Access and Participation Plan
2025-26 to 2028-29

Queen Mary University of London
Access and participation plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

Introduction and strategic aim

Queen Mary University of London is a Russell Group university with a difference. We combine excellence in research with an unparalleled commitment to social justice and social mobility, and a very close relationship with our local communities that led us to be the first university to receive the Platinum award for Public Engagement. Our vision is to open the doors of opportunity and be the most inclusive University of our kind. We were very proud to be ranked number one for social mobility in the country in 2021 in a report by the Department for Education, Institute of Fiscal Studies, and The Sutton Trust (1).

In 2023-24, Queen Mary's undergraduate home student population comprised 14,075 students. Of the 3,498 undergraduate home students joining us in September 2023, 75% were from Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic backgrounds and 27% were local to east London. 93% of our undergraduate cohort are from state schools and 22% were previously eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). As described in this document we continue to strive to recruit students to the University from diverse backgrounds nationally and internationally, including from our local communities as described in our Civic University Agreement. Tower Hamlets, where Queen Mary is situated, has a diverse population and is an area of significant deprivation. 69% of Tower Hamlets residents belong to a minority ethnic group (2) and 60% of its population live within the 30% most deprived areas of England (IMD). 27.3% of children living in Tower Hamlets are part of relative low income families, and 21.4% are in absolute low income families - the highest rate in London (2).

Queen Mary's Civic University Agreement (3) aims to bring together activity to ensure the work of the University meets the needs of our neighbours and partners. Our commitment to inclusivity across the lifecycle is evidenced through our diverse pathways into higher education. In collaboration with Newham College, we opened the London City Institute of Technology in 2022, to deliver new pathways into high-quality employment (4). In 2015, Queen Mary became one of the first higher education institutions to deliver degree apprenticeships (5), and the first Russell Group university, offering routes from Level 4 to 7, inclusive of opportunities for school leavers.

We are proud of our track record in recruiting and supporting students from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds and note the external recognition we continue to receive in this area. The diversity of our student body is truly sector-leading for a research-intensive university like ours and being the top ranked university for social mobility is a testament to the outcomes our students achieve upon graduation. Yet we are not complacent and understand the challenges across the sector as well as our local context. We have analysed the contextual evidence available and identified targets in this plan which addresses gaps across access, success and progression.

Approach to widening access

Queen Mary's approach to widening access is underpinned by a strong evidence base and has been developed in collaboration with our student body. Through the sponsorship of two Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs), The University Schools Trust and Drapers' Multi-Academy Trust, we support students from primary school onwards, by delivering a progressive outreach curriculum designed in collaboration with prospective students and their key influencers. Through partnership-working and strategic involvement, including Board-level trustee membership, staff governors, teacher and adviser CPD, and a collaborative approach to programme design, we aim to support attainment-raising across the trusts. Ongoing work

with an additional 90 target schools allows for delivery of the University's Outreach Progression Curriculum, designed to support learners to build on their knowledge, skills, and social capital, best preparing them to make informed decisions. The Outreach Progression Curriculum supports learners to develop their knowledge, skills and social capital; covering traditional and alternative routes into higher education.

The University's flagship access programme, Access to Queen Mary, was developed with partner schools to ensure we maintain our success in recruiting students from groups currently under-represented at Russell Group universities, and from areas where there is low progression to university. The programme combines pastoral, academic, study skills and transition support. Once at the University, participants are supported to engage with employment opportunities through the Student Ambassador Scheme and encouraged to participate in a suite of CPD opportunities. The programme is core to the University's strategy to be the most inclusive university of our kind.

An important component of our widening participation approach is our contextual admissions policy, restructured for 2025 entry. The policy aims to mitigate both educational disadvantage and individual circumstances, ensuring that anyone who is able to flourish at Queen Mary can join us, irrespective of background. The tiered approach to contextual admissions is evidence-based and ambitious, informed by sector research and our own internal data (6).

Our collaborative approach is evidenced through our partnership commitments. Via Realising Opportunities (7) we jointly support over 1,500 participants per year to access the information, guidance and skills required to succeed at a research intensive university. Through a shared commitment to change the dial on fair access, we aim to reduce the national gap in entry rates at higher-tariff providers between the most and least under-represented groups. The programme is underpinned by robust evaluation, undertaken by independent evaluators, ensuring a regular review against targets.

In partnership with Advancing Access (8), a national collaboration of 24 universities, we support schools and colleges with CPD for teachers and advisers, with the aim of aiding progression to selective universities. Queen Mary is a member of the Advancing Access steering group, helping to inform the future direction of the partnership. In collaboration with AccessHE, part of London Higher UniConnect, we have led the development of a pan-London evaluation resource (9). Launched in November 2023, the Evaluation Projects Database aims to bring together good practice from across London and the South East to support practitioners. It has been very well received so far.

Approach to success and progression

At Queen Mary, our vision is to open the doors of opportunity to all students, providing academic and pastoral support tailored to their needs. We further this through specific support for identified communities using a data-driven methodology. At the core of our educational approach is the Active Curriculum for Excellence, comprising five interrelated components designed to offer a meaningful educational journey for our diverse student community. These interrelated components are underpinned with individualised support, ongoing student feedback, and employability skills development (with the latter recorded in their Higher Education Achievement Record).

The transition of students under-represented in higher education, from school to university is crucial to ensuring their future success and engagement in a HE curriculum. Students who are in receipt of a contextual offer will benefit from comprehensive support provided by our wellbeing services and associated transition activity. This holistic approach ensures that their transition into higher education is not only well supported but also guided with care and attention. From mental health resources to

academic guidance, we are committed to fostering a nurturing environment where students can thrive academically and personally.

Our transition scheme contains activities that include a co-curricular academic and related skills programme to support students throughout the first year and the rest of their time at university. The programme includes a coherent offering from the Library Learning Support and Engagement team, building on links with teams across the University. Interventions will work to destigmatise help-seeking behaviour, which is a widespread issue, particularly amongst Black students and those who have a history of academic success, preventing them from seeking out support opportunities that are available (10). For second year students, the scheme will allow them to feel more confident in their abilities, be able to recognise more opportunities both academically and with employability, and gain experiences helpful to their future beyond university. These elements are pivotal for ensuring students settle and succeed throughout their degree.

Additionally, our commitment to the Advance HE Race Equality Charter (REC) and our aspiration to be recognised with a Bronze Award will enhance the representation, progression, and success of individuals from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. To achieve this award, we have identified four priority opportunities for Race Equality which include: representation of BAME individuals at senior level, taking appropriate action on issues of race, improving the Black student experience, and investing in and developing BAME Postgraduate Research Students.

Through a range of wellbeing support initiatives and interventions, we facilitate the success of all students in overcoming obstacles that could otherwise hinder their continuation and completion of a degree. Our collaborations with partners such as Togetherall and the Student Assistance Programme play a crucial role in delivering invaluable support for our students' wellbeing, around the clock, in particular to our students with declared disabilities, Black students and those previously eligible for FSM; where mental health support is pivotal to their success. Recognising that mental health is intricately linked to academic performance and overall well-being, we provide comprehensive support to ensure that students have the resources they need to thrive both academically and personally.

For over a decade we have used data to identify cohorts of students at higher risk of unemployment or under-employment after graduation. Through targeted interventions, we have tailored support to aid these students' progression. Our current initiatives continue that approach, providing bespoke and targeted support to our Bangladeshi students and those previously eligible for FSM – two groups where data indicates employment outcomes are less favourable than our broader cohort. We offer targeted interventions such as coaching, alumni mentoring and enterprise support.

In addition, we are initiating a cross-institutional project aimed at consistently integrating employability and skills articulation into the undergraduate curriculum, ensuring that all students, regardless of capacity to take on extra-curricular activities, receive the opportunity to apply their academic learning to a real-world context and build their transferable skills and professional networks before they graduate. Embedding Employability in the Curriculum stands as one of three strands in the University's Education and Student Experience Enabling Plan, illustrating Queen Mary's commitment to supporting our students' progression. Lastly, our Careers service will shortly be moving to a peer-to-peer support model. Underpinned by research, this structure of providing front-line employability support will be more accessible to less confident students whilst offering work experience and skills development to our students taking on the peer support roles.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Our analysis considers data available from the Office for Students (OfS) Access and Participation data dashboard, internal datasets, and the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR). We have considered all risk groups within our analysis, where we have sufficient data to draw meaningful conclusions. Further, we have disaggregated the data with specific regard to intersectionality between ethnicity and disability and other student demographics. A full analysis of our assessment of performance can be found in annex A.

The analysis below relates specifically to our intake of full-time, first-degree students, the majority of our undergraduate cohort. Due to the small numbers of part-time and apprenticeship students, we are unable to draw conclusions of statistical significance. We will continue to monitor the risks of equality of opportunity for these students, in addition to new or emerging risk groups identified in the EORR through our APP monitoring group.

Access

Risk one: The proportion of students with a declared disability at Queen Mary is below the sector and is not increasing year-on-year in the same trajectory as the sector.

Whilst there is a sector-wide gap in participation and evidence to suggest that despite being qualified, disabled students may not feel able to apply to certain higher education providers **(EORR Risk 3)**, students may also not have equal opportunity to receive the information and guidance needed to make informed choices about higher education **(EORR Risk 2)** (11). We will address these risks through the targets and subsequent intervention strategies as part of this plan (**Target: PTA_1).**

Risk two: The proportion of students entering Queen Mary who are Care Leavers is very low. Nationally, research has indicated that the overall KS4 GCSE attainment is broadly half that of the overall population and is further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic **(EORR Risk 1)** (12). Further, students may lack appropriate information and guidance relevant to their circumstances **(EORR Risk 2)**. We will address these risks through the targets and subsequent intervention strategies as part of this plan **(Target: PTA_2).**

Risk three: The percentage of students in TUNDRA quintile 1 has declined year-on-year and the proportion of students from quintiles 4 and 5 has increased over this period. Queen Mary has a considerably lower proportion of students in quintiles 1, 2 and 3, and a considerably higher proportion of students in quintile 5, than the sector.

TUNDRA employs Middle-layer Super Output Areas in its methodology. Subsequently, it does not capture the intricate social and economic dynamics, particularly in regions such as East London, where a mix of affluent areas coexist with deprived communities. Recognising the limitations of measures such as POLAR and TUNDRA particularly in London, we refrain from setting targets based solely on these metrics. Instead, we will prioritise the use of ACORN as a more reliable metric and will continue to monitor access of the different socio-economic groups, including FSM students.

Given the University's central location in London and the significant proportion (68%) of our 2021/22 Home undergraduate population from Greater London, we have opted not to establish an objective aligned with this measure. Instead, we will adopt a collaborative approach, working through Realising Opportunities, leveraging its national reach to support learners beyond London, including within

TUNDRA quintiles 1 and 2. Working alongside partner universities, we will utilise an appropriate basket-measure of identifiers to work with students most in need of support, through a shared target.

Risk four: The University has a very low proportion of mature students compared to the sector. The University's portfolio of predominantly full-time undergraduate courses is likely to play a factor in our under-recruitment of mature students, this is further evidenced in **EORR Risk 5**, with course structure and teaching hours that are not specifically targeted to meet the needs of mature entrants.

Queen Mary is positioned in east London, an area in which there are specialist universities focusing on supporting mature learners through specific course portfolios. Given the proximity of this expertise and targeted offer, it does not make sense for Queen Mary to attempt to replicate it. We have therefore decided not to include a target for this group of learners. We will continue to review this position given the emergence of the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE).

Risk five: The University has a low proportion of students in ABCS quintile 1 compared to the sector.

The ABCS measure is partly influenced by TUNDRA, which for the reasons outlined within Risk three, lacks specificity in context of the majority of our student body. We recognise the importance of understanding the nuanced impact of a range of characteristics and will continue to prioritise students meeting multiple criteria that indicate they could have more challenge accessing university, through our own access provision and the University's collaborative work with Realising Opportunities. (**Target: PTA_4).**

Risk six: There is a small decrease in the number of students eligible for FSM in the most recent cohort, although Queen Mary remains well ahead of the sector in attracting these students. The national attainment gap for FSM students in secondary schools is well documented, identifying both an access and attainment risk **(EORR Risks 1 & 2).** Further, when reviewing ethnicity alongside eligibility for FSM, it is notable that the proportion of FSM recipients from White backgrounds at Queen Mary is 12.1%, compared to 25.2% of the overall population. This highlights a risk that will be addressed through the plan **(Target: PTA_3)**.

Success

Risk seven: The proportion of students continuing after their first year at Queen Mary with a declared disability is below the sector **(EORR Risk 6).** The proportion had been increasing year on year but saw a decrease after 2019/20, which is a likely impact of the COVID-19 pandemic **(EORR Risk 9).** This decrease was also seen across the sector. In particular, the data shows that students with a social or communication impairment or a mental health condition **(EORR Risks 7 and 8)** highlight the biggest gaps. This is an area that we will address through the targets and subsequent intervention strategies as part of this plan **(Target: PTS_1).**

Risk eight: There has been a notable decline in the continuation of Black students at Queen Mary after their first year, reaching its lowest point since 2015-16 **(EORR Risk 6 & 7)**. The COVID-19 pandemic **(EORR Risk 9)** may be a likely cause for this sudden decline, and this can also be observed across the sector. Black students were disproportionately affected by the fallout of the coronavirus outbreak and have also suffered increased levels of anxiety **(EORR Risk 8)** (13)**.** This is an area of concern that we will explore further and have addressed through the targets and subsequent intervention strategies as part of this plan **(Target: PTS_2).**

Risk nine: Since 2014-15, there has been a general decrease in completion rates among students previously eligible for FSM **(EORR Risk 6, 7 & 10**), although our data shows we outperform the sector average on this measure, we aim to address the trend through the targets and subsequent intervention strategies as part of this plan **(Target: PTS_3).**

Progression

Risk ten: Overall, the University has progression into employment or further study that exceeds the sector across all IMD quintiles. However, we have observed a small year-on-year decline in the percentage of students from IMD quintiles 1 to 3. At this stage we have chosen not to submit a target in this area but if the risk significantly increases, we will seek a variation to our plan.

Risk eleven: Asian students have the highest completion rates across the University; however, they have the lowest progression rates into employment or further study. This trend can also be observed nationally **(EORR Risk 12).**

Using our internal data, we understand that this risk is more pronounced for Bangladeshi students, within specific academic disciplines. While the overall progression rates into employment or further study are consistent with our broader Asian student population, the progression into Highly Skilled employment is lower. We will address this risk through the targets and subsequent intervention strategies as part of this plan **(Target: PTP_1).**

Risk twelve: Since 2018/19, students with a declared disability have had better progression rates than those without a disability, and when compared to the sector. Our analysis shows in the last academic year, our progression rate for this group dropped, in contrast to the sector which saw improved progression rates. On account that disabled students at Queen Mary still have more favourable outcomes than non-disabled students, and our overall rates remain above the sector, we will not set a target for this risk.

Risk thirteen: The University consistently outperforms the sector in progression rates across all ABCS quintiles. Since 2018/19, we have observed a positive trend of increasing progression rates for quintiles 1 and 2, however, we acknowledge that the gap between quintiles 1 and 5 has widened.

Recognising the limitations of using this measure both within London (given the influence of TUNDRA) and to specifically target individual students, we believe that our interventions to address two significant progression gaps (Bangladeshi students and students previously eligible for FSM), identified by this measure as having lower progression outcomes, will contribute to closing the ABCS gap, subsequently, we have not set a specific target for this measure.

Risk fourteen: The gap in progression rates for students previously eligible for FSM is narrower than the sector; however, there has been a decline in the progression of students previously eligible for FSM since 2017/18. Across the sector, this gap has narrowed slightly during this period, but it remains wider than the University's, and progression rates in the sector are lower **(EORR Risk 12).**

Although our progression rates are better than the sector, the gap is something that we are keen to challenge, therefore, we have decided to focus on this as one of our institutional targets. We will address this through the targets and subsequent intervention strategies as part of this plan **(Target: PTP_2).**

In instances where there are fluctuations in data without a clear pattern, we will continue to monitor and review trends and make changes to internal targets and intervention strategies where appropriate.

Objectives

Access

Objective one: To mitigate risk one, Queen Mary will work to reduce the gap in participation for students with a reported disability. We aim to increase the percentage of students entering the University who have a reported disability by 0.5% each year, from 10.9% in 2021-22 to 12.9% in 2028-29. To do this, Queen Mary will embed a series of individual and collaborative interventions that specifically target the barriers faced by disabled students. Queen Mary commits to undertaking additional research to fully understand the drivers causing a gap in participation, with a view to implementing further intervention strategies that address identified issues at the source.

Objective two: To mitigate risk two, Queen Mary will work to reduce the gap in participation for students who are care leavers. Queen Mary aims to increase the proportion of care leaver students entering the University by 0.1% each year, from 0.71% in 2021-22 to 1.11% in 2028-29. To do this, we commit to achieving the standards set out in the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) Quality Mark (14), alongside committing to interventions aimed at reducing the barriers to access for students who are care experienced. We expect the scope of this work to also support access for a greater number of students who fall under the broader care experienced and estranged (CEES) student definition.

Objective three: In consideration of the sector-level risk to attainment, alongside the declining number of students eligible for FSM entering Queen Mary between 2020-21 and 2021-22, the University will work to improve the outcomes of students eligible for FSM by supporting attainment raising at Key Stage four. In recognition that developing metacognition in learners has strong evidence in improving attainment, we will work to improve the confidence and self-efficacy of these students within Queen Mary's sponsor schools, by increasing student confidence by 5% for each cohort annually, assessed against self-reported pre and post questionnaires. We will also monitor the longitudinal impact of this objective, as a mechanism for realising additional benefit as part of objective seven.

Objective four: In reviewing risks three and five, we will work collaboratively alongside thirteen other research-intensive universities through the Realising Opportunities partnership to contribute to national improvements in closing the gap in entry rates at high tariff providers between the most and least under-represented groups. Together, we will increase the proportion of Realising Opportunities students who are tracked into a research intensive university (RIU) within two years of becoming 'HE ready'. The partnership works to support students from TUNDRA quintiles 1 and 2, alongside supporting broader geographic mobility of students who meet a myriad of under-representation criteria. In turn, this will positively benefit students in ABCS quintiles 1 and 2.

Success

Objective five: To address risk seven, Queen Mary plans to close the gap in the proportion of students with declared disabilities continuing into year two of study. Specifically, we aim to increase the continuation rate of students with a declared disability by 0.25% each year from 91.4% in 2021-22 to 92.4% in 2028-29. To achieve this objective, we will implement a range of individual and collaborative interventions that specifically target the challenges faced by disabled students, in particular, focusing on students with social or communication impairment or a mental health condition.

Objective six: To address risk eight, we will narrow the disparity in the proportion of Black students continuing into year two of study. We aim to increase the continuation rate of Black students by 0.25%

each year from 90.2% in 2021-22 to 91.20% in 2028-29. To achieve this objective, we will implement a range of individual and collaborative interventions that specifically target the challenges faced by Black students.

Objective seven: To address risk nine, Queen Mary plans to reduce the gap in completion between students previously eligible for FSM and those not eligible. Queen Mary aims to increase the completion rate of students previously eligible for FSM by 0.25% each year from 92.1% in 2017-18 to 93.1% in 2028-29. To achieve this objective, Queen Mary will implement a range of individual and collaborative interventions that specifically target the challenges faced by those previously eligible for FSM.

Progression

Objective eight: To address risks ten and eleven, Queen Mary is committed to narrowing the progression gap into highly skilled employment and further study for Bangladeshi students and students previously eligible for FSM. Our objective is to reduce the progression gap between Bangladeshi and White students from 6% in 2020-21 to 4% by 2028-29. Similarly, we aim to decrease the gap between students previously eligible for FSM and the overall population from 5% in 2020-21 to 3% by 2028-29, achieving an annual reduction of 0.5% starting from 2025-26, following the introduction of new activities in 2024-25, as part of the subsequent intervention strategy.

Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Queen Mary prides itself on our diverse student body and our dedication to supporting everyone's journey to future success. Central to this commitment is our comprehensive range of support services tailored to meet the needs of our student body. We also recognise that certain student demographics may face additional challenges requiring extra support. In alignment with the objectives of this plan, we have developed a targeted set of intervention strategies outlined below, which include both new activities and enhancements to existing ones to meet our objectives. Our approach is underpinned by Queen Mary's five core values, with inclusivity at the centre, evidenced in many cases through the student-led design and consultation process.

By combining these targeted activities with our broader range of services, we believe we can effectively mitigate risks and address barriers to success. This holistic approach underscores our dedication to fostering an inclusive environment where every student can succeed.

Our intervention strategies are as follows:

1. Improved access for disabled students
2. Improved access for care leavers
3. Improved attainment for Key Stage 4 students eligible for FSM, attending our sponsored academies
4. Improved access to Research Intensive Universities (Realising Opportunities.
5. Improved continuation rates at Queen Mary for students with a declared disability
6. Improved continuation rates for Black students
7. Improved completion rates for students previously eligible for FSM
8. Improved progression rates into highly skilled employment or further study for Bangladeshi students or those previously eligible for FSM.

Intervention strategy 1: Improved access for disabled students

Objectives and targets

(PTA_1) To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from under-represented backgrounds (students with a reported disability).

Risks to equality of opportunity

Risk 2 - Information and guidance, Risk 3 - Perception of higher education.

Overarching Theory of change

Through implementing a series of staff training and CPD, alongside committing to additional research to fully understand the barriers faced by disabled students, we expect to best support disabled students in applying to, and accessing, Queen Mary.

Activity and Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
Theory of Change: By conducting further research and staff training we aim to better understand the barriers faced by disabled students, with a view to embedding additional activities that will support disabled students to access higher education at Queen Mary.			
Further research Commission research to fully understand the barriers facing disabled students in accessing and continuing though higher education at Queen Mary, through both our Consult student employability scheme and independent research. Through this research, the University will engage with current students, subject matter experts, and staff and students from schools and colleges with the aim of informing future interventions to best meet the needs of disabled learners.	Staffing: £1057.16 total.	• Improved understanding of the barriers to disabled students accessing higher education at Queen Mary, leading to an improved access offer for disabled students.	IS5

(New activity)			
Staff training and CPD Embed a staff training series for outreach practitioners, admissions staff, marketing teams, student support services and academic staff. (New activity)	Staffing: £4,240 per annum.	• Improved knowledge and awareness of disabilities and disability support for frontline staff engaging with students pre-entry to ensure prospective applicants with disabilities are equipped to make informed decisions about their future and aware of the services available at Queen Mary.	IS5
Theory of Change: Through the prioritisation of disabled learners for the travel bursary and access schemes, we aim to support disabled learners to access the information and guidance needed to apply to higher education at Queen Mary.			
Targeted travel bursary Targeted travel bursary for disabled students in Year 11 – 13 to access on campus events to help them make informed decisions. The scheme includes, but is not limited to, Open Days and Offer Holder Days. (Amended activity)	Staffing: £1,781.80 per annum. Delivery costs: £5,000 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will get access to support that will help them: • Investigate course and placement options, and social and leisure opportunities in Higher Education.	IS2
Prioritised entrance to access schemes Prioritised entry to Queen Mary's access schemes for supported entry to the University. To include Access to Queen Mary and Queen Mary Futures. (Amended activity)	Staffing: £7,139 per annum. Delivery costs: £20,000 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Explore social and leisure, and extra-curricular opportunities in Higher Education and Queen Mary • Find out about academic and information services, facilities, and resources at Queen Mary • Engage effectively with the UCAS process and generate and submit a strong university application • Gain a positive first-hand experience of student life and a university environment • Become familiar with learning and teaching approaches in Higher Education	IS2

		• Participate in challenging educational activities that are stimulating and motivating • Access the information, advice & guidance they need to make a successful transition to Higher Education and Queen Mary.	
Commitment to inclusive practice A commitment to inclusive practice for neurodivergent learners across the Queen Mary outreach progression curriculum. This will include dedicated content on disability support services. (New activity)	Staffing: £3,846.80 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Investigate course and placement options, and social and leisure opportunities in Higher Education • Evaluate course, student finance and graduate opportunities and make informed choices that align with personal interests and career aspirations • Anticipate challenges they will face in Higher Education and make a successful transition to university.	-

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

- £42,007.60 per annum
- £1,057.16 year one only
- £169,087.56 duration of plan

Summary of evidence base and rationale

To design this intervention strategy, we first completed a literature review, alongside evaluation of existing activity at Queen Mary. Data tells us that people with a disability are less likely than their peers to enter higher education and achieve an undergraduate degree, and in 2021-22, only 17.4% of university entrants had a declared disability (15).

Whilst, as a University, we are committing to undertaking additional research to fully understand the barriers to accessing higher education at Queen Mary, existing research indicates that barriers across the sector include a lack of:

- staff awareness into the needs of disabled learners
- specific transition support
- embedded inclusive practice in outreach curriculums
- dedicated information, advice, and guidance.

The Disabled Student Commitment Report (16) emphasises the importance of higher education providers working in collaboration with the student body to embed inclusive practices that enable access to, and success in, higher education. Further, the report stresses the importance of providers ensuring there is a disability focus within outreach strategies.

The full evidence base and approach to evaluation for this activity is included in annex B.

Intervention strategy 2: Improved access for care leavers

Objectives and targets

(PTA_2) To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from under-represented backgrounds (care leaver students).

Risks to equality of opportunity

Risk 1 – Knowledge and Skills, Risk 2 - Information and guidance, Risk 3 - Perception of higher education.

Overarching Theory of change

Through the introduction of an embedded CPD curriculum, alongside specific interventions designed to support care leavers, we aim to support improved access to information and guidance, which in turn will also support a broader range of students under the broader CEES definition.

Activity and Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
Theory of Change: By working towards the NNECL Quality Mark and embedding effective staff CPD, we aim to improve the quality of information and guidance, resulting in improved access for care leavers.			
NNECL Quality Mark Work towards achieving the NNECL Quality Mark, with the view to ensuring sector-leading support for CEES students and identifying future areas of development.	Staffing: £14,660.20 per annum. Delivery costs: £10,000 per annum.	• Improved provision of services for CEES students across the full student lifecycle.	-

(New activity)			
Staff training and CPD Embed a staff training series for outreach practitioners, admissions staff, student support services and academic staff. (New activity)	Staffing: £4,240.50 per annum. Delivery costs: £2,500 per annum.	• Improved knowledge and awareness of the challenges faced by CEES students, to support frontline staff to ensure prospective applicants are equipped to make informed decisions about their future and aware of the services available at Queen Mary.	-
Theory of Change: Through the introduction of dedicated activities and prioritisation for the travel bursary and access schemes, we aim to increase the opportunities available to develop knowledge and skills, as well as to break down pre-conceived perceptions of higher education. In doing so, we aim to improve access to the University for care leavers.			
Subject and skills-based workshops A series of subject and skills-based workshops for students in Year 10 and 11. (New activity)	Staffing: £6,360.75 per annum. Delivery costs: £5,000 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Explore academic, social, economic, and personal benefits of progressing to Higher Education • Explore differences between Higher Education Institutions and study opportunities within subject areas • Increase confidence in their capacity to progress onto Higher Education.	-
Improved relationships with Virtual Schools Targeted work with neighbouring local authorities to ensure enhanced relationships with Virtual Schools, ensuring ongoing support for staff as well as access to young people in care. (New activity)	Staffing: £2,120.25 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Increase confidence in their capacity to progress on to Higher Education • Investigate course and placement options, and social and leisure opportunities in Higher Education.	-
Targeted travel bursary Targeted travel bursary for CEES students in Year	Staffing: £1,781.80 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will get access to support that will help them:	IS1

11 – 13 to access on campus events to help them make informed decisions. The scheme includes, but is not limited to, Open Days and Offer Holder Days. (Amended activity)	Delivery costs: £5,000 per annum.	• Investigate course and placement options, and social and leisure opportunities in Higher Education.	
Open Day support Targeted, on-campus support for CEES students visiting an Open Day. CEES students will receive 1:1 guidance on the day. (New activity)	Staffing: £1,781.80 per annum. Delivery costs: £540 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Investigate course and placement options, and social and leisure opportunities in Higher Education.	-
Prioritised entrance to access schemes Prioritised entry to Queen Mary's access schemes for supported entry to the University. To include Access to Queen Mary and Queen Mary Futures. (Amended activity)	Staffing: £7,139 per annum. Delivery costs: £20,000 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Explore social and leisure, and extra-curricular opportunities in Higher Education and Queen Mary • Find out about academic and information services, facilities, and resources at Queen Mary • Engage effectively with the UCAS process and generate and submit a strong university application • Gain a positive first-hand experience of student life and a university environment • Become familiar with learning and teaching approaches in Higher Education • Participate in challenging educational activities that are stimulating and motivating • Access the information, advice & guidance they need to make a successful transition to Higher Education and Queen Mary.	IS1

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

- £84,124.30 per annum
- £364,970.20 duration of plan

Summary of evidence base and rationale

This intervention strategy has been designed with the underpinning literature review, alongside evaluation of existing activity at Queen Mary. The number of care leavers progressing to higher education, and to Queen Mary, is significantly lower than the rest of the population. Data indicates that in 2018-19, only 13% of looked after young people progressed to higher education, compared to 43% of their non looked after peers (17).

Research completed to date suggests that engaging with the NNECL Quality Mark is one of the best ways that providers can adopt a full-lifecycle approach to supporting looked after young people and care experienced students. Further, the adoption of University-wide and recognised language, alongside comprehensive CPD and staff training, is pivotal to ensuring equity in higher education.

When considering additional barriers to higher education that care leavers may face, research indicates both social capital and perceived cultural differences to be critical. Through activities to support an improved sense of belonging, outreach teams can begin to break down some of the barriers faced by looked after young people. Additionally, the importance of effective information, advice, and guidance, as well as the accessibility of such information, is crucial to ensure care leavers are supported on their journey to higher education.

The full evidence base and approach to evaluation for this activity is included in annex B.

Intervention strategy 3: Improved attainment for Key Stage 4 students eligible for FSM, attending our sponsored academies.

Objectives and targets

(PTA_3) To support attainment raising at KS4 for students from disadvantaged backgrounds (students in receipt of FSM).

Risks to equality of opportunity

Risk 1 – Knowledge and Skills, Risk 2 - Information and guidance, Risk 3 - Perception of higher education.

Overarching Theory of change

Through embedding a course of academic coaching, focused on metacognition and self-efficacy, we aim to support improved attainment in English and Maths for learners at KS4, with the ultimate aim of supporting access to university.

Activity and Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
Theory of Change: By implementing the collaborative CoachBright approach of small group coaching and an introduction to the University campus, we aim to increase the confidence, resilience, independence, and aspirations of young people to improve attainment at school and aspirations to apply to university.			
Academic coaching Small group academic coaching, delivered in collaboration with Coach Bright. Activity made up of eight, 75-minute coaching sessions focusing on self-regulation and metacognition (New activity)	Staffing: £2,120.25 per annum. Delivery costs (Coach Bright): £31,500 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Develop students' confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenge of university life and graduate progression • Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment and successful graduate progression • Develop students' understanding by contextualising subject knowledge and support attainment raising.	-
On campus event On-campus graduation event for participants, with an introduction to the University campus, engagement with current staff and students. (New activity)	Staffing: £2,120.25 per annum. Delivery costs: £1,500 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Explore university subject areas and the range of possible study opportunities • Discover academic and social benefits of Higher Education.	**-**
Theory of Change: Through working closely with staff and students in our sponsored academies we aim to increase the opportunities for young people to develop the knowledge and skills required for university, alongside improving access to the information and guidance required to make a successful application to university.			

Progression curriculum Delivery of the Queen Mary Outreach Progression Curriculum in sponsored academies, working with students Year 6 – Year 13 through a series of progressive in-school and on-campus workshops. (Amended activity)	Staffing: £4,240.50 per annum. Delivery costs: £10,000 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Increase confidence in their capacity to progress onto Higher Education • Explore academic, social, economic, and personal benefits of progressing to Higher Education.	-
University-MAT strategic partnerships Strategic partnership with two MATs, including working towards the improvement of schools through the governing boards as well as engagement with staff, parents/carers, and students at all levels. (Existing activity)	Staffing: £30,991.30 Delivery costs: £5,000 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Interact with academic staff and other university employees • Participate in challenging education activities that are stimulating and motivating • Access the information, advice, and guidance they need to make a successful transition to Higher Education.	-

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

- £87,472.30 per annum
- £349,889.20 duration of plan

Summary of evidence base and rationale

To design this intervention strategy, we first completed a literature review, alongside evaluating existing activity to support pre-entry attainment raising. All activities are underpinned by evaluation and outcomes informed by the Network for Evaluating and Researching University Participation Interventions (NERUPI) framework (18).

The confidence of learners to make informed decisions about their future has also been linked to a positive impact on attainment (19). Specifically, long term and sustained provision may support learners to develop the skills needed to make a successful transition to higher education, alongside activities that support the development of metacognition and self-regulation (20). Further, through campus visit activity, it has been possible to identify a small increase in Progress 8 scores, specifically impactful for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The full evidence base and approach to evaluation for this activity is included in annex B.

Intervention strategy 4: Improved access to Research Intensive Universities (Realising Opportunities)

Objectives and targets

(PTA_4) Increase the number of students tracked into a Research Intensive University (Realising Opportunities).

Risks to equality of opportunity

Risk 1 – Knowledge and Skills, Risk 2 - Information and guidance, Risk 3 - Perception of higher education.

Overarching Theory of change

Through delivery of Realising Opportunities we aim raise awareness and understanding of research intensive universities, as well as support learners to access the information needed, and to develop the skills required, to make a successful application to a research intensive university.

Activity and Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
Realising Opportunities A sustained (2 year) and progressive programme for high achieving students with clear focus on groups at risk according to the equality of opportunity risk register through targeted eligibility criteria. At present, RO aims to recruit 1250 – 1500 students annually. This is an existing activity that is delivered in collaboration with 14 Research Intensive Universities. Individual programme elements are highlighted below.	Staffing: £22,510.30 per annum. Delivery costs: £51,000 per annum.	• Increase number of applicants and entrants to RIUs Realising Opportunities universities from those at risk of inequality of opportunity • Prepare students for success at RIUs • Raise awareness and understanding of RIUs • Broaden geographical horizons and help students make informed academic choices. Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Discover course and placement opportunities in higher education and at Queen Mary • Find out about research areas, expertise, and facilities in higher education and at Queen Mary	-

(Existing activity)		• Evaluate different types of Higher Education institution in terms of personal interests and career aspirations • Compare degree courses and study options across a range of universities • Engage effectively with the UCAS process and generate and submit a strong university application • Become familiar with learning and teaching approached in Higher Education • Participate in challenging education activities that are stimulating and motivating • Enhance revision skills and expertise in a range of revision techniques • Enhance interpersonal and group work skills and capacity to work collaboratively with others.	
Theory of Change: Through attending events and activities at Realising Opportunities Partner universities, learners will benefit from increased knowledge about higher education and the application process, broaden their geographical horizons, as well as have the opportunity to consider all options to make an informed choice about their application to higher education.			
Events and activities at Partner universities, including but not limited to a Launch Event and National Student Conference, offering students the opportunity to engage with all 14 Partner universities.	As above	• Raise awareness and understanding of research intensive universities • Broaden geographical horizons • Increased confidence in applying to research intensive universities, including Realising Opportunities Partners.	-
Theory of Change: By taking part in the Academic Skills Module and Skills4Uni module, young people will develop their confidence and decision-making skills, sense of belonging, and transitional skills required to make a successful application and transition to a research intensive university.			
Academic Skills Module An authentic experience of academic work at university that enables students to learn, upskill and interact with university staff and students.	As above	• Prepare students for success at research intensive universities (knowledge and skills) • Support students to make informed choices (knowledge and reflection).	-

Skills4Uni module and quiz A self-directed online study skills module and quiz, increases knowledge of and confidence in transferable skills required for success in HE.	As above	• Prepare students for success at research intensive universities (knowledge and skills).	-
Theory of Change: Through participation in the online community, live Q&As and online support, learners will be empowered to conduct their own research into higher education options as well as access the information and guidance required to make a successful application to a research intensive university.			
Online support including the RO Online Community and Live Q&As Students can match or communicate with ambassadors from any Partner university, irrespective of students' location. In addition, students can access a knowledge bank and self-serve activities and online courses.	As above	• Raise awareness and understanding of research intensive universities • Prepare students for success at research intensive universities (knowledge and skills) • Support students to make informed choices (knowledge and reflection) • Increased confidence in applying to research intensive universities, including Realising Opportunities Partners.	-

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy
 	
   •   £73,510.30 per annum
   • £294,041.20 duration of plan			

Summary of evidence base and rationale

Realising Opportunities was established in 2009 to support access to highly selective, Research Intensive Universities (RIUs), through a range of evidence-based interventions, working collaboratively with Partners sharing knowledge and expertise and having a robust evaluation strategy to monitor impact.

Whilst RO can demonstrate success in supporting those at risk of inequality of opportunity to access RIUs, the fact that disadvantaged young people continue to remain much less likely to get into the most 'prestigious, high-tariff universities' (UK Government, 2023), illustrates the partnership's continuing relevance in its aims and approach through a series of targeted evidence-based interventions.

From UCAS end of cycle data in 2022, 88% of Realising Opportunities students went on to accept an offer from an HEI, 10% higher than the benchmarked group. Three quarters of Cohort 11 students (74%) accessed HE in their first HE ready year (2021), and of these two thirds (67%) were studying at RIUs.

Furthermore, most recent data demonstrates that, at programme completion, 66% of CH9 students felt that RO had helped their academic performance in first year and 65% felt that RO had helped them settle into university life.

The full evidence base and approach to evaluation for this activity is included in annex B.

Intervention strategy 5: Improved continuation rates at Queen Mary for students with a declared disability

Objectives and targets

(PTS_1) To reduce the gap in the proportion of students continuing after their first year at Queen Mary with a declared disability.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Risk 6: Insufficient academic support, Risk 7: Insufficient personal support, Risk 8: Mental health, Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus

Overarching Theory of change

By developing our understanding of disabled student experiences through enhanced learner engagement analytics and additional research, we will further develop our targeted activities and support programmes specific to the needs of disabled learners, ultimately improving their sense of belonging and resulting in improved continuation rates.

Activity and Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
Learner Engagement Analytics The introduction of a Learner Engagement Policy and process to identify and assist disengaged or struggling students, facilitating targeted interventions for improved continuation and completion. This will guide proactive interventions for specific student groups in the future. (New activity)	-	Specifically, this activity will support students to be able to: • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services • Engage with student services and the Students' Union to foster personal wellbeing and development.	IS6 IS7

Enhanced Transition and Availability of support for students with Autism Targeted session for new students with an autism diagnosis run on campus each September just ahead of the main Welcome Week schedule. This will be further supported with drop-in sessions for specifically for students with autism and mental health diagnoses. (New activity)	Staffing: £4,240.50 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Receive comprehensive information about social and leisure, and extra-curricular opportunities • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services • Engage reflexively with support services and other students to articulate and reflect upon academic identity, belonging and personal development • Engage with student services and the Students' Union to foster personal wellbeing and development.	-
Expansion or Delivery of Assistive Learning Technologies SensusAccess is a self-service, alternate media solution which allows students to automatically convert documents into a range of alternative media including audio books, e-book, and digital Braille. (Existing activity)	Delivery costs: £3,000 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Receive information through a variety of communication mediums • Access appropriate information, advice and guidance and fully utilise course and placement opportunities • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services • Engage with and fully utilise available learning and teaching approaches and resources • Consolidate their understanding of their subject area and utilise course materials and teaching resources effectively.	-
Further research Commission research to fully understand the barriers facing disabled students in accessing and continuing through higher education at Queen Mary. Through this research, the University will engage with current students, subject matter experts, and staff and students from schools and colleges with	Staffing: £1,057 total for this intervention.	• Improved understanding of the barriers to disabled students succeeding in higher education at Queen Mary, leading to an improved success for disabled students.	IS1

the aim of informing future interventions to best meet the needs of disabled learners. (New activity)			
Disabled Student Commitment We will work towards meeting each part outlined within the Disabled Student Commitment. (New activity)	Staffing: £3272.16 per annum.	Secure an enhanced and improved experience for disabled students.	-
Theory of change: By academic schools proactively contacting students with a mental health condition and social or communication impairment, to signpost them to the variety of wellbeing services on campus, as well as offer 1:1 check ins, students will be more willing to access these services which will lead to an increase in continuation rates.			
Additional Wellbeing Support The wellbeing services provides all students with a range of support, including counselling, group therapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), mental health advice and general wellbeing guidance. Academic Schools will pro-actively contact students who have a declared mental health condition and social or communication impairment termly, to signpost to the support available on campus as well as offer 1:1 check-ins. (Amended activity)	Staffing: £389,824 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services • Access student finance and budgeting support appropriate to personal circumstances • Engage reflexively with support services and other students to articulate and reflect upon academic identity, belonging and personal development • Engage with student services and the Students' Union to foster personal wellbeing and development.	IS6 IS7
Theory of change: By enhancing our signposting for students to access support services and the introduction of 24/7 wellbeing services we aim to remove barriers for students needing support outside office hours, improving their wellbeing and boosting continuation rates.			

Student Assistance Programme In recognition students may need support at any point, we will introduce a 24/7 Wellbeing Hotline provided externally and staffed by trained counsellors. This freephone number is available for UK based Queen Mary students to call at any time of the day or night, 365 days per year. Student Wellbeing services will actively signpost students with a declared disability to the out of hours support. Student Transition & Campus Experience Manager will run termly wellbeing showcases, promoting this programme. Students with a declared disability will receive targeted communications about the event and programme. (New Activity)	Staffing: £17,362.94 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services.	IS6 IS7
Togetherall Instant access to mental health support active day and night, monitored and moderated 24/7 by licensed mental health practitioners. Student Wellbeing services will actively signpost students with a declared disability to the out of hours support. Student Transition & Campus Experience Manager will run termly wellbeing showcases, promoting this programme. Students with a declared	Staffing: £5,205 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services.	IS6 IS7

disability will receive targeted communications about the event and programme. (New Activity)			
Theory of change: By training more staff about the support available to students with a declared disability, students will receive better support and therefore improve continuation rates.			
Enhanced staff training to support Disabled Students Following student feedback, we will extend our advisors training to all staff, created in collaboration with Student Services and QM to ensure effective signposting of students to relevant support across the University. (New activity)	Staffing: £649.32 per annum.	Through broader awareness, staff will be better able to support students to: • Receive comprehensive information about social and leisure, and extra-curricular opportunities • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services • Engage reflexively with support services and other students to articulate and reflect upon academic identity, belonging and personal development • Engage with student services and the Students' Union to foster personal wellbeing and development.	-
Theory of Change: By simplifying and streamlining the policy for submitting Extenuating Circumstances, particularly for students with declared disabilities or mental health conditions, we aim to reduce stress, expedite the process, and ultimately enhance support, leading to improved continuation rates among these students.			
Review of existing Extenuating Circumstances policy Reviewing the policy to ensure it is more accessible for student with a declared disability. (New activity)	Staffing: £5,127.38 for year one only.	Students from target groups will: • Benefit from a simpler more streamlined process.	-
Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy • £424, 610.92 per annum			

- • £5,127.38 year one only
- • £1,703,571.06 duration of plan

Summary of evidence base and rationale

Disabled students face higher dropout rates and greater challenges in higher education, with those having less visible disabilities encountering additional disadvantages (21) (22) . Staff training to identify mental health conditions and suicide risks is crucial (23). A systematic review highlights the benefits of Assistive Learning Technologies for students with disabilities (24) .

Our support strategy aligns with best practices, drawing from the Disabled Students' Commission's work, which identifies persistent gaps in disabled student access, academic outcomes, and experiences (25). For students with autism, we have conducted specific induction events and actively involved existing students to support newcomers post-COVID-19.

A full literature review of this approach is evidenced in annex B, alongside a review of existing activity at Queen Mary.

Intervention strategy 6: Improved continuation rates for Black students

Objectives and targets

(PTS_2) To reduce the gap in the proportion of Black students continuing after their first year at Queen Mary.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Risk 6: Insufficient academic support, Risk 7: Insufficient personal support, Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus

Overarching Theory of change

Through a variety of internal and external support services, peer mentoring, study skill programmes, activities, events, staff training, and policy reviews dedicated to Black students, we aim to improve continuation rates through university.

Activity and Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?

Learner Engagement Analytics The introduction of a Learner Engagement Policy and process to identify and assist disengaged or struggling students, facilitating targeted interventions for improved continuation and completion. These initiatives will guide proactive interventions for specific student groups in the future. (New activity)	-	• To guide proactive interventions for specific student groups in the future and identify the need for support to targeted groups. Specifically, this activity will support students to be able to: • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services • Engage with student services and the Students' Union to foster personal wellbeing and development.	IS5 IS7
Student Lifecycle Coaching for at risk students Small group and 1:1 academic coaching to build self-confidence and resilience, delivered initially in collaboration with Coach Bright. Activity made up of six 1:1 coaching sessions and two group workshops eight. (New activity)	Delivery costs: £10,100 Staffing: £236.10 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Consolidate a varied skills set to enhance future employability and develop the capacity to demonstrate skills to potential employers • Consolidate their interpersonal and group work skills and capacity to work collaboratively with others.	IS7
Inclusive Assessment Practice To embed "Inclusive Assessment Practice" across the University. This includes investigating award gaps and providing university-wide professional development for educators on inclusive assessment. Additionally, resources and case studies will be made available to support the integration of inclusive assessment practices, with dedicated student interns focusing on amplifying the voices of first-year Black students in this process.	Delivery costs: £10,000 per annum. Staffing: £5,859.50 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Engage with and fully utilise available learning and teaching approaches and resources • Extend and apply knowledge within a supportive academic environment, which utilises a wide range of teaching resources.	-

(New activity)			

Theory of change: By academic schools proactively contacting and signposting Black students to the variety of wellbeing services on campus, as well as offering 1:1 check ins, students will be more willing to access these services which will lead to an increase in continuation rates.

Additional Wellbeing Support The wellbeing services provides all students with a range of support, including counselling, group therapy, CBT, mental health advice and general wellbeing guidance. Academic Schools will pro-actively contact Black students termly, to signpost to the support available on campus as well as offer 1:1 check-ins. (Amended activity)	Staffing costs: £334,911.61 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services • Access student finance and budgeting support appropriate to personal circumstances • Engage reflexively with support services and other students to articulate and reflect upon academic identity, belonging and personal development • Engage with student services and the Students' Union to foster personal wellbeing and development.	-

Theory of change: By enhancing our signposting for students to access support services and the introduction of 24/7 wellbeing services we aim to remove barriers for students needing support outside office hours, improving their wellbeing and boosting continuation rates.

Student Assistance Programme In recognition students may need support at any point, we will introduce a 24/7 Wellbeing Hotline provided externally and staffed by trained counsellors. This freephone number is available for UK based Queen Mary students to call at any time of the day or night, 365 days per year. Student Wellbeing services will actively signpost Black students to the out of hours support. Student Transition & Campus Experience Manager will run termly wellbeing showcases, promoting	Delivery costs: £16,482 per annum. Staffing costs: £880.04 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services.	IS5 IS7

this programme. Black students will receive targeted communications about the event and programme. (New Activity)			
Togetherall Instant access to mental health support through Togetherall, active day and night, monitored and moderated 24/7 by licensed mental health practitioners. Student Wellbeing services will actively signpost Black to the out of hours support. Student Transition & Campus Experience Manager will run termly wellbeing showcases, promoting this programme. Black will receive targeted communications about the event and programme. (Amended activity)	Delivery costs: £5,205 per annum. Staffing costs: Accounted in above intervention.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services.	IS5 IS7

Theory of Change: By destigmatising help-seeking behaviour which prevents students from seeking out support opportunities that are available through Library Learning Support and Engagement, students will feel more confident in their abilities, be able to recognise more opportunities both academically and with employability, and gain experiences helpful to their future beyond university. These elements are pivotal in ensuring students settle and succeed throughout their degree, improving continuation rates.

Library Learning Support and Engagement for continuation Focus on engagement and acclimatisation, looking	Delivery costs: £24,223 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Receive comprehensive information about the range of course and placement opportunities available to them • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services	-

to demystify the hidden curriculum in HE and support Black students to thrive at Queen Mary. A focus on supporting and encouraging Black students to take part in interventions and support programme as well as the recruitment of student interns to better understand the Black student experience.	Staffing costs: £40,223 per annum.	• Consolidate their academic skills and develop a personalised strategy for skills acquisition • Consolidate their study skills to maximise the benefit of different learning and teaching formats • Consolidate their understanding of their subject area and utilise course materials and teaching resources effectively.	
Theory of Change: By growing the number of Black student mentors and mentees on the peer mentoring scheme, it acknowledges a need for a sense of community and belonging to avoid isolation which will support the continuation of Black students.			
Peer Assisted Study Scheme A course-based mentoring scheme, run for students by students. Giving first-years the opportunity to discuss study-related problems and get general advice from higher-year undergraduates in their subject. The scheme will focus on growing the number of Black student mentors and mentees. (Amended activity)	Staffing costs: £4,978.50 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Receive comprehensive information about the range of course and placement opportunities available to them. • Access appropriate information, advice and guidance and fully utilise course and placement opportunities • Engage with students from a variety of social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds to establish positive relationships and form mutual support networks • Extend and apply knowledge within a supportive academic environment, which utilises a wide range of teaching resources • Consolidate their academic skills and develop a personalised strategy for skills acquisition • Consolidate their study skills to maximise the benefit of different learning and teaching formats.	-
Theory of Change: By dedicating resources to identify and address barriers encountered by Black, Asian, and minority ethnic staff and students, and implementing a comprehensive framework for action and improvement, we aim to enhance representation, address race-related issues, and ultimately improve the Black student experience, resulting in better continuation rates.			

| Race Equality Charter | Staffing costs: | By achieving a bronze award we will: | - |
| Improved the representation, progression, and success of Black, Asian and minority ethnic students.

(New activity) | £59,957.20 per annum. | • Ensure a solid foundation for eliminating racial inequalities and developing an inclusive culture that values all staff and students
• Have a culture that acknowledges commitment and preparation to act. | |

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

- £513,055.95 per year
- £2,052,223.80 duration of plan

Summary of evidence base and rationale

In higher education, despite higher enrolment rates among Black students compared to some ethnic groups, their retention rates and degree outcomes often lag. By actively promoting our onsite and out of hours wellbeing services, which include counselling, group therapy, CBT, mental health advice and general wellbeing guidance, to Black students, we are able to address EORR Risk 8 and improve continuation rates.

Personalised coaching and initiatives like the Peer Assisted Study Scheme, with an increase in Black mentors and mentees, aims to support Black students, acknowledging a sense of isolation and need for a sense of community and belonging. Alongside this, the Library Learning Support and Engagement project focusses on engagement, overcoming challenges in the 'hidden curriculum' and destigmatising help-seeking behaviour. The project aligns with diverse approaches, prioritising peer interaction, academic literacies, and values of learning development.

The REC aims to enhance representation, address race-related issues, and improve the Black student experience which will lead to better continuation rates. The development of a Learner Engagement Policy and ability to identify when Black students may be disengaged or struggling will allow for targeted interventions and support to improve continuation rates.

A full literature review of this approach is evidenced in annex B, alongside a review of existing activity at Queen Mary.

Intervention strategy 7: Improved completion rates for students who have been previously eligible for Free School Meals

Objectives and targets

(PTS_1) To reduce the gap in the proportion students eligible for FSM completing their studies at Queen Mary.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Risk 6: Insufficient academic support, Risk 7: Insufficient personal support, Risk 10: Cost pressures

Overarching Theory of change

Through a variety of internal and external support services, financial support, peer mentoring, academic coaching, activities, events and policy reviews dedicated to students previously eligible for FSM, we aim to improve completion of students previously eligible for FSM.

Activity and Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
Student Lifecycle Coaching for at risk students Small group and 1:1 academic coaching to build self-confidence and resilience, delivered in collaboration with Coach Bright. Activity made up of six 1:1 coaching sessions and three group workshops eight, targeted at 30 students. (New activity)	Delivery costs: £10,100 Staffing: £236.10 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Consolidate a varied skills set to enhance future employability and develop the capacity to demonstrate skills to potential employers • Consolidate their interpersonal and group work skills and capacity to work collaboratively with others.	-
Learner Engagement Analytics introduction of a Learner Engagement Policy and process to identify and assist disengaged or struggling students, facilitating targeted interventions for improved continuation and completion. These initiatives will guide proactive	-	• To guide proactive interventions for specific student groups in the future and identify the need for support to targeted groups. Specifically, this activity will support students to be able to:	IS5 IS7

interventions for specific student groups in the future. (New activity)		• Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services • Engage with student services and the Students' Union to foster personal wellbeing and development.	
Targeted promotion and support for placements abroad To reduce the gap in the proportion of students previously eligible for FSM completion at Queen Mary through the targeted promotion of, and bespoke support for students previously eligible for FSM to engage with, international opportunities abroad. (Amended activity)	Staffing costs: £9,957 per annum.	• Receive comprehensive information about the range of course and placement opportunities available to them • Access appropriate information, advice and guidance and fully utilise course and placement opportunities • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services • Engage with students from a variety of social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds to establish positive relationships and form mutual support networks • Engage with careers advise and utilise placement opportunities to enhance employability and capacity to realise graduate goals • Consolidate their communication and language skills within formal and informal settings.	-
Theory of Change: By providing students previously eligible for Free School Meals with financial support through the Queen Mary Bursary, we can support students accessing materials as well as extra-curricular opportunities they may not have been able to partake in otherwise, enhancing their experience and therefor supporting completion rates			
Queen Mary Bursary The Queen Mary Bursary is specifically targeted at student from low-income households to provide financial assistance during their studies. (Existing activity)	£1,700 each year for students whose household income is less than £20,000. £1,000 each year for students with a household income	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access social and leisure, and extra-curricular opportunities, and pursue personal interests • Engage with students from a variety of social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds to establish positive relationships and form mutual support networks.	-

	between £20,000 and £35,000. See the total cost of intervention for forecast spend.		
Theory of change: By academic schools proactively contacting signposting students previously eligible for FSM to the variety of wellbeing services on campus, as well as offering 1:1 check ins, students will be more willing to access these services which will lead to an increase in continuation rates.			
Additional Wellbeing Support The wellbeing services provides all students with a range of support, including counselling, group therapy, CBT, mental health advice and general wellbeing guidance. Academic Schools will pro-actively contact students previously eligible for FSM termly, to signpost to the support available on campus as well as offer 1:1 check-ins. (Amended activity)	Staffing costs: £664,390.93 per annum	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services • Access student finance and budgeting support appropriate to personal circumstances • Engage reflexively with support services and other students to articulate and reflect upon academic identity, belonging and personal development • Engage with student services and the Students' Union to foster personal wellbeing and development.	IS5 IS7
Theory of change: By enhancing our signposting for students to access support services and the introduction of 24/7 wellbeing services we aim to remove barriers for students needing support outside office hours, improving their wellbeing and boosting continuation rates.			
Student Assistance Programme In recognition students may need support at any point, we will introduce a 24/7 Wellbeing Hotline staffed by trained counsellors. This freephone number is available for UK based Queen Mary	Delivery costs: £16,482 per annum. Staffing costs: £809.94 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services.	IS5 IS7

students to call at any time of the day or night, 365 days per year. Student Wellbeing services will actively signpost students previously eligible for FSM to the out of hours support. Student Transition & Campus Experience Manager will run termly wellbeing showcases, promoting this programme. Students previously eligible for FSM will receive targeted communications about the event and programme. (New Activity)			
Togetherall Instant access to mental health support through Togetherall, active day and night, monitored and moderated 24/7 by licensed mental health practitioners. Student Wellbeing services will actively signpost students previously eligible for FSM to the out of hours support. Student Transition & Campus Experience Manager will run termly wellbeing showcases, promoting this programme. Students previously eligible for FSM will receive targeted communications about the event and programme.	Delivery costs: £5,205 per annum. Staffing costs: Accounted for in above intervention.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access appropriate academic and personal support and fully utilise university services.	IS5 IS6

(Amended activity)			
Theory of Change: Introducing peer mentoring to students eligible for FSM in their second year will allow for support and guidance in the transition to the final year and therefore increase rates of completion.			
Extension of Buddy Scheme to support second to third year transition Students previously eligible for FSM will be eligible for a peer-mentor to provide support and guidance in their transition into their final year. (New activity)	Delivery costs: £1,000 per annum. Staffing costs: £33,154.88 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access social and leisure, and extra-curricular opportunities, and pursue personal interests • Engage with student life and the university's academic community • Engage reflexively with support services and other students to articulate and reflect upon academic identity, belonging and personal development.	-

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy
 	
In addition to this, we anticipate spending £8million annually to support students through the Queen Mary Bursary. This is represented within <u>Annex C</u> and the associated target investment plan.
 	
    •   £741,335.85 per year
    • £2,965,343.40 duration of plan			

Summary of evidence base and rationale

In the UK, students previously eligible for FSM consistently achieve lower outcomes in both compulsory and higher education. Queen Mary is tackling this issue by implementing a new Learner Engagement policy, using Learner Engagement Analytics data, to identify and assist struggling students, enabling targeted interventions.

By actively promoting our onsite and out of hours wellbeing services, which include counselling, group therapy, CBT, mental health advice and general wellbeing guidance, to students previously eligible for FSM , we are able to address provide support to this targeted group.

A collaboration with Coachbright aims to enhance academic coaching and self-confidence. Recognising the positive impact of peer mentoring, the university plans to expand its Buddy Scheme, focusing on second-year students previously eligible for FSM, to foster a supportive environment and improve academic success.

We are mindful of the significance of financial support and its impact. Previously, we engaged the University of Bristol to conduct a literature review on the efficacy of bursaries. The evaluation concluded that our financial support effectively "levelled the playing field" (Harrison and McCaig, 2018) for bursary recipients. Research indicates that without such support, their progression would have been adversely affected (Bathmaker et al., 2013; McCaig et al., 2016; Harrison and McCaig, 2017). Moreover, we continually assess the impact of our bursary provision using the OfS Financial Evaluation Toolkit, examining both qualitative and quantitative outcomes.

A full literature review of this approach is evidenced in annex B, alongside a review of existing activity at Queen Mary.

Intervention strategy 8: Improved the progression rates into highly skilled employment or further study for Bangladeshi students or those previously eligible for FSM

Objectives and targets

(PTP_1) To reduce the progression gap for students from underrepresented groups (Bangladeshi students and students previously eligible for FSM.)

Risks to equality of opportunity

Risk 12: progression from higher education

Overarching Theory of change

By implementing targeted coaching, mentoring, and peer-led support programmes, Bangladeshi and students previously in receipt of FSM are expected to gain the necessary skills and confidence to secure better job opportunities. Integrating employability skills into the curriculum further enhances their university experience and addresses barriers faced by students from lower-income backgrounds, ultimately leading to improved career outcomes and narrowed progression gaps.

Activity and Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?

Theory of change: Through the implementation of a comprehensive coaching and peer-to-peer support provision, we aim to enhance internship and job opportunities for Bangladeshi and FSM students. This initiative will include weekly group sessions covering key transition themes such as CV preparation, interview techniques, LinkedIn utilisation, and resilience building, supplemented by one-to-one support. By providing relatable role models and facilitating engagement with professional networks, we anticipate increased student comfort and progression to career opportunities.			
Graduate coaching The implementation of one-to-one 40-minute graduate coaching appointments to Bangladeshi and FSM students in their final year of study or recent graduates. (Amended activity)	Staffing costs: £33,809 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Access specialist careers information, advice and guidance and opportunities to network with alumni and employers • Engage with careers advise and utilise placement opportunities to enhance employability and capacity to realise graduate goals.	-
Student peer led delivery careers service. We will recruit 10 student ambassadors trained in aspects of careers information and advice giving, communication skills, University Support Services, resilience, and effective feedback. These students will be representative of the target groups to provide role models and increase engagement. (New activity)	Staffing costs (including ambassador costs): £97,914 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Engage with student life and the university's academic community • Engage with students from a variety of social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds to establish positive relationships and form mutual support networks • Engage reflexively with support services and other students to articulate and reflect upon academic identity, belonging and personal development • Engage with and fully utilise available learning and teaching approaches and resources.	
Peer to Peer Graduate Support Graduate Coach to coordinate and lead a peer-to-peer graduate support group of six weekly sessions covering key transition themes such as preparing CVs, interviewing, LinkedIn, resilience, and growth mindset. Internships and job opportunities will be	Covered within the costs of Graduate coaching (above).	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Consolidate their communication and language skills within formal and informal settings • Consolidate a varied skills set to enhance future employability and develop the capacity to demonstrate skills to potential employers	-

shared at each session and the graduates will be able to book into one to ones as needed. (New activity)		• Engage with careers advise and utilise placement opportunities to enhance employability and capacity to realise graduate goals.	

Theory of Change: By integrating an employability framework into undergraduate programmes, we aim to elevate the role of the Careers Service, enhance career-oriented learning outcomes, and boost skills development for all students, especially those from lower-income backgrounds. This initiative addresses barriers to career success by providing valued experiences, fostering social mobility, and empowering students for future employment opportunities, ultimately to improve progression.

Embedding Careers within the curriculum An employability framework to integrate career education into the credit-bearing curriculum of all Level 4, 5, and 6 Undergraduate programmes. While this initiative will benefit the entire student body, it will specifically support Bangladeshi and students previously eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). Our internal data has shown that these groups are less likely to actively engage with the careers provision. This framework will involve assisting academics in incorporating Queen Mary Graduate Attributes into undergraduate programmes. This will be achieved through appropriate learning outcomes, delivery methods, and assessments, ensuring that the skills developed through academic modules are clearly communicated to students. (New activity)	Staffing costs: £84,500 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Receive comprehensive careers information, advice and guidance • Engage with student services and the Students' Union to foster personal wellbeing and development • Extend and apply knowledge to specific areas of post-graduate study and graduate employment • Extend specific areas of knowledge independently to access post-graduate course and graduate employment • Engage pro-actively with the changing demands of their studies and develop pro-active support-seeking behaviours to ensure their success.	-

The activities listed below in this intervention are specifically targeted for Bangladeshi students.
Theory of Change: By implementing tailored one-to-one mentoring programmes and a Women of Colour Entrepreneur-in-residence pilot we will provide

our Bangladeshi students with appropriate role models and personalised support, comprehensive training, and entrepreneurship opportunities, ultimately fostering academic and professional success and improved progression outcomes.

| **Mentoring** One-to-one mentoring for Bangladeshi students from specific academic schools with wider progression gaps (Politics and International Relations, and, Languages, Linguistics and Film. This will also incorporate training for students that covers professional communication, relationship management, reflective practice, and networking. (Amended activity) | Covered within the costs of current resourcing | Students from targeted groups will be able to: Access specialist careers information, advice and guidance and opportunities to network with alumni and employers Engage with careers advise and utilise placement opportunities to enhance employability and capacity to realise graduate goals Engage with students from a variety of social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds to establish positive relationships and form mutual support networks Consolidate their academic skills and develop a personalised strategy for skills acquisition Consolidate a varied skills set to enhance future employability and develop the capacity to demonstrate skills to potential employers. | - |
| **Woman of Colour Entrepreneur-in-residence pilot** The pilot will**:** 1. One-on-one enterprise appointments to offer personalized guidance and support to aspiring Women of Colour entrepreneurs. 2. Workshops on writing funding applications to equip participants with the skills and knowledge necessary to secure financial backing for their ventures. | Delivery costs: £10,000 per annum. Staffing costs: £2,600 per annum. | Students from targeted groups will be able to: Consolidate their academic skills and develop a personalised strategy for skills acquisition Consolidate their communication and language skills within formal and informal settings Consolidate a varied skills set to enhance future employability and develop the capacity to demonstrate skills to potential employers Consolidate their interpersonal and group work skills and capacity to work collaboratively with others. | - |

3. A dedicated award for Women of Colour entrepreneurs to recognise and support their innovative ideas and entrepreneurial spirit. (New activity)			
Summer School (Global Mobility) This pilot will deliver a summer school abroad for up to 10 Bangladeshi students from summer 2025 with a specific focus on employability, resulting in increase skill sets aligned to QM Graduate attributes. (New activity)	Staffing costs: £2,489.25 per annum.	Students from targeted groups will be able to: • Receive comprehensive information about the range of course and placement opportunities available to them • Receive comprehensive careers information, advice and guidance • Access appropriate information, advice and guidance and fully utilise course and placement opportunities • Engage with students from a variety of social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds to establish positive relationships and form mutual support networks • Engage with careers advise and utilise placement opportunities to enhance employability and capacity to realise graduate goals • Consolidate their communication and language skills within formal and informal settings.	-
Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy • £231,312.25 per annum • £925,249.00 for duration of the plan			

Summary of evidence base and rationale

Internal research into Bangladeshi students has highlighted the preference for tailored one-to-one support and strong role models. The progression gap will therefore be reduced through targeted coaching providing tailored one-to-one support, and mentoring. The enhancement of the peer-led careers service will enable students to see role models and feel more comfortable in engaging with the service and its professional support networks. Research has also shown that students from lower income backgrounds found it harder to participate in the activities that employers are perceived to value if they sat outside of the

curriculum, due to other family and financial responsibilities. Therefore, we are seeking to integrate employability skills into our undergraduate curriculum, which will also mean the Careers Service becomes central to their university experience.

We presented these plans to current students' representative of the target, to gain feedback and inform the design.

A full literature review of this approach is evidenced in annex B, alongside a review of existing activity at Queen Mary.

Whole provider approach

Queen Mary combines academic excellence with an unwavering commitment to social justice, mobility, and inclusivity. In our APP, we clearly outline our dedication to addressing key challenges to equal opportunity throughout the entire student journey. This commitment is not confined to the plan alone; it is deeply embedded in our core values and the overarching University Strategy 2030, and our vision to open the doors of opportunity to everyone with the potential to succeed. This is further evidenced within our Culture & Inclusion Enabling Plan. The recently refreshed plan (originally developed in 2019) will focus on staff and student inclusion and belonging - we recognise that a stronger sense of belonging positively influences student success, outcomes and retention.

The Culture & Inclusion Plan includes activity around gender and race equality, disability and LGBTQIA+ inclusion, the prevention of harassment and misconduct, and wellbeing. We recognise many of these workstreams will be conducive to the student groups and interventions targeted across the Access and Participation Plan.

Embedding the APP across the institution

We have set challenging targets to improve access for some of the most under-represented groups to ensure equitable outcomes in student continuation and completion, eliminating attainment gaps and enhancing the overall educational experience for all students. Notably, these objectives are reflected in four out of our 13 Strategic University-wide KPI's.

Demonstrating our commitment to equality, the University considers the Equality Act 2010 in all areas of work and policy development. Our People, Culture, and Inclusion Enabling Plan outlines the steps toward achieving our overall vision.

Consultation in the development of this plan

Our APP has been written and informed through consultation with a broad range of internal stakeholders, including professional service staff across the different service areas, academic and support staff across each of our faculties and significant engagement with Queen Mary Students' Union. We have also consulted several external community networks, including Tower Hamlets Local Authority, and our teacher and advisor Network within our sponsored academies.

Formally approved by the University Council and Senior Executive Group, our APP is supported by a robust governance structure that includes student representation at every level. This ensures that the overarching KPIs and objectives are managed strategically. The APP is aligned with our overall University Strategy, and the underpinning enabling plans.

Student consultation

Co-creation and student voice are critical to our education strategy and to our access and participation work. At Queen Mary, students are involved in decision-making at all levels of the University. Students have shaped the developments of our strategy and the continual enhancement of the education experience, including enabling student and staff communities to be more effective co-creators.

Student consultation in plan development

Throughout the development of this plan, we have consulted with current and prospective students, as well as their key influencers in schools and colleges, to produce a cohesive offer that meets the needs of the target audiences. We have utilised three main routes to engage current students with the development of the plan, with the aim of gathering meaningful feedback and helping to shape the direction of interventions:

1. Focus groups: We had an in-depth conversation with 20 students across two focus groups, with representation across both undergraduate and postgraduate, disabled students, CEES students, students previously in receipt of FSM, Bangladeshi students, Black students, and those who had previously participated in Queen Mary's access activities. Follow-up individual consultations were available on request, as well as an anonymous feedback form.
2. Student Panels: We continue to engage with a core group of eight undergraduate students through ongoing student panels. The panel is made up of students from under-represented backgrounds, specifically those targeted through this APP. The panel have had the opportunity to feedback on targets, intervention strategies, the writing of the plan, and the evaluation. From this point, the panel will form a Student Advisory Board to ensure student voice in ongoing plan delivery.
3. Students' Union and student groups: The Students' Union, primarily the elected student officers, have been closely engaged with the development of this plan. They are represented on the Access and Participation Monitoring Group, and elected student officers are invited to all student panels. Engagement with student societies has been particularly valuable in ensuring feedback from under-represented students targeted through the plan.

Feedback received and changes implemented

Following consultation through focus groups, student panels and engagement with student societies, we have received a lot of helpful feedback that has been pivotal to plan development. Primarily, feedback has been positive towards the overall approach and has provided useful reassurance in the direction of the plan and the University's strategy. There was overall agreement to the at risk groups targeted through the plan.

The following changes have been implemented resulting from student consultation:

- Additional review of communications, including:
  - how activities aimed at supporting students with a disability are communicated, specifically those with a mental health condition or social or communication impairment.
  - how work towards the NNECL Quality Mark is communicated to students, including what actions have been taken as a result.
  - Initiating a focus group regarding the improvement of email communications to ensure students can access the relevant support areas and opportunities across the University.
  - Longer-term, how a review of our approach to managing student enquiries can help realise a single point of contact and co-ordinated approach between all academic and professional service teams, specifically relating to student support.
- Additional information and guidance embedded as part of the intervention strategy to support the access of care leavers to Queen Mary, with a specific focus on UCAS and the application process.
- Supplementary training embedded for staff and Student Ambassadors who work with students' pre-entry, specifically in relation to supporting learners with a disability.
- Additional workshops embedded on-campus as part of Intervention Strategy Three, supporting the attainment of Key Stage 4 students in receipt of FSM with a specific focus on the courses and options available at university.

- Supplementary money management guidance embedded as part of all access programmes, as well as through the transition support offered for students in receipt of the Queen Mary Bursary.

Student voice in the development of activity

We are committed to embedding student voice in both the development and delivery of activity. We actively encourage and empower our students to contribute to strategic project design and delivery. We have created a range of opportunities for students to facilitate this, for example, The Student Enhanced Engagement and Development (SEED) Award which provides students with a pathway to achieving AdvanceHE Associate Fellowship as further recognition of their engagement and contribution. Two examples of pan-University co-created projects that achieved SEED awards include our frameworks for the Inclusive Curriculum and Graduate Attributes.

Queen Mary prides itself on being one of the first universities to have an outreach progression curriculum primarily designed by, and in consultation with, current students. The curriculum spans Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 5 and embeds the voices of both our current student body and prospective learners from our sponsored academies. We continue to engage current students with an annual review of the curriculum, ensuring ongoing feedback and student voice. Specifically trained Student Ambassadors form a core team of session leaders, delivering essential information and guidance in schools and colleges, as well as on campus. Our broader 135+ cohort of central Student Ambassadors are key to the delivery of our widening access activity, specifically trained to understand the barriers to higher education and support those most under-represented across the sector and Queen Mary.

Through the School of Business and Management's Student Consultancy Project, we are engaging two consultancy teams to support the ongoing research into supporting distinct student groups. The first consultancy team will conduct research into the barriers experienced by disabled students in accessing Queen Mary, whereas the second will focus on understanding the progression of under-represented groups into postgraduate study. Both projects will be crucial to the future development of activities to support under-represented learners.

Student voice in ongoing monitoring

Current students are vital to the ongoing monitoring and continuous review of the plan. There are four main ways in which we will engage students in this process:

1. APP Monitoring Group: This group meets termly to review progress against the plan. This group includes representatives from the Students' Union.
2. Student Advisory Board: Through a Student Advisory Board, made up of a representative group of target students within the plan, we will review progress toward interventions, as well as evaluation data and participant feedback. This will enable us to continue capturing student voice in the ongoing recommendations and review of activities associated with the plan.
3. Student voice in review and evaluation: Our Student Ambassador cohort are pivotal to the ongoing monitoring of activities. Following delivery, ambassadors are involved in session debriefs and recommendations are taken forward to amend or review activity. Further, we involve our PhD Ambassador cohort in our evaluation plans. PhD Ambassadors are specifically trained to review reflective writing as part of the broader access programme evaluation strategy.
4. Student representation: Through four-primary channels, students views are represented across the University lifecycle and contribute to the ongoing feedback and review process. This is pivotal to Queen Mary's values:
   a. Course representatives who work with their School or Institute to represent the voice of students on their course.

b. Staff Student Liaison Committees, through which matters relating to the learning experience are addressed.
c. Hall representatives who seek out students views to make changes that improve the accommodation experience.
d. Student Council, through which elected representatives work on all issues to do with student life.

Evaluation of the plan

To further develop our evaluation methodology and approach, we have fully reviewed the OfS' self-assessment, considering the full student lifecycle. We have formulated a comprehensive action plan to be overseen by our evaluation leads, with a particular focus on the areas identified as emerging, including our Evaluation Implementation, Learning resulting from our evaluation findings and our ability to monitor new, or emerging at-risk groups as identified on the EORR. This plan will undergo annual review by the APP Monitoring Group.

Strategic Context

To effectively monitor and assess the impact of the initiatives outlined in our intervention strategies, we will maintain a cross-institutional approach incorporating the perspectives of a diverse stakeholder network, including the future beneficiaries of our activities.

We recognise the strong benefit in collaborating externally and engage with both delivery partners and professional networks to further enrich our approach, and support with the dissemination of best practice. Queen Mary currently holds memberships and engages fully with the following networks: Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO), NERUPI, Forum for Access and Continuing Education (FACE), APP Special interest Group (APPSiG), AcessHE (UniConnect), Advancing Access, HELOA and the National Education Opportunities Network (NEON). We are also an active subscriber to the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) service. For several years, we have longitudinally tracked access participants as one of our key tools to understand the long-term impact of our interventions. Internally, we have developed dashboards that enable all staff to explore and understand gaps across the lifecycle and at programme level, incorporating various widening participation characteristic intersections.

Multiple stakeholder groups are involved in monitoring the progress of our plan and an established APP Monitoring Group regularly reports to the Senior Executive Team. To ensure advanced levels of evaluation, in accordance with our evaluation action plan, we will further develop a University-wide community of practice though two key mechanisms:

- **APP Practitioner Group**: Established to exchange ideas, experiences, and best practices, contributing to continuous improvement in our evaluation processes.
- **Student Advisory Group**: We will build on the success of this group student panels developed in writing this plan and establish it as a permanent advisory group to support the monitoring and future development. We will ensure the group is representative of the target groups identified in the plan, including prospective students who attend our sponsored academies. We will also ensure representation from the wider student body in accordance with our whole provider approach.

Evaluation Design and Implementation

The University has a robust history of designing and implementing effective evaluation methodologies and remains dedicated to advancing these practices throughout the entire lifecycle. All activities outlined in our plan adhere to a minimum of Type 1 standards of evidence, for the following reasons:

1. Each Access and Participation activity is underpinned by a clear Theory of Change, with short and medium-term objectives aligned to the NERUPI Framework. This structured approach to evaluation ensures alignment with the latest widening participation research and facilitates collaborative contributions to sector-wide evidence.
2. Our approach is data-driven, utilising internal dashboards to monitor performance across each stage of the Access and Participation Plan lifecycles with granularity down to the program level. Furthermore:
   a. For Access: Real-time monitoring allows us to track applicant demographics, including those from outreach programmes, enabling timely responses to identified trends.
   b. For Student Success: Our student journey dashboards facilitate the monitoring of continuation annually, aligning with University Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
   c. For Progression: Engagement with our careers service is monitored through both service engagement and student journey dashboards.
3. We are committed to further developing the filter set on our data dashboards to ensure we can monitor an increased number of at risk student characteristics, as outlined on the EORR, at a deeper level than available within the OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard.
4. In addition to internal data, we regularly benchmark our performance against external sources such as HESA data and commissioned reports with UCAS, beyond those provided by the Office for Students (OfS).

To elevate each intervention to level 2 standards of evidence, we will continue to:

- Leverage our membership in HEAT to longitudinally track participants in our outreach activities, employing pre and post-statements aligned with the NERUPI framework to assess qualitative impact.
- Collaborate closely with sponsored academies to establish baselines for students in each key stage, enhancing our understanding of the cumulative impact of interventions in outreach settings.
- Introduce a standard set of statements aligned with the NERUPI framework for student registration, enabling comparison of student attitudes towards success over time.

To achieve level 3 standards of evidence within the plan's timeframe, we will:

- Invest in additional resources to establish an APP evaluator team, ensuring representation at each phase of the student lifecycle and enhancing our capacity for effective monitoring.
- Collaborate with research partners such as HEAT to refine our approach to experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation designs.

Furthermore, we will conduct annual reviews of the Queen Mary Bursary scheme using a mixed approach, including external research, the OfS Financial Toolkit, and consultation with our student body.

In summary, our evaluation approach employs a variety of research methods tailored to specific intervention strategies. These include quantitative analysis of demographic data, qualitative assessments using benchmarked NERUPI statements, and interviews and focus groups where applicable.

Detailed methodologies are provided in Annex B, with regular reviews and adjustments made to ensure the highest standards in evaluation practice.

Learning and dissemination of findings

We are committed to organisational learning and contributing to the higher education sector through effective dissemination of evaluation associated with this plan. In addition to formal governance structures, we will cultivate informal networks to stimulate the development of innovative ideas and approaches.

At the heart of our efforts to enhance educational provision is the Queen Mary Education Approach, the Active Curriculum for Excellence, which emphasizes excellence in employability, education, engagement, and the learning environment. The Queen Mary Academy collaborates closely with academic, teaching, and research staff to refine practices and regularly publishes accessible case studies on new approaches. In conjunction with formal governance, we disseminate key findings through various informal channels. Our annual Education Excellence Awards showcase and disseminate innovative teaching and student engagement methods, while the Student Union Education Awards recognise staff contributions.

To consolidate our Access and Participation Plan (APP) evaluation efforts, we will establish an internal micro-site. This platform will facilitate the sharing of internal evaluations, raise awareness of available staff support, and connect with professional networks such as NEON, HEAT, and NERUPI. Furthermore, we aim to enhance our external web presence to publish our findings, contributing to the broader evidence base in the sector.

We will continue to seek ways to support dissemination nationally, for example, a recent collaboration with AccessHE has led to the development of a pan-London evaluation resource. This resource not only helps identify collaborators but also provides a repository of evaluation materials to support practitioner development. We are committed to enhancing our evaluation capabilities and contributing to the broader discourse on access and participation in higher education through additional collaborative opportunities. Our proactive engagement with external stakeholders ensures that our evaluation efforts remain aligned with best practices, reinforcing our leadership in promoting inclusivity and social mobility within the higher education sector.

Provision of information to students

Queen Mary is committed to ensuring that information relating to fees and financial support is accessible. The APP will be published online on our dedicated webpages (26), alongside an accessible summary of the plan to support current and prospective students, and their key influencers, to access the information.

Fee information

Queen Mary's Tuition Fee webpage (27) gives accurate and clear information about course fees. The information on these webpages covers:

- Tuition fee information for current and prospective students.
- Tuition fee information for undergraduate and postgraduate, home, and international students.
- Information on how to pay tuition fees.

The current tuition fee for both home and international students is also available on each course page, through the Queen Mary Course Finder (28), to allow ease of access for prospective students.

Financial support

Information about our current financial support offer is available on the Bursaries and Scholarships webpage (29). The webpages incorporate the following information:

- A breakdown of each of the financial support packages
- Bursary eligibility criteria
- Full terms and conditions

The primary route of financial assistance is the Queen Mary University of London Bursary. This bursary offers £1,700 to undergraduate students coming from a household with income less than £20,000 and £1,000 to those from a household with income between £20,000 and £35,000, as assessed by the Student Loans Company. An additional bursary of £1,500 is available to undergraduate students who are assessed by Student Finance as being a Care Leaver or Estranged to support maintenance costs during the summer vacation between years of study. Further, the Financial Assistance Fund (30) offers financial hardship support for living costs and can be applied for on an individual basis. Support with money advice and the process is offered through Welfare Advisers, as part of the Advice and Counselling Service.

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

Introduction

In producing this Assessment of Performance summary we have utilised the data available on the OfS Access and Participation data dashboard, alongside analysing internal datasets and the risks to equality of opportunity set out in the EORR.

The analysis relates to our intake of full-time, first-degree students which comprise the majority of our undergraduate cohort. Due to the small numbers of part-time and apprenticeship students, we are unable to draw conclusions from these cohorts that are statistical significance. We will continue to monitor the risks of equality of opportunity for these students through our access and participation monitoring group.

We have considered all risk groups within our analysis, where we have sufficient and relevant data to draw meaningful conclusions. Where suitable data is currently unavailable, we will continue to review data collection and reporting methodology across the University to ensure full monitoring of at-risk groups. Through the APP Monitoring Group, we will continue to monitor the risks of equality of opportunity for new or emerging risk groups identified in the EORR. Access

Disability

We have identified that the proportion of students with a declared disability is below the sector and subsequently set a target to address this **(PTA_1).**

The proportion of entrants with a declared disability has seen a slight 0.3% decrease over time, while the sector has been increasing year-on-year. In 2021/22, 10.9% of our entrants had a declared disability, compared with 17.4% in the sector. Whilst there is a sector-wide gap in participation and evidence to suggest that despite being qualified, disabled students may not feel able to apply to certain higher education providers **(EORR Risk 3)**, students may also not have equal opportunity to receive the information and guidance needed to make informed choices about higher education **(EORR Risk 2)**.

Figure 1: Proportion of entrants with a declared disability at Queen Mary University of London and the sector from 2016/17 to 2021/22
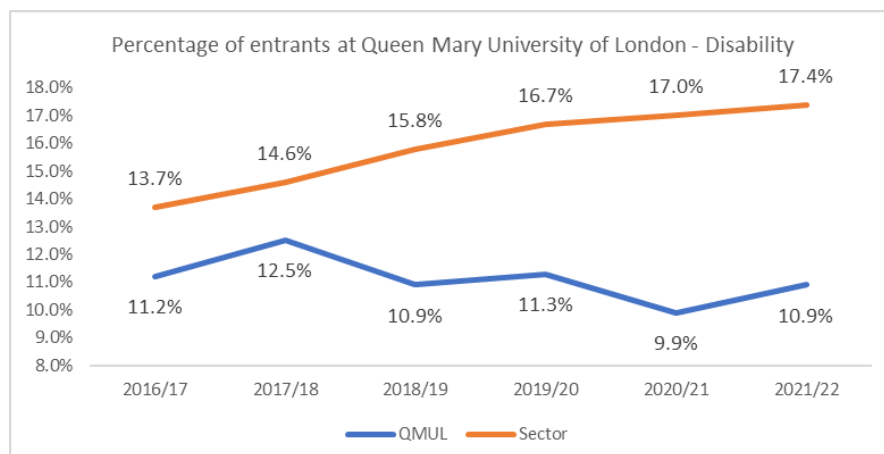
Care Leavers

We have identified that the proportion of care leavers entering Queen Mary is low. Although, absolute numbers are however too small to identify specific trends, on account of the national risks, we have set a target to increase representation of this group (PTA_2). Our target uses the definition of a young person who has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, as this can be verified with Student Loans Company data. We expect the scope of this work to also support access for a greater number of students who fall under the broader CEES definition.

In 2021/22, 31 students who identified themselves as care leavers entered Queen Mary, representing 0.71% of the home undergraduate population. Nationally, research has indicated that the overall KS4 GCSE attainment is broadly half that of the overall population and is further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic **(EORR Risk 1)** (12). Further, students may lack appropriate information and guidance relevant to their circumstances **(EORR Risk 2)**.

Table 1: Enrolment figures for verified care leavers at Queen Mary University of London from 2018/19 to 2022/23 (Student Lonas Company)

	2018/19	**2019/20**	**2020/21**	**2021/22**	**2022/23**
Verified care leaver	SUPP	11	7	13	10
% of UG Home population	SUPP	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%

TUNDRA

Tundra is a measure that uses postcodes, and it is widely accepted that these measures do not work well in London (31). Therefore, as much as there is a gap between the proportion of entrants in TUNDRA Quintile 1-2 with Quintile 4-5 (9.2% in 2021-22 compared with 81.7%), we are not using this data as a driver of activity.

Considering our locality – in one of the most deprived boroughs in England – we are committed to focussing on access measures that are relevant at an individual rather than postcode level, where available. We therefore use FSM, combined with ACORN, the latter being a much more sensitive and individualised measure of low participation than TUNDRA and POLAR, and more appropriate for universities based in London in localities like ours, as articulated in the Sutton Trust analysis 'Measuring Disadvantage'. (32)

Figure 2: Access gap between TUNDRA Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 at Queen Mary University of London from 2016/17 to 2021/22

Percentage of entrants at Queen Mary University of London - TUNDRA
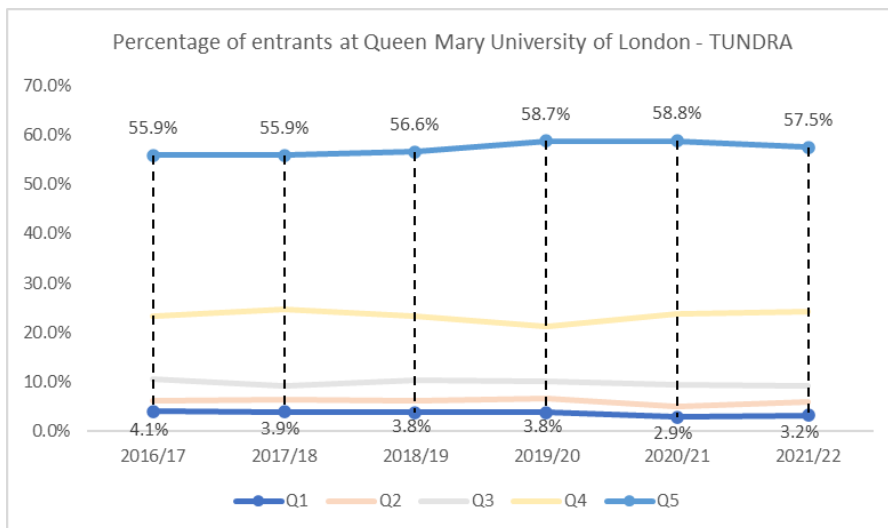
Age (mature learners):

There is a low and declining population of mature students entering our University.

The proportion of mature learners entering Queen Mary has declined from 9.8% in 2016/17 to 5.5% in 2021/22. The population of mature students in the sector is, however, increasing over time. The University's current portfolio of predominantly full-time undergraduate courses is likely to play a factor in our under-recruitment of mature students, this is further evidenced in **(EORR Risk 5)**, with course structure and teaching hours that are not targeted to attract mature entrants.

There are specialist providers in London that aim to attract mature students, and structure their courses accordingly. Given the targeted offer of these providers, and the length of time they have been successfully servicing the needs of mature students, we believe we are better to continue to focus on attracting and supporting school leavers, rather than attempt to diversify and replicate an offer that is provided elsewhere. Mature students who are able to join our courses with the current course structure will always of course be welcome at Queen Mary.

Table 2: Proportion of mature entrants at Queen Mary University of London and the sector from 2016/17 to 2021/22

	2016/17	**2017/18**	**2018/19**	**2019/20**	**2020/21**	**2021/22**
Queen Mary	9.8%	8.8%	7.9%	7.3%	7.6%	5.5%
Sector	24.9%	24.4%	25.5%	26.9%	29.3%	29.0%
Gap between QM and Sector	**15.1pp**	**15.6pp**	**17.6pp**	**19.6pp**	**21.7pp**	**23.5pp**

ABCS

The University has a low proportion of students in ABCS Quintile 1 (1.4% in 2021/22 compared to the sector 7.1%). Over 60% of the University's 2021/22 entrants are in Quintile 5, compared with a lesser 34.9% in the sector. There is a 59.5% gap in access between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 entrants at the University, compared with a 27.8% gap in the sector.

Our analysis suggests that this is being partially driven by gaps in TUNDRA Quintile 1 and 2 students, and as above, TUNDRA is a poor measure in London. However, we will continue to prioritise students meeting multiple under-represented criteria for access to long-term interventions. In particular, through the University's collaborative work with Realising Opportunities, we will address this risk. This approach is reflected in target (PTA_3).

Figure 3: Access gap between ABCS Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 at Queen Mary University of London from 2016/17 to 2021/22
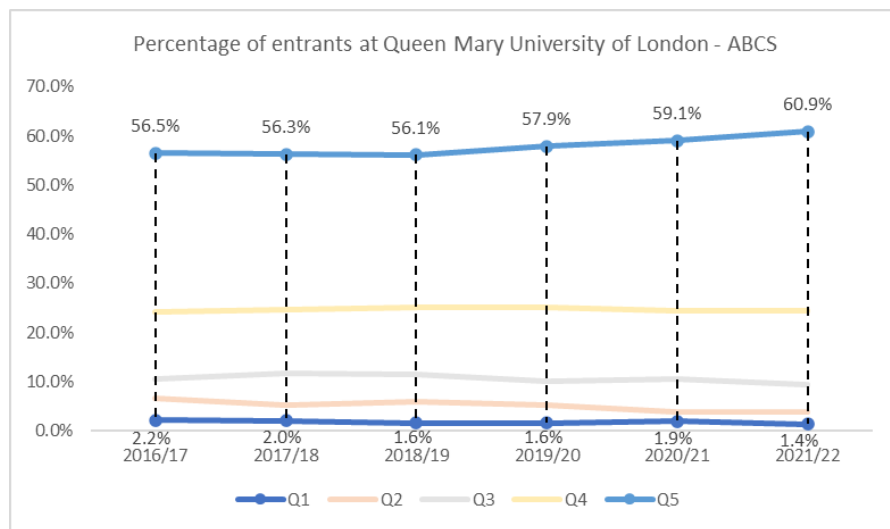
FSM and ethnicity

Queen Mary is significantly ahead of the sector in attracting FSM students (28.0% in 2021/22, compared with 18.4% in the sector). We do however note the recent decline in FSM and are monitoring this carefully.

Further, when reviewing ethnicity alongside eligibility for FSM, it is notable that the proportion of FSM recipients from White backgrounds at Queen Mary is 12.1%, compared to 25.2% of the overall population. It is well documented that these students can be some of the hardest to attract to university. This highlights a risk **(EORR Risks 1 & 2)** that will be addressed through the plan in targets (PTA_3) and (PTA_4).

Figure 4: Proportion of entrants eligible for FSM at Queen Mary University of London and the sector from 2016/17 to 2021/22
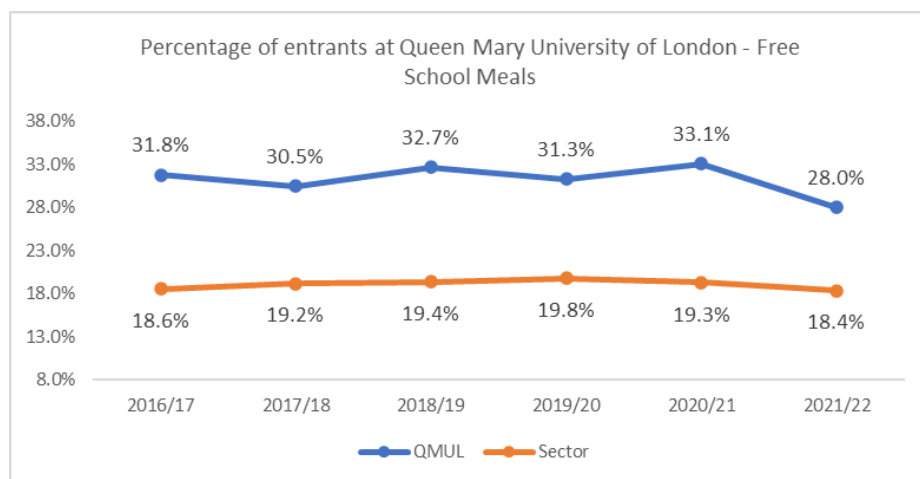
Table 3: Breakdown of ethnicity detail for entrants eligible for FSMs in 2022/23

Eligible for FSM	2022/23	% of FSM entrants	% of overall entrants
Asian – Bangladeshi	171	22.4%	13.9%
Asian - Chinese	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP
Asian – Indian	30	3.9%	11.0%
Asian – Pakistani	64	8.4%	8.7%
Other Asian background	86	11.3%	11.1%
Black – African	145	19.0%	10.8%
Black – Caribbean	10	1.3%	1.1%
Other Black background	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP
Mixed – White and Black African	10	1.3%	1.0%
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP
Mixed – White and Asian	14	1.8%	2.6%
Other Mixed background	34	4.5%	3.3%
White	84	11.0%	29.3%
Other ethnic background	45	5.9%	4.1%

Continuation

Disability

The proportion of students continuing after their first year at Queen Mary with a declared disability is below the sector at 91.4% which is 2.7% lower than that of students without a declared disability at Queen Mary **(EORR Risk 6).** The proportion had been increasing year on year but saw a decrease after 2019-20 which is a likely impact of the COVID-19 pandemic **(EORR Risk 9),** which is mirrored by the results of the sector.

When disaggregating the data, we can see that students with 'Social or communication impairment' and a 'Mental health condition' **(EORR Risks 7 and 8)** are the biggest area of concern with gaps of 5.9% and 5%, respectively, compared to the sectors 2.1% and 2%. Subsequently, we have incorporated this as a target within the plan (PTS_1).

Table 4: Breakdown of disability type for the continuation of students

Disability	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Cognitive or learning difficulties	95.6%	89.2%	93.7%	92.8%	96.8%	95.0%
Mental health condition	90.4%	78.5%	87.1%	88.8%	94.1%	89.1%
Sensory, medical, or physical impairment	94.2%	91.1%	-	90.7%	92.4%	89.7%
Social or communication impairment	-	70.8%	85.2%	-	-	88.2%
Multiple impairments	78.9%	94.5%	92.5%	92.3%	-	92.6%
No disability reported	93.9%	92.1%	93.1%	94.8%	97.1%	94.1%

Ethnicity

Continuation rates at the University are high and are above the sector for entrants from all ethnic groups. However, there was a decline in continuation from 2019/20 to 2020/21, influenced by the pandemic. This particularly impacted students from Black ethnic groups, where continuation declined by 7.1%.

Recent internal data indicates that 90.2% of Black students have continued from year one to year two, which is the lowest continuation rate among all ethnic groups at Queen Mary. Queen Mary experienced consistent increase in continuation until 2019-20, with Black students previously demonstrating an upward trajectory, surpassing other ethnicity groups, including White students. The COVID-19 pandemic **(EORR Risk 9)** may be a likely cause for this sudden decline, and this can also be seen in the results across the sector. Subsequently, we have incorporated this as a target within the plan (PTS_2).

Figure 5: Continuation rate across ethnic groups at Queen Mary University of London from 2015/16 to 2020/21
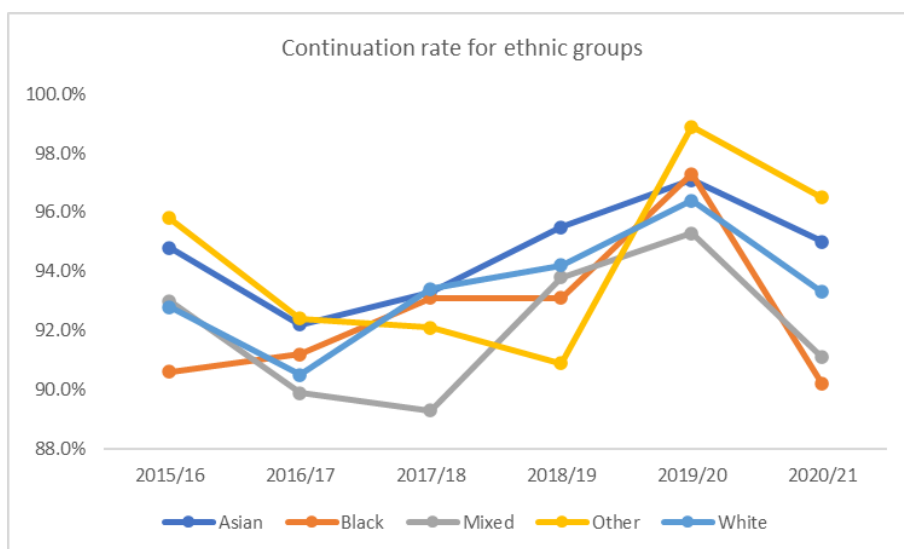
Attainment

Ethnicity and Deprivation (IMD)

There is a three-percentage point gap in attainment for Black students in IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 2, and those in IMD Quintiles 3, 4 and 5. This is a larger gap than for students of any other ethnic background, however, the gap has been closing over time and work will continue in this area to support Black students from the most deprived backgrounds to succeed at Queen Mary. This data will be monitored over time to ensure the positive trend continues.

Table 5: Attainment gap between students in IMD Q1-Q2 and Q3-Q5, across different ethnic groups from 2014/15 to 2019/20

	Attainment Gap between Q1-Q2 and Q3-Q5		
	Asian	**Black**	**White**
2014/15	8.0pp	16.0pp	1.0pp
2015/16	0.0pp	3.0pp	2.0pp
2016/17	3.0pp	0.0pp	5.0pp
2017/18	1.0pp	5.0pp	4.0pp
2018/19	2.0pp	3.0pp	-1.0pp
2019/20	1.0pp	3.0pp	1.0pp

Completion

FSM

Over the period since 2014-15, there has been a general decrease in completion rates among students eligible for FSM, leading to a widening gap compared to non-eligible students **(EORR Risk 6, 7 & 10).** Despite a slight reduction, the gap still stands at 2.3%, with 92.1% of students eligible for FSM successfully completing their studies. While our results outperform the sector average, where there is a more substantial gap of 8%, the comparison to Queen Mary's previous performance for students with FSM eligibility is a cause for concern. Subsequently, we have incorporated this as a target within the plan (PTS_3).

Figure 6: Completion rate of entrants eligible and not eligible for FSM at Queen Mary University of London from 2012/13 to 2017/18

Completion rate at Queen Mary University of London
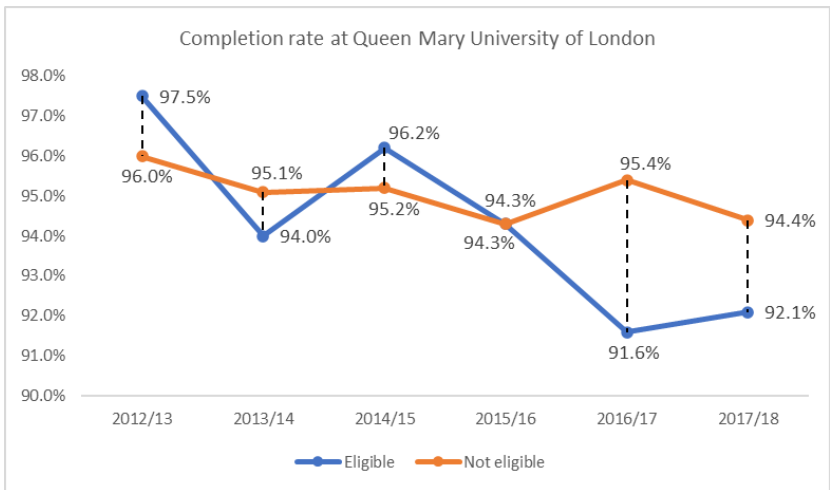
Progression

Deprivation (IMD)

There has been a decline in progression rates for students in IMD Quintiles 1 to 3, though the progression rates are still above the sector.

There is a 7.7% progression gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5, compared with a sector gap of 10.8%. The University's progression rates are above the sector for all quintiles; however, progression rates have decreased for Quintiles 1, 2, and 3 from 2017/18 to 2020/21, while rates for Quintiles 4 and 5 have increased, and the gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 widened in 2020/21.

As progression rates are currently above the sector, we have chosen not to submit a target in this area but will instead monitor our performance closely.

Figure 7: Progression gap between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 at Queen Mary University of London from 2017/18 to 2020/21

Percentage of entrants at Queen Mary University of London - TUNDRA
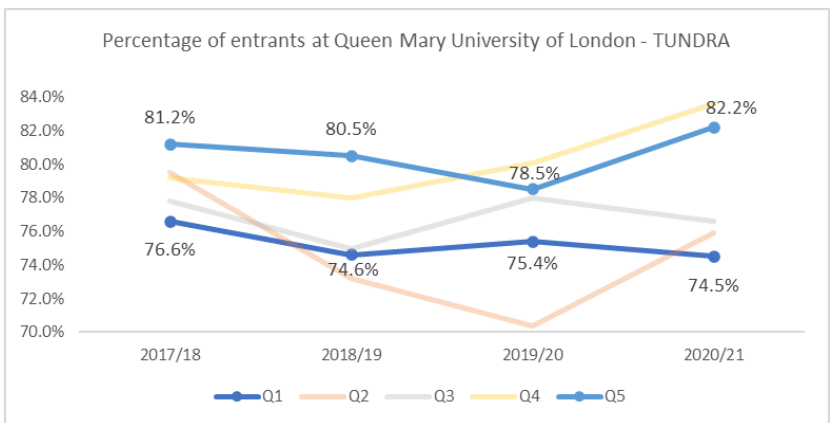
Ethnicity: There has been a decline in progression for Asian students, specifically Bangladeshi students.

While Asian students have the highest completion rates at the University, students from Asian ethnic groups had the lowest progression rates in 2020/21, though still above the sector. This group has also seen an overall decline in progression from 2017/18 to 2020/21. Internal data highlights that the most pronounced risk is for Bangladeshi students, within specific academic disciplines. While the overall progression rates into employment or further study are consistent with the broader Asian population, the progression into Highly Skilled employment is considerably lower.

Progression increased in 2020/21 for all students except those from Black ethnic groups, where progression decreased by 5.3%, after having increased by 8.8% in the previous year. Progression has also fluctuated for students from Other ethnic backgrounds, decreasing by 14.6% from 2018/19 to 2019/20, then increasing by 10.2% the following year.

Progression rates at the University remain higher than the sector for all ethnic groups. Due to the fluctuating data for Black students and Other ethnic background students, the progression rates for these ethnic groups will be monitored closely. Subsequently, we have incorporated this as a target within the plan (PTP_1).

Table 6: Progression rates across ethnic groups at Queen Mary University of London from 2017/18 to 2020/21

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Asian	79.4%	75.7%	73.7%	75.9%
Black	80.2%	75.6%	84.4%	79.1%
Mixed	71.2%	78.6%	75.0%	76.3%
Other	77.9%	83.0%	68.4%	78.6%
White	80.0%	74.8%	78.9%	80.3%

Table 7: Progression rates for Asian students at Queen Mary University of London from 2017/18 to 2020/21
(Emp – Employment or Study, HS – Highly Skilled)

	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18	
	Emp	HS	Emp	HS	Emp	HS
Bangladeshi	83%	72%	79%	72%	82%	61%
Chinese	74%	77%	82%	84%	76%	80%
Indian	86%	85%	85%	78%	85%	81%
Other	81%	76%	81%	69%	85%	71%
Pakistani	86%	81%	80%	75%	89%	75%

Disability

There is a progression gap of -2.3%, with students with a declared disability having a higher progression rate than those without in 2020/21. The progression rate for disabled students increased 4.4% from 2017/18 to 2020/21, whereas the progression rate for non-disabled students decreased in this period. Last year, the progression for disabled students fell, but is still higher than for non-disabled students.

Progression rates at the University remain higher than the sector. On account that disabled students at Queen Mary still have more favourable outcomes than non-disabled students, and our overall rates remain above the sector, we will not set a target for this risk.

Figure 8: Progression rates of students with and without a declared disability at Queen Mary University of London from 2017/18 to 2020/21
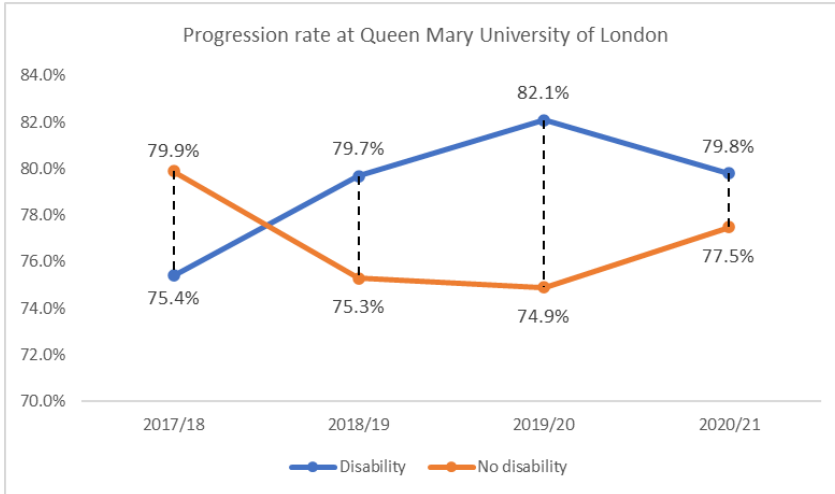

ABCS

There has been a progression gap between ABCS Quintiles 1 and 5.

The University consistently outperforms the sector in progression rates across all ABCS quintiles. Since 2018/19, we have observed a positive trend of increasing progression rates for Quintiles 1 and Quintile 2, however, we acknowledge that the gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 has widened to 19.4%, exceeding the sector's gap of 17.3%.

As described above ABCS is partly driven by TUNDRA, which is a flawed measure in London. We will therefore monitor this metric but will not set a target.

Figure 9: Progression gap between ABCS 1 and Quintile 5 at Queen Mary University of London from 2017/18 to 2020/21
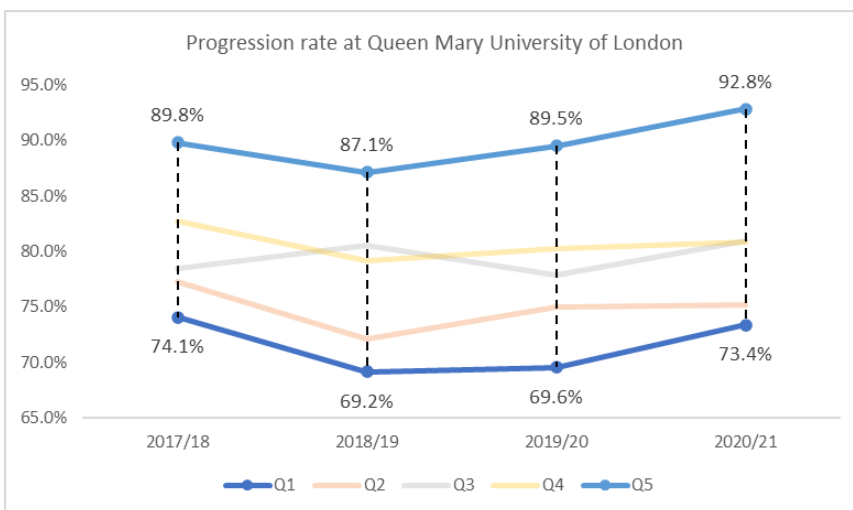
FSM

There has been a gap in progression rates for students previously eligible for FSM.

Overall progression rate has declined for FSM entrants, although it is significantly ahead of the sector. Where FSM students previously had higher progression rates than non-FSM students in 2017/18, a gap of 4.9% has now emerged. This is an area of concern that we will address through a dedicated target and subsequent intervention strategy **(PTP_2).**

Table 8: Progression rates for students eligible and not eligible for FSM at Queen Mary University of London and the sector from 2017/18 to 2020/21

		2017/18	**2018/19**	**2019/20**	**2020/21**
Queen Mary	Eligible for FSM	77.1%	69.6%	69.7%	73.3%
	Not Eligible for FSM	76.7%	74.9%	75.2%	78.2%
	Gap	**-0.4pp**	**5.3pp**	**5.5pp**	**4.9pp**
Sector	Eligible for FSM	65.1%	63.5%	65.2%	67.8%
	Not Eligible for FSM	72.9%	69.8%	71.9%	74.6%
	Gap	**7.8pp**	**6.3pp**	**6.7pp**	**6.8pp**

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.

Intervention strategy 1: Improved access for disabled students.

Evidence and rationale

Disabled students are under-represented in higher education and are 28% more likely than their peers to defer entry to university (11). Further, disabled people are almost half as likely to have an undergraduate degree than non-disabled people (33) and in 2021/22 only 17.4% of university entrants had a declared disability (15). Through additional research to be commissioned by the University into the barriers faced by disabled students in accessing Queen Mary, we plan to gain further insight into the programmes and support mechanisms required to increase the participation of disabled learners to Queen Mary.

Research suggests that despite increasing numbers of disabled students entering higher education, there is still a reluctance to disclose a disability due to the perception of associated stigmas (34), and that there are still multiple barriers that disabled people face when accessing university. Once such barrier is the lack of awareness amongst staff of the needs a disabled learner may have (35). Further, the OfS highlight the need for providers to embed inclusive practice through adopting a social response to disability, ensuring that the surrounding environment and attitudes are inclusive (36). Through a series of staff training and CPD, Queen Mary will aim to address some of the barriers faced by young people in understanding and accessing the required support services.

There is evidence to suggest that applicants with disabilities need earlier support to make a successful transition to higher education (37). By embedding inclusive practice for neurodivergent learners, as well as increased work with learners from Year 7 – Year 13 through the Outreach Progression Curriculum, we will work with prospective students to support effective delivery of information and guidance about higher education and dispel the myths associated with progression to university.

The Disabled Student Commitment report (25) calls for higher education providers to ensure appropriate access to information, advice, and guidance support, as well as ensuring that such practice acknowledges the potential barriers. Further, the report calls upon providers to ensure that there is a disability focus within outreach strategies. Through prioritisation of disabled learners on Queen Mary's long-term access programmes, as well as dedicated staff training, Queen Mary aims to support learners from in preparing for, applying to, and transitioning to the University. Finally, research within the Disabled Student Commitment (25) demonstrates the importance of ensuring Open Days are accessible to disabled applicants and their key influencers. Through the introduction of a targeted Travel Bursary, Queen Mary aims to support disabled learners in accessing key events in the pre-entry calendar, such as Open Days and Offer Holder Days.

Evaluation

The below table highlights the evaluation design for each activity associated with Intervention one, including the subsequent publication plan. This intervention will illicit OfS standards of evidence Type two, empirical enquiry.

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Further research	**Qualitative research/review (Type 1)**	-
Staff training and CPD	**Qualitative** survey outcomes from staff participants (Type 2).	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Targeted travel bursary	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes through HEAT** (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis. Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Prioritised entrance to access schemes	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2). **Qualitative review** of reflective writing/student reflection post-event (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes matched to a comparator group** (Type 3).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis. Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025). Findings shared at sector-wide conferences and networks, such as NERUPI, NEON, HELOA.
Commitment to inclusive practice	**Qualitative and quantitative** survey outcomes, Queen Mary Evaluation Framework (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis.

Intervention strategy 2: Improved access for care leavers.

Evidence and rationale

The number of care leavers progressing to higher education is significantly lower than the rest of the population. The OfS highlights that in 2018-19 only 13% of looked after young people entered higher education, compared to 43% of their non looked after peers (17). When considering entrance into high tariff institutions, the figure sits at only 2% of care leavers (38).

The Government's policy paper (39) addressing principles to guide HE providers on improving care leaver access and participation in HE demonstrates engagement with the NNECL Quality Mark as an example of best practice in this area. Further, the paper highlights the importance of providers supporting young people in care to understand their options and the application process, as well as incorporating care leavers as a priority group in admissions policies. Through working towards the NNECL Quality Mark (14), Queen Mary will improve the understanding of terms associated with CEES students, adopting a University-wide recognised language that also supports tracking, recording, and reporting. A report by Aldridge (40) highlights the need for providers to work collaboratively with local authorities. Through building valuable links with Virtual Schools, Queen Mary will support both young people and their key influencers to benefit from appropriate information and advice.

The number of children looked after in England has risen steadily over the last five years, up to 83,840 in March 2023 (41). A report by Ellis and Johnston (42) considers the pathways to university through care, making recommendations for improving the process. One of the key findings and recommendations is around destigmatising terminology and ensuring inclusive practice. Further, a report by Styrnol et al (43) notes that providers should aim to work more closely with staff in local authorities and virtual schools to facilitate collaboration, as well as ensuring an inclusive understanding of definitions and consistent tracking of CEES students. Through the introduction of an embedded CPD curriculum for professional services and academic staff, Queen Mary aims to improve the experience of both prospective and current students. In addition to this, through working collaboratively with local authorities, we aim to support improved access to appropriate information and guidance pre-entry.

Findings from Styrnol et al (43) indicate the importance of providers supporting prospective learners in developing their social capital, including ensuring there is a trusted figure in the journey to higher education. The report suggests that multi-intervention outreach, including summer schools, tutoring, information, advice, and guidance, can work together to support learners in building successful social networks that can, in turn, support progression to higher education. Through priority access to Queen Mary's long-term access programmes, as well as dedicated early support from Key Stage Four, we aim to best support CEES learners in progressing to higher education at Queen Mary.

Considering EORR risk three, perceptions of higher education, research by Hauari et al (44) highlights that there is a perceived cultural difference for many care experienced young people when considering higher education, impacting the sense of belonging at university. Findings suggest that widening participation teams can have a positive impact on the experience of care experienced young people, supporting them to develop belonging through social groups and buddying systems. Through a role model support system at key events, such as Open Days and Offer Holder Days, where prospective students can benefit from tailored support, we aim to support CEES young people develop a sense of belonging with the University.

When considering the knowledge and skills of care experienced young people, in relation to risk one, a report by Young and Lilley (38) indicates that "35 per cent of looked after children between the ages of 11 and 18 had moved schools at least once due to a change in placement". Whilst there is no official Key

Stage Five data pertaining to looked after young people, Gov.uk data highlights a significant gap in Key Stage Four English and Maths performance between all pupils and those in local authority care. In 2021/22, 11% of children looked after for 12 months achieved English and Maths at 5 or above, compared to 49.8% of all other pupils (12). Considering this gap, young people in care participating in the long-term Access to Queen Mary programme, for which care experience and estrangement are prioritising factors, are offered 1:1 academic tutoring in an A-Level subject of choice. Further, CEES young people will be offered entrance to additional subject and skills-based workshops, on campus, to support the development of confidence, academic skills, and revision techniques to support attainment at Key Stage Four.

Evaluation

The below table highlights the evaluation design for each activity associated with Intervention one, including the subsequent publication plan. This intervention will illicit OfS standards of evidence Type 3, causality

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
NNECL Quality Mark	**Qualitative review** of progress against achieving the NNECL Quality Mark (Type 2).	Learnings and progress towards the NNECL Quality Mark to be shared on the Queen Mary website from September 2026.
Staff training and CPD	**Qualitative survey outcomes** from staff participants (Type 2).	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Subject and skills-based workshops	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes matched to a comparator group** (Type 3).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis. Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Targeted travel bursary	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes through HEAT** (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis. Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).

Open Day support	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes through HEAT** (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2).	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Prioritised entrance to access schemes	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2). **Qualitative review** of reflective writing/student reflection post-event (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes matched to a comparator group** (Type 3).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis. Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025). Findings shared at sector-wide conferences and networks, such as NERUPI, NEON, HELOA.

Intervention strategy 3: Improved attainment for Key Stage 4 students eligible for FSM, attending our sponsored academies.

Evidence and rationale

Queen Mary will work with partner schools to support the attainment of targeted students in receipt of FSM at Key Stage Four. Through the University's close relationships with three partner schools, Drapers' Academy, Royal Greenwich Trust School, and St Paul's Way Trust School, we will seek to improve the confidence, metacognition, and self-efficacy of learners.

The OfS highlights the positive correlation between attainment in school and subsequent access to higher education, specifically recommending that strong partnerships are pivotal to supporting the educational attainment of learners from under-represented groups (45). In addition, the research report by Crawford (46) finds that learners attending schools with a higher proportion of students in receipt of FSM are significantly less likely to progress to a high-tariff institution. Findings from Newrick (47) indicates that university outreach schemes, alongside contextual admissions, have the potential to support the most disadvantaged young people to successfully progress to higher education.

The Education Endowment Foundation indicates that there is a high strength of evidence towards activities that support the development of metacognition and self-regulation (20). The evidence suggests that "the average impact of metacognition and self-regulation strategies is an additional seven months' progress over the course of a year" and that to support in closing the attainment gap, explicit teaching of such techniques to groups under-represented in higher education may be beneficial (20). Further findings by Stanton et al (48) suggest that the success of learners can be impacted by supporting them to develop their own metacognition. Through embedding a programme of small-group academic coaching, focused on improving metacognition, confidence, and self-efficacy, we aim to work towards improved attainment for learners at Key Stage Four, ultimately supporting progression to university.

Through the University's Outreach Progression Curriculum, learners at the University's partner Multi Academy Trusts are supported through a sustained outreach offer from Key Stage Two to Key Stage Five. (49) Findings indicate that long-term sustained programmes have a positive impact on attainment, as well as motivation towards learning. Further evidence is available from the OfS (50), highlighting that "progressive outreach helps learners improve their knowledge of higher education and build confidence to make informed decisions". By working with learners in a sustained way, Queen Mary aims to continue building the confidence and skills of young people with the overarching aim of raising academic attainment and supporting access to Queen Mary.

A collaborative report by TASO and HEAT (19) investigates the impact of outreach participation and attainment at Key Stage Four, ultimately assessing the impact on access to higher education. The investigation finds that participation in campus visits is "associated with a small increase in Attainment 8 scores", with the greatest impact for originally low attaining pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Through culminating small group academic coaching, progressive outreach interventions in-school, and skills-based visits to the Queen Mary campus, we aim to support the attainment of students in receipt of FSM at Queen Mary's partner schools.

Evaluation

The below table highlights the evaluation design for each activity associated with Intervention one, including the subsequent publication plan. This intervention will illicit OfS standards of evidence Type 2, empirical enquiry.

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Academic coaching	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes through HEAT** (Type 2). **Independently validated report** generated through ImpactEd, measuring social and emotional skills (Type 2).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis. Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025). Findings shared at sector-wide conferences and networks, such as NERUPI, NEON, HELOA.

On campus event	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes through HEAT** (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis. Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Progression curriculum	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes through HEAT** (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis. Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
University-MAT strategic partnerships	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes through HEAT** (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis. Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).

Intervention strategy 4: Improved access to Research Intensive Universities (Realising Opportunities)

Evidence and rationale

Research highlights that only 11.4% of students from all under-represented groups progress to a high tariff institution (51). In addition to this, students completing their A levels at independent schools were more than twice as likely than their state school peers to progress to high tariff higher education by age 19, with the gap between independent and state school students increasing to 32.8 percentage points in 2023 (52). Through the Realising Opportunities, we aim to collaboratively address these issues. Following a survey to programme participants (cohort 13), 92% of respondents had applied to a Realising Opportunities university.

There is research to indicate that amongst the 2023 applicants who had applied, or were planning to apply to university, there was a substantial difference in preference for attending a Russell Group university by familial financial circumstances (53). Specifically, the research highlights that young people from families who used a food bank in the last year were 13 percentage points less likely to list a Russell Group as their preferred university to attend. Further, the same research finds that young people from state schools were 34% less likely to want to go to a Russell Group university than their privately educated peers. This indicates an attitudinal difference in university aspirations that Realising Opportunities seeks to address through raising awareness and understanding of research intensive universities.

There has been great emphasis in recent years on the power of collaboration in supporting the most under-represented students into higher education (54). Through working together with 13 other universities, we aim to support students to explore their geographical horizons and make informed choices about their future. Further, the collaborative approach aims to ensure continual learning from good practice, as well as opening opportunities for young people from the most under-represented backgrounds to explore university options outside of their direct geographic area.

Whilst Realising Opportunities demonstrates success in supporting those at risk of inequality of opportunity to access research intensive universities, the fact that disadvantaged young people continue to remain much less likely to get into the most 'prestigious, high-tariff universities' (52), combined with the focus on perceptions of higher education outlined in the EORR, illustrates the partnership's continuing relevance in its aims and approach through a series of targeted, evidence-based interventions.

Evaluation

The below table highlights the evaluation design for each activity associated with Intervention one, including the subsequent publication plan. This intervention will illicit OfS standards of evidence Type 3, causality.

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Events & activities at Partner universities	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2).	External evaluation report to be compiled by the IES and published annually on the Realising Opportunities website.

	Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes through HEAT (Type 2).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis.
	Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2).	Realising Opportunities presence and participation in sector conferences to disseminate learnings.
	Comparator group analysis of student progress, using the National Pupil Database and HESA Track (Type 3).	
Academic Skills Module	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2).	External evaluation report to be compiled by the IES and published annually on the Realising Opportunities website.
	Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes through HEAT (Type 2).	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis.
	Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2).	Realising Opportunities presence and participation in sector conferences to disseminate learnings.
	Comparator group analysis of student progress, using the National Pupil Database and HESA Track (Type 3).	
Skills4Uni module and quiz	**Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2).	External evaluation report to be compiled by the IES and published annually on the Realising Opportunities website.
	Comparator group analysis of student progress, using the National Pupil Database and HESA Track (Type 3).	Realising Opportunities presence and participation in sector conferences to disseminate learnings.
Online support including online community and Live Q&As	**Monitoring of students via internal dashboards** for applications, offer, accepts, enrolments (Type 2).	External evaluation report to be compiled by the IES and published annually on the Realising Opportunities website.
	Comparator group analysis of student progress, using the National Pupil Database and HESA Track (Type 3).	Realising Opportunities presence and participation in sector conferences to disseminate learnings.

Intervention strategy 5: Improved continuation rates at Queen Mary for students with a declared disability

Evidence and rationale

Disabled students exhibit higher dropout rates and face more challenging experiences in higher education compared to their non-disabled peers (21). Individuals with less apparent disabilities encounter additional disadvantages due to a lack of understanding and willingness to accommodate their needs (22). Research underscores the importance of providing training for staff working with students to identify mental health conditions and suicide risks (23). To gain deeper insights into the barriers faced by disabled students at Queen Mary in progressing through higher education, our team plans to conduct additional research, focusing on understanding the necessary programmes and support mechanisms to enhance the participation of disabled learners at Queen Mary.

A systematic review reveals that Assistive Learning Technologies can offer educational, psychological, and social benefits for students with disabilities, fostering academic engagement and social participation, and bringing about transformative psychological effects (24).

Our strategy for supporting students with disabilities aligns with best practices in the Higher Education sector, drawing inspiration from the work of the Disabled Students' Commission. The Commission's report for the academic year 2022/23 highlights persistent gaps in disabled student access, academic outcomes, experiences, and employment opportunities. Despite some narrowing, the attainment rate for disabled students has consistently remained lower over the past five years. The Commission recommends enhancing the 'four C's' for disabled students' university experience (25).

Regarding targeted interventions for students with autism, we recognise that new environments, especially noisy and unfamiliar ones, can be stressful. Hence, we have conducted autism-specific induction events for new students. Post COVID-19 pandemic, we have actively involved existing students with autism, allowing second and third-year students to share their experiences and offer support to incoming first-year students.

Evaluation

The below table highlights the evaluation design for each activity associated with Intervention five, including the subsequent publication plan. This intervention will illicit OfS standards of evidence Type 2, empirical enquiry.

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Additional Wellbeing Support	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives using Queen Mary evaluation framework from student participants (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for non-continuation (Type 2).**	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to the Head of Student Wellbeing

Student Assistance Programme	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1) **Monitoring of students via service dashboards for usage trends and identification of themes for students accessing the service (Type 2)**	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to the Head of Student Wellbeing
Learner Engagement Analytics	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1)	-
Enhanced Transition and Availability of support for students with Autism	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives using Queen Mary evaluation framework from student participants (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for non-continuation (Type 2)**	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to the Head of Disability and Dyslexia and Head of Student Wellbeing
Enhanced staff training to support disabled students	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives using Queen Mary evaluation framework from staff participants (Type 2).	Progress against this initiative will be reported internally on an annual basis
Expansion or delivery of Assistive Learning Technologies	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1)	-
Review of existing Extenuating Circumstances policy	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1)	-
Further research	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1)	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Disabled Student Commitment	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1)	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Togetherall	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1)	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).

Intervention strategy 6: Improved continuation rates for Black students

Evidence and rationale

While Black students demonstrate higher enrolment rates in higher education compared to certain ethnic groups, their retention rates and degree outcomes often fall below the average. In the academic year 2020 to 2021, Black students had a continuation rate of 84.3%, lower than their counterparts in other major ethnic groups (55).

Efforts to enhance student wellbeing aim to address the mental health and emotional needs of students, acknowledging the close relationship between academic success and psychological wellbeing. According to the Office for Students (OfS) 2019 mental health insight brief, there is a significant attainment gap between Black and White students with declared mental health conditions. Therefore, essential interventions such as counselling services, mental health advice, and general wellbeing guidance are crucial (56). Personalised one-to-one coaching offers tailored guidance and mentorship, particularly advantageous for Black students navigating the challenges of higher education. A successful mentoring scheme not only contributes to a better overall environment but also serves as a valuable model for student support (57).

Research indicates that there is a prevailing sense of isolation among Black students and a stigma surrounding help-seeking behaviours and mental health difficulties (58). Initiatives like the Peer Assisted Study Scheme, featuring Black mentors to support students during their first year and help them navigate university services, can play a significant role in addressing this issue.

Research with minority ethnic students to hear their direct experiences highlights a combination of impactful factors, all of which lead to a sense of not belonging in HE and feelings of 'otherness and isolation' (59) (60). This sets the context for their journey through their degree and whether they progress to postgraduate studies. Therefore, attention from year one must be a priority. Their experience was felt, in particular, through assessments. Evidence suggests the creation of assessment reflects the bias of the task author in their cultural norms (59); and that both formative and summative feedback draws on predetermined "stocks of interactional language" (61). Considering this, Queen Mary Academy will lead on a 'Inclusive Assessment Practice' project, with the aim of embedding Inclusive Assessment Practice across Queen Mary with a specific focus on diversification assessment approaches.

Engagement and a sense of belonging are widely understood to be crucial to student attainment and retention (62). Research found that students talked about student engagement based on sense of belonging in three interlinked ways: familiarity, interpersonal belonging, and academic belonging (63). The Library Learning Support and Engagement project will aim to support students in all three areas by building on the work of the previous Get Ahead project and developing support for transition to university by clarifying expectations and demystifying higher education; encouraging peer interaction and supporting students to feel that they belong by understanding their place at university.

The literature about the challenge of negotiating the 'hidden curriculum' (64) and the challenges of thriving in higher education is extensive. Who, or what, is responsible for adaptation is often contested, however our approach is underpinned by principles of inclusivity which does not consider systemic issues.

It is also important that, while looking to support Black student attainment, this is not done is a way that is exclusive. Stevenson et al define 'ethnicity targeting' as inclusive interventions designed to benefit all students but one or more minority ethnic groups and/or exclusive interventions explicitly directed at one or more minority ethnic groups' (65). Nevertheless, it is important that we do identify and address specific challenges faced by Black students (66).

We will employ relevant strategies, drawing on academic literacies, learning development values, and Peer Assisted Study Support (PASS), to collaborate with students and help them thrive. Additionally, insights from extracurricular initiatives will contribute to refining the curriculum and assessment methods, achieved through direct collaboration with academic schools and our partnership with the Queen Mary Academy.

The work of the intervention will prioritise the encouragement of peer interaction, both via dedicated initiatives but also by close integration with the PASS scheme. As Gravett and Winstone observe, 'interpersonal connections remain of paramount importance to many students' (67). This initiative will also adopt a 'whole person' approach to supporting learners' development, acknowledging the complex lives they have. The pilot we ran with Grit in 2022 demonstrated the benefit of encouraging reflexive approaches and we will look to incorporate some of these ideas into our work. It is also important that some of this work is contextualised and as such we will continue to work closely with other professional services.

Finally, it is worth noting that transition is an ongoing process. The initial incarnation of Get Ahead was focused on pre-arrival support, but this approach will look more at support throughout students' time at Queen Mary. Our Westfield Fund supported work (Psaros et al, forthcoming) with second years both informed our thinking about first year progression and retention and also our work directly with Level 5 students, who are often overlooked by institution-wide initiatives (68) (69) (70) (71).

The REC aims to provide representation of BAME people at senior level, take appropriate action on issues of race, and improve the Black student experience to provide a sense of belonging which is essential to improve continuation rates of Black students. (72)

Evaluation

The below table highlights the evaluation design for each activity associated with Intervention six, including the subsequent publication plan. This intervention will illicit OfS standards of evidence Type 2, empirical enquiry.

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Additional Wellbeing Support	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives using Queen Mary evaluation framework from student participants (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for non-continuation (Type 2).**	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to the Head of Student Wellbeing

Student Assistance Programme	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1) **Monitoring of students via service dashboards for usage trends and identification of themes for students accessing the service (Type 2)**	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to the Head of Student Wellbeing
Learner Engagement Analytics	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1)	-
Student Lifecycle Coaching for at risk students	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives using Queen Mary evaluation framework from randomised controlled trials of target demographic (Type 3) **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for non-continuation (Type 2).** **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes matched to a comparator group** (Type 3).	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Library Learning Support and Engagement for continuation	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives using Queen Mary evaluation framework from student participants (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for non-continuation (Type 2).**	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to the Head of Library Teach and Learning Support
Peer Assisted Study Scheme	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives using Queen Mary evaluation framework from student participants (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for non-continuation (Type 2).**	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to the Head of Library Teach and Learning Support Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Race Equality Charter	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1)	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).

Inclusive Assessment Practice	**Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for non-continuation (Type 2).** **Post survey** of workshop objectives using Queen Mary evaluation framework from staff participants (Type 2)	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to the Director of Queen Mary Academy
Togetherall	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1)	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).

Intervention strategy 7: Improved completion rates for students who previously eligible for FSM

Evidence and rationale

In the UK compulsory education system, students eligible for FSM consistently achieve lower outcomes compared to their non-eligible peers. This trend persists in higher education, where students previously eligible for FSM are less likely to progress successfully from one academic year to the next and complete their qualifications. (73)

Queen Mary plans to implement a Learner Engagement Policy to identify and assist disengaged or struggling students, enabling targeted interventions for improved progression and completion. Research indicates that such information gathering helps institutions better understand students' needs, allowing them to customise information about services and support tailored to each student's benefit. (74)

Various studies highlight the positive impact of mentoring, counselling, coaching, and advising on academic attainment, retention, and completion. Queen Mary's wellbeing services encompass a wide range of offerings and advice, including a 24/7 wellbeing hotline for after-hours support. Collaboration with Coachbright will also provide academic coaching and self-confidence workshops. (75)

Research demonstrates that participation in a blended peer mentoring program correlates positively with enhanced student outcomes. (75) Queen Mary intends to expand the current Buddy Scheme, a peer mentoring initiative, with a specific focus on supporting second-year students who were previously eligible for FSM.

Research (76) and findings from Universities UK International (77), underscores the positive impact of short-term international experiences, lasting four weeks or fewer, particularly those from less-advantaged socio-economic backgrounds. Short-term international experiences are shown to enhance graduate outcomes and employability skills. Mobile students, those who go abroad during their degree, consistently exhibit improved outcomes, such as a 19% higher likelihood of gaining a 1st in their degree, 20% less unemployment, 7% higher average wages, and 10% more likely to be in graduate jobs related to their degree (77) [48]. These outcomes are even more pronounced for mobile students from less-advantaged backgrounds, demonstrating higher further study rates, lower unemployment rates, and higher average salaries.

In accordance with the 'Excellence in Student Employability' pillar of our curriculum approach, we are committed to improving the engagement of students previously eligible for FSM with global mobility programmes by providing clear financial information, maximising financial support, and addressing barriers beyond financial concerns (78).

Evaluation

The below table highlights the evaluation design for each activity associated with Intervention seven, including the subsequent publication plan. This intervention will illicit OfS standards of evidence Type 2, empirical enquiry.

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Additional Wellbeing Support	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives using Queen Mary evaluation framework from student participants (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for non-continuation (Type 2).**	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to the Head of Student Wellbeing
Student Assistance Programme	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1) **Monitoring of students via service dashboards for usage trends and identification of themes for students accessing the service (Type 2)**	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to the Head of Student Wellbeing
Learner Engagement Analytics	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1)	-
Student Lifecycle Coaching for at risk students	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives using Queen Mary evaluation framework from randomised controlled trials of target demographic (Type 3) **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for non-continuation (Type 2).** **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes matched to a comparator group** (Type 3).	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Extension of Buddy Scheme to	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives using Queen Mary evaluation	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to the

support second to third year transition	framework from student participants (Type 2). **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for non-continuation (Type 2).**	Head of Library Teach and Learning Support Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Queen Mary Bursary	**Post survey of objectives using Queen Mary evaluation framework from students in receipt of a bursary (Type 2).** **Monitoring of students via internal dashboards for non-continuation (Type 2).**	Interim findings disseminated internally on an annual basis to Head of Student Recruitment and Widening Participation Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Targeted promotion and support for placements abroad	**Pre and post survey comparison** of objectives, using Queen Mary evaluation framework (Type 2). **Qualitative** review of reflective writing/student reflection post-event (Type 2). **Longitudinal study to compare year-on-year outcomes (quantitative and qualitative)** for FSM students, to track progress and monitor our reach with this at-risk target group. (Type 2)	Progress against this initiative will be reported internally on an annual basis by the Head of Global Opportunities Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).
Togetherall	**Qualitative research/review** (Type 1)	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (published on our website from October 2025).

Intervention strategy 8: Improved the progression rates into highly skilled employment or further study for Bangladeshi students or those previously eligible for FSM

Evidence and rationale

Research shows that students from low-income and under-represented backgrounds, including those who were previously in receipt of FSM, and of Bangladeshi heritage, face multiple obstacles when

obtaining graduate level employment or further study. These obstacles can include limited professional networks, restricted geographical mobility, and a lack of social capital, which can impact overall career aspirations.

Our strategy to address these challenges and bridge progression gaps for students previously eligible for FSM and students of Bangladeshi heritage is based on sector research and student testimony. Our strategy includes three main activities: tailored support, curriculum integration, and enhanced accessibility of the careers service.

Tailored support through effective coaching and mentoring
Students from less-advantaged backgrounds face barriers when applying to graduate level work due to a lack of networks, lower social capital and less parental guidance around career options and application support (79). The intersectionality of being from a low socio-economic background and being of Bangladeshi heritage can create additional barriers. Research has shown that for many graduates of Bangladeshi heritage there exists a preference to work and study near their community, further restricting geographical mobility and narrowing professional and social networks (80) (81). Research carried out at Queen Mary looking at a small cohort of female Bangladeshi students reported that Bangladeshi women did not favour mixed gender networking events, preferring one to one mentoring (80) (81).

 Scerro et al (82) found that mentoring relationships, regardless of background, enable mentees to build knowledge, skills, and confidence, develop networking opportunities and gain self-reflection abilities. (82) This is further supported by other research which finds mentoring is a key component of graduate student growth (83) (84). Effective mentoring has been revealed by research studies to be a vital part of the university experience for the successful graduate student. Mentoring assisted graduate students to "better prepare for a career...provided them with an alternate support network and had helped increase their self-esteem and confidence". Furthermore, research into Muslim women in the work environment, highlighted the benefits of mentoring, increasing confidence, internships and work shadowing as helping to break down barriers to the workplace (85).

 One-to-one mentoring connects students and graduates with experienced professionals who can offer personalised guidance, fostering confidence, social capital, and networking skills (82) (83) (84) (82) (80) (84). Based on this research, we believe that further individualised career coaching and targeting mentoring for students previously eligible for FSM and Bangladeshi students will equip them with the tools to identify their career goals, develop their strengths, and craft effective job search strategies. Workshops will provide a platform to address common barriers identified for these two cohorts, such as fear of failure and lack of professional networks, empowering them to overcome these hurdles.

Embedding Employability Skills into the curriculum
The key to ensuring the progression gap is reduced is to make employability a structurally unavoidable part of the academic curriculum. Tom Lowe argues that embedding employability skills into the curriculum ensures "a higher percentage of students are exposed to…employability activities, and particularly, learning is ensured for students from widening participation backgrounds" (79). While Flynn, Levett and Baines conclude "embedding activities which help to develop social capital or allow students to practice in work-related environments, gives widening participation, often first in family, working-class students an increased chance of succeeding in gaining graduate level roles against their more privileged peers" (86).

Over the past two decades, much research has been conducted around this subject, highlighting the value of embedding employability into the curriculum:

- The Bridge Group found that students from lower income backgrounds found it harder to participate in the activities that employers are perceived to value, if they sat outside of the curriculum (87).
- Those lacking in social capital can be slower to make career decisions early on leaving them still uncertain about a career plan upon graduation (88); embedding in curriculum from the first year would help with decision making and research shows that this is something that students would want added to their academic degrees (89).
- Graduates may not understand how their academic studies and university experiences relate to the world of work (90) (89); embedding this within curriculum with academic credit can demonstrate that these activities are of value and can increase participation (89).
- Students will often approach academics for career advice; bringing the careers team into curriculum offers expertise at scale and equality of access (91).
- Embedding careers education into the curriculum ensures the careers service becomes central university experience (92).

By embedding employability skills into the curriculum, this strategy ensures that all students, regardless of their background, can acquire the skills and experience necessary to thrive in the competitive job market. This structurally integrated approach levels the playing field, empowering all graduates to compete on equal footing with their peers (86).

Enhancing peer and professional support networks
Student peer led delivery has been present in universities for many years. In this model students and recent graduates act as co-creators and can engage students who, for a range of reasons, do not wish to engage with Careers Service professionals, feeling more comfortable engaging with their peers/recent peers who can empathise with them. There are many examples of successful peer-to-peer work within Careers Services (93).

The benefits include:

- Peer to peer support can lower anxiety in students, thus supporting wellbeing (94)
- Working with peers can increase connections (95)
    - Evidence shows that those who participate in peer-to-peer support integrate more effectively into the University (96) and can also increase a student's sense of belonging (97) (98).
    - The Careers Studio at University of Liverpool increased student engagement at scale, nudged students to take action and reduced anxiety around career planning (99).

A peer-to-peer support model will facilitate shared experiences and empathy, providing a relatable and approachable platform for all students and graduates to seek guidance (93). Peer mentors, who have themselves navigated the career landscape, can offer valuable insights and support, fostering a sense of community and reducing the hesitation often associated with traditional career service interactions.

Our Internal data shows us that placement rates for Bangladeshi and financial aid bursary students (being used as a proxy dataset for FSM) in our Careers and Enterprise-run employability programmes are lower than their counterparts (White students and non-bursary students). We also have a low number of Bangladeshi students taking up appointments and attending events. Therefore, Careers and Enterprise needs to make itself more accessible and visible to students, with a first point of contact that students can relate to and can encourage students of the benefits of engaging in Careers and Enterprise activities. Establishing a dedicated Careers Studio space will provide a physical hub where our students can access

career support and resources (95) (96). This dedicated space will serve as a welcoming environment where they can connect with career advisors, peer mentors, and fellow graduates, fostering a sense of belonging and encouraging active engagement with career services (99).

Global mobility to support progression outcomes

Despite positive outcomes, WP students, including Bangladeshi students, face high attrition rates in global mobility programmes due to various barriers. This targeted activity aims to support increased progression rates among Bangladeshi students at Queen Mary through a curated short-term mobility program, addressing and reducing compounded barriers such as financial constraints, lack of role models, cultural differences, and family expectations. The initiative aligns with the University's strategic priorities to increase engagement and participation in mobility among underrepresented groups, ultimately fostering enhanced skillsets, strengthened Graduate Attributes, and increased job market preparedness. Coordination between the Global Engagement team, academic schools, Queen Mary Careers and Enterprise, and on-campus communities is expected to generate increased interest and applications for mobility programmes among Bangladeshi students during the summer of 2025.

Evaluation

The below table highlights the evaluation design for each activity associated with intervention eight, including the subsequent publication plan. This intervention will illicit OfS standards of evidence Type 2, empirical enquiry.

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Graduate coaching	**Monitoring of engagement data** for participation in coaching sessions (Type 1). **Qualitative survey outcomes** administered 6 months post engagement to assess students' experiences with the intervention and their career outcomes. (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes** data using Graduate Outcomes Survey data (Type 2).	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (due to the delay in data, this will be in October 2026).
Peer to Peer Graduate Support	**Monitoring of engagement data** for participation in coaching sessions (Type 1). **Pre and post survey comparison of** confidence, career readiness, and employability (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes** data using Graduate Outcomes Survey data, using non-participants as a comparator	Progress against this initiative will be reported in our annual impact report (due to the delay in data, this will be in October 2026).

	group. Administered annually at enrolment (Type 2),	
Embedding Careers within the curriculum	**Qualitative survey outcomes** from module evaluation forms (Type 1).	Graduate Outcomes Results of students previously eligible for who had employability embedded into their degree programme from Level 4 (subject to the framework being rolled out in September 2025) will be published in June 2030.
	Pre and post survey comparison for students who completed embedded employability compared to previous cohorts by using the Careers Readiness Survey, administered annually at enrolment (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes** data using Graduate Outcomes Survey data, using non-participants as a comparator group (Type 2).	Progress against this initiative will be reported annually in our progress report (published on our website from September 2025)
Student peer led delivery careers service	**Monitoring of engagement data** with the service (Type 1). **Pre and post survey comparison** for students who engaged in the service by using the Careers Readiness Survey, administered annually at enrolment (Type 2). **Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes** data using Graduate Outcomes Survey data, using non-participants as a comparator group (Type 2).	Findings to be shared on the Queen Mary website from September 2026. Progress against this initiative will be reported annually in our progress report (published on our website from September 2025)
Mentoring	**Pre and post survey comparison of** confidence, career readiness, and employability (Type 2). **Pre and post survey comparison** for students who participated in the pilot by using the Careers Readiness Survey, administered annually at enrolment (Type 2).	Findings to be shared on the Queen Mary website from September 2026. Progress against this initiative will be reported annually in our progress report (published on our website from September 2025)

	Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes data using Graduate Outcomes Survey data (Type 2).	
Woman of Colour Entrepreneur-in-residence pilot	**Pre and post survey comparison** of confidence measures based on entrepreneurial competencies within the Entrecomp Framework (Type 2).	Findings to be shared on the Queen Mary website from September 2026.
	Pre and post survey comparison for students who participated in the pilot by using the Careers Readiness Survey, administered annually at enrolment (Type 2).	Progress against this initiative will be reported annually in our progress report (published on our website from September 2025)
	Monitoring of participant ventures to determine activity on the HE Business and Community Interaction Survey (HE-BCI).	
Summer School (Global Mobility)	**Pre and post survey comparison of** confidence, career readiness, and employability (Type 2).	Progress against this initiative will be reported annually in our progress report (published on our website from September 2025)
	Longitudinal tracking of student outcomes data using Graduate Outcomes Survey data (Type 2).	

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Fees, investments and targets
2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Queen Mary University of London

Provider UKPRN: 10007775

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	This applies for our Integrated Foundation Programmes within Science and Engineering disciplines	N/A	9250
Foundation degree		N/A	9250
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	This fee applies for the year in which a student takes a year in industry only	N/A	1850
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	This fee applies for the year in which a student takes a full-year study abroad option only	N/A	1385
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	*
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
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: Queen Mary University of London

Provider UKPRN: 10007775

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	£1,212,000	£1,212,000	£1,212,000	£1,212,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£9,242,000	£9,254,000	£9,266,000	£9,278,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£154,000	£177,000	£203,000	£229,000

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 (£)	£473,000	£473,000	£473,000	£473,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£666,000	£666,000	£666,000	£666,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£73,000	£73,000	£73,000	£73,000
Access activity investment	**Total access investment (£)**	**£1,212,000**	**£1,212,000**	**£1,212,000**	**£1,212,000**
Access activity investment	*Total access investment (as % of HFI)*	**1.1%**	**1.1%**	**1.1%**	**1.1%**
Access activity investment	**Total access investment funded from HFI (£)**	**£1,212,000**	**£1,212,000**	**£1,212,000**	**£1,212,000**
Access activity investment	*Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)*	**£0**	**£0**	**£0**	**£0**
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£8,500,000	£8,500,000	£8,500,000	£8,500,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£130,000	£130,000	£130,000	£130,000
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£612,000	£624,000	£636,000	£648,000
Financial support investment	**Total financial support investment (£)**	**£9,242,000**	**£9,254,000**	**£9,266,000**	**£9,278,000**
Financial support investment	*Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)*	**8.1%**	**8.2%**	**8.4%**	**8.4%**
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£154,000	£177,000	£203,000	£229,000
Research and evaluation investment	*Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)*	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Queen Mary University of London

Provider UKPRN: 10007775

Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim [500 characters maximum]	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from under-represented backgrounds (students with a reported disability).	PTA_1	Access	Reported disability	Disability reported		To increase the percentage of students entering Queen Mary who have a reported disability. (Any reported disability, increase by 0.5% each year from 10.9% to 12.9%).	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage	10.9%	11.4%	11.9%	12.4%	12.9%
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from under-represented backgrounds (care leaver students).	PTA_2	Access	Care experienced students	Care experienced students		To increase the proportion of care leaver students entering Queen Mary by 0.1% each year	No	SLC data (please include details in commentary)	2022-23	Percentage	0.71%	0.81%	0.91%	1.01%	1.11%
To support attainment raising at Key Stage 4 for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.	PTA_3	Raising attainment	Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)	Eligible		To improve the confidence and self-efficacy of Key Stage 4 students eligible for Free School Meals across Queen Mary's sponsor schools.	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
By working in collaboration, Realising Opportunities (RO) will contribute to national improvement in closing the gap in entry rates at higher tariff providers between the most and least under-represented groups.	PTA_4	Access	Other	Other (please specify in description)		Proportion of RO students who are tracked into HE who will access a research intensive university (RIU) within two years of becoming 'HE ready' and completing their post-16 studies.'Other' has been selected as the characteristic owing to multiple eligible at risk groups. 1% yearly increase forecasted using historic HESA data from 2016-2019 and taking into consideration OfS's desire for stretching targets.	Yes	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	2019-20	Percentage	48%	55%	56%	57%	58%
	PTA_5														
	PTA_6														
	PTA_7														
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
To reduce the gap in continuation for students from under-represented backgrounds (students with a reported disability).	PTS_1	Continuation	Reported disability	Disability reported	No disability reported	To increase the proportion of students with a reported disability contonue to stage 2 of study by at least 0.25% annually.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage	2.7%	2.45%	2.2%	1.95%	1.7%
To reduce the gap in continuation for students from under-represented backgrounds (Black students).	PTS_2	Continuation	Ethnicity	Black	Other ethnicity	To increase the proportion of black students who progress to stage 2 of study by at least 0.25% annually.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage	3.1%	2.85%	2.6%	2.35%	2.1%
To reduce the gap in completion for students from under-represented backgrounds (students previously in receipt of Free School Meals).	PTS_3	Completion	Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)	Eligible	Not eligible	To increase the proportion of students previously in receipt of Free School Meals who complete their degree programme by 0.25% annually.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2019-20	Percentage	2.3%	2.05%	1.8%	1.55%	1.3%
	PTS_4														
	PTS_5														
	PTS_6														
	PTS_7														
	PTS_8														
	PTS_9														
	PTS_10														

	PTS_11															
	PTS_12															

Table 5e: Progression targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
To reduce the progression gap for students from underrepresented groups (Bangladeshi students)	PTP_1	Progression	Ethnicity	Other ethnicity	White	To reduce the gap in highly skilled employment or further study between Bangladeshi and White graduates. (Due to availability of Graduate Outcomes data, Queen Mary will only be able to report on a milestone after three years.)	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage	6%	5.5%	5%	4.5%	4%
To reduce the progression gap for students from underrepresented groups (students previously eligible for Free School Meal students).	PTP_2	Progression	Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)	Eligible	Not eligible	To reduce the gap in highly skilled employment or further study between students eligible for free school meals and the whole population. (Due to availability of Graduate Outcomes data, Queen Mary will only be able to report on a milestone after three years.)	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage	5%	4.5%	4%	3.5%	3%
	PTP_3														
	PTP_4														
	PTP_5														
	PTP_6														
	PTP_7														
	PTP_8														
	PTP_9														
	PTP_10														
	PTP_11														
	PTP_12														