

2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by University of Exeter against targets, objectives and written commitments set out in its 2019-20 access and participation plan. This document is a summary of information submitted by the provider to the OfS. This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

1. Ambition and strategy

University of Exeter's ambition and strategy as detailed in the 2019-20 access and participation plan:

The University is committed to enabling social mobility through education. Our aims are to widen participation; raise attainment; contribute to a strong regional skills base; and bridge gaps in retention, progression and success to ensure our students enjoy the best possible outcomes, at University and as graduates. Our strategy is based on the following four principles:

1. Diversity, fair access and equal opportunity – addressing the specific challenges we face as a highly selective university within a largely rural area to ensure we build a diverse community which fully represents wider society and enables all students to realise their potential and enriches the learning experience for all.
2. A whole student lifecycle approach - with the aim of raising aspirations; improving attainment; enabling fair access; and providing the right support to help students thrive and achieve academic and professional success.
3. Collaboration and partnership - pulling together expertise, resources and knowledge across the University and working with local and external partners within education, business and the third sector to create joined-up and sustainable solutions.
4. Evidence-based practice - focusing our resources where they can make most impact; improving our knowledge of the challenges facing students to enable us to tailor more effective solutions; evaluating what we do and learning from experience.

During 19/20 we focussed on the following priorities:

Whole institution approach to Widening Participation:

* Embedding social mobility within our institutional strategies and making it central to our developing Education Strategy

- * Improving our evidence base and management information to inform decision making through continued investment in evaluation, market research and academic enquiry
- * Strengthening our governance, planning and reporting structures to ensure a joined-up approach to widening participation across the student lifecycle
- * Developing joined up support for students across the student journey, especially those with complex needs including carers, care leavers, estranged and disabled students
- * Linking academic, practice and student communities through a new Centre for Social Mobility to share insights and improve impact
- * Improving knowledge across the University and working to encourage an inclusive culture

Attainment:

- * Supporting schools through sponsorship and governance to improve performance
- * Working with partners, Schools and Colleges to develop and deliver interventions aimed at raising pupil attainment
- * Developing our progression programmes and outreach including University of Exeter Scholars to better support skills development

Access:

- * Extending choice through degree apprenticeships and other non-traditional routes
- * Refining contextualised admissions to take into account multiple equality measures
- * Continuing to enhance our University of Exeter Scholars programme based on evaluation
- * Developing our partnerships with target local and national schools within a programme of sustained engagement to improve impact
- * Building on the new relationships we have formed in key regions to support the progression of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students
- * Increasing investment in strategies to improve access for mature learners, improving our knowledge, information and practices
- * Working with partners such as Realising Opportunities and IntoUniversity to widen our impact and achieve economies of scale
- * Refining our recruitment practices and information to ensure they are inclusive
- * Providing transition support for groups of students with complex needs
- * Providing financial and practical support to help students overcome economic and other barriers to accessing higher education

Success:

- * Embedding our personalised learning framework including tutor support, peer mentoring and Effective Learning Analytics to support pupil attainment and retention
- * Implementing improvements to our teaching practice informed by innovations developed through our Education Incubator
- * Implementing the outcomes of our curriculum review including optimising the use of technology to support particular target groups
- * Improving early interventions and student support through our student hub network
- * Working with our Student Guild and Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union to build an inclusive student culture
- * Developing joined up approaches to support students with complex needs such as carers, care leavers, mature students, estranged students and disabled students
- * Enhancing academic skills support and targeting interventions at discipline level to address disparities in attainment and degree outcomes
- * Building on interventions which we know work for and are valued by our students such as breakfast clubs and peer mentoring.

Progression:

- * Delivering employability support for widening participation students including paid internships, professional pathways and one to one support
- * Enabling students to take advantage of outward mobility schemes such as Common Purpose
- * Implementing the outcomes of our curriculum review to better embed employability within our programme delivery
- * Encouraging and supporting students who wish to go on to postgraduate study

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by University of Exeter of progress against the targets approved in its 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-20 access and participation plans. Full information can be found in **Table 8a – statistical targets and milestones** and **Table 8b – Other milestones and targets** of University of Exeter's 2019-20 [access and participation plan](#).

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in [Annex B](#).

Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	State school entrants as a percentage of all young, full-time, first degree entrants.	2011-12	67.4%	72.5%	73%	Percentage	2019-20	64.5	No progress
T16a_02 (Access)	LPN entrants as a percentage of all young, full-time, first degree entrants.	2011-12	4.9%	6.1%	6.3%	Percentage	2019-20	6.4	Expected progress
T16a_03 (Student success)	Baseline year 2010-11	Other (please give details in Description column)	94.5%	94.5%	94.5%	Percentage	2018-19	91.2	No progress
T16a_04 (Access)	Entrants in receipt of DSA as a percentage of all young, full-time, first degree entrants.	2011-12	6.6%	9%	9.5%	Percentage	2019-20	7.8	Limited progress
T16a_05 (Access)	Number of entrants eligible as Care Leavers under the Children (Leaving Care) Act	2012-13	2	6	7	Headcount	2019-20	8	Expected progress
T16a_06 (Access)	Male entrants to primary PGCE	2011-12	24%	26.5%	27%	Percentage	2019-20	14.9	No progress
T16a_07 (Access)	BAME entrants for both primary and secondary PGCE programmes	2011-12	3%	6.5%	7%	Percentage	2019-20	6.2	Limited progress
T16a_08 (Student success)	Completion rates for both primary and secondary PGCE programmes	2011-12	90%	94.5%	95%	Percentage	2019-20	95.7	Expected progress
T16a_09 (Student success)	Narrowing the gap in non-completion rates for mature students	2011-12	7%pts	3.5%pts	3%pts	Percentage points	2019-20	7.1	No progress

T16a_10 (Student success)	Narrowing the gap in non-completion rates for students with disabilities	2011-12	4%pts	1.5%pts	1.25%pts	Percentage points	2019-20	2.8	Limited progress
T16a_11 (Student success)	Narrowing the gap in degree outcomes (1st and 2:1) for mature students	2011-12	17%pts	11%pts	10%pts	Percentage points	2019-20	12.3	Limited progress
T16a_12 (Progression)	Narrow the gap in positive graduate destinations (DLHE) for LPN students	2013-14	16.8%pts	13%pts	11.5%pts	Percentage	2016-17	2	Expected progress
T16a_13 (Student success)	Narrow the gap in degree outcomes (1st and 2:1) for BAME students	2014-15	12%pts	9%pts	8%pts	Percentage points	2019-20	5.8	Expected progress
T16a_14 (Access)	Undergraduate BAME entrants (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	2014-15	8%	10%	10.5%	Percentage	2019-20	11.2	Expected progress
T16a_15 (Access)	Undergraduate white male entrants as a percentage of LPN (POLAR3) entrants (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	2014-15	19%	23%	25%	Percentage	2019-20	36	Expected progress
T16a_16 (Access)	Progression of RO participants to any RO partner institution. No baseline available.	Other (please give details in Description column)	n/a	25%	25%	Percentage	2019-20	38	Expected progress
T16a_17 (Access)	Students engaging with the new IntoUniversity Bristol South West Centre. No baseline available.	Other (please give details in Description column)	785	900	n/a	Headcount	2019-20	1174	Expected progress
T16a_18 (Access)	Entrants declaring a disability as a percentage of all young, full-time, first degree entrants.	2016-17	12.4%	12.8%	13%	Percentage	2019-20	19.3	Expected progress
T16a_19 (Access)	Mature entrants as a proportion of all first time degree entrants	2016-17	6.3%	n/a	6.5%	Percentage	2019-20	7.1	Expected progress

Other milestones and targets

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16b_01 (Student success)	A three-year roll out of peer support programmes with UG students, starting with Sept 2015-16 cohort. No baseline available.	Other (please give details in Description column)	n/a	See comment	See comment	N/A (see description / commentary)			
T16b_02 (Student success)	WP students securing placements and internships, including Professional Pathways schemes. No baseline available.	Other (please give details in Description column)	n/a	300	300	Headcount	2019-20	357	Expected progress
T16b_03 (Access)	Increase the engagement of white economically disadvantaged males in our main post-16 outreach programme	2015-16	25%	32%	35%	Percentage	2019-20	26	Limited progress
T16b_04 (Access)	KS1 pupils make expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics	Other (please give details in Description column)	n/a	80%	n/a	N/A (see description / commentary)			
T16b_05 (Access)	Disadvantaged, overall, average percentile rank improvement across schools within the Ted Wragg Trust	Other (please give details in Description column)	Q1 (20)	n/a	+3%	N/A (see description / commentary)			

3. Investment commitments

3.1. Access and participation investment for the last audited year

Please note that some differences in predicted vs actual spend may be due to reporting differences between academic and financial years.

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£3,995,000.00	£2,325,000.00	-42%
Financial Support	£5,392,000.00	£5,444,000.00	1%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected University of Exeter has made the following commitments to increase the rate of progress against their targets.

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16a_01	We commit in our 2020/21 plan to focus our UK recruitment activities around four main strands: a) portfolio development to provide flexibility and student choice; b) diversification of our marketing and communications to position the University as an accessible choice; c) reducing obstacles in our admissions process via offer making and related support; d) conversion and transition activities.
T16a_03	This target has no widening participation focus and has been superceded by demographically focussed success targets
T16a_04	This target has been superceded by the new 2020/21 APP where we have focussed on a more specific gap in degree outcomes
T16a_06	This target is no longer included in the APP as we have focussed on the diversity of the wider student body
T16a_07	This target is no longer included in the APP as we have focussed on the diversity of the wider student body

T16a_09	We acknowledge this persistent gap and have retained this as a target in the 2020/21 APP. We have strategic measures in place which are being taken forward by our Mature Students Working Group and Success for All Governance Structure. These address issues such as portfolio, admissions policy, outreach, transition and ongoing support.
T16a_10	We acknowledge the gap and the higher rate of non-continuation, and particularly interruptions, for those with mental health conditions, and commit to keeping it under review. We also note the discrepancy between our internal data (which is higher) and HESA data where students may continue on within the HE system.
T16a_11	We continue to invest in study skills support but are also mindful of factors such as childcare and timetabling and the impact of covid. As described, this is on our radar and we continue to take remedial steps for this cohort.
T16b_03	This is an area of concern and one that the team are mindful of. We need to continue to engage with best practice in this area and look at experiences/trends from similar schemes/institutions.

5. Confirmation

University of Exeter confirms that:

Student engagement	
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?	
Yes	
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?	
Yes	
Verification and sign off	
University of Exeter has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.	
Yes	
Accountable officer sign off	
Name	Professor Lisa Roberts
Position	Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

University of Exeter's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16a_01
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Our state school performance continues unchanged from previous years. This is a source of concern for our Vice-Chancellor and we are engaging in some comprehensive work with Council to take the steps to tackle this ongoing issue. There are a number of strategic issues at play around portfolio, tariff, admissions and recruitment. However Council preference is for an ambitious approach. We look forward on reporting back on progress on this area next year.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
For entry year 2021 we have amended our contextual offer to include a state school element.

Target reference number: T16a_03
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
We have delivered our plans in this area on Transition support, and taking an institutional approach to academic success.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
We have further revised our governance structure to bring together staff working on transition and inclusion and attainment and student outcomes.

Target reference number: T16a_04
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
The % of students declaring a disability continues to increase, however the take-up rate of DSA has been affected by changes in funding and the type of disability declared. This is under constant review by our Head of Wellbeing.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
We continue to support student with a disability who are not eligible for DSA, and we note that this historic target was formed at a time before Govt changes to DSA policy were made.

Target reference number: T16a_06
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Target reference number: T16a_07

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

We have made progress on this target which is particularly challenging based on the high level of recruitment from the local area.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Target reference number: T16a_09

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

This target continues to be a concern and we are looking into the circumstances of this metric for this cohort including any patterns around subject, reasons for leaving as well as whether students go elsewhere in HE. We continue to develop a package of support and have this year conducted a comprehensive survey with mature students to understand better their experience.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Subsequent to 2019/20 we have developed further dedicated support for mature students to assist with entry and transition

Target reference number: T16a_10

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

We have delivered the planned support for entrants with disabilities at transition and entry stage

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Target reference number: T16a_11

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Analysis of this metric over recent years shows it is very erratic (sometimes due to the cohort size) but, nevertheless, we perform worse than the Russell Group average and this does need attention. Our mature students underperform at every stage of the student lifecycle and for our 20-25 APP we decided to focus on increasing our number of students accessing (where we exceeded for 19-20) and in non-continuation so that we are shoring up the beginning of the lifecycle for these students. However we keep their performance for this metric under review and their intersectionality with our BAME community and with our disabled community (where we have attainment APP targets) should mean that measures to address will impact positively on this group in the future.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

We have set up a mature students working group that looks exclusively at these issues during the lifecycle and have undertaken a thorough student survey and state of the nation report to set out detailed recommendations for this group over the lifetime of our APP. It is clear that more understanding about the reasons for their underperformance is needed to inform the nature of the support.

Target reference number: T16b_03

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Unfortunately the number of male participants in the programme this year has dropped back to the same level as year 1 with 31% male. We had seen an increase in this year to 37% in 2018-19 so it is disappointing to see it drop back with no easily identifiable explanation.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

The new Exeter Scholars Year 13 peer mentoring programme was due to provide the opportunity to use more male role models to encourage applications from their peers in future years to build on momentum. Unfortunately it was not possible to deliver this programme due to schools closing however this activity will be reinstated as soon as possible with an interim project planned for 2020-21 while some school closures are still on going.

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

University of Exeter's commentary on any of the targets listed in [Section 2](#).

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	We have updated our target in this area to combine it with IMD in order to focus on those students from the most deprived areas.
T16a_02	Reported using HESA PI which has updated to POLAR4
T16a_03	
T16a_04	
T16a_05	
T16a_06	
T16a_07	
T16a_08	
T16a_09	
T16a_10	
T16a_11	
T16a_12	Target met earlier than anticipated in 2016/17 (the last year of DHLE).
T16a_13	
T16a_14	
T16a_15	
T16a_16	
T16a_17	Progress reported although no specific target for 2019/20, Sponsorship relationship ongoing
T16a_18	
T16a_19	
T16b_01	This target completed in 2018/19 (see previous commentary), and the programme continues to operate effectively.
T16b_02	
T16b_03	
T16b_04	Target not applicable for 2019/20
T16b_05	OFSTED inspection not yet available