider of further education to care leavers, there is an internal market to support this objective.

- **Estranged Students:** from 2019 onwards, the College will identify and support entrants to ensure fair access and continuation. The College will support students who are estranged from their families, from pre-application, to ensure they have opportunities and raise aspirations to enter higher education.

3.2 Aims and Objectives

For each of the target groups, the college will set out aims and measurable objectives for improvement. The timescale in which the college aims to eradicate the gaps will cover the 5 year period 2020/21 to 2024/25. Targets, where data is available, are detailed in the supporting 'targets and investment plan', which shows the targets that the college has set over the five years of achieving the aims and objectives detailed in the table below (Table 15). Where data sets are too small for meaningful analysis the College has made a written commitment to improve. Details of each target group are below set out below in table 15.

Table 15: Aims and Objectives

Target Group	AIM	OBJECTIVE	Timescale
POLAR4 population Q1 - Q2	To increase the entrant population of POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 participants by 12.8%, by 2025	• Identify POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 students within FE who are currently studying level 1, 2 and level 3 programmes to progress into Higher Education at the College. Then target, track and support them to progress onto to HE (commencing September 2019) • Engage in community and outreach work by building on current partnerships with the Local Authority and Third Sector Agencies to raise aspirations of under-represented, target group • Further develop support network within HE provision to identify, intervene and support 'at risk' of non-continuation students • Record and track students who progress to partner HEI to better understand progression of this population (data reports created by December 2019)	• 2020 – 2025 • Annual review

		• Utilisation of pre-entry and outreach projects; the College works with Shaping Futures, a local NCOP consortium led by University of Liverpool that includes 12 local HE providers. The consortium aims to raise aspirations and provide impartial HE information to 14-18 year olds through activities and projects across the region • Tracking of activities to evaluate their impact through college HE Quality and Participation Cycle (September 2019).	
ABMO population	Increase the entrant population of full time ABMO participants by 3 pp, by 2025	• Engage with English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students within the College's further Education programmes (September 2019) • Identify target groups within the College who are currently studying level 1, 2 and level 3 programmes to progress into higher education at WMC with support and guidance (May 2020). • Engage in local community and outreach work by building on current partnerships with external agencies (September 2019). • Tracking of individual ABMO through college HE Quality and Participation Cycle to ensure there are no significant gaps in access, success or progression (September 2019 - 2025).	• 2020-2025 • Annual Review
Mature Students	• Commitment to increase the population	• The College will work to increase the population of mature aged 21 and over, through the development of Pre-Access and Access provision which leads to the College's HE offer. • The College will continue to engage with the local community and external education organisations to ensure fair access to HE. • A key focus will also be to raise attainment levels and improve progression to graduate level employment or further study. • In line with research conducted by UCAS in 2018, that looked at the admission patterns for mature applicants. The College will ensure mature students can access lower fees, financial support, a family and work friendly timetable and a broad choice of vocational subjects (September 2020).	• 2019-2025 • Annual Review
Disabled Students	• To improve continuation rates by 10% by 2025.	• Further develop support network within the College to identify, intervene and support 'at risk' of non-continuation students	• 2019-2025 • Annual Review

		• Engage students in teaching, learning and assessment stretch and challenge activities to raise attainment • Enhancement of existing services and development of new initiatives to support the College's students' success and progression, a priority being work to address identified attainment gaps	
Care Leavers	• Commitment to increase the population	• To identify and support entrants to ensure fair access and continuation. The College will support care leavers from pre-application to ensure they have opportunities and raise aspirations to enter higher education. • Ongoing development of closer engagement with, and input to, schools/colleges coupled with collaboration with third sector organisations to further support the attainment of young people and progression to Higher Education	• 2019-2025 • Annual Review
Estranged Students	• Commitment to increase the population	• The College will identify and support students, who are estranged from their families, from pre-application to ensure they have opportunities and raise aspirations to enter HE.	• 2019-2025 • Annual Review

4. Strategic measures

4.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overview

The College is governed by a Board of Governors which have an additional Board Committee, responsible for quality assurance and scrutiny. The Principal and Vice Principal for Quality have overall responsibility for the Access and Participation Plan (2019/20). However, the detailed work to develop the Access and Participation Plan to include evaluation of the impact of the work carried out through this plan is undertaken by a central Higher Education Management Team. This team report to the Vice Principal for Quality. The team consists of an Assistant Principal for Quality, College Manager for Higher Education, HE administrator, Student Support Services and relevant Subject Curriculum College Managers. This team are responsible for, amongst other duties, monitoring and evaluating activities against the College's Access and Participation Plan.

The College's mission *'to enhance economic prosperity through high quality, work related education and skills'* can only be met through the creation of educational pathways to occupations and professions. Every year the College reviews and evaluates the job opportunities within the Liverpool City Region and more specifically, within the borough of Wirral. In addition, the College continuously reviews demographic **'needs'** in relation to local borough analysis. This exercise then identifies the focus for curriculum development and areas of low participation that the College then targets to engage learners.

The College has a vocational curriculum and the College's objectives are to be responsive to the needs of its stakeholders, to deliver a quality education and training service and underpinning this, to ensure financial viability. To do this, the College must ensure that its curriculum offer is aligned with the strategic developments led by the Liverpool City Region's Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), as well as responding to the needs of the borough of Wirral. Since Liverpool City Region will become a devolved City Region for the purposes of local adult further education funding, the College must also serve the needs of the Combined Authority. All of these stakeholders aim to support the needs of employers, both those within Liverpool City Region and those we seek to attract, by way of inward investment.

The College's strategic framework includes:

- Vision: To be an inclusive, outstanding college.

- Mission: To enhance economic prosperity through high quality, work related education and skills.

- Values: Success – Passion – Integrity – Respect – Opportunity.

The Vision, Mission and Values of the College relate to every aspect of the College's offer, from basic skills to higher education (HE). In relation to HE the strategic objectives are also underpinned by the College's three strategic themes, namely:

- Theme 1 – Ensuring we are responsive.

- Theme 2 – Ensure we set and meet high quality standards.

- Theme 3 – Ensure we are efficient and financially viable.

Within each of these themes there are specific objectives that commit to widening participation, social mobility, equity and fair access for al, including:

- Creating a curriculum that enables non-traditional HE students to progress from level one to HE

- Developing strategic partnerships with Universities to pro-actively identify under-represented groups to encourage take up of HE in order to provide pathways to professional careers

- Pro-actively targeting areas of under-representation in HE and minimising any gaps in the opportunity and performance of under-represented students.

A whole life-cycle approach to access, success and progression is adopted

Curriculum planning is centrally driven and overseen by the Principal and Deputy Principal with specialist scrutiny from a Vice Principal (Curriculum) and independent scrutiny from a Vice Principal (Quality). This cycle ensures that the College has a whole organisational approach to curriculum architecture and the setting and meeting of Quality Assurance targets in relation to student recruitment, on-programme learning, attainment and continuation. Alongside the centralised infrastructure to ensure consistency, the Higher Education provision has a Governance and Quality Framework (as referred to in section 3.3) to ensure that Higher Education is afforded the focus and scrutiny required, the College also has a dedicated HE Manager responsible for the whole of Higher Education provision within the College. The HE Manager is supported by an independent HE Secretariat to ensure appropriate resourcing, scrutiny and consistency across all HE provision. See Diagram 1 for the HE reporting structure within the college.

Diagram 1: HE Governance and Quality Framework
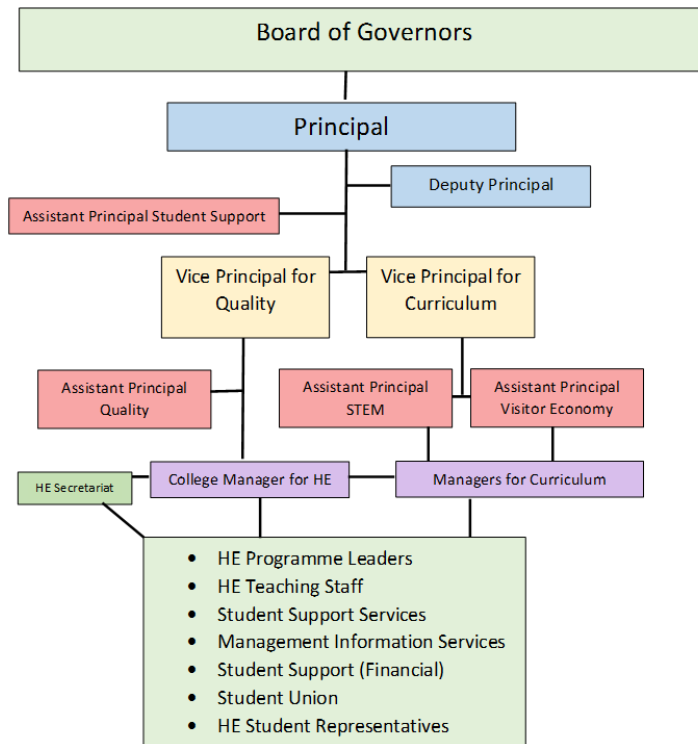
The College operates within the matrix standard to ensure impartial advice and guidance in relation to all students at every level. This advice and guidance is centralised and lead by a specialist manager who is also responsible for ensuring the consistent delivery of the College's standards, linked to the Gatsby benchmarks. The manager responsible for this (Student Services and Admissions) is supported by a team of specialists, qualified to deliver advice and careers guidance and this facility remains independent of curriculum to maintain a fair and consistent approach to access. The College also has centralised admissions to ensure that the consistency of pre-entry enrolment, interview and subsequent admissions are fair and consistent across the provider. This is underpinned by maintaining clear entry criteria to ensure students have access to a fair and transparent set of criteria to help them understand every stage of the process.

Evidence to support this includes:

1) Detailed EMSI analysis that creates a matrix analysis to consider the College's curriculum offer in context of the vocational and job opportunities available in the region. Because of the need to increase the engagement of under-represented groups the College ensures that its curriculum strategy provides clear and coherent pathways from Further Education to Higher Education. Whilst the pathways from Further Education to Higher Education underpin the success of delivering the College's whole strategy, the College has defined objectives to ensure that HE has an independent review and this is governed and reviewed by the College's

Board of Governors. The College's Higher Education strategy and Quality Framework is formally reviewed by the Board of Governors in October of each academic year.

2) Analysis shows Consistent improvement of National Student Survey results (July 2019):
    a. *'Teaching on my Course' is* 7.73 pp above the sector,
    b. *'Overall Satisfaction'* is 2.4 pp above the sector.

3) Gatsby Benchmarks Standards have been set and are continuously reviewed by a formal Committee which scrutinises performance and ensures compliance.

Staff from departments, services and units across the provider are engaged in a whole provider approach:

The College approaches change to develop a culture and structure that promotes and supports inclusivity and consistency. To ensure consistency across all curricular, the College has a formal Framework for communication, evaluation and staff development to inform the implementation of change. The HE Manager is based within the College's Quality Assurance directorate to provide the independence and autonomy that ensures HE standards, within each department, are set and met. The College has a centralised approach to staff development that is linked to the self-assessment evaluation process. This is a continuous process of evaluation throughout the year, culminating in an annual self-assessment report that informs change, defines areas for improvement, which leads to appropriate development for staff. The College engages students in the evaluation and review process and also has a governance process to evaluate the student experience, which includes an independent infrastructure to focus on HE. In addition to this framework, the College undertakes regular surveys.

There is clear and explicit leadership and provider commitment to access, success and progression:

The Board of Governors approves a series of annual Key Performance Indicators that are reviewed by a formal Board Quality and Scrutiny committee. This adds a further level of scrutiny that then informs the whole Board of Governors.

The Principal also leads continuous review and development of partner organisations with Higher Education institutions. The strategic development of pathways from Further to Higher Education incorporates strategic planning between the College's senior team and the senior team within their partner universities. A significant recent development to evidence the impact of this, includes the complete review of the College's Health and Social Care curriculum working with a partner University. This resulted in the College and the University co-locating some of the University's delivery within the Birkenhead area, which is an area of extremely low participation (Quintile 1, POLAR 4 data).

Every semester, a range of Key Performance Indicators are reviewed and on two occasions during the year in Oct/Nov and March/April, departmental performance reviews are led by the Principal, to ensure that targets are being met and performance is properly scrutinised and evaluated. The operational leadership of HE and continuous monitoring, evaluation and review is carried out in accordance with the Quality Framework (defined in Section 3.4).

Alignment with Other Strategies

Equality and Diversity (E&D):

The College aims to be an Inclusive, Outstanding College and its strategy for HE reflects this. Activities for marketing and recruitment remain focused on celebrating equality, diversity and inclusion. The College has developed its approach for HE recruitment with these themes remaining at its core.

The College adheres to the Equality Act 2010 and has a college wide policy in place to ensure consistency in best practice across the College, including HE. All staff receive training in equality, diversity and inclusion during their initial staff induction and this is updated annually. The College has an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee that encompasses HE provision. The purpose of this committee is to ensure all students are treated fairly, in line with current legislation and college policy. There is also student representation on the committee from across the provision. The committee reviews outcomes for all students and monitors achievement gaps, identifies areas for improvement and approves mandatory training for all staff in relation to EDI. During the application and interview process the College offers support to students making applications for Disabled Students' Allowance. There is a designated HE student mentor in place to provide HE students with additional support, alongside a team of professionally qualified learning mentors. Specialisms include support for specific learning difficulties including visually impaired, hearing impaired and students with mental health issues. The College has a central LGBTQ+ group to discuss best practice and improvements to provide additional support and awareness. This has been set up with the support of the University of Liverpool's student union guild.

The College has a formal governance process that defines Equality, Diversity and Inclusion impact measures informed by the evaluation of the large range of KPIs detailed in the process. This formal committee meets three times a year to learn from the impact of interventions, designed to increase participation or tackle any aspect of under-representation and gaps. Following that evaluation, clearly identified actions are set in place to ensure that the learning from this process informs change. This action plan is reviewed by the Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee and the EDI action plan is reviewed through a formal Board of Governors agenda item. As a result of this process, one of the actions relating to HE specifically is that the HE Manager is a formal part of the EDI Committee and is responsible for ensuring that the EDI Action Plan includes discrete HE EDIM targets.

The College also operates and adheres to the following policies which are available to students and applicants:

- **HE Admissions Policy:** The College is committed to valuing equality, diversity and inclusion and to promoting and implementing equality of opportunity in all its activities. In line with the College's Access and Participation Plan (APP 2020-2025) this commitment underpins the College's admissions policy set out below. The process of gaining admission to College courses will be clearly structured to allow ease of access for students onto courses appropriate to their needs. Impartial information, advice and guidance will be available at each stage of the process, so that prospective students can make informed and appropriate choices. Whilst we aim to offer provision for all applicants, we recognise that for some students the College, its courses or facilities, will not be the most appropriate option. In these cases we will endeavour to provide accurate information and impartial advice and guidance on alternative provision.

- **HE Attendance Policy:** In line with the College's Access and Participation Plan 2020-2025, the College is committed to supporting students' to actively engage with their programme. This includes a HE Attendance Policy that ensures the early identification and intervention of

student absence, in order to address any issues that may emerge. The College expects and sets high expectations for all of its students, including attendance at all lessons, events and activities as directed by the College which is critical in helping students to achieve their full potential. The College recognises the importance and positive impact that excellent attendance can have on a student's ability to develop, achieve and succeed. Students are also encouraged to study independently, coursework submissions must be made in a timely fashion, and students are expected to maintain regular contact with the staff teaching them.

- **Work Experience Policy for Higher Education:** This policy describes the framework in place at the College for the organisation and management of work placement opportunities for Higher Education students. In line with the APP 2020-2025, the college aims to ensure consistent processes are documentation are used across all curriculum areas, where work placement is a mandatory part of the Higher Education Programme. The College provides guidance to students seeking meaningful placements with local employers and has links with a hundreds of employers and professionals to support students. The College supports HE curriculum areas to prepare students for work placement and records placements within legislative requirements. The College also works with employers to understand what is expected of them throughout the process. The College monitors efficacy of placements with both students and employers, through feedback, and makes improvements as necessary.

- **Higher Education Student Engagement Policy and Implementation Strategy:** The College firmly believes in embracing student views and there is a structured process in place, including with the Board of Governors, to provide opportunities to have direct student engagement in shaping the learning experience. The College believes this will have a significant and effective impact on increasing student success and developing students' potential and aspirations. This will also contribute to the development of the College's quality improvement and APP student consultation processes. The College recognises that all students, individually and collectively, have an entitlement to participate in the co-production of their educational experience and in the evaluation of their teaching and learning through the mechanisms of engagement detailed in this document. The College aims to maintain, enhance and build student engagement to develop a culture where students are enabled and encouraged to give constructive feedback on their experience, both pastoral and academic, which is responded to and acted upon. The College will foster an inclusive culture where no individuals or groups of students are excluded.

- **Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy:** The College has a Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy for HE which is kept under annual review. The impact of the strategy is monitored, reported and evaluated using a wide range of indicators and measures such as TLA development planning, professional development engagement, staff induction effectiveness, learning walks, learning talks, impact and engagement in TLA projects, learner attendance, continuation, attainment and progression. This also considers learner voice data (including National Students' Survey and Module Level/ Course Level Feedback). The intended impact of the strategy is to maintain and support a skilled workforce of teaching staff who design and facilitate engaging and immersive learning experiences, who feel supported and can access a wide range of technology, development and training to continually improve their practice.

- **Student Protection Plan:** This policy is in the context of the College's statutory responsibilities under the Consumer Rights Act 2015 (CRA), as well as the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA) and the institution's registration with the Office for Students (OfS). The

purpose of this policy is to mitigate risk, ensure refunds and compensation are awarded where appropriate, and protect the students' interests if there is an unexpected programme termination (conditions apply). The College has undertaken an assessment of potential risks associated with continuity of provision and the likely hood of those risks occurring. The risks have been assessed for continuing students and applicants to the provision. Assessment of risk for the College is low.

Strategic Measures

To achieve the College's strategic aims and objectives, the College will use the following strategic measures for each stage of the student lifecycle. From September 2019 onwards, progress on these measures will be reviewed and evaluated through the College Quality Cycle. The College will use a number of widening participation indicators, as well as OfS KPM indicators. There are a number of core measures that apply to all different groups of students over the whole student life-cycle. These are detailed below:

- **Keeping tuition fees low:** A tuition fee of £7790 for UK and EU undergraduates from 2020 - 21 onwards, subject to inflationary increases as allowed by Government and any impact resulting from Brexit.

- **Financial Support:** The College offers a £500 per annum 'Support Bursary' for students with a household income below £25k as well as an 'Access and Progression Bursary' of £500 per annum for students with a household income between £25,001 and £42,600 and who have studied at the College in the previous two years. The College also operates a needs-based Student Hardship Fund for UK students in need. This is allocated to students on an ad-hoc basis, based on an internal application process.

- **Small class sizes and high number of contact hours (compared to sector):** Classes are up to a maximum of 30 students in one teaching session. This allows the Colleges' students to access high quality teaching, learning and assessment opportunities. The results of the College's 2018/19 NSS Survey demonstrates the impact of this, through above sector average scores for student satisfaction. The College delivers HE provision in a student friendly inclusive framework, for example, smaller class sizes (no more then 30), on average 15 hours of tutor contact time per week and parent/family/work friendly timetables. The College provides a supportive environment whilst maintaining its integrity, academic standards and compliance with HEI partner University policies, procedures and regulations.

- **Pastoral Support:** Each student has a named personal tutor with a timetabled tutorial session every week for the group, and additional bookable times available for individuals. The College has HE specialist Learning Mentors who are able to support with external issues and offer guidance. All of which provides HE students with the 'wrap-around' support required when appropriate. Every student is also offered additional study skills, namely, free English and Mathematics qualifications. The College's NSS Survey data 2019 demonstrated students were pleased with the College as a whole, particularly the smaller class sizes and support on offer.

The college is continuing to improve its performance as reflected in the recent National Student Survey in July 2019. Table 16 below, illustrates the results for 'teaching on my course' which are 7.7 percentage points (pp) above the wider sector and 7.9 pp above the region.

Table 16: NSS July 2019 results

National Student Survey (July 2019)	My result	Region %	Sector %
The teaching on my course	91.86	83.97	84.13
Overall satisfaction	86.05	83.49	83.65

Access Strategy Measures:

Fair access for POLAR4 Populations – Increase population:
From September 2019 onwards, the College will actively promote HE through outreach activities that are focused on raising aspirations of potential students, from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPN). There are twelve local areas of LPN that are classified as quintile 1 (POLAR4) within the College's catchment area. The College will engage with Sixth Forms and Secondary Schools in LPN, as well as providing summer school taster days, which will contribute to raising participation of Q1 POLAR4 cohorts. Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) will be targeted to the Colleges Level 2 and 3 students, aged 18-25 from LPN to ensure they have fair opportunities to progress to HE. The College, in partnership with other HEIs, participates in OfS NCOP aspiration-raising activities across the region. Part of this collaboration with NCOP includes projects supported by Shaping Futures that are created, planned and implemented by the College and feature sustained and co-ordinated activities in LPNs (POLAR4 Quintile 1 areas). The impact of these activities has seen a significant improvement in the recruitment of young people

Fair Access for Mature Students – increase population:
Socio-economic issues are the greatest barrier to access for mature students. Therefore, the College will continue to support inclusive access from September 2019 onwards, by; keeping fees lower than the sector average, making bursaries available, ensuring teaching, learning and assessment is delivered in a family/work friendly framework, Maintaining smaller class sizes than sector averages and by providing greater pastoral support. The College continues to provide opportunities to students who may never have enter HE and works closely with the University of Chester, University of Liverpool, University of Central Lancashire and Pearson to develop a curriculum that is appropriate and responsive to the needs of Liverpool City Region and more specifically, Wirral. The College will target its current and future level 2 and 3 adult learners in FE to ensure they are given appropriate IAG regarding the support the College can offer to enable progression to its HE provision.

Fair Access for Asian, Black Mixed and Other Students – continue to increase population in line with Wirral Population Growth:
From September 2019 onwards, the College will target its student population undertaking English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students currently studying at level Entry 3 to Level 3. This particular group of students face a significant number of additional barriers to accessing HE.

The College will adopt a range of strategies, to include the introduction of short courses to include English Language summer schools; class visits from HE tutors to talk about their own programmes; IAG regarding financial support and progression routes; past HE students and current HE students studying from ABMO backgrounds to act as role models and ambassadors. This will be offered in addition to keeping fees low, making bursaries available, ensuring teaching, learning and assessment is delivered in a family/work friendly framework, keeping small class sizes and by providing greater pastoral support.

Care Leavers and Estranged Students
From September 2019 onwards, the College will seek to identify these particular groups of students from within its FE provision. Once identified, a support package will be put in place to enable these students to progress and achieve in HE. The use of the College's pastoral support mechanisms will be applied as appropriate and tailored to the individual. In addition, the College is developing an active partnership with the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral Council to seek their support as corporate parents.

Student Success Strategy:

POLAR4 Q1 – 2, Increase attainment of Mature Students and Disabled students.
From September 2019 onwards, the College seeks to raise attainment by increasing the number of students awarded firsts or upper seconds for these student groups. This will be achieved through the implementation of a Student Mentor scheme that will offer social support and signpost those students 'at risk' of non-continuation to college and partner support services. The College will facilitate accommodation for personal study and support distance learning (where mitigating circumstances deem this appropriate). The use of induction activities and HE Student Union activities will be further developed to promote student engagement, enhancement and belonging. A number of HE tutors are currently in the process of gaining Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, this process requires HE tutors to reflect on their own performance and practice. This, in turn, will support student success through the continued improvements in teaching and learning. Performance and progress with be measured and evaluated, using non-continuation rates and module completion rates, as well as OfS KPM 5.

Progression to Employment or further study:

Mature Students, Disabled Students and those from POLAR4 Q1-2 areas.
From September 2019 onwards, the College will seek to increase progression onto further study or graduate level employment for all students. However, further work is needed for these particular populations. The College will continue to work with local employers and those in professional careers to build on and increase successful outcomes for HE students. The College will engage with established links and employers to source work placements for undergraduates. Progress on this strategy will be measured and evaluated through follow up contact with leavers, after fifteen months, via the OfS Graduate Outcomes Survey. This will ascertain the number of graduates in employment or in further study. The College is able to apply its expertise with employers to support the development of degree and HND provision, which leads to graduate level employment.

The College is also working closely with the Local Education Authority to ensure those in the community that are the most difficult to reach, are targeted to raise awareness of opportunities. The College is the largest provider of 16-19 year old provision within Wirral where 66% come from low participation neighbourhoods (LPN) and they have access to a full suite of events to encourage

progression for further and higher study. Mature students also have targeted events to ensure their particular needs are met and addressed. All students benefit from lower HE course fees, flexible learning, greater pastoral support and smaller class groups relative to HE sector averages.

Activities from September 2019, to increase access to HE through collaborative and long-term outreach work includes the following:

- Continuing to develop resources and activities in schools, ensuring schools and pupils are receiving the support and information they need to progress onto higher education.

- Developing drop-in sessions and workshops, as well as one-to-one appointments, with a dedicated HE engagement team; student finance advice team; careers team; additional learning support team.
- Providing drop-in sessions and workshops to raise aspirations and confidence in order to raise participation from identified target groups, such as looked-after children.

- Working closely with schools around family and community learning events to raise participation from targeted and under-represented groups.

Bursary for Financial Support:

The College offers financial support to students as a practical way of helping them stay in higher education. Students who meet the set criteria (detailed below) will automatically receive a bursary each year. The aim of this bursary is to support students to continue in their studies. A factor in non-continuation of studies has been financial issues. Therefore, the bursary is a way of maintaining support for students when financial difficulties arise.

All full time Degree students who begin and enrol on their course from September 2020/21 and onwards, and are paying the higher course fee of £7790, are means tested for bursary payments of £500 per academic year. If the student has an annual household income of £25k or less they are eligible for the additional financial support via the bursary, this is automatically paid to the student. The College uses Student Loans Company (SLC) to identify those students who meet the criteria. Any eligible student who is paying the higher fee and meets the criteria stated, but has not applied for a loan through the SLC, is asked to complete an application form to provide the evidence of income at £25k or below, to receive the bursary. Financial support was introduced in academic year 2017/18 and the college intends to evaluate its impact through continuation data and comparison of success data from previous years.

In addition to the full time bursary described above, the College offers an alternative bursary of £500 per academic year for students on full time degree programmes, who do not qualify for the means tested bursary. Students enrolled from 2020/21 onwards and paying the higher fee of £7790 per year who meet the following criteria will qualify for this bursary; Students will have a household income of above £25k, will have attended the College for at least 2 years prior to entry and have progressed onto HE provision at the College. Students can apply for this bursary through an application form with evidence to support eligibility criteria.

In 2017/18, 29 students qualified for the HE Support Bursary where household income in below £25k. This indicated that although the college was attracting students from under-represented areas of low participation postcodes, the majority of students were from higher income families, who may live in

these areas. Following on from this in 2018/19, this figure doubled with 69 students qualifying for the support bursary where household income is below £25k. This is in line with an improvement of 5pp in overall attendance in 2018/19 compared with the previous year. Analysis of FE performance data, illustrates that attendance is key to improving non-continuation rates and we saw an improvement in non-continuation rates overall. Student feedback demonstrates the positive impact that the bursaries have had in enabling students to continue in their studies.

4.2 Student Consultation

The College has a number of strategies and processes to consult with students, regarding all aspects of the student experience and life cycle. All programmes operate a course level Student Liaison Committee meeting with the HE Manager. Every programme has an elected student representative who receives training and support throughout the year from the College's Students Union. HE Student Representatives also provide feedback to partner institutions and receive support and training from them. Students are encouraged to participate in the National Students' Survey and internal HE-specific learning talks.

The HE Student Liaison Committee is held once a semester and is led by the students. Recruitment and training takes place for the role of Student Rep and during induction week students are given information and guidance on how they can engage with the College to help shape, inform and develop the APP, curriculum and quality of provision. The College invites all students from all backgrounds and groups to give feedback via a questionnaire and ensures all groups are represented at HE Student Liaison Committee, as well as through college wide activities. These methods of consultation have been used to inform the design and development of the current Access & Participation Plan (APP).

Student consultation has been provided at each stage of development of the APP. A number of HE students will be part of a new panel that will be responsible for developing plans and monitoring the progress against targets within the APP. This panel will form part of the college's new (2019-20) Quality and Participation Cycle for 2019.

We have also consulted with students through an email survey to ask for their views on our approach to access and participation, delivery of provision and approach to supporting them to succeed. Although responses were low, replies showed that students valued our student centred approach, caring and supportive staff, and support through early interventions to gain access to Higher Education. The number of responses from mature students was greater than young students and they commented that the support received via financial and additional learning support, was very good. Some students responded that improvements could be made around careers advice and routes to further study. We have used this feedback to inform this current APP and the College will continue to consult with students to ensure that services are responding to students' needs and addressing any gaps in provision.

The College offers HE Fellowships for students who have completed their degree. These Fellows are able to register as students at the College and use the facilities such as Art Studios etc. In return, the HE Fellows are expected to engage in the development of HE provision through consultation on the APP, Quality Cycle and mentoring of students in the subject area. The College will invite one of the HE Fellows to sit on a new Quality and Participation Panel to support the panel in its endeavour to meet its set targets, close gaps in performance and drive forward improvements for all HE students.

4.3 Evaluation Strategy

KPM 6 focuses on evaluation, namely the proportion of access and participation plans that contain robust evaluation methods which focus on impact and lead to improved practice. With this in mind the College has developed an evaluation strategy that is impact focused and ensures rapid change when needed.

The College will be adopting the NERUPI (Network Evaluating & Researching University Participation Interventions) Framework in order to inform the design, delivery and evaluation of widening participation interventions during the Quality and Participation cycle detailed below. This will allow the College to gather meaningful data that will enable impact to be assessed to evaluate performance against the College's strategic objectives. The focus of this relates to access and participation as a basis for the 'theory of change' where effectiveness will be assessed by identifying changes resulting from the interventions put in place. The College will further invest in systems and resources supporting the ongoing development of research and evaluation to ensure a continued and thoroughly evidence-based approach in the College's plans, resulting in the sharing of findings with colleagues across the sector (to include the use of the NERUPI Evaluation Framework) This theoretically-informed evaluation framework draws from a range of key theoretical influences, including: Freire's notion of 'praxis', Bourdieu's Theories of Field, Capitals and Habitus and Nancy Fraser's theory on social justice. It will be used to ensure the College designs interventions with clear aims and objectives to meet specific purposes. An example is included below for encouraging progression to HE for students currently studying at Level 3:

Table 17: NERUPI (Network Evaluating & Researching University Participation Interventions) Framework

			Aims:	Objectives
				Enable students to:
SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC CAPITAL	PROGRESSION CURRICULUM	KNOW	Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education	Investigate course and placement options and social/leisure opportunities at Wirral Met College and other universities
		CHOOSE	Develop students' capacity to navigate Higher Education sector and make informed choices	Evaluate course, student finance and graduate opportunities and make informed choices that align with personal interests and career aspirations
HABITUS	STUDENT IDENTITIE	BECOME	Develop students' confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenges of university life	Anticipate challenges they will face in HE and facilitate a successful transition
EDUCATIONAL CAPITAL	SKILLS CURRICULUM	PRACTISE	Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment	Enhance academic skills through collaborative projects that develop capacity for critical thinking, independent research and self-directed learning

INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL	KNOWLEDGE CURRICULUM	UNDERSTAND	Develop students' understanding by contextualising subject knowledge	Situate existing knowledge within wider fields of knowledge and apply to other contexts. Situate existing knowledge and interests within the context of HE programmes and academic disciplines

Diagram 2: The cycle of evaluation:

The cycle of evaluation comprises the following design, to allow for effective data capture culminating in analysis of impact:

Diagram 2: The Cycle of Evaluation

Following detailed analysis that evaluates the impact of actions taken, the associated learning with those actions, is shared through the College's Higher Education Forum. This ensures good practice is shared, and equally, any aspects that did not work to plan are evaluated. This formative evaluation informs the annual cycle of curriculum design and development and is central to the College's Quality Assurance process. From September 2019, the College will work to ensure continuous improvement through evaluation, monitoring of gaps in access, success and progression between students from under-represented populations and their peers, leading to implementation of any action needed to close gaps.

Based upon the detailed approach to evaluation, sector-based benchmarking and ensuring that research continues to embrace the strategic involvement of university partners, will be paramount. An example of the evidence that the College can already demonstrate through this approach is growth in pathways to Health that have been designed from Level 2 Study Programmes in Further Education through to Higher Education. This supports young people from under-represented groups and the adults' progression of pre-access (Level 2) access Level 3 and 2+2 progression to BSc Honours Psychology, which demonstrates the positive impact of creating progression pathways and targeting underrepresented students.

The College has also developed a governance structure that embraces the student voice and the Chair of the Board and the Principal meet termly with the 'Student Union Executive Team' to understand the students' experience and triangulate the evaluative data, reviewed in KPIs, with the actual experience of students. Underperformance and any identified gaps results in targeted intervention and these are supported with a detailed action plan that is RAG rated, monitored

independently by the HE Manager and Vice Principal for Quality. This approach is also scrutinised by part of the Governance process through the Quality and Scrutiny Committee which in turn, informs the Board of Governors.

4.4 Monitoring Progress against Delivery of the Plan

The evaluative process looks at every aspect of the life-cycle from:

1. **Identifying need** - based upon detailed analysis of demographic trends and targeted areas defined as under-represented

2. **Turning need into demand** – ensuring that the College's curriculum offer is accessible and supported by appropriate interventions, to meet the needs of individuals, for example the bursary

3. **Admissions** – ensuring high quality impartial advice and guidance to support fair and transparent admissions linked to defined entry criteria, together with an understanding of the individual needs of the student

4. **On-Programme learning** – delivery of the programme that is reviewed in line with the Quality processes, as defined at every stage

5. **Progression** - to ensure that the original intent of the programme provides students with the opportunities for progression, sought through engaging in HE. Plan, review and intervention takes place as a continuous process, based upon the learning, as part of the quality cycle.

The College considers the impact of this approach upon particular groups to evaluate the difference that it is making in terms of increased participation. This is reviewed by the Equality and Diversity Committee, that is a formal management committee within the College, chaired by the Principal and includes a Governor. Based upon the findings and impact of actions taken, the Equality and Diversity Action Plan reflects any actions resulting from the learning.

Targets and milestones are revisited on a regular bases to ensure continuous monitoring and evaluation. This is achieved through a number of mechanisms that are embedded into the College's HE Quality and Participation Cycle, as detailed below:

Access and Participation Group (APG):

The purpose of this group is to ensure the APP targets and milestones are understood by all and actions are undertaken. This group reports to the Quality and Participation Board twice a year, to inform progress against milestones and targets. This group is governed by the College's Quality Department, and comprises of representatives from every relevant department in the College, including:

- HE Students
- HE Teaching Staff
- HE Quality / HE Manager
- Student Support Services
- Management Information Services Manager
- HE Marketing Manager
- HE Admissions Manager
- HE Student Bursaries and Financial Support Manager
- Additional Learning Support Manager
- Finance Manager

From September 2019, the group meets monthly and use a number of KPIs to review impact of activities, evaluate their worth and action any interventions to address emerging themes or gaps in performance. KPIs include attendance data, access data from enrolments, for example: access by underrepresented groups, attendance/feedback from marketing activities, student feedback, student performance data, bursary and financial support data, Additional Learning Support provision data, Teaching, Learning and Assessment activities, student support services activities. The group seeks to evaluate the College's position and interventions to improve or close gaps in performance.

Higher Education Quality and Participation Cycle (HEQPC):

Whilst complying with partner HEIs' regulations and procedures, the College also operates an independent Quality and Participation Cycle that ensures compliance, integrity and transparency at every level of its HE provision. The key drive is to ensure excellent academic standards and to be an inclusive college. Below describes this cycle:

Higher Education Quality and Participation Board (HEQPB): This board directs the College's strategic position ensuring it is responsive to growth opportunities and focussed on key employment areas. The board is responsible for the continued monitoring of HE provision, to ensure the development and design of Higher Education is in line with the HE Strategy. This board is chaired by the Vice Principal for Quality, a summary report is shared with Senior Leadership Team and Governors and is also circulated to HE staff and students. The Access and Participation Group, and the Academic Scrutiny Panel both report to this board. Monitoring and evaluation of Access, Success and Progression is undertaken checking for impact on outcomes for students. Actions are set to ensure the access and participation plan targets are met, implementation of the APP is exercised appropriately and the College's HE strategy is delivered.

Academic Scrutiny Panel (ASP): This panel is governed by the College's Quality Department. The purpose of this panel is to ensure continuous monitoring of quality and academic standards for every Higher Education programme. This is done through the submission of External Examiner Reports, Action Plans, students' feedback and performance data. The ASP also panel evaluates exam/assessment board performance, through appropriate minutes. The panel then sets intervention actions for improvement, as appropriate. This is tracked and monitored by Quality Department. The panel also monitors student outcomes, student success (through module/unit performance tracking) and stakeholder feedback at course level. The Academic Scrutiny Panel is chaired by the College's Higher Education Manager and a summary report is sent to the Higher Education Quality and Participation Board and the Higher Education Forum with any recommendations for improvement.

Higher Education Student Liaison Committee (HESLC): The purpose of this committee is to gather feedback from Higher Education Students regarding recruitment and programme development, enrolment, equality and diversity, teaching and learning, environment and resources, student support services, quality of provision and assessment procedures. The HESLC is chaired by a HE student representative and a summary report is sent to the Academic Scrutiny Panel. The Access and Participation Plan is reviewed by this committee to consider student feedback and consultation for future and further development. Any operational issues raised by students are dealt with swiftly by the Higher Education Manager and relevant programme team.

Higher Education Forum: The main focus of this forum is Teaching and Learning. This involves a clear directive to share best practice and address any staff development needs identified by the Academic Panel. The Forum also informs Higher Education staff of emerging changes to the Higher Education sector, such as the Teaching and Excellence Framework. The Higher Education Forum is led by the Higher Education Manager and a summary report is sent to the Higher Education Quality and Participation Board.

5. Provision of Information to Students

The College is compliant with the consumer law requirements of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), In accordance with the CMA guidance, all information provided to students is distributed in a durable medium and subsequent changes to that information is brought to the attention of students. The College also provides timely and accurate information to UCAS and the Student Loans Company to ensure that accurate information is available to potential students. The College complies with all associated deadlines through the College's HE Administrator.

Students and applicants are provided with detailed information with respect to fees, additional costs, and the financial support we offer though bursaries. The College is committed to publishing clear and accessible information to existing and prospective students on all aspects of their course and the financial expectations. The College will publish its Access & Participation Plan on its website in a way that is easily accessible to both current and prospective students.

The College provides information relating to finance and current course fees for students via the following platforms.

- **HE Prospectus:** This publication contains information and guidance for students on the application process. This includes contact details of Student Advisers and Admissions. Information also includes associated tuition fees, loans and grants. The document also contains details about making an application for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) and the College offers support to students who wish to make an application to DSA.

- **College Website**: The website includes up to date student fee information, as well as information about loans and bursaries. All information relating to programmes offered, their content and assessment methods.

- **HE Events and Open Days**: Teaching staff and Learning Support staff provide advice and guidance to potential students and family members whilst maintaining students' confidentiality. The College delivers and attends a range of external events and exhibitions within the local community, to further promote and support access to HE for all.

Students and Applicants are provided with the following information:

- The cost per year of the programme, as well as the course duration and total course cost within the offer letter which is also emailed to students.
- The College provides details of the Students' Protection Plan against potential risk associated with continuity of provision and the likelihood of those risks occurring.
- The course handbook, which details the implications of continuous, unauthorised absence on tuition fees and links to the college Fee Policy and Attendance Policy
- A student regulations and policy document which includes the College's HE Fees Policy
- Any details of standard optional additional costs such as equipment
- Accompanying information and conditions of offer document, which provides details regarding the payment of fees, the total amount of tuition fees payable and contact details of the College's Finance Team and cancellation arrangements

6. Appendices

The OfS will append the following items from the fees and targets and investment documents when an Access and Participation Plan is published:

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)

2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)

3. Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

Targets and investment plan
2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Wirral Metropolitan College

Provider UKPRN: 10007553

Targets

All targets must be:
- Stretching and closely aligned to those areas where you have identified significant gaps through your assessment of performance in section A of your access and participation plan, or that contribute to the national priorities we have identified for access and participation
- Outcomes-based
- Proportionate to the gaps you have identified with regard to access, success and progression
- Measurable on a consistent basis, with baseline data where possible
- Set over five years and include annual or interim milestones to help you monitor whether you are making progress

Note: The tables contain examples of targets based on the OfS key performance measures to illustrate how providers' targets can be formulated. Where applicable, providers can use these example targets as part of their own suite of targets to demonstrate how they will contribute to the sector wide priorities the OfS has identified. If you choose not to use these target, please overwrite them to avoid validation errors.

Validation

1. All mandatory cells within a row in this table must be complete - rows must have a main target group, they must be classified as collaborative or not, they must have a baseline year and baseline data entered, and they must contain milestones up to and including 2024-25.

Table 2a - Access

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To ensure fair access and increase the entrant population of POLAR4 quintile 1 participants by 12.8 pp, by 2025	PTA_1	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	•Continue with collaborative work as part of MCOP •Identify target group within the college who are currently studying level 2 and level 3 programmes to progress into higher education at WMC. •Engage in community and outreach work by building on current partnerships with the local authority and 3rd sector agencies	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	37.2% of full time, all undergraduates, POLAR4 population were Q1	40%	43%	45%	48%	50%	The College will encourage applications to higher education through outreach activities that are focused on raising aspirations and attainment among potential applications from LPN. There are twelve local areas of LPN that are classified as quintile 1 (POLAR3) within the College's demographic. The College will engage in opportunities to visit Primary and Secondary schools in LPN, as well as summer school taster days, which will all contribute to raising access. The internal progression of WMC level 3 students aged 18-25 from LPN will also be raised and supported through specific Information, Advice and Guidance activities.
To ensure fair access and increase the entrant population of ABMO participants by 3 pp, by 2025	PTA_2	Ethnicity	To engage with English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students within WMC further Education programmes •Identify target group within the college who are currently studying level 2 and level 3 programmes to progress into higher education at WMC with support and guidance •Engage in local community and outreach work by building on current partnerships with external agencies	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	9.8% of full time, all undergradates were ABMO	10%	10.5%	11%	12%	12.8%	Although this gap has been significantly closing, it's closing in a negative direction due to a decrease in the white population. Although it would be expected to see some degree of gap in participation, due to the demography of the Wirral, the gap in participation will be a focus for improvement for the college. WMC is significantly worse than the sector in recruiting ABMO students.
	PTA_3												
	PTA_4												
	PTA_5												
	PTA_6												
	PTA_7												
	PTA_8												

Table 2b - Success

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To improve continuation rates for disabled students by 9.5%, by 2025	PTS_1	Disabled	Further develop support network within the college to identify, intervene and support 'at risk' of non-continuation students to be in line with sector	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	88.5%	90%	92%	95%	96%	98.5%	The wider sector has slightly higher continuation rates for those with a disability, but the college is now following the sector trend. For those on a first degree the picture is still good, but the continuation gap is consistently bigger than the sector over the 5 year period. Students with a disability had lessor continuation rates than those without, although this is in line with the sector, it is an area for improvement.
	PTS_2												
	PTS_3												
	PTS_4												
	PTS_5												
	PTS_6												
	PTS_7												
	PTS_8												

Table 2c - Progression

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones					Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
								2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
	PTP_1												
	PTP_2												
	PTP_3												
	PTP_4												
	PTP_5												
	PTP_6												
	PTP_7												
	PTP_8												

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Wirral Metropolitan College

Provider UKPRN: 10007553

Investment summary

The OfS requires providers to report on their planned investment in access, financial support and research and evaluation in their access and participation plan. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in student success and progression in the access and participation plans and therefore investment in these areas is not recorded here.

Note about the data:
The investment forecasts below in access, financial support and research and evaluation does not represent not the total amount spent by providers in these areas. It is the additional amount that providers have committed following the introduction of variable fees in 2006-07. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

The figures below are not comparable to previous access and participation plans or access agreements as data published in previous years does not reflect latest provider projections on student numbers.

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£36,874.00	£42,530.40	£50,209.50	£56,385.00	£66,230.00
Access (pre-16)	£8,000.00	£9,000.00	£10,000.00	£11,000.00	£12,000.00
Access (post-16)	£15,000.00	£15,000.00	£18,000.00	£20,000.00	£25,000.00
Access (adults and the community)	£10,000.00	£13,000.00	£15,000.00	£17,000.00	£20,000.00
Access (other)	£3,874.00	£5,530.40	£7,209.50	£8,385.00	£9,230.00
Financial support (£)	£18,437.00	£35,442.00	£45,645.00	£56,385.00	£66,230.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£5,531.10	£7,088.40	£9,129.00	£11,277.00	£13,246.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£184,370.00	£354,420.00	£456,450.00	£563,850.00	£662,300.00
Access investment	20.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Financial support	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Research and evaluation	3.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Total investment (as %HFI)	33.0%	22.0%	22.0%	22.0%	22.0%

Access and participation plan
Fee information 2020-21

Provider name: Wirral Metropolitan College

Provider UKPRN: 10007553

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

We do not intend to raise fees annually

Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Full time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£7,790
Foundation degree		£7,790
Foundation year/Year 0		£7,790
HNC/HND		£5,990
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT		£7,790
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£3,895
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND		£2,995
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT		£3,895
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

Provider fee information 2021-22

Provider name: Wirral Metropolitan College
Provider UKPRN: 10007553

Summary of 2021-22 course fees

*course type not listed

Table 1a - Full-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	(£7500 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£7,790
Foundation degree	(£7500 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£7,790
Foundation year/Year 0	(£7500 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£7,790
HNC/HND	(£3975 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£5,990
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	(£7500 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£7,790
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 1b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students

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

Table 1c - Part-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	(£2650 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£3,895
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	(£2650 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£2,995
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	(£2650 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£3,895
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 1d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students

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

2022-23 fee information

Provider: Wirral Metropolitan College

UKPRN: 10007553

Summary of 2022-23 course fees

*Course type not listed by the provider as available to new entrants in 2022-23. This means that any such course delivered to new entrants in 2022-23 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

Table 1a - Full-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	(Â£7500 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£7,790
Foundation degree	(Â£7500 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£7,790
Foundation year/Year 0	(Â£7500 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£7,790
HNC/HND	(Â£3975 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£5,990
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	(Â£7500 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£7,790
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 1b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students

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

Table 1c - Part-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	(Â£2650 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£3,895
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	(Â£2650 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£2,995
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	(Â£2650 for continuing students that started in 19/20)	All students	£3,895
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 1d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students

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