

UCEN Manchester

Access and participation plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

Introduction and Strategic Aim

UCEN Manchester is a trading name of the LTE Group, for the delivery of higher education provision. The mission of LTE Group is “*Improving lives and economic success through learning and skills*”. The Group currently delivers a range of courses from Entry Level to Level 7 in several different settings and to an extremely diverse student population. The UCEN Manchester curriculum portfolio is based on local industry and employment needs and is therefore aligned to the Greater Manchester Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), while also providing a progression route for our further education students and attracting new applicants from across the UK.

The mission at UCEN Manchester, is "*to deliver first-class technical and professional higher-level skills to meet the priorities of the Greater Manchester region and beyond.*" This applies equally to our extensive degree-level provision in creative, culture and sport – which as highlighted in the Greater Manchester LSIP form “a large part of the GM economy” – as it does to our higher technical education programmes. UCEN Manchester is committed to widening access to students who would not normally progress into higher education and, to this end, have well established widening participation strategies that aim to make higher education more accessible to students locally, regionally, nationally and from a diverse range of backgrounds. HESA data found that 15% of young students in the Northwest (20/21 entry cohort) come from a low participation neighbourhood: source: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/performance-indicators/widening-participation>

The general profile of our students is one of diversity and UCEN Manchester actively seeks to promote and celebrate such diversity.

The UCEN Manchester 2022-2027 strategy has 5 objectives:

- Objective 1 – Position UCEN Manchester as the regional lead for the level 4 & 5 Technical Education Strategy with GM
- Objective 2 - Continue to ensure UCEN Manchester provision is delivered in the highest quality facilities for Technical and Professional Education
- Objective 3 – Deliver Degree Awarding Powers (DAPS) and achieve TEF Gold
- Objective 4 - Launch and brand-new Schools to deliver the ‘Selfridges model’ of National and Regional Technical HE
- Objective 5 - Deliver a ‘UCENtric people strategy, creating a distinct HE community and becoming the employer of choice for staff in college-based HE

UCEN Manchester has a significant track record of delivering higher education courses which pre-dates 2017. Throughout this time, UCEN Manchester have developed and maintained excellent relationships with a number of validating partners, most recently Sheffield Hallam University, Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Huddersfield, and are confident that this experience has equipped us with

a full understanding of the DAPs criteria and the standards required to award our own degrees of which we are currently engaged with.

UCEN Manchester over this time has developed governance and management systems to develop, manage, review, and monitor its provision. This has included the introduction of the Divisional Board which has delegated powers from the Group Board of Governors to oversee the governance of the higher education provision. Academic Standards and the quality of teaching and learning are monitored through the established quality assurance processes and reported through the committee structure in place, which includes Academic Board, the Teaching, Learning and Enhancement Committee, and the Quality and Standards Committee.

UCEN Manchester received the TEF Silver award in the autumn term of 2023 and within this, the student experience was noted as Silver and ‘typically very high quality’. It was noted that additional student voice evidence supported the TEF panel judgements, demonstrating our strong partnership with students, as highlighted in the Student Engagement Strategy.

At present UCEN Manchester comprises of three Academic Faculties and ten Schools (Table 1), supported by two Curriculum Directorates (Table 2), the Academic Service Directorate and Student Experience and Engagement Directorate.

Table 1: UCEN Manchester Faculties and Schools (Curriculum)

Faculty	Schools
Higher Technical and Professional Industries	Computing and Cybersecurity; Business and Law; Sport, Health and Wellbeing; Counselling and Education; Construction and Engineering
Creative Arts and Media Industries	Arden School of Theatre; Manchester Film School; School of Art, Media and Makeup
Access to Higher Education	Nursing and Medical Sciences; Business, Humanities and Technologies

Table 2: UCEN Manchester Directorates (Support and Standards)

Directorates	Provision
Academic Standards	Academic Services
Student Experience and Engagement	Recruitment, Outreach and Admissions, including Uni Connect – Greater Manchester Hub Student Engagement and Participation, including Student Voice and Student Union Student Support – Future U, Advice and Well Being

Over the last 3 years, UCEN Manchester has consistently enrolled approximately 1100 students on to First Degree and Other Undergraduate provision. Of this around 60% are within the Faculty of Creative and Media Industries, and 40% within the Faculty of Technical and Professional Industries. The latter also has approximately 60 new Level 4 enrolments each year on to a non-designated Counselling qualification.

UCEN Manchester's strategy regarding curriculum development is to offer a range of courses at different levels to accommodate the needs of industry and students. In line with government policy, UCEN Manchester will continue to expand our Level 4 and 5 provision to offer more higher technical courses at sub degree level, particularly in subjects such as computing, engineering, construction, and health, and where appropriate all of these courses will have a Level 6 progression route. HESA data found that the proportion of males applying for engineering and technology and computing is much higher than female applicants, but females overall have a higher percentage of starts in higher education.

(Source:<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/19-01-2023/sb265-higher-education-student-statistics/subjects#:~:text=Males%20make%20up%2043%25%20of,subjects%20decreased%20in%202021/22.>) Thus, UCEN Manchester's Level 6 access approach aims to attract more male applicants.

“Men are considerably less likely to progress to higher education by age 19, than women, and this has been the case for many years. In 2021/22, 54% of women were in HE by 19, compared to only 40% of men. The gender gap has risen slightly on this measure, since the previous year, 2020/21.”

(Source:<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cdp-2024-0043/#:~:text=Men%20are%20considerably%20less%20likely,previous%20year%2C%202020%2F21.>)

However, UCEN Manchester will also continue to develop our 3-year degree provision, particularly in the creative and performance industries where the full degree programme is more attractive to students. Over the past couple of years, more 3-year degree programmes have been developed which has resulted in L6 numbers increasing. The designated HE curriculum offer comprises of Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, foundation degrees, Top Up degrees and three-year honours degrees. All the foundation degrees and many of the Higher National courses have an articulation route to a named Top Up degree.

UCEN Manchester is committed to constantly improving the student experience and this is reflected in the Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy, which clearly sets out the approach to be ‘an inclusive, diverse learning community that is committed to equality of opportunity and progression towards student autonomy’. Training in inclusive teaching, learning and assessment practices is provided as part of the staff mandatory continuing professional development programme. For example, recent sessions delivered to staff have included Gender Identity, inclusive practices for

teaching neurodiverse students, and working with students with disabilities for inclusion. UCEN Manchester's journal, "Educate" was also exclusively focused on supporting accessibility and inclusivity across the curriculum. [EdUcate 003 July 2023].

UCEN Manchester operates a separate Adult Safeguarding Policy to reflect the differences between the statutory duties of further education and higher education providers which is based on several principles: Empowerment, Prevention, Risk Assessment, Proportionality, Protection, Partnership, Accountability, which are further heightened in the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy (TLA), with a commitment to offering 'an inclusive, diverse learning community that is committed to equality of opportunity and progression towards student autonomy, which recognises that students have varying needs and that the principles underpinning the TLA Strategy must remain relevant to all students whatever their educational objective.'

Following the launch of the curriculum restructure and introduction of Faculties and Schools a further strategic decision was taken to bring together the different strands of student support having previously in the main been delivered as a shared service and campus model. The rationale for this change was because of the student and staff voice which clearly advocated for a separate support offer for higher education students, despite, at the time, students sharing campuses and staffing with The Manchester College students.

In 2020 'Future U' the student support service was created as a one stop shop concept for students, which brought together all strands of student support in one offer, so that this was a more visible and consistent offer for higher education students. This was enhanced further by the implementation for the Future U Student Support Strategy, led by the Director of Student Experience and Engagement and serviced by both The Manchester College staff and a variety of bespoke dedicated higher education roles. At this stage the admissions team and student voice team were already a dedicated higher education service. In the academic year 2022-23 all staff in this area worked predominantly for UCEN Manchester and within the Student Experience and Engagement Directorate.

UCEN Manchester's commitment to widening participation is reflected by our diverse student population with a higher proportion of students who are from underrepresented groups compared to the national average. UCEN Manchester's current Access and Participation plan data shows that UCEN Manchester has a high number of students from low participation neighbourhoods, ethnic minority groups, mature students and students with a disability.

In 2023-24 the student population at UCEN Manchester was proportionally female, at 70% and males represented 30% of the population. 62% of students resided in quintiles 1-2, with 38% of BAME students. The majority study on a full-time programme, with an equal split between mature students and students under 21. Given the nature of the curriculum offer and faculty design the two faculties have

distinct student characteristics. The Higher Technical and Professional Industries Faculty attracts more mature, stay at home, commuting students. The Creative and Media Industries Faculty has a wider regional reach attracting younger students who live away from home (Table 3)

Table 3: UCEN Manchester student profile by HE Faculty

Proportion / Faculty	Creative and Media Industries	Higher Technical and Professional Industries
Proportion of Population	59%	41%
Proportion L4-5	38%	67%
Proportion Degree	62%	22%
Female	67%	61%
Male	33%	40%
Quintile 1-2	52%	76%
Disability	21%	15%
BAME	21%	66%
Mature	32%	81%
PT	1%	20%

Students declaring disabilities, under receipt of the disabled student allowance and those with a personal learning plan are illustrated below (Table 4). Whilst those students that disclose a disability had decreased on the previous year, students who have a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) has increased. Nationally, the percentage of students who disclosed a disability has increased from 2010-2021 by 5%. (Source: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8593/>) At UCEN Manchester, all students are supported by the dedicated Disability Officer. The table below shows declared disabilities, the number of Personal Learning Plans (PLP's) and students under receipt of Disabled Student Allowance. (DSA).

Table 4: UCEN Manchester students with declared disability, PLP and DSA

Academic Year	Declared Disability	Personal Learning Plan (PLP)	Disabled Student Allowance (DSA)
21-22	319	11	42 (42 applied)
22-23	429	50	81 (98 applied)
23-24	359	68	65 (92 applied)

UCEN Manchester is committed to continuous improvement for the benefit of our students, and in 2022-23 we saw increases in a range of outcomes, including pass rate (+3% points) and continuation rate (+8% points) on the previous year.

UCEN Manchester operates within the LTE Single Equality Scheme. This scheme is committed to providing an environment where everyone is valued as an individual, and where students and staff can work, learn, flourish and develop their skills and

knowledge in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. At UCEN Manchester, we pride ourselves on the environment we provide for our students. We do not tolerate bullying or harassment and are in the process of mapping to the framework and expectations for preventing and addressing harassment and sexual misconduct. We regularly run campaigns to promote issues such as sexual harassment and racism and to celebrate diversity.

UCEN Manchester is part of the Greater Manchester Higher project, which is a collaborative network of higher education providers, offering impartial information, advice and guidance to help young people make informed choices about their future. UCEN Manchester currently hosts the GM Higher Hub. This funding is part of the national Uni Connect project.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Given the external pressures and the work of student voice at UCEN Manchester we believe that the most pressuring external risks for our students are the cost-of-living crisis, the impact of the pandemic and economic instability on academic skills, social and emotional development, and on mental and physical health, and well-being. Given the student profile UCEN Manchester is also fully concurrent with research suggesting that the costs of higher education are hitting stay at home / commuter students and adding to a growing sense of isolation from campus.

“In the post-pandemic a new academic divide has emerged: the commuter student versus the on-campus student. These two types of scholars may be studying in the same academic institution, but they may as well be living separate parallel lives. One is navigating the daily demands of travel and balancing the complexities of academic and home life. The other is more likely to be fully immersed in university life, enjoying all the social and extracurricular enrichment that may bring. These are higher education’s new outsiders and insiders.”

The spiralling costs of higher education are hitting stay at home students harder | Wonkhe

The student finance offer has been considered in relation to the student cohorts, as well as the design and delivery of a strong cohesive support strategy that considers student communities and fosters a strong sense of belonging. Anecdotally we are also aware that many of UCEN Manchester students will be working a minimum of 15 hours plus per week to remain being a student, alongside their studies.

“More and more university students are working a paid job alongside their studies, according to an annual survey. More students in paid work (55%) than not (45%) Students in paid employment working an average of 13.5 hours per week.”

Most university students working paid jobs, survey shows - BBC News

Responses to the [Advance HE/HEPI Student Academic Experience Survey 2024](#) from over 10,300 students, point to an increasingly positive academic experience for undergraduates studying in the UK. However, this is overshadowed by the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. The report shows improvements in teaching - particularly in assessment, expectations being met and perceptions of value for money. However, students now spend an average of 42 hours a week in paid work and study, up from 35 hours in 2021. Some subgroups, such as those who have caring responsibilities, those who commute and those aged over 26, work and study on average more than 50 hours per week.

UCEN Manchester provides free breakfasts for all students and has initiated free lunch vouchers for students during peak assessment periods and the summer reassessment period and in collaboration with Catering services and the Student Union, food vouchers, a 'Helping Hand' menu saver and swop shop for students.

Fees we charge are available on the website and the maximum we charge in 2024-25 is £8,900. From 2025-26, programmes within the Arden School of Theatre and The Manchester Film School will increase to £9,250, as approved by Divisional Board. [fee summary 2024 25.pdf \(ucenmanchester.ac.uk\)](#)

The detail of the UCEN Manchester's Assessment of Performance is set out in Annex A below. From this analysis, UCEN Manchester proposes to target the following risks given that in most cases there is insufficient / insignificant objective data to prove either that the gaps addressed below are caused by the risks listed or what specific actions would best reduce them. This analysis has been completed on the basis of reasonable assumptions about causes and likely effects. We will continue to gather data on the impact of this work and adapt accordingly over the life of this plan.

UCEN Manchester's Access and Participation Plan seeks to address the following six risks:

- Risk 1,2,3,5: There are lower proportions of Black and Asian students accessing creative courses in the Creative Industries Faculty suggesting insufficient prior knowledge and skills, limited access to good information and guidance and lower prior attainment, limiting course choices. Factors that could influence this (but are not limited to) could include a student's home circumstances and perceptions of stereotypical gender subjects and careers.
- Risk 1,2,3,5: There are lower proportions of male students accessing Higher Education courses at UCEN Manchester suggesting insufficient prior knowledge, and skills, limited access to good information and guidance as well as the necessity to work in full time employment and therefore, creating a barrier to full time study options.
- Risk 1,2,5: The completion rate gap widens between male students from IMDQ1 and IMDQ5 suggesting that a lack of personal and academic support mechanisms may exist and home difficulties impact upon on a student's ability to engage to the fullest extent with their academic studies. Likewise, students may have less time

to devote to non-academic activities than other students. It is likely that increased levels of academic support and hybrid support models would reduce these gaps.

- Risk 6,7,8,9,10: The completion gap widens between 'Black' and 'White' students, but it is likely that they could be mitigated by increased support to help students academically and personally through tailored and individual support packages.
- Risk 7,8: The NSS survey outcomes on question pertaining to the Mental Health and Wellbeing is below the sector benchmark suggesting there is a limited awareness of mental health and wellbeing services for students under 21 within the Creative Industries Faculty, but it is likely that through stronger pre and post entry literature and information this will increase awareness and accessibility. Alongside, fostering a compassionate campus community.

Following the Coronavirus pandemic UCEN Manchester was awarded the Whatuni award for student support, receiving both this accolade and ten student bursaries in acknowledgement for the support delivered to students during this time. ([UCEN Manchester wins Whatuni Awards | UCEN Manchester](#)). Therefore, with the ongoing impact and consequences of coronavirus the extent of on-course academic and personal support continues to be enhanced through the student experience and engagement directorate, the Future U Student Support Strategy and initiatives such as the Personal Tutorial Model, incorporating the role of the Personal Tutor the work of the Student Status Policy and Procedure, which works with identifying and supporting students identified at risk, as well as the Mental, Health and Well Being Strategy.

This has been further endorsed through the Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre, having received accreditation from them in May 2024.

“There are clear structures in place to ensure that students have good access to pastoral care and that appropriate safeguarding provision and guidance are in place. Support comes from school specific services, as well as from the centralised Future U team which provides a comprehensive range of wellbeing services and resources.” and “The Future U team offers a robust structure of support for students, including for their psychological wellbeing.”

(Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre, Accreditation report 2024)”

Our overarching objective to be considered for risk 7, and 8 is to raise awareness of the UCEN Manchester’s mental health and wellbeing service, by fostering a compassionate campus community by providing accessible resources and promoting mental wellness initiatives among students and staff. Following attendance at the QAA Webinar in March 24, “Supporting our students to flourish in challenging times, on and off campus”, the Head of Student Support, Advice and Wellbeing is working with Schools to adopt the Prearrival Questionnaires utilised by University of East London and Teesside University, to help us better understand the needs and expectations of students before they commence their studies at UCEN Manchester to ensure support is in place.

Objectives

We have developed intervention strategies across key stages of the student lifecycle to address and mitigate these risks. These strategies prioritise the student groups most impacted by the identified risks and include evidence-based activities with built-in evaluation processes. The expected outcomes are clearly defined, along with the areas where we anticipate these outcomes will be evident. To ensure we are making progress, we will internally evaluate and monitor our advancements towards these goals.

Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Intervention strategy 1: Access

Approach

Since UCEN Manchester's last access and participation plan, UCEN Manchester have invested in and introduced a dedicated UCEN Manchester outreach team who have three specific areas of focus;

- Schools, Colleges, and Sixth Form
- Adult and Community (Confident Futures)
- The Manchester College Internal Progression

Outreach and Community Engagement | UCEN Manchester

Each offering a bespoke outreach offer, ranging from personal statement support, finance talks, campus tours etc., This team also work in collaboration with the Greater Manchester Higher project, which is part of the National Uni Connect project which offers activities, impartial advice, and information on the benefits and realities of going to university.

[Home - Uni Connect \(officeforstudents.org.uk\)](http://officeforstudents.org.uk)

Activities to support Access objectives

- Confident Futures - The 'Confident Futures' series aims to provide students aspiring to enter Higher Education with essential information, advice, and guidance (IAG), by delivering by-weekly workshops on key topics.
- HE aspirational sessions - Offering 10 curriculum sessions: a package of HE inspirational workshops including HE pathways and HE finance sessions, delivered to around 15 pupils per session.
- Campus Visits - Offering 5 local high schools and colleges a campus visits across UCEN Manchester locations, delivered to around 30 pupils per session.

- Summer School - Offering an annual summer school in collaboration with uni-connect and local HEI partners, delivered to 35 year 10 pupils who have criteria that makes them less likely to progress into higher education from various schools across Greater Manchester
- National Saturday Club - A free Saturday club, initially piloted in the Theatre area (Arden) to provide free access to drama for Black and Asian students in the area, affecting change at a grass roots level (13–16-year-olds). To ensure inclusivity, the club will actively recruit students from diverse backgrounds, partnering with local schools and community organisations.

“The Institute of Race Relations states that “Across the UK, more people from Black, Asian, and other minority ethnic backgrounds, are likely to be in poverty” with 46% of families where the household head Black/African/Caribbean/Black British are living in poverty, compared to 19% of families where the head of household was white. Therefore, targeted areas of greater deprivation will naturally target underrepresented groups.

- Expansion of the Higher Technical and Professional Faculty provision - Expanding our Higher Technical and Professional offerings to attract a broader audience and provide more flexible learning experiences. These nationally recognised technical qualifications, equivalent to Levels 4 and 5, are employer-led and developed in collaboration with industry partners. Also aiming to attract more males into higher education study.
- We will offer 8 new, short courses and 11 new Higher Technical Qualifications - <https://www.ucenmanchester.ac.uk/apply/professional-development/>

For many students, especially those from low-income backgrounds or those without substantial financial support from their families, the cost of living can pose a significant barrier to accessing and completing their education. High living costs can force students to take on excessive work hours, compromising their academic performance and overall well-being. Additionally, inadequate financial resources may lead to food insecurity, inadequate housing, as well as causing stress and anxiety which can hinder academic success and overall student experience. By providing eligible students with financial support, referred to here on in as the UCEN Manchester Bursary, aims to alleviate the financial pressure caused by the increased cost of living on students most in need. The financial allocation for academic year 24/25 is £180,000

The UCEN Manchester Bursary, will be offered to any HE student who is registered on a full-time programme of study (or at least 60 credits if part-time) to apply and must: be fully enrolled with UCEN Manchester; have received the full entitlement of Student Loans; have excellent attendance (85%), engagement, and commitment to studies (mitigating circumstances considered on a case-by-case basis).

UCEN Manchester also recognises that there are groups of students who are more likely to benefit from financial support this includes students from a low household income; first in family; disabled; mature; commuters; young carers; LGBT; Muslim; estranged and care experienced. Risk 10: Cost pressures - Office for Student.

The UCEN Manchester Bursary provides financial support towards the cost of studying and more specifically will offer support for: Maintenance with respect to cost of living; Specialised equipment and devices; Additional travel requirements for visits/interviews or auditions; Personal items.

The window for bursary applications is open to students from October to August each year, with bursary funds paid directly into student bank accounts within 14 working days of assessment. A student can make an application for any element of the bursary package but subject to the eligibility criteria. The funding is matched to the criteria / elements following assessment and once the monies have been allocated, they are spent. However, we always endeavour to support students in hardship wherever we can.

The UCEN Manchester Bursary is calculated in accordance with four key elements. Except for Element 2, all other elements are means tested and evidence will need to be provided to support a student's application.

Element One: APP Award maximum £500 - This is only eligible to students who meet specific criteria related to our Access and Participation Plan to widen access to higher education. Any student eligible for this element, must have a household income of less than £30,000 and able to evidence they fall into one of the following categories: Care Experienced; Claiming benefits in the last six months; Have young children and still receiving benefit; First in family to attend university; Disabled; Young Carer; Identify as LGBT+; Muslim; Estranged from parents; Progressed from UCEN Manchester or The Manchester College Level 3 courses in previous academic year.

Element Two: Cost of Living Award maximum £500 - Available to any student who is facing short term financial difficulties. It should not be used to cover day to day living expenses or ongoing debts. Instead, Future U Student Services Team will direct students to external agencies who can help them secure a longer-term solution.

Element Three: Removing Barriers Award maximum £300 - Only available to students with disabilities and who need financial support with costs of assessment and additional equipment not covered by the Disabled Student Allowance (DSA).

Element Four: Progression to UCEN HE Award set at £250 - Only for students who have progressed directly from a L3 course from The Manchester College onto a higher education course with UCEN Manchester. This can be a HNC, HND, Foundation Degree or Degree including Top-Ups. This is a one-off payment of £250 depending on year of study.

A student eligible for all 4 elements will be entitled to £1,550.

Intervention strategy 1 (IS1): Access	
Objectives and targets:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OBJ 1.1 - Increase the proportion of BAME student accessing creative courses in the Creative Industries Faculty from 19% to at least 24% by 2028-29 • OBJ 1.2 – Increase the proportion of male students accessing Higher Education courses at UCEN Manchester from 35% to at least 40% by 2028-29.
Risk to equality of opportunity	<p>EORR Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk 1 – Knowledge and skills • Risk 2 - Information and guidance • Risk 3 - Perception of higher education • Risk 5 – Limited choice of course type and delivery mode <p>Further detail can be found in our Assessment of Performance</p> <p>Risk Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower application rates - Lower progression rates (on-course) - Lower continuation rates (on-course)

Student Group / Objective	Activities	Input	Outcomes	Outcome indicators
BAME (OBJ 1.1) Male students (OBJ 1.2)	Confident Futures (existing) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Targeted activity for marginalised groups - On campus events - Online webinars 	X1, HE Outreach Coordinator X1 workshop every two weeks X1 hour per workshop	ST 1 – Targeted students feel informed and empowered to apply to HE courses ST 2 – Targeted students are able to make informed decisions about their HE options and courses for them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher numbers of workshop sign-ups • Increased successful applications to UCEN Manchester

		IT resources – online delivery Student Ambassadors	MT 1 - Higher success rates in target group applications due to better-prepared personal statements and understanding of application processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback from participants through surveys
BAME (OBJ 1.1) Male students (OBJ 1.2)	Partnerships to increase access opportunities for students from target groups (existing) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TMC HE internal aspirational sessions (existing) - Campus visits (existing) - Summer School (existing) 	UCEN Manchester Outreach team Uni-Connect Student Ambassadors	ST 1 - Aspirations for targeted students to progress into HE are improved. MT 1 – Increase in targeted students starting HE courses. MT 2 – Increase in internal HE progression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased successful applications to UCEN Manchester • Positive feedback from participants through surveys.
BAME (OBJ 1.1) Male students (OBJ 1.2)	National Saturday Club (new) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Targeted activity for marginalised groups - On campus events - External events <u>National Saturday Club - Explore exciting subjects on</u>	Curriculum team / outreach team	MT 1 – Targeted students feel a stronger sense of belonging and inclusion within the creative community in Greater Manchester. LT 1 – Increased awareness and aspiration of arts education amongst the Black and Asian and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased course enquires. • Increased successful applications to UCEN Manchester from targeted students

	<u>Saturday mornings for free</u> <u>(saturday-club.org)</u>		male population in Greater Manchester.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback from participants through surveys
Male students (OBJ 1.2)	<p>Expansion of the Higher Technical and Professional offer (new)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 new short courses - 11 new Higher Technical Qualifications. <p>https://www.ucenmanchester.ac.uk/apply/professional-development/</p>	<p>Director of Curriculum</p> <p>Head of Curriculum</p> <p>HE Lecturers</p> <p>Sessional Lecturers</p> <p>Staff training</p>	<p>ST 1 – Increased awareness of the availability and benefit of these courses.</p> <p>MT 1 – Improved retention and progression rates among male students as they advance through their course.</p> <p>MT 2 – Male graduates possessing the practical skills and knowledge required by employers, leading to better job placement rates and career advancements.</p> <p>LT 1 – Positive ripple effects within marginalised communities such as reduced poverty rates and enhanced social mobility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased course enquires from male students • Increased successful applications to UCEN Manchester from male students • Comparisons data from male students vs. female students • Employment rates of targeted graduates within twelve months of course completion
BAME (OBJ 1.1) Male students (OBJ 1.2)	<p>Financial support packages (existing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - APP Award - Cost of Living Award 	<p>Head of Student Support, Advice and Wellbeing</p> <p>Careers and Welfare Lead</p>	<p>ST 1 – Targeted students feel reduced financial stress and economic barriers to accessing HE</p> <p>ST 2 – Improved accessibility for targeted students who might</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased applications to UCEN Manchester from targeted students

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removing Barriers Award - UCEN HE Award 		<p>otherwise be unable to afford tuition and related expenses.</p> <p>MT 1 – Enhanced academic performance and higher grades for targeted students as financial concerns are less likely to interfere with studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased utilisation of campus resources and support services by targeted students
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Cross intervention: This intervention strategy and following activities do not exist in isolation and relate to other objectives and activities listed within subsequent intervention strategies. The linked objectives include OBJ 2.1 / OBJ 3.1 / OBJ 3.2.

Evaluation

Activity(s)	Outcome	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Confident Futures (existing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness and understanding of HE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre and post evaluation forms • Recruitment data (Type 2) 	Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher application success rates for WP groups 		
Partnerships to increase access opportunities for students from target groups (existing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased application and enrolment • Increased internal progression • Increase awareness of HE pathways • Increase knowledge on student finance processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre and post evaluation forms (Type 2) • HEAT and uni-connect data (Type 2/3) • Parent evaluation (Type 2) 	Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure
National Saturday Club (new)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased sense of belonging • Increased awareness and aspirations of arts education • Increased awareness and aspiration of arts education amongst Black and Asian and male population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre and post evaluation forms (Type 2) • Parent evaluation (Type 2) • Application data (Type 2/3) 	Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure

<p>Expansion of the Higher Technical and Professional offer (new)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased course awareness and availability to male applicants • Improved retention and progression • Increased graduate outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on attainment, retention, achievement, progression, etc (Type 2/3) • External data sets (Type 2/3) • Compassion data on male's vs females applying/enrolling on the course 	<p>Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure</p>
<p>Financial support packages (existing)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced financial pressures. • Improved accessibility • Enhanced academic performance 	<p>Internal data sets (Type 2/3)</p> <p>Data on attainment, retention, achievement, progression, etc (Type 2/3)</p>	<p>Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure</p>

Intervention strategy 2: Success

Details of Intervention strategy 2

Approach

UCEN Manchester is committed to constantly improving the student experience and this is reflected in our Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy, which clearly sets out its approach to being 'an inclusive, diverse learning community that is committed to equality of opportunity and progression towards student autonomy', this also applies to the Future U Student Support Strategy, whereby:

"Delivering and providing a seamless and inclusive student-centred support system and structure that enables all students throughout their journey to develop and achieve successful and rewarding academic and professional outcomes based on identifying and mitigating barriers to learning."

UCEN Manchester's student-centred approach, academic support programmes and the Student Status Process and procedures, are designed to help and contribute to student achievement.

Activities to support achievement objectives

- Academic support programmes – Working in partnership with the Student Status Meetings, we will establish targeted academic support programmes specifically tailored to the needs of male students from IMDQ 1 & 2 backgrounds. These programmes will include personalised tutoring sessions, academic mentoring, study skill workshops, access to counselling services and assistance with navigating academic resources and support system
- Essential English for Academic Study – Working in partnership with Future U and The Manchester College ESOL department, this programme aims to include the delivery of study skills, GCSE and Functional Skills English courses and providing essential skills that enrich academic modules.
- Fostering an inclusive and safe university campus environment while preventing and addressing harassment and inappropriate behaviour through; active consent, support & report Tool, University & SU campaigns, SU Diversity Awards, staff EDI groups & networks and staff training
- Hybrid models of course delivery - Blended learning model (in-person and online classes) with a blended support offer to enhance.

Intervention strategy 2 (IS2): Success	
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OBJ 2.1 – To reduce the completion rate gap between IMDQ1 and IMDQ5 students from 11% to 6% or less by 2028-29. • OBJ 2.2 – To reduce the completion rate gap between Black and White students from 13% to 8% or less by 2028-29.
Risk to equality of opportunity	<p>EORR Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk 6 – Insufficient academic support • Risk 7 – Insufficient personal support • Risk 8 – Mental Health • Risk 9 – Ongoing impacts of coronavirus • Risk 10 – Cost pressures • Further detail can be found in our Assessment of Performance <p>Risk Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower continuation rates - Lower-than-expected on-course attainment.

Student Group/Objective	Activities	Input	Outcomes	Outcome indicators
IMQD1 (OBJ 2.1) Black students (OBJ 2.2)	Fostering an inclusive and safe university campus environment while preventing and addressing harassment and inappropriate behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active consent (existing) - Support & Report Tool (new) - University & SU campaigns (existing) - SU Diversity Awards (new) 	Head of Student Support, Advice and Wellbeing Students Union Group Marketing Team Group Quality Team (CPD)	ST 1 – Greater awareness of consent, harassment prevention and diversity issues with both staff and students MT 1 - Increased continuation rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of Report & Support satisfaction ratings. • High proportion of students engaging with services support groups or campaigns.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff EDI groups & networks (existing) - Staff training 			
IMQD1 (OBJ 2.1)	Hybrid models of course delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blended learning model (in-person and online classes) - Blended support model 	Director of Curriculum Head of Curriculum	<p>ST 1 – Higher attendance rates for both in-person and online components due to the increased convenience of a hybrid model</p> <p>MT 1 – Improved retention rates as students are more likely to continue with their studies.</p> <p>MT 2 – Enhanced academic performance due to the availability of diverse learning resources.</p> <p>LT 1 – Significant reduction in the educational attainment gap between students from IMDQ 1 & 2 backgrounds and their peers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback from students in surveys and module evaluations • Increased involvement in extracurricular activities and campus events
IMQD1 (OBJ 2.1) Black students (OBJ 2.2)	Academic support programmes (new) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student Engagement Officer - Cosy Club - Personal Tutorial Model - Library provision and resources 	Head of Curriculum Approved Practitioner / Student Engagement Officer	<p>ST 1 – Increased engagement and participation</p> <p>MT 1 – Improved academic performance and confidence.</p> <p>LT 1 – Increased graduation rates and student success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance data • Increased numbers on the Student Engagement Officer self-referral caseload • Academic performance metrics

		Cosy Club sessions; Personal Tutors; HE Library team; VLE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking of alumni success
IMQD1 (OBJ 2.1) Black students (OBJ 2.2)	Essential English Skills for Academic Study (new) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Future U Study Skills offer (existing) - Essential English (new) - GCSE English (new) - Functional Skills English (new) 	0.5 FTE Student Engagement Officer	ST 1 – Improved academic writing, comprehension and communication skills MT 1 – Improved retention and student success LT 1 – Improved employability and graduate skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased numbers on the Student Engagement Officer self-referral caseload Academic performance metrics Tracking of alumni success
IMQD1 (OBJ 2.1) Black students (OBJ 2.2)	Financial support packages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - APP Award - Cost of Living Award - Removing Barriers Award - UCEN HE Award 	Head of Student Support, Advice and Wellbeing Careers and Welfare Lead	ST 1 – Targeted students feel reduced financial stress and economic barriers to accessing HE ST 2 – Improved accessibility for targeted students who might otherwise be unable to afford tuition and related expenses. MT 1 – Enhanced academic performance and higher grades for targeted students as financial concerns are less likely to interfere with studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased applications to UCEN Manchester from targeted students Increased utilisation of campus resources and support services by targeted students

Cross intervention: This intervention strategy and following activities do not exist in isolation and relate to other objectives and activities listed within subsequent intervention strategies. The linked objectives include OBJ 3.1 / OBJ 3.2.

Evaluation			
Activity	Outcome	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Inclusive campus (new and existing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased retention and continuation 	Student Reviews - Type 2 Internal data sets (Type 2/3) Comparison data sets for WP indicators (Type 3)	Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure
Hybrid models of course delivery (new)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher attendance, increased retention, and continuation Enhanced academic performance 	Data on attainment, retention, achievement, progression, etc (Type 2/3) Comparison data (Type 3) Data on learning hours (Type 3)	Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure
Academic support programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased engagement and participation Enhanced academic performance 	Data on attainment, retention, achievement, progression, etc (Type 2/3) Comparison data (Type 3)	Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure
Essential English Skills for Academic Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved skills Improved retention and success Improved employability and graduate skills 	Internal data sets and assessment board outcomes (Type 2/3) Data on attainment, retention, achievement, progression, etc (Type 2/3) Comparison data (Type 3)	Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure
Financial support packages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced financial pressures. Improved accessibility Enhanced academic performance 	Internal data sets (Type 2/3) Data on attainment, retention, achievement, progression, etc (Type 2/3)	Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure

Intervention strategy 3: Mental Health

Approach

UCEN Manchester's overarching objective is to raise awareness of the UCEN Manchester's mental health and wellbeing service, by fostering a compassionate campus community by providing accessible resources and promoting mental wellness initiatives among students and staff. UCEN Manchester has a dedicated Wellbeing Officer, an inhouse Counselling service and to ensure support is in place 24/7, 365 days per year, since COVID, we have invested in PAM Assist as our student assistance provider.

In the academic year 2023-24, UCEN Manchester introduced Student Wellbeing Advocates who received training from Mental Health Foundation to provide peer support via U OK Workshops? The objectives for mental health peer mentor support are to establish a compassionate and empathetic network where trained peers provide non-judgmental listening, practical coping strategies, and emotional support to fellow students experiencing mental health challenges.

Through structured training, utilising Mental Health Foundation resources, UCEN Manchester aim to train 10 student Wellbeing Advocates in academic year 2024-25, increasing to 20 for academic year 2025-26. [U OK? | Mental Health Foundation](#). In addition, we are also encouraging our students to participate in the national research project, Nurture U, which aims to help the sector identify which interventions work best in support of student mental health and wellbeing. This is being led by University of Exeter.

Activities to support mental health and wellbeing

- Student Minds Mental Health Charter and Award - UCEN Manchester is committed to a whole institutional approach to mental health and wellbeing and are intending to join Student Minds, Mental Health Charter programme with a longer-term ambition to achieve the Award. [University Mental Health Charter - Student Minds Hub](#) This will be possible through being awards DAPs.
- WHO Wellbeing survey - Our objective is to leverage the insights gained from students completing the WHO wellbeing survey to signpost to evidence-based strategies that enhance mental health. By analysing survey data, we aim to identify key areas for intervention and develop tailored initiatives that prioritise student mental health.
- By providing staff and students with the opportunity to participate in Mental Health First Aid training, our intention is to empower participants with the knowledge and skills to recognise signs of mental health distress, provide initial support to individuals experiencing mental health challenges, and facilitate timely access to appropriate professional help on and off campus.
This activity aims to deliver 2 cohorts of training in academic year 24.25 to ensure 20% of UCEN Manchester community are confident to respond to mental health incidents on campus in support of both staff and students - [Become a Mental Health First Aider - MHFA England](#)
- Season check-ins - Through targeted check in campaigns, we aim to destigmatise seeking help for mental health concerns and encourage proactive engagement with available Future U Student support services.

Intervention strategy 3 (IS3): Mental Health	
Objectives and targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OBJ 4.1 – Raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing services to reach benchmark in NSS survey (+19) by 2028-29 • OBJ 4.2 – Raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing services for students under 21 within Creative Industries Faculty from 45% to 75% by 2028-29
Risk to equality of opportunity	<p>EORR Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk 7 - Insufficient personal support • Risk 8 - Mental Health <p>Further detail can be found in our Assessment of Performance</p> <p>Risk Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower continuation rates - Lower course attainment

Student Group/Objective	Activities	Input	Outcomes	Outcome indicators
<p>NSS (OBJ 3.1)</p> <p>Students under 21 (OBJ 3.2)</p>	<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing support and services including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student Minds Mental Health Charter and Award (new) 	<p>Director of Student Experience and Engagement</p> <p>Head of Student Advice, Support and Wellbeing</p>	<p>ST 1 - Increased utilisation of wellbeing offer from under-represented groups as more students are aware of and comfortable accessing Future U Student Support Services</p> <p>ST 2 – Targeted students are provided with a variety of safe spaces, community groups and networks which</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of enrolment onto programme • Number of staff participating in training • Decrease in the number of students reporting high levels of stress

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mental Health Foundation accredited Mental Health First Aid Training (existing) - Wellbeing Advocates (existing) - WHO Wellbeing survey (new) 	<p>Head of Student Advice, Support and Wellbeing</p> <p>Wellbeing Officer</p> <p>Tutor – Mental Health First Aid Facilitator</p> <p>Wellbeing Officer</p> <p>Student Voice Co-ordinator</p> <p>Costs - Resource Pack and Hoody</p> <p>Head of Student Support, Advice and Wellbeing</p> <p>Senior Web Developer</p> <p>Wellbeing Officer</p> <p>PAM Assist</p>	<p>allow them to feel part of the UCEN Manchester community.</p> <p>MT 1 – Improved mental health outcome for target students, including reduced rates of distress, enhanced coping skills, and better overall well-being among students and staff</p> <p>MT 2 – Remove the retention gap between students who declare mental health and those who do not</p> <p>MT 3 - Early intervention and increased access to support services lead to improved mental health outcomes, including reduced rates of distress, enhanced coping skills, and better overall well-being among students</p> <p>LT 1 - Improved mental health indicators, reductions in crisis incidents, and the</p>	<p>and distress in annual surveys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in self-reported well-being scores • Decrease in the number of students reporting high levels of stress and distress in annual surveys. • Improvements in self-reported well-being scores
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	- Seasonal check-ins	Counselling Team Data Protection Officer Future U Student Support Team	development of a compassionate campus culture in relation to mental wellness.	
NSS (OBJ 3.1) Students under 21 (OBJ 3.2)	Financial support packages - APP Award - Cost of Living Award - Removing Barriers Award - UCEN HE Award	Head of Student Support, Advice and Wellbeing Careers and Welfare Lead	ST 1 – Targeted students feel reduced financial stress and economic barriers to accessing HE ST 2 – Improved accessibility for targeted students who might otherwise be unable to afford tuition and related expenses. MT 1 – Enhanced academic performance and higher grades for targeted students as financial concerns are less likely to interfere with studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased applications to UCEN Manchester from targeted students • Increased utilisation of campus resources and support services by targeted students
Cross intervention: This intervention strategy and following activities do not exist in isolation and relate to other objectives and activities listed within subsequent intervention strategies. The linked objectives include OBJ 1.1 / OBJ 1.2 / OBJ 2.1 / OBJ 2.2				
Evaluation				

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Mental Health and Wellbeing services (new and existing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of service • Improved mental health outcomes • Reduced retention gap between students who declare a MH condition and those who don't 	<p>Internal data sets (Type 2/3)</p> <p>Caseload analysis (Type 2)</p> <p>Data on attainment, retention, achievement, progression, etc (Type 2/3)</p>	Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure
Financial support packages (existing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced financial pressures. • Improved accessibility • Enhanced academic performance 	<p>Internal data sets including secondary WP indicators for students who declare a MH condition (Type 2/3)</p> <p>Data on attainment, retention, achievement, progression, etc (Type 2/3)</p>	Internal only through our Academic Committee Structure

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

The Fees, Investments and Targets (FIT) report 2025-26 to 2028-29 provides details of planned activity against the 3 key areas of intervention, as shown below, representing approximately 17% of high fee income.

Table 5: Summary of investments

Intervention strategy	Examples of activity (see Intervention tables)	Planned investment over 4-year cycle
Intervention Strategy 1 (Access)	Confident Futures; Partnerships and Outreach; Saturday Club; Curriculum Offer; Financial Support.	£920,000
Intervention Strategy 2 (Success)	Inclusive Environment; Hybrid model of delivery; Essential English Skills; Academic Support; Financial Support.	£480,000
Intervention Strategy 3 (Mental Health)	Mental Health and wellbeing support services; Financial support.	£407,000

Summary of evidence base and rationale

Annex A provides the evidence base to inform gaps, with Annex B providing a rationale for chosen interventions.

UCEN Manchester have considered their own student numbers and performance metrics reports, nationally-recognised survey outcomes (i.e., NSS) along with national evidence of widening participation cohorts.

In doing so, UCEN Manchester have reviewed national evidence on the key characteristics of WP cohorts who aspirations to higher education is low and compared these findings with internal data sets to identify the most at need cohorts to support via our intervention strategies.

Evaluation

UCEN Manchester intends to use data sets from pre- and post-interventions, with post-intervention data collected at various short, medium, and long-term intervals, to establish the immediate and longitudinal impact of WP projects. These data sets will be broken down into comparison data to assess the impact on targeted groups and on students engaging in one or more WP projects, examining the effects of singular versus multiple interventions.

Recognising that external influences can affect the data and impact of WP projects, UCEN Manchester will compare internal data sets to national data where necessary. For collaborative projects, data sets from external stakeholders, including the local authority and Uni Connect, will be utilised to review the impact of individual activities. WP projects will be reviewed regularly, with UCEN Manchester planning to frequently use the evaluation self-assessment tool to ensure that the evaluation type aligns with the objectives of the intervention strategy.

Please see intervention tables for how each intervention will be evaluated. However, UCEN Manchester will be adopting the theory of change across all APP projects to create a visual representation of the programme's activities, inputs, outputs, and outcomes.

UCEN Manchester have chosen to use the ToC as the model allows you to: describe the need you are trying to address, the changes you want to make (outcomes); and how you plan to achieve these changes (activities).

Whole provider approach

UCEN Manchester is part the LTE group and The Manchester College, whose strategic aim is to harness the power of the group to be a recognised national leader in education and skills. The group structure enables each organisation to be focused on its own learners, students, customers, colleagues, and stakeholders, supported by the professionally shared services that operate across the group. It also underpins the scope to safely expand, adjust and develop in support of communities, policy, and economic needs. As a charity with clear social objectives, this structure also allows cost-effective sharing of service and operational delivery at quality standards, and the reinvesting of surpluses for students, to produce better achievements and outcomes. Across all Business units there are shared values:

- Integrity: We are honest, trustworthy, and open.
- One Team: We collaborate, respect each other, and contribute to team goals.
- Always improving: We are forward-thinking, we innovate and take ownership.
- Sustainable: We take a long-term view, environmentally, financially, and socially.
- Can do: We are positive, inclusive, flexible, and proactive.

Working alongside shared services such as IT, Health, Safety and Environment, Finance, People and Talent, Marketing and Communication, UCEN Manchester actively embeds these shared values throughout its staff and student body, which is managed as a single Higher Education provider with a common management structure, academic governance structure, distinct staffing, and distinct provision operating across two main campuses.

Student representation in the evaluation and review of this APP will be taken from the UCEN Manchester Students Union'. The Students' Union is made up of several paid Officer roles, including a full time President, part time Vice President and one part time Sports and Activities Officer. The Student Union is part of the student engagement and experience team, working alongside the Student Voice team and the Student Representative Model.

The combination of the diversity of the Students' Union, Student Voice, Student Representative Model and well-established policy and staff practice is sufficient to ensure that the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 will be met in the implementation of this plan.

UCEN Manchester is committed at all levels to widening access and participation. This commitment has clearly defined target groups and expected outcomes that are shaped by evidence and aligned with other strategies, including those relating to equality, diversity and inclusion; teaching and learning and business and community engagement. Students are part of and fully engage in the operations and academic governance of UCEN Manchester.

While the delivery of this plan will be distributed across many parts of UCEN Manchester, overall responsibility for managing the delivery, evaluation and review of this plan will rest with the management team of UCEN Manchester. Monitoring and evaluation will be a

responsibility shared between the Students Union and the Academic Governance structure, reporting to the Board of Governors.

Student consultation

UCEN Manchester, values student participation in decision-making, maintaining robust mechanisms for student voice to ensure representation and collaboration across all our structures and initiatives. This commitment is reflected in our Student Representative Model and subsequent focus group process, which includes membership from the entire student body. The ongoing development of the Students' Union, focusing on sustainability, not only strengthens the team but also ensures that the student voice remains at the core of all initiatives and decisions.

Students have been actively engaged with the design and creation of this Access and Participation Plan through the Students' Union, and Student Voice team, with the Students' Union President and Student Voice Coordinators leading on consultation meetings and online discussions. The Student Union President was also part of the APP staff task and finish group. Consequently, the Students' Union has provided a brief endorsement of their involvement, detailed in the Appendix: Students' Union Statement. Moreover, students hold significant positions within UCEN Manchester's Committee structure, ensuring representation across all formal committees.

Students were offered the opportunity to voice their perspectives, which profoundly influenced the formulation of the access and participation plan, and the Student Union President was part of the APP working group.

The impact of student consultation is further underscored by the collaborative development of objectives for each target and measure and the TEF silver award confirming that the additional student voice evidence supported judgements endorsing that UCEN Manchester has:

- A systematic approach to student voice, with 'clear and robust' plans for improving into the future evident.
- Examples of significant changes to student experience made based on student feedback, indicating very high-quality levels of responsiveness to student voice. Examples have been given that show the provider listens and acts on student feedback.
- Evidence that the Student Voice approach that is clear, robust, and impactful.

Evaluation of the plan

With a view to improving the impact of UCEN Manchester's widening participation offer, the student experience and engagement team has reviewed the evaluation of its activities while completing the evaluation self-assessment tool. Each existing and new intervention strategy will be created using theory of change methodologies to help clearly outline the desired outcomes for each strategy. Interventions will be designed based on internal and/or external data (type 2/3), as well as through academic research findings (type 1).

UCEN Manchester is creating an overarching widening participation theory of change relating to their mission and strategic aims. Departments will each have a theory of change that links to the Group level and project leads to create their own, per widening participation intervention. This will create a standardised approach which also allows for specific evaluation types required to measure the desired outcomes.

Evaluation types, both quantitative and qualitative, will depend on the activity and will include but are not limited to:

- Pre and post evaluation questionnaires (type 2)
- Teacher and parent feedback/evaluations (type 2)
- Data on attainment, retention, achievement, progression, etc (type 2/3)
- Distance travelled during individual projects including confidence, knowledge, and aspirational (type 2)
- Comparison data based on characteristics and short vs longitudinal WP activities (type 3)
- Internal data sets (type 2/3)
- External data sets when collaborating with stakeholders (type 2/3)

UCEN Manchester will create and embed an evaluation led widening participation offer with all activities, from one-off sessions to longitudinal projects to be evaluated in at least one way.

In addition to these evaluation methods, UCEN Manchester plans to subject its entire APP intervention to regular critical review. This will be achieved by consolidating various levels of evaluation and reports through the annual quality cycle, Teaching Learning and Enhancement Committee and presenting them to Academic Board and to the Board of Governors for scrutiny at least twice per academic year via the UCEN Manchester Divisional Board.

Strengthening Evaluation

UCEN Manchester is in the process of scheduling an annual evaluation cycle which will feed into senior level evidence-based decision making. Evaluation meetings will review data and impact, especially looking if the evaluation collects evidence to show the desired impact for that activity, to help develop each widening participation programme and impact.

By the end of 2024/25, UCEN Manchester will:

- Conduct a skills audits of widening participation staff and other key stakeholders to assess current evaluation knowledge and skills, identify gaps and determine ways to address them.

Over the life of the plan, UCEN Manchester will:

- Provide all staff involved with widening participation activities, design, and delivery, with additional evaluation training, including an evaluation skills audit, to increase knowledge and awareness of designing activities with evaluation outcomes in mind.
- Expand the distribution of APP evaluations designated to individuals and groups and actively seek their feedback on recommendations.
- Strengthen strategic oversight of the evaluation process.
- Increase and enhance APP staff engagement with external partners, relevant literature and working groups.

Publication of Impact

Publication of the results of evaluation activities will be as follows.

- All evaluation activities conducted throughout the year (such as questionnaire and survey results, feedback from staff and students, data reports, etc.) related to each interventions evaluation strategies will be presented to the APP working group and included in various tasks within the annual quality cycle. These reports will be submitted to the Academic Board and, through it's minutes, communicate to the Board of Governors.
- Reviews of interventions will be reported to the APP working group, Quality Leadership Team and Academic Board committee, and subsequently to the Governors as previously outlined.
- Annual reports will be collaboratively produced by the APP working group and Academic Board committee, assessing the impact of each intervention strategy and recommending any necessary changes to the intervention plan. These reports will be published internally through our Staff HUB.
- Insights from evaluation processes, especially those concerning the effectiveness and value for money of interventions, will be shared internally with stakeholders, and may also be published more broadly for academic audiences.

Provision of information to students

UCEN Manchester upholds a commitment to providing applicants with transparent, inclusive, and pertinent information. This encompasses details on fees, financial support, and any current and applicable Access Agreements. Such information is readily accessible on our website at: [Policies and Procedures | UCEN Manchester](#)

On the website, applicants can find comprehensive applicant and student information, including the Admissions Policy and Procedure, Tuition Fee Policy, Terms and Conditions, Student Protection Plan, Student Status Policy and Procedure, Support for Continuing Students Policy and Procedure, Cancellation Form, details on the Bursary and Financial Support Package. Furthermore, all information is available through the Future U Student Support Service and is readily available at all outreach and recruitment events, such as Applicant days, open events etc.

Applicants applying via UCAS are also directed to the aforementioned website and subsequent information through the UCAS portal. This ensures that students have clear access to essential information throughout their application process.

This again is signposted to students during the enrolment and induction process and information is included in the UCEN Manchester Student Handbook.

Information, including financial details and other relevant content, can also be made available in print format, in addition to being accessible online. This ensures that low-income families who lack access to IT, as well as students with disabilities, can obtain the information they need. The printed materials can be customised for accessibility, such as using large print, coloured paper, or braille.

Annex A: Further information and analysis relating to the identification and prioritisation of key risks to equality of opportunity

1. Increase the proportion of Black and Asian students accessing creative courses in the Creative Industries Faculty

Risk

Risk 1,2,3,5: There are lower proportions of Black and Asian students accessing creative courses in the Creative Industries Faculty suggesting insufficient prior knowledge and skills, limited access to good information and guidance and lower prior attainment, limiting course choices. Factors that could influence this (but are not limited to) could include a student's home circumstances and perceptions of stereotypical gender subjects and careers.

Analysis

The OfS Data Dashboard (accessed July 2024), looking at First Degree 18-year olds as a similar profile to Creative Industries Faculty, reports that White students 66% of the population; Asian students 17%; and Black students 8% (Figure A1.1).

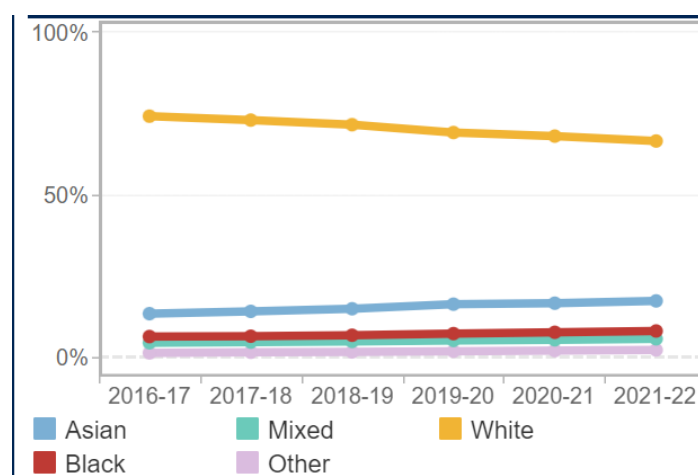


Figure A1.1. Full Time First Degree 18-Year Olds: Ethnicity (Source: OfS Data Dashboard)

The UCEN Manchester internal data of most recent cohorts (2021-2024), shows that the proportion of students by ethnicity has remained consistent over the last 3-year period, with 63% white, and lower proportions for Asian (8-9%) and Black (13-14%). See Table A1.1.

There is also consistency in proportions across the two HE Faculties. Over the last 3-years, around 80% of the students within the Creative and Media Industries (Table A1.2) Faculty are White, compared to 34% within the Higher Technical and Professional Industries (Table A1.3). Just a small proportion (6-9%) are Black or Asian within the Creative Faculty, compared to 45% within the Higher Technical Faculty.

Table A1.1 UCEN Manchester 3-year ethnicity profile

Ethnicity	Proportion of Students enrolled each academic year		
	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Ethnicity - Asian	9%	8%	8%
Ethnicity - Black	14%	14%	13%
Ethnicity – Other	16%	15%	16%
Ethnicity - White	62%	63%	63%

Table A1.2 Creative and Media Industries Faculty 3-year ethnicity profile

Ethnicity	Proportion of Students enrolled each academic year		
	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Ethnicity - Asian	4%	3%	3%
Ethnicity - Black	5%	4%	3%
Ethnicity – Other	13%	12%	12%
Ethnicity - White	79%	81%	81%

Table A1.3 Higher Technical and Professional Industries Faculty 3-year ethnicity profile

Ethnicity	Proportion of Students enrolled each academic year		
	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Ethnicity - Asian	16%	16%	16%
Ethnicity - Black	29%	29%	29%
Ethnicity – Other	21%	21%	20%
Ethnicity - White	34%	34%	34%

2. Increase the proportion of male students accessing higher education courses

Risk

Risk 1,2,3,5: There are lower proportions of male students accessing Higher Education courses at UCEN Manchester suggesting insufficient prior knowledge, and skills, limited access to good information and guidance as well as the necessity to work in full time employment and therefore, creating a barrier to full time study options.

Analysis

OfS data from all registered providers reports that female students made up the majority of full-time undergraduate and postgraduate entrants in the latest academic year of data, 2021-22 (55.1 and 55.8 per cent respectively; see Table A1.4). However, these are sector-wide figures, with differences across the Creative sector far higher, particularly in areas like the Performing Arts and Special Effects and Make-Up, which represent the largest volume of students by programme areas.

The UCEN Manchester internal data (Table A1.5) of most recent cohorts (2021-2024), shows female students consistently represent two-thirds of the student population. Whilst there are differences in the proportions of IMDQ1-2 females (41%) and males (25%) that access HE, this is not considered as a risk due to the well-represented proportions across both/. However, intervention to increase male student representation will include activities that target and aspire those from lower economic backgrounds.

Table A1.4: Sex of full-time entrants to higher education from 2018-2022

	Proportion of full-time undergraduate entrants				Proportion of full-time postgraduate entrants			
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Female	55.9%	55.7%	56.0%	55.1%	58.7%	57.6%	56.7%	55.8%
Male	44.0%	44.3%	43.9%	44.7%	41.2%	42.2%	43.1%	43.9%
Other	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%

Source: OfS, 'Size and shape of provision data dashboard'. Data from all OfS registered providers.

Table A1.5: Proportion of males and females at UCEN Manchester, split IMD Quintiles

Gender & Quintile	Proportion of males and females		
	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Female from IMD Quintiles 1 & 2	41%	43%	43%
Female from IMD Quintiles 3,4,5	21%	22%	22%
All Females	63%	65%	65%
Male from IMD Quintiles 1 & 2	25%	25%	25%
Male from IMD Quintiles 3,4, 5	12%	10%	10%
All Males	37%	35%	35%

3. To reduce the completion rate gap between IMDQ1 and IMDQ5 students

Risk

Risk 1,2,5: The completion rate gap widens between male students from IMDQ1 and IMDQ5 suggesting that a lack of personal and academic support mechanisms may exist and home difficulties impact upon on a student's ability to engage to the fullest extent with their academic studies. Likewise, students may have less time to devote to non-academic activities than other students. It is likely that increased levels of academic support and hybrid support models would reduce these gaps.

Analysis

The OfS Data Dashboard reports an 11% points difference with students' completion rates for Full Time Undergraduates, with 81% for IMDQ1 student in comparison to 92% for IMDQ5 students (Figure 1.2).

The UCEN Manchester internal data (Table A1.6) of most recent cohorts (2021-2023), shows a similar gap to the national picture, with completion rates of 83% for IMDQ1 students, compared to 93% for IMDQ5 students.

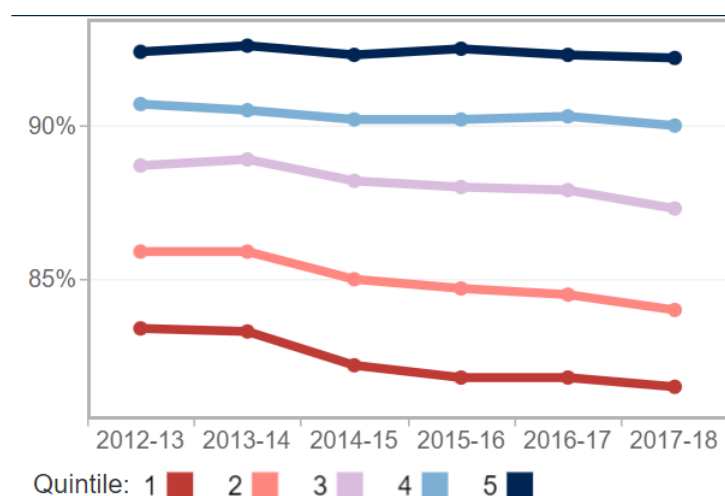


Figure A1.2: Completion rates by IMD 2019 (Source: OfS Data Dashboard)

Table A1.6: UCEN Manchester completion rates by IMD Quintiles 2021-23

Deprivation	2022/23		2021/22	
	Proportion of students	Completion Rate	Proportion of students	Completion Rate
IMD Quintile 1	43%	82.82%	44%	79.58%
IMD Quintile 2	22%	89.86%	21%	85.94%
IMD Quintile 3	14%	85.88%	14%	86.11%
IMD Quintile 4	12%	91.67%	11%	87.72%
IMD Quintile 5	9%	93.33%	10%	91.30%

4. To reduce the completion rate gap between black and white students

Risk

Risk 6,7,8,9,10: The completion gap widens between ‘Black’ and ‘White’ students, but it is likely that they could be mitigated by increased support to help students academically and personally through tailored and individual support packages.

Analysis

The OfS Data Dashboard reports a 8.5% points difference between completion rates Black and White students, with 80% for Black students in comparison to 88.5% for White students (Figure A1.3).

The UCEN Manchester internal data (Table A1.7) of most recent cohorts (2021-2023), shows a similar profile to the national picture. Overall, completion rates are 87%, with a 13% points gap between Black (78%) and White (91%) students in 2022-23.

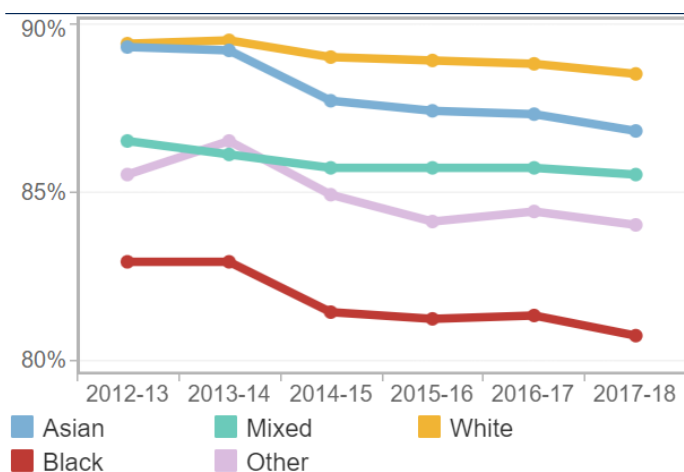


Figure A1.3: Completion rates by ethnicity (Source: OfS Data Dashboard)

Table A1.7: UCEN Manchester completion rates by ethnicity 2021-23

Academic Year	2022/23	2021/22
Ethnicity	Completion Rate	Completion Rate
Ethnicity - Black	78.26%	80.17%
Ethnicity - White	91.53%	86.49%
All ethnic groups	87.08%	83.56%

5. **To reach benchmark in the NSS survey for the question pertaining to awareness of mental health services**
6. **Raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing services for students under 21 within the Creative Industries Faculty**

Risk

Risk 7,8: The NSS survey outcomes on question pertaining to the Mental Health and Wellbeing is below the sector benchmark suggesting there is a limited awareness of mental health and wellbeing services for students under 21 within the Creative Industries Faculty, but it is likely that through stronger pre and post entry literature and information this will increase awareness and accessibility. Alongside, fostering a compassionate campus community.

Analysis

For students studying in England, the NSS 2023 reported that 75.9% of students responded positively to 'How well communicated was information about your university/college's mental wellbeing support services'. UCEN Manchester responses were 19% points below the sector average, scoring a 53% satisfaction rate. This was more significant when considering Under 21 students within the Creative Industries Faculty, where there was a 30% points difference (45%). This was specific to a couple of courses in The Arden, where the impact of the coronavirus remained and the impact of working long hours may have affected these cohorts. These cohorts also moved campuses during this period, which affected the use of spaces and the timeliness of signage.

Due to the changes in the questions and response options, the 2023 NSS results cannot be straightforwardly compared with those from earlier years and the mental health question was not included in previous years, therefore, UCEN Manchester does not have a comparable figure or analysis.

[National Student Survey data: provider-level dashboard - Office for Students](#)

Annex B: Further information that sets out the rationale, assumptions and evidence base for each intervention strategy that is included in the access and participation plan.

B1. Access Interventions and rationale

- Increase the proportion of Black and Asian students accessing creative courses in the Creative Industries Faculty
- Increase the proportion of male students accessing higher education courses

Intervention	Rationale
<p>Confident Futures for marginalised groups</p>	<p>Research has shown that when students are equipped with accurate information and support, their confidence in making educational decisions significantly increases. Universities UK 2021 highlights how clear and accessible information can significantly improve the understanding and confidence of student from low socio-economic backgrounds.</p> <p>This intervention intends to make key information about applying to HE more accessible for students who may be first generation or from the lowest socio-economic backgrounds. By offering sessions tailored to address specific areas of concern, such as ‘writing a personal statement’ or ‘how to apply for Student Finance England’ Confident Futures provides practical insight into the Higher Education landscape.</p> <p>The Confident Futures series is not just about providing information but also equipping and empowering applicants with the tools, mindset and space necessary to navigate and succeed in higher education, helping to foster a more inclusive and diverse academic community.</p> <p>UCEN Manchester believes that the Confident Future series will be effective because it directly addresses the specific needs and challenges faced by marginalised students. By providing targeted information and resources, we aim to remove the barriers that often prevent these students from considering higher education as an option.</p>
<p>Partnerships/outreach activity to increase access from target groups</p>	<p>There is evidence to suggest that application and participation in Higher Education is particularly low in some social and ethnic groups and that this may be attributed to poor understanding amongst potential students, parents, and social groups of the opportunities that Higher Education can offer. Roberts and Bolton 2023 suggest that a lack of parental knowledge about higher education can hinder students’ ability to navigate the application process and succeed in their studies. Families with no history of</p>

	<p>higher education may also struggle to provide the necessary support and guidance.</p> <p>The intention of this intervention is to provide an opportunity to engage with community groups and internal applicants to boost their knowledge, understanding and initial experiences of HE provision.</p> <p>Working in partnership with GM Higher, UCEN Manchester believes that offering tailored aspirational sessions, campus visits and summer schools will give students in these marginalised groups an opportunity to enrich their understanding and have a positive first experience.</p>
<p>National Saturday Club (could be included in above)</p>	<p>The addition of a National Saturday Club would aim to remove barriers and increase aspiration to higher education in the arts at grass roots level. The National Saturday Club is a programme that partners with educational institutions to deliver a ‘transformational, free education programme for 13-16 year olds’. They work with a large number of UK educational institutions, supporting recruitment, outreach, access and widening participation strategies: “The programme offers excellent opportunities for host institutions to reach out and engage young people in their local communities. One of our core aims is to widen access, particularly to young people from under-represented communities and disadvantaged backgrounds and those who would benefit most from a free learning opportunity.” (The National Saturday Club, n.d)</p> <p>The National Saturday Club prioritise young people based on certain backgrounds which include ethnic background and socio-economic status. Targeting these areas will therefore help UEN Manchester improve access in these areas at grass-roots level, improving aspiration to higher education in the long-term.</p>
<p>Expansion of curriculum offer</p>	<p>UCEN Manchester has a strategic aim to provide an accessible higher technical offer, that meets the local skills needs to employment. This will include areas like Construction, Engineering and Digital, where there is traditionally good representation from males. In doing so, the expansion of such an offer is expected to increase male participation rates – alongside efforts to ensure an accessible over through related interventions, such as developing hybrid models of delivery.</p>
<p>Financial Support packages</p>	<p>The HEPI and Advance HE 2023 Student Academic Experience Survey found that 76% of students felt that the cost-of-living crisis had affected their studies. 50% stated that their studies were</p>

impacted “a little” and over a quarter (26%) stated that their studies were affected “a lot”.

The survey also found that there has been a major increase in the number of students in paid employment, from 45% to 55%. It is fair to suggest that this is likely to have an impact on a student's academic experience and therefore requires intervention to mitigate the impact of this. UCEN Manchester believes that being able to offer financial support packages to our students can not only support them to physically engage in their studies but can reduce financial pressures and worries and improve mental wellbeing.

In 23.24, £130k was allocated to 182 students. The impact of this support has been an 11% reduction in students seriously contemplating leaving their course and 21% reduction in students entertaining thoughts of leaving after receiving the UCEN Manchester Bursary.

For AY 24.25, in line with the OfS Equality of Risk Register, Risk 10: Cost pressures - Office for Students, UCEN Manchester have identified the following groups who are most likely to need additional financial support from us during their studies: care experienced, claiming benefits in the last six month, have young children and still receiving benefits, first in family to attend university, disabled, young carer, identify as LGBT+, Muslim, estranged from parents, progressed from UCEN Manchester or The Manchester College Level 3 courses in previous academic year. The sensitives around eligibility are address as each applicant has a one-to-one assessment with a dedicated adviser from the Future U Student Support Team.

B2. Success Interventions and rationale

Intervention	Rationale
<p>Inclusive Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active consent • Support & Report Tool • University & SU campaigns • SU Diversity Awards • Staff EDI groups & networks • Staff training 	<p>The Support and Report Tool provides a confidential and accessible platform for students to report incidents and seek support. By offering a clear and effective mechanism for addressing concerns, we aim to demonstrate our commitment to student safety and inclusivity encouraging them to focus on their studies without fear of discrimination or harassment.</p> <p>We believe that collaborative campaigns between UCEN Manchester and the Students Union raise awareness on key issues such as mental health and diversity and inclusion. The ambition of these campaigns is to not only educate out student community but also promote inclusivity and create a supportive and welcome campus, thus enhancing the wider student experience and contributing to better academic outcomes.</p> <p>Providing comprehensive training for staff on EDI principles and practices will equip them with the knowledge, skills, and power to better support our diverse student population. Empowered staff are better prepared to address the needs of all students, creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.</p>
<p>Essential English Skills for Academic Study</p>	<p>As suggested by Universities UK in 2021, The Office for Students has funded multiple projects to address the educational disparities faced by Black and Asian students. These projects often include personalised academic support, peer mentoring and skills development workshops.</p> <p>In addition, reports by the Department for Education highlight the need for additional academic support for students from lower socio-economic background.</p> <p>This intervention aims to support Black and Asian students and students from IMDQ1 and 2 backgrounds in developing their academic abilities to enhance the quality of their written work. UCEN Manchester believes that by participating in this intervention activity, students will gain valuable tools and techniques to improve not only their academic writing but their comprehension and communication skills also. In advancing these skills, they will feel more confident and empowered within their overall performance.</p>

<p>Hybrid models of course delivery</p>	<p>The Advance HE/HEPI Student Academic Experience Survey 2021 found that 57% of students would prefer to learn ‘<i>mostly in-person</i>’ (Advance HE/HEPI, 2021). However, there is still appetite to keep some digital provision (Universities UK, 2024).</p> <p>The Student Futures Commission 2021 found that 66% of students want a blend of in-person and online teaching.</p> <p>By combining both in-person and online learning, a hybrid delivery model can significantly enhance student success by providing flexibility, personalised learning experiences and improved access to resources.</p> <p>At UCEN Manchester we believe that this intervention strategy will support our students to succeed by allowing them to navigate their studies around their personal lives and responsibilities which can often include childcare and full-time work. “Adopting digital aspects into the curriculum will allow students to work at their own pace through certain topics” (BESA, 2021), revisit complex topics or accelerate through content as needed. This approach enhances engagement and understanding, contributing to improved academic outcomes.</p> <p>Could possibly add some data in here from Football industry course – retention/achievement?</p>
<p>Academic support programmes</p>	<p>Students on Level 4 programmes have a timetabled professional and academic module designed to help them develop their academic writing skills, preparing them for further development in Levels 5 and 6. Additionally, all students have a scheduled weekly tutorial with a dedicated Personal Tutor for extra academic support. However, evidence suggests that some cohorts from certain courses would benefit from extra-curricular academic support programmes to improve their grades and reduce the need for re-assessment.</p> <p>In the academic year 23-24, 20% of our students from the School of Sport, Health and Wellbeing were from IMDQ1 and IMDQ2 backgrounds. 38% of our sport provision failed to achieve module success across their programme. Of these, 29% were given the opportunity to repeat the year and 53% were given summer reassessment.</p> <p>Observations through the SSM (Student Status Meetings) process indicate that key points within the academic year, particular ahead of submission deadlines, are critical for</p>

	<p>additional academic support. This support package would be available to all students for this reason, with a particular focus on those from lower socio-economic backgrounds that leave them unprepared for higher-level study or those referred through the SSM due to other risk factors.</p>
<p>Financial Support packages</p>	<p>The HEPI and Advance HE 2023 Student Academic Experience Survey found that 76% of students felt that the cost-of-living crisis had affected their studies. 50% stated that their studies were impacted “a little” and over a quarter (26%) stated that their studies were affected “a lot”.</p> <p>The survey also found that there has been a major increase in the number of students in paid employment, from 45% to 55%. It is fair to suggest that this is likely to have an impact on a student's academic experience and therefore requires intervention to mitigate the impact of this. UCEN Manchester believes that being able to offer financial support packages to our students can not only support them to physically engage in their studies but can reduce financial pressures and worries and improve mental wellbeing.</p> <p>In 23.24, £130k was allocated to 182 students. The impact of this support has been an 11% reduction in students seriously contemplating leaving their course and 21% reduction in students entertaining thoughts of leaving after receiving the UCEN Manchester Bursary.</p> <p>For AY 24.25, in line with the OfS Equality of Risk Register, <u>Risk 10: Cost pressures - Office for Students</u>, UCEN Manchester have identified the following groups who are most likely to need additional financial support from us during their studies: care experienced, claiming benefits in the last six month, have young children and still receiving benefits, first in family to attend university, disabled, young carer, identify as LGBT+, Muslim, estranged from parents, progressed from UCEN Manchester or The Manchester College Level 3 courses in previous academic year. The sensitives around eligibility are address as each applicant has a one-to-one assessment with a dedicated adviser from the Future U Student Support Team.</p>

B3. Mental Health Interventions and rationale

Intervention	Rationale
<p>The Student Minds University Mental Health Charter Framework is the foundation for UCEN Manchester’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and our interventions are framed around the four domains Learn, Support, Work, Live.</p> <p>LEARN: Working alongside curriculum continue to provide proactive termly check-ins to promote the Future U’s mental health and wellbeing offer.</p> <p>SUPPORT: Tailoring support based on student responses to WHO Wellbeing Survey scores</p> <p>WORK: Increasing the number of staff Mental Health First Aiders to 30 by end AY 24.25</p> <p>LIVE: Wellbeing Advocate intervention is to lead regular Wellbeing Walks commencing Freshers Week AY 24.25</p>	<p>Introduced during COVID, the Future U Student Support Team have continued to offer proactive check ins to students each term. This was recognised as best practice by WhatUni UCEN Manchester wins Whatuni Awards UCEN Manchester and is a similar intervention delivered by University of Greenwich.</p> <p>The rationale for increasing the number of staff accessing Mental Health First Aid Training is because there is a strong evidence base to indicate participants showed greater confidence in providing help to others, greater likelihood of advising people to seek professional help, improved concordance with health professionals about treatments, and decreased stigmatising attitudes. This will ensure support for students is seen beyond the remit of our support teams and can assure our commitment to a whole institutional approach to mental health and wellbeing Mental-Health-First-Aid-MHFA-training-the-top-line-evidence.pdf (mhfaengland.org)</p> <p>Whilst the impact of physical activity on student mental health does not yet have a strong evidence base Physical Activity - TASQ, our intention is to pair students with Wellbeing Advocates to facilitate regular walks. Based on research from U OK? Mental Health Foundation, our intention is to further explore the benefits of peer mentoring interventions on bringing students with shared experiences together to help each other emotionally.</p>
<p>Financial support packages</p>	<p>The HEPI and Advance HE 2023 Student Academic Experience Survey found that 76% of students felt that the cost-of-living crisis had affected their studies. 50% stated that their studies were impacted “a little” and over a quarter (26%) stated that their studies were affected “a lot”.</p> <p>The survey also found that there has been a major increase in the number of students in paid employment, from 45% to 55%. It is fair to suggest that this is likely to have an impact on a student's academic experience and therefore requires intervention to mitigate the impact of this. UCEN Manchester believes that being</p>

	<p>able to offer financial support packages to our students can not only support them to physically engage in their studies but can reduce financial pressures and worries and improve mental wellbeing.</p> <p>In 23.24, £130k was allocated to 182 students. The impact of this support has been an 11% reduction in students seriously contemplating leaving their course and 21% reduction in students entertaining thoughts of leaving after receiving the UCEN Manchester Bursary.</p> <p>For AY 24.25, in line with the OfS Equality of Risk Register, <u>Risk 10: Cost pressures - Office for Students</u>, UCEN Manchester have identified the following groups who are most likely to need additional financial support from us during their studies: care experienced, claiming benefits in the last six month, have young children and still receiving benefits, first in family to attend university, disabled, young carer, identify as LGBT+, Muslim, estranged from parents, progressed from UCEN Manchester or The Manchester College Level 3 courses in previous academic year. The sensitives around eligibility are address as each applicant has a one-to-one assessment with a dedicated adviser from the Future U Student Support Team.</p>
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Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: LTE Group

Provider UKPRN: 10023139

Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

We will not raise fees annually for new entrants

Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	Performing Arts; Film	N/A	9250
First degree	Sport	N/A	8900
Foundation degree	Health and Social Sciences, Sport, Computing, Counselling, Criminology	N/A	8000
Foundation degree	Special Effects, MakeUp Artistry	N/A	8900
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	8000
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2025-26

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

Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	4000
Foundation degree		N/A	4000
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	4000
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2025-26

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

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: LTE Group

Provider UKPRN: 10023139

Investment summary

A provider is expected to submit information about its forecasted investment to achieve the objectives of its access and participation plan in respect of the following areas: access, financial support and research and evaluation. Note that this does not necessarily represent the total amount spent by a provider in these areas. Table 6b provides a summary of the forecasted investment, across the four academic years covered by the plan, and Table 6d gives a more detailed breakdown.

Notes about the data:

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.

Yellow shading indicates data that was calculated rather than input directly by the provider.

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

"Total access investment funded from HFI" refers to income from charging fees above the basic fee limit.

"Total access investment from other funding (as specified)" refers to other funding, including OFS funding (but excluding Uni Connect), other public funding and funding from other sources such as philanthropic giving and private sector sources and/or partners.

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£195,000	£195,000	£195,000	£195,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£238,000	£254,000	£255,000	£260,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£195,000	£195,000	£195,000	£195,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (£)	£195,000	£195,000	£195,000	£195,000
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment (as % of HFI)</i>	<i>7.9%</i>	<i>7.4%</i>	<i>7.2%</i>	<i>7.2%</i>
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment funded from HFI (£)</i>	<i>£195,000</i>	<i>£195,000</i>	<i>£195,000</i>	<i>£195,000</i>
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)</i>	<i>£0</i>	<i>£0</i>	<i>£0</i>	<i>£0</i>
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£190,000	£200,000	£200,000	£200,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£48,000	£54,000	£55,000	£60,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (£)	£238,000	£254,000	£255,000	£260,000
Financial support investment	<i>Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)</i>	<i>9.6%</i>	<i>9.6%</i>	<i>9.5%</i>	<i>9.6%</i>
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
Research and evaluation investment	<i>Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)</i>	<i>0.2%</i>	<i>0.2%</i>	<i>0.2%</i>	<i>0.2%</i>

