

Access and Participation Plan

2025-26 to 2028-29

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If any of the diagrams or tables are inaccessible for you, please contact us at wp.evaluationteam@brookes.ac.uk.

Introduction and strategic aim

Our founder, John Henry Brookes, believed that everyone should have access to education. That's why he created the college that we were founded on over 150 years ago, and it's why equality of opportunity remains central to our mission today.

Our strategic objective is to inspire and drive collective progress through individual endeavour. We seek to make our city, region and the wider world a better place through the impact of our teaching, research and knowledge exchange. Our Access and Participation Plan (APP) sets out where we have the most progress to make in providing equality of opportunity for students in our region, and the actions we will take to achieve this. It sits within our wider guiding principle of inclusivity which underpins what we do and how we do it: we take positive steps to create an environment in which we celebrate, value, and provide equal opportunity to all.

We are a modern, forward-thinking institution rooted in and connected to a city with a rich history of culture and learning. We attract students from across our region, who join an international community of almost 17,500 students across our UK campuses and partners. We equip our learners with the skills, knowledge and personal qualities they will need to succeed in an uncertain world, providing support and challenge along the way.

As a university, our research aims to deliver transformational social, cultural and economic benefit for our communities, both locally and globally, and we use it to inspire our teaching. It also helps organisations - local, national and global - to develop in a sustainable way and advance their work.

For example, through our [Children and Young People research network](#), we deliver research and knowledge-building that supports improvements in children's and young people's opportunities, experiences and outcomes. As a provider of initial teacher training for over 20 years, we utilise our research and partnerships with schools to support the provision of high quality teachers. Around 45% of our graduating teachers work within Oxfordshire, with three quarters placed within surrounding counties.

We continue to provide a variety of routes to an Oxford Brookes qualification to support access for those seeking alternative routes to higher education. Through our higher and degree apprenticeships we work with employers to provide educational pathways that meet local and regional skills needs, including routes for young people and adults into careers in healthcare. Through our long-standing partnerships with FE colleges, and through Institutes of Technology, we deliver a range of level 4-6 qualifications, including foundation degrees and Higher Technical Qualifications. Through tailored approaches to timetabling, pedagogy and assessment, this part of our provision particularly supports students returning to education later in life.

Oxford Brookes is a student-centred University. Throughout the development of our APP we have sought the insight and collaboration of students as partners. We will continue this commitment through the delivery and evaluation of the activities outlined in our APP, and the alignment with Brookes Students' Union's strategic priorities of belonging, collaboration and employability.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Approach to identifying risks to equality of opportunity

We have developed our Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) through a combination of the findings from our Assessment of Performance (Annex A), discussions with key stakeholders across the University (staff and students) and internal and external sources of evidence. These sources of evidence seek to understand the root causes of the indications of risk and therefore, what the specific risk might be to our prospective and current students. We considered each of our risks against the national EORR. This process resulted in the identification of seven risks relevant to our context:

Risk	Indication of risk	Risk description	Risk drivers
R1: Perceptions of HE and of Oxford as a place to study	RI1: Disproportionately low numbers of students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes RI2: Disproportionately low numbers of students from black and mixed ethnicities	Students may not apply to HE, or consider Oxford as a place to study, despite being qualified.	Perceived lack of diversity within the city and concerns around high cost of living. Our research indicates these perceptions are often based on assumptions about and public images of the city, which do not reflect the reality of the student community and life in Oxford.
R2: Knowledge, skills and experience	RI1: Disproportionately low numbers of students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes RI2: Disproportionately low numbers of students from black and mixed ethnicities RI3: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to continue their studies one year after starting RI4: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above RI5: Black and Asian students are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above	Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills needed to enter into, succeed and progress from higher education	Disadvantaged pupils and those from minoritised ethnicities in Oxfordshire perform less well than their peers nationally at all key stages. Insufficient knowledge and skills may contribute to preventing pupils choosing Oxford Brookes as a place to study and being prepared for HE study. This is compounded by the increased demand for digital literacy and academic skills support once students begin their studies, and an increasing need for awareness and understanding of what is required at key points of their transition through HE.

Risk	Indication of risk	Risk description	Risk drivers
	<p>RI6: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes, are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study</p> <p>RI7: Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study</p>		
R3: Recruitment and selection	<p>RI1: Disproportionately low numbers of students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes</p> <p>RI2: Disproportionately low numbers of students from black and mixed ethnicities</p>	Students may not have an equal chance of being accepted onto a course at Oxford Brookes despite having the potential to succeed	Not all students who apply to Oxford Brookes receive offers at equal rates. Our data suggests that 18 year olds from the lowest IMD quintile and black and mixed ethnicities are less likely to receive an offer at Oxford Brookes, even when adjusting for subject of study.
R4: Belonging and shaping	<p>RI3: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to continue their studies one year after starting</p> <p>RI4: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above</p> <p>RI5: Black and Asian students are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above</p> <p>RI6: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes, are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study</p>	Students may not have a positive student experience while at Oxford Brookes because they don't feel they belong within the university community	Sector evidence suggests that belonging is considered to be one of the most prevailing factors that impact on engagement and success at university, as well as contributing to a prospective student's decision to apply to a particular HE institution. Belonging is therefore a complex web of interrelated variables which impacts all stages of the student lifecycle, as well as within each of the risks identified. It is shaped by the culture of the institution within teaching and learning, student support and wider extra-curricular and supra-curricular activities. Developing a greater sense of belonging empowers students to actively develop their learner journey and their positive contribution to wider society.

Risk	Indication of risk	Risk description	Risk drivers
	<p>R17: Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study</p>		<p>Our investigations suggest that we can do more to create an inclusive learning and teaching environment that recognises and responds to the needs of students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds.</p>
<p>R5: Student support</p>	<p>R13: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to continue their studies one year after starting</p> <p>R14: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above</p> <p>R15: Black and Asian students are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above</p> <p>R16: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes, are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study</p> <p>R17: Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study</p>	<p>Students may not have equal access to or do not feel able or confident to reach out to the academic and personal support that is available and which will support them to succeed in and beyond higher education</p>	<p>Ensuring that academic and personal support is reflective of and responsive to the needs of individual students is pivotal to student success, requiring an understanding of the circumstances and barriers that some students may face.</p> <p>Engagement with a range of support initiatives that are not part of the formal teaching curriculum is often low for students, particularly those from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> <p>Our investigations also suggest that students may not be aware of the support that is available to them.</p>
<p>R6: Mental health</p>	<p>R18: Students with declared mental health conditions are less likely to complete their study programme.</p> <p>Through our consultation with staff and students we believe this to be a significant risk in its own right, as well as being</p>	<p>Students may experience mental health difficulties that may impact their studies</p>	<p>As a sector we know that mental health issues have increased substantially for students, exacerbated by the pandemic and cost of living crisis. As a University we have identified increasing numbers of students being referred to our welfare services. Many of these students do not have a formal diagnosis of mental health</p>

Risk	Indication of risk	Risk description	Risk drivers
	<p>exacerbated by each of the other risks identified here. Although the impact may be greater for students who fall within the APP, the increased number of mental health referrals witnessed over previous years has led to our decision to maintain its prominence through an identified risk within our EORR</p>		<p>difficulties, but do require additional support to help them with the challenges of everyday life that they face, within the context of their university studies.</p>
<p>R7: Affordability</p>	<p>RI1: Disproportionately low numbers of students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes</p> <p>RI2: Disproportionately low numbers of students from black and mixed ethnicities</p> <p>RI3: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to continue their studies one year after starting</p> <p>RI4: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above</p> <p>RI5: Black and Asian students are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above</p> <p>RI6: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes, are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study</p>	<p>Increased cost of living may affect a student's ability to access and succeed in higher education</p>	<p>As a sector we know that cost of living is a major concern for students due to the impact of the pandemic and inflationary prices. We know that this is a particular concern for students considering Oxford Brookes because of the perceived and real cost of living within the city. Through our Students' Union we know that cost of living is a major challenge for many of our students. 58% of our students surveyed by the Students' Union were working.</p>

Risk	Indication of risk	Risk description	Risk drivers
	R17: Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study		

Enhanced risk factors

Through our consideration of risks to equality of opportunity and consultation with staff and students, we have identified some groups of students who may experience increased likelihood of the risks listed above. For example, we have identified that care experienced and estranged students may be more likely to experience risks to equality of opportunity due to factors including their relationships with adults and peers, their sense of agency and independence, and prior experiences of transition points. As part of the implementation of this APP, we will undertake further work to understand how risks to equality of opportunity may present differently for students with particular characteristics, and will work with our current students to identify these.

We know that students studying through our subcontracted provision are more likely to be from low socioeconomic backgrounds and are more likely to be returning to study over the age of 21. They therefore often have less traditional academic backgrounds. Our data shows that this cohort of students has lower continuation and completion rates, although their degree outcomes and progression can be higher than their more advantaged peers. In collaboration with our partners, we have identified four enhanced risk factors that may be experienced by students studying through subcontracted provision: sense of HE identity, access to financial resources, physical and mental health, and the ongoing impact of coronavirus.

We have provided further detail about these enhanced risk factors within Annex A.

Objectives

The objectives presented here will address the risks detailed above and collectively and independently contribute to achieving a greater sense of belonging for students. We anticipate that this will positively impact objectives across the whole of the student lifecycle.

Objective	Aim	Target		Risk
O1: To enable equitable access to Oxford Brookes University which results in a student intake that is representative of our recruitment region	To increase the proportion of new students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes	From	To	R1 R2 R3 R7
		17.4% (2021/22)	21.0% (2028/29)	
	To increase the proportion of new black and mixed ethnicity students	9.2% (2021/22)	11.5% (2028/29)	
O2: To improve continuation rates for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes	To halve the gap in continuation rates between students from IMDQ1+2 and IMDQ3-5 postcodes	4.5 pp (2020/21)	2.2pp (2028/29)	R2 R4 R5 R6 R7
O3: To increase the proportion of students from	To halve the gap in degree outcomes (2:1 or above)	8.8pp (2021/22)	4.4pp (2028/29)	R2 R4 R5

Objective	Aim	Target		Risk
IMDQ1+2 postcodes who are awarded a 2:1 or above	between students from IMDQ1+2 and Q3-5 postcodes			R6 R7
O4: To increase the proportion of black and Asian students who are awarded a 2:1 or above	To halve the gap in degree outcomes (2:1 or above) between Asian and black students, and white students	19pp (2021/22)	9.5pp (2028/29)	R2 R4 R5 R6
O5: To improve progression to further study or higher level employment for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes	To halve the gap in progression to further study or higher level employment between students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes and those from IMDQ3-5 postcodes	4.4pp (2021/22)	2.2pp (2028/29)	R4 R5 R6 R7
O6: To improve progression to further study or higher level employment for students from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities (ABMO)	To halve the gap in progression to further study or higher level employment between students from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities (ABMO) and white students	3.9pp (2020/21)	1.9pp (2028.29)	R4 R5 R6

Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Intervention strategy 1: Equality of access

Objectives and targets

O1: Our objective is to enable equitable access to Oxford Brookes, resulting in a student intake that is representative of our recruitment region.

Compared to our recruitment region, we have disproportionately low numbers of 18-year old entrants from low socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD Q1+2) and from black and mixed ethnicities. We have seen little change in the proportion of our young intake from these groups over the last 4 years. We will therefore monitor progress for these demographic groups through the following targets, which aim to halve the gap in representation between our intake and the demographics of our recruitment region.

- We will increase the proportion of our new students who are from low socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD Q1+2) from 17.4% in 2021/22 to 21% in 2028/29.
- We will increase the proportion of our new students from black and mixed ethnicities from 9.2% in 2021/22 to 11.5% in 2028/29.

We know our recruitment region has a higher proportion of 16-17 year old care leavers than the national average. We will monitor the proportion of care experienced and estranged students entering Oxford Brookes over the course of the APP.

Risks to equality of opportunity

The Oxford Brookes risks to equality of opportunity that this Intervention Strategy addresses are:

Risk 1: Perceptions of HE and of Oxford as a place to study

Risk 2: Knowledge, skills and experience

Risk 3: Recruitment and selection

Risk 7: Affordability

Related objectives and targets

This objective will be supported through the activities outlined in intervention strategy 2, which will ensure Oxford Brookes offers students of all backgrounds equality of opportunity in relation to successful outcomes.

Related risks to equality of opportunity

Risk 4: Belonging and shaping

Risk 6: Mental health

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Financial literacy programme	We will implement a pre- and post-enrolment financial literacy information, advice and guidance programme. We will explore opportunities to deliver this in collaboration with other organisations.	£269,000 Additional investment Student Money Advice role Existing staff time to undertake a review and redesign of current provision	Prospective students are able to make well-informed financial choices and are prepared to undertake effective budget management Prospective students are able to make an informed choice about Oxford Brookes as an affordable HE destination and understand what financial support they will be eligible to receive	IS2
	We will expand our existing Money Advice team in order to extend our 1:1 financial advice service to targeted applicants. This will be targeted at students identified during the application process to be from low socio-economic backgrounds or with independent student status (e.g. students with no living parents).	Investment in financial advice platform		IS2
Teacher action research	We will deliver a teacher action research project in collaboration with a local 11-18 Academy with the aim of supporting the development of high quality teaching leading to a rise in attainment of disadvantaged learners. Teachers will complete short action research projects and will disseminate their findings within the school and	£26,000 Staff resource from Children and Young People Research network. School staff resource to undertake action research projects.	Through opportunities to participate in action research, teachers have increased intellectual wellbeing. Through the establishment of a sustainable action research approach to staff development within a school, retention of high quality teachers improves. Pupil attainment improves.	

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	<p>through wider networks. Participating teachers will be supported by our Children and Young People Research Network.</p> <p>This is a new, collaborative project.</p>	Budget for resources to support research.		
Knowledge and skills outreach	<p>We will implement an evidence-based, progressive 'spine' of study skills content which will be delivered through our existing outreach programmes and partnerships with schools and colleges.</p> <p>We will work with students to co-design this content, based on our existing student partners model. We will develop this as part of the wider Brookes Bridges Transition Framework.</p> <p>This is an enhancement of our existing outreach work.</p>	<p>£9,000</p> <p>Existing staff resource</p> <p>5 student partners for up to 4 x 2 hour workshops</p> <p>Budget for resource creation and development</p>	<p>Students demonstrate increased levels of engagement with school learning</p> <p>Students are supported to develop academic, cognitive, meta-cognitive and self-efficacy skills</p> <p>Reduction in gap in attainment between target students and their peers</p>	IS2
Tutoring programme	<p>We will develop and deliver a tutoring programme focussed on increasing attainment among disadvantaged students.</p> <p>Underpinned by joint analysis of the school's attainment and attendance data, we will co-design the tutoring programme with school staff and pupils. Oxford</p>	<p>£62,000</p> <p>Staff resource to undertake data analysis.</p> <p>Staff resource from Access and Outreach, School of Education and Oxford Spires Academy to co-design the</p>	<p>Specific outcomes will be determined on the basis of the findings of the data analysis and co-design with school pupils.</p> <p>We expect outcomes to relate to:</p> <p>Students demonstrate increased levels of engagement with school learning</p>	

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	<p>Brookes will input expert resource to support the school to undertake in depth analysis of pupil outcome data, which will be the basis for the specific targeting and content of the tutoring programme.</p> <p>This is a new, collaborative project with an 11-18 Academy in Oxford.</p>	<p>programme.</p> <p>Student Ambassador paid hours to train and undertake mentoring.</p>	<p>Students are supported to develop their cognitive, meta-cognitive and self-efficacy skills in order to reflect on and enhance their own learning and attainment.</p> <p>Improved levels of attendance for target students</p> <p>Reduction in gap in attainment between target students and their peers.</p>	
Admissions assessment training and development	<p>We will undertake further analysis to understand the underlying causes of unexplained differences in offer-rates between white and black students and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.</p> <p>Building on the findings from our analysis and our existing processes for fair and transparent admissions, we will implement a programme of training and development for all staff involved in the assessment of applications and design of assessment criteria.</p>	<p>£5,000</p> <p>Staff resource from existing Admissions, Access and Outreach and EDI teams to design and deliver relevant training for staff.</p> <p>Staff time from all those participating in the training.</p> <p>Support from Digital Services team to create online training modules.</p>	<p>Our recruitment and selection processes are designed and delivered in a way that supports equitable access.</p> <p>All applicants experience a transparent and fair application process.</p> <p>We understand the reasons why some applicants are less likely to receive an offer.</p> <p>Unexplained differences in offer-rates are eliminated.</p>	

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Support to transition into HE	<p>We will continue to implement targeted measures to support students to navigate the admissions process and successfully transition into higher education. This includes targeted use of contextual offers and provision of transition mentoring.</p> <p>As we develop the Brookes Bridges Transition Framework, we will ensure our existing work to support transition to enrolment aligns with our whole lifecycle approach.</p>	<p>£108,000</p> <p>Investment in online mentoring platform</p> <p>Student mentor staff time</p> <p>Existing staff time to project manage</p> <p>Admissions resource to support contextual offer</p>	<p>We have an effective way of identifying applicants who would benefit from additional or personalised support.</p> <p>Students can effectively negotiate the application process.</p> <p>Our recruitment and selection processes are configured to support equitable access.</p> <p>Incoming students see they can be themselves and find community, success and opportunity while studying at Oxford Brookes</p>	IS2
Brookes and Beyond - sustained outreach programme for care experienced students	<p>We will continue to deliver a sustained outreach programme in partnership with the Oxfordshire Virtual School. The programme supports pre-16 students in local authority care through a progressive programme of activities over multiple years. The programme is designed to raise participants' awareness and understanding of the opportunities in higher education, and the support available for care experienced students, as well as supporting them to develop the skills and knowledge required to achieve their</p>	<p>£160,000</p> <p>Existing staff resource and operational budget</p>	<p>Participants have a positive perception of Oxford Brookes</p> <p>Participants see university and Oxford Brookes University as somewhere they feel they can fit in and be happy and as a realistic aspiration for students</p> <p>Develop student and carers' knowledge of university and the benefits of university</p> <p>Improve students' confidence studying at a higher level</p>	

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	potential at GCSE and beyond.			

Additional ongoing activity

The actions outlined above do not represent all that we do to support access to higher education. We will continue to deliver and evaluate an evidence-based programme of progressive and sustained outreach activity, building on internal and sector evidence of impact to ensure this work is contributing to the objective and targets set out in this intervention strategy.

Depending on future UniConnect funding arrangements, we will work with our HE and FE partners to continue to deliver sustained outreach projects where we feel these are most effectively delivered in collaboration. Our collaborative activity currently includes:

- Contribution as a core partner to the strategic development, delivery and evaluation of collaborative attainment-raising work, aligning our own institutional activity to avoid duplication. This includes funding and delivering Academic Exploration Days.
- Young carers, care experienced and service pupils bespoke projects: delivery of a sustained and progressive programme of university, college and employer visits, as well as information, advice and guidance delivered with the specific needs of each group of students in mind. Students experience a range of institutions and career options, whilst learning about different progression routes, practicalities of progression, goal setting and tackling barriers to achievement.

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

£934,000

Summary of evidence base and rationale

Consistent with our whole institution, whole lifecycle approach, achieving our Access objective will depend on the activities identified in this Intervention Strategy working in combination with other APP activities, and also with core activity which supports the APP. Annex B presents Theory of Change models for each risk and these include a written narrative which articulates the risk level evidence. Table B1 in Annex B presents evidence for each Access activity. Table B1 and the Theory of Change models for R1, R2, R3 and R7 should therefore be read in combination as the evidence base for the Access Intervention Strategy.

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Financial literacy programme	<p>More students perceive study at Oxford Brookes to be affordable and understand what financial support they will be eligible to receive.</p> <p>Increase in enrolment and retention of students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds</p>	<p>Empirical (Type 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant and enrolment data • Self-referral data re access. to money advice and financial support teams • HEAT tracking to better understand association with continuations 	<p>Process evaluation insights - 2027/28</p> <p>Early impact insights - 2028/29</p>
Teacher action research	<p>Action research outcomes that are practical, shareable and impactful for learners in the short and long term</p> <p>Positive impact on attainment of learners</p>	<p>Empirical (Type 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative data from surveys/interviews with teachers • Analysis of teacher retention data • Student testimonials; attainment data 	<p>Process evaluation insights - 2026/27</p> <p>Early impact insights - 2027/28</p> <p>Longer term impact insights - 2028/29</p>

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Knowledge and skills outreach	<p>Increased levels of engagement with school learning</p> <p>Improved academic, cognitive, meta-cognitive and self-efficacy skills</p> <p>Reduction in attainment gap between target students and their peers</p>	<p>Empirical (Type 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longitudinal tracking using non-random comparison group Mixed methods including pre- and post-surveys and using TASO Access and Success Questionnaire (ASQ) validated scales Applicant and enrolment data 	<p>Process evaluation insights - 2026/27</p> <p>Early impact insights - 2027/28</p> <p>Longer term impact insights - 2028/29</p>
Tutoring programme	<p>Specific outcomes will be determined on the basis of the findings of the data analysis and co-design with school pupils.</p> <p>We expect outcomes to relate to:</p> <p>Increased engagement with learning/ attendance levels</p> <p>Increased subject-specific attainment at KS4/5</p> <p>Reduction in attainment gap data between target students and their peers</p>	<p>Empirical (Type 2) and Causal Type 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School student performance/attendance data HEAT tracking and longitudinal tracking with non-random comparison groups Mixed methods including pre- and post-surveys and using TASO ASQ validated scales 	<p>Process evaluation insights - 2026/27</p> <p>Early impact insights - 2027/28</p> <p>Longer term impact insights - 2028/29</p>
Admissions assessment training and development	<p>Increased understanding of causes of differential offer rates</p> <p>Increase in offer rates for target students</p>	<p>Empirical (Type 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal applicant data UCAS data 	<p>Process evaluation insights - 2026/27</p> <p>Early impact insights - 2027/28</p> <p>Longer term impact insights - 2028/29</p>

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Support to transition into HE	Increased enrolment rates for applicants from target groups	Empirical (Type 2): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore potential for small n. design (methodologies suitable for use with small cohorts) • Mixed methods including TASO ASQ validated scales • HEAT / HESA tracking data 	Contextual offers insights - 2026 Delivery insights to accompany Brookes Bridges evaluation: 2028
Brookes and Beyond	Shift in perceptions that HE is an achievable option for care experienced learners Increase in rate of successful applications for target learners Increase in progression to HE for care experienced learners	Empirical (Type 2): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore potential for using Small n. • Mixed methods including pre- and post-surveys and using TASO ASQ validated scales • HEAT / HESA tracking data 	Impact insights - 2028

Intervention strategy 2: Equality of student outcomes

Objectives and targets

Our Student Success objective is to improve the continuation rates for students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes (O2), and degree outcomes for students from IMD Q1+Q2 postcodes (O3) and black and Asian students (O4), which will be monitored through the following targets:

- Halve the gap in continuation between students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes and IMDQ3-5 from 4.5 percentage points in 2021/22 to 2.2 percentage points in 2028/29
- Halve the gap in degree outcomes (2:1 or above) between students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes from 8.8 percentage points in 2021/22 to 4.4 percentage points in 2028/29
- Halve the gap in degree outcomes (2:1 or above) between black and white students, and Asian and white students from 19 percentage points in 2021/22 to 9.5 percentage points in 2028/29

Risks to equality of opportunity

The Oxford Brookes risks to equality of opportunity that this Intervention Strategy addresses are:

Risk 2: Knowledge, skills and experience

Risk 4: Belonging and shaping

Risk 5: Student support

Risk 7: Affordability

Related objectives and targets

This objective will contribute to the achievement of Intervention Strategy 1: Equality of Access, which seeks to enable equitable access to Oxford Brookes, resulting in a student intake that is representative of our recruitment region.

Related risks to equality of opportunity

This Intervention Strategy will also address Risk 6: Mental health.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Brookes Pioneering Peers	<p>We will pilot a buddying scheme to provide tailored support that meets the needs of all students, specifically those from IMD Q1+2 postcodes and black and Asian ethnicities. This will complement the student ambassadors who provide support for students prior to course start.</p> <p>Aligned within our guiding principle of inclusivity, the scheme will be open to all students but will target appropriate communications to students from diverse backgrounds to encourage participation. These communications will focus specifically on students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes, and students from black and Asian ethnicities.</p> <p>We will ensure that buddies are representative of our diverse student body and implement processes to enable students to be matched to buddies of their choice.</p> <p>Buddies will be trained in diversity and inclusion, and developed to understand the needs of students with different lived experiences.</p>	<p>£98,658</p> <p>Subscription to buddying platform</p> <p>Part-time coordinator</p> <p>Payment for buddies</p> <p>Development of buddying scheme - staff time</p> <p>Development of training resources</p> <p>Delivery of training to buddies</p>	<p>Mentees and mentors:</p> <p>Shorter term</p> <p>See themselves reflected in the institution</p> <p>Understand, value and are committed to the mentoring process</p> <p>Longer term</p> <p>Will gain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • useful and implementable insight for successful study and beyond • a greater sense of belonging • greater self-efficacy in relation to study and beyond 	<p>IS1</p> <p>IS3</p>

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	The buddy scheme will also complement other activities that occur within faculties and within our student support teams, in relation to induction and transitions in, through and beyond Oxford Brookes. It will also support the development of a sense of belonging at Oxford Brookes.			
Brookes Bridges	<p>Our Brookes Bridges initiative will ensure targeted transitions support for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes and black and Asian ethnicities, across the whole student lifecycle.</p> <p>We will establish a Brookes Bridges Transitions Working Group to oversee the delivery of this activity. This will enable existing good practice to be shared, with a specific focus on the impact on students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes and black and Asian ethnicities. Embedding evaluation within existing initiatives will enable us to identify areas for enhancement or development that support our success objectives.</p> <p>Initial conversations with colleagues have already identified several activities within this framework that can begin to be delivered as this group is established:</p>	<p>£20,825</p> <p>Staff time across faculties and directorates to contribute to a working group and development of resources</p> <p>Design and print costs</p>	<p>Students will gain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • useful and implementable knowledge at key transition points of their educational journey • a greater sense of belonging • greater self-efficacy in relation to study and beyond 	<p>IS1</p> <p>IS3</p>

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Pioneering Peers activity above will support the transition into, through and out of Oxford Brookes for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes and black and Asian students, supporting them at key points of their HE journey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> induction Year 1 (week 0) mid-semester (weeks 5 or 6) end-semester weeks 9 or 10) re-induction Year 2 and Year 3 (week 0 or week 1) and similar points as in Year 1 Resources such as a Transitions Quick Start Guide and a 'key information card' will be developed to support students in understanding required actions for progression into Year 2 or Year 3. The development of the resources will be informed by our student consultants to ensure they are representative and tailored to the needs of students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes, and black and Asian ethnicities. <p>We will undertake further analysis into the reasons for low continuation rates (including collating and analysing additional data around student experience). Building on these findings</p>			

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	we will review our existing approaches to student transitions against existing frameworks.			
IDEAS	<p>Implement Phase 2 of IDEAS.</p> <p>IDEAS was launched during the 2020-25 APP, designed to support programme teams with inclusive practice development. We will evaluate the impact of the implementation of IDEAS on programme design, specifically focussing on inclusivity through the lens of students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes and black and Asian students. This evaluation will inform the ongoing implementation of IDEAS within programmes in terms of the impact on our APP success objectives.</p>	<p>£3,200</p> <p>Student incentive to participate</p>	<p>Short term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are committed to reducing inequitable outcomes through their own programmes and practice • Opportunities for change are understood • Students are empowered to co-create their study experience <p>Longer term, students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an equitable study experience • Have an increased sense of belonging • Are empowered to succeed 	<p>IS1</p> <p>IS2</p>

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Brookes Bursary Scheme	Based on evaluation of our current scheme, we will retarget our Brookes Bursary to include an increased standard bursary for students with household incomes below £35k, and new support for students with household incomes between £35k and £45k. We will also expand our Money Advice Team.	£21,526,827 The bursary Operational costs to deliver the scheme 66% of the Access Money Advice team	Students from lower income backgrounds can afford to access and fully participate in university life at Oxford Brookes.	IS1
Brookes Student Employer Programme	We will expand the range and quality of part-time work opportunities provided by Oxford Brookes University for students. This will include identifying opportunities and effectively communicating roles to students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes and black and Asian ethnicities, enabling inclusive access to part-time work, for those that may otherwise face barriers in taking on part-time employment.	£16,860 Staff time across faculties and directorates to develop the programme Data analyst	Current students are able to undertake paid part-time work that supports them to continue studying and develop longer term employability skills. Students have an increased sense of belonging at Brookes Improved rates of retention and continuation	IS1 IS3
Academic Advising Policy	Our Academic Advising Policy was launched in 2023, committing a minimum of 2 hours of Academic Advising tutorials as part of the formal teaching timetable. Whilst the content of	£4000 Incentive for student to participate in focus groups	Improved NSS and BSS scores in relation to satisfaction with	IS1 IS3

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	<p>the tutorials should predominantly focus on academic matters, undoubtedly there will be many occasions where students' mental wellbeing is being affected by their studies or issues outside of the formal academic environment. The aim of the Policy and subsequent check-in relating to attendance, is to ensure early alerts so that students can receive timely support, or students with immediate needs can be directed to the right support services.</p> <p>The activity we commit to in our APP is to evaluate the impact of the new Academic Advising Policy in terms of the effectiveness of academic and pastoral support particularly in relation to students identified within our APP and specifically mental health. In terms of pastoral support, we will focus on evaluating the impact of our processes to ensure that Academic Advisors know when, who and how to refer students on to University support services.</p>		<p>academic support and academic advising.</p> <p>Improved NSS and BSS scores in relation to personal support</p> <p>Improved student engagement with academic advising</p> <p>Improved rates of retention and continuation</p> <p>Improvements in the award of 1st and 2:1s</p>	
Insight	In addition to the specific interventions above, we wish to undertake further analysis to understand the indicators of risk relating to continuation, drawing on existing sector models, mapped against our current provision.	<p>£99,921</p> <p>Data team resource</p> <p>Head of Impact Evaluation and Insight</p>	We will understand the gaps in our provision in relation transitions support and identified specific activities to address them	<p>R2</p> <p>R4</p> <p>R5</p> <p>R6</p>

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	<p>We will also undertake further analysis in relation to the drivers behind the degree awarding gap including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intersections with other student characteristics; • assessment and feedback; • student engagement • Individual support plans • exceptional circumstances • student investigations and resolutions <p>The outcomes of this analysis will contribute to the identification of additional activities to support our overarching student success objective.</p>	Research Fellow	We will have a better understanding of the drivers contributing to degree outcomes for students from black, Asian and mixed ethnic backgrounds and identify specific activities to address them.	R7

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

£22,113,176

Summary of evidence base and rationale

Consistent with our whole institution, whole lifecycle approach, achieving the Success objectives will depend on the activities identified in this Intervention Strategy working in combination with other APP activities, and also with core activity which supports the APP. Annex B presents Theory of Change models for each risk and these include a written narrative which articulates the risk level evidence. Table B2 in Annex B presents evidence for each Success activity. Table B2 and the Theory of Change models for R2, R4, R5, R6 and R7 should therefore be read in combination as the evidence base for the Success Intervention Strategy.

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Brookes Pioneering Peers	Increased student sense of belonging Increased on-course retention / completion rates for target learners Increased progression rates to graduate study or employment for target learners	Empirical (Type 2): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process evaluation followed by Impact evaluation • Mixed methods including TASO validated scale • Longitudinal tracking using OfS continuation and completion data • HEAT / HESA progression data 	Process evaluation insights - 2026/27 Early impact insights - 2027/28 Longer-term impact insights - 2028-29
Brookes Bridges	Increase in continuation rates for target students	Empirical (Type 2): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process evaluation followed by Impact evaluation • Mixed methods 	Process evaluation insights - 2026 Early impact insights - 2027 Longer-term impact insights - 2028-29
IDEAS	Increased student sense of belonging Increase in enrolment of target students Reduction in gaps in continuation rates Reduction in awarding gaps Reduction in progression gaps to graduate study or employment for target learners	Empirical (Type 2): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process and Impact evaluation • Holistic programme level mixed-methods evaluation has potential to generate causal (Type 3) evidence using the Difference in Difference approach 	Process evaluation insights - 2026 Early impact insights - 2027 Longer-term impact insights - 2028-29 (Potential for causal (Type 3) evidence insights - 2028/29)

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Brookes Bursary Scheme	<p>Increase in student retention into second year (continuation)</p> <p>Increased rates of degree completion within five years</p> <p>Increase in degree attainment level or grades</p>	<p>Empirical (Type 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OfS financial support toolkit (Causal Type 3) • Mixed methods approach - surveys and internal continuation data (Empirical Type 2) 	<p>Early impact insights - 2028</p>
Brookes Student Employer Programme	<p>Increase in employability skills and experience</p> <p>Increase in students directly employed by Oxford Brookes</p> <p>Increased sense of worth and wellbeing</p> <p>Improved progression outcomes</p> <p>Reduction in progression gaps to employment</p>	<p>Empirical (Type 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial process evaluation • HEAT / HESA data • Mixed methods 	<p>Process evaluation insights - 2026/27</p> <p>Early impact insights - 2027/28</p> <p>Longer-term impact insights - 2028-29</p>
Academic Advising	<p>Improved continuation rates for target students</p> <p>Increase in degree attainment level or grades</p> <p>Improved NSS scores relating to Academic Advising</p>	<p>Empirical (Type 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process evaluation • Mixed methods impact evaluation 	<p>Process evaluation insights - 2025/26 and ongoing</p> <p>Impact insights - 2025/26 and annually thereafter</p>

Intervention strategy 3: Equality of progression

Objectives and targets

Our Progression objective is to improve progression to further study or higher level employment for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes (O5) and Asian, black and mixed other (ABMO) students (O6). Progress will be monitored through the following targets:

- Halve the gap between students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes and those from IMDQ3-5 postcodes from 4.4 percentage points in 2020/21 to 2.2 percentage points in 2028/29
- Halve the gap between students from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities (ABMO) and white students from 3.9 percentage points in 2020/21 to 1.9 percentage points in 2028/29

Risks to equality of opportunity

The Oxford Brookes risks to equality of opportunity that this Intervention Strategy addresses are:

Risk 2: Knowledge, skills and resources

Risk 4: Belonging and shaping

Risk 5: Student support

Risk 7: Affordability

Related objectives and targets

This objective will contribute to the achievement of Intervention Strategy 2: Student Success, to make substantial progress in improving continuation rates and degree outcomes for students from IMD Q1 and Q2 and Asian, black and mixed ethnicity students.

Related risks to equality of opportunity

This Intervention Strategy will also address Risk 6: Mental health

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Brookes Pioneering Peers	<p>Medium term: Our Business School currently embeds peer support within the Hospitality and Events programme. Year 3 students run workshops for Year 1 and 2 students, with the aim of supporting them to find placements and prepare for recruitment and selection processes, post-graduation. As part of this intervention strategy, we will extend this initiative into an additional, larger programme within the Business School, specifically aimed at understanding the impact on IMD Q1+2 students and Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicity students.</p> <p>Longer term: Outcomes of the activity will determine further expansion of the initiative to other schools and faculties. There will be opportunity to extend the content of the workshops beyond a focus on placements and career progression to include workshops that support the Success Intervention Strategy</p>	<p>£4,506</p> <p>Programme staff</p> <p>Year 3 student mentors</p>	<p>Students from IMDQ1+Q2 backgrounds and Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities will be confident in identifying, applying for and gaining a placement.</p> <p>Students from IMDQ1+2 and Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities will be confident in the recruitment and selection processes they are likely to encounter post-graduation.</p> <p>Oxford Brookes will have a better understanding of the impact on students from IMDQ1+2 and Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities in relation to accessing placements and preparing for recruitment and selection processes post-graduation</p>	IS2

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Thrive Festival	Thrive is a week-long festival run by Brookes Enterprise Support and aims to provide students already interested or involved in enterprise to develop their skills and those who aren't to get curious. To support our Progression intervention strategy, we will pilot a workshop within the Thrive festival, specifically aimed at students from IMD Q1+2, Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities. We will also work with Brookes Enterprise Support to develop a series of industry-focused events, including guest speakers, and networking opportunities targeted for the specific needs of these students.	£6,109 Staff time to develop and deliver the workshops and events	Students will have a better understanding of career pathways open to them. Students will be exposed to positive role models that represent their background. Students develop skills to support their post-graduation progression	IS2
Development of resources and enhancement of existing activity	We will develop and deliver additional resources to support students to develop the skills and competencies required for their post-graduation pathways. Amongst the resources will be a Graduate Guidance Pack, with a strong focus on mental health, and an eLearning module. Existing support through our Careers and Employability Service will be enhanced to enable more targeted events, which are effectively communicated.	£24,694 Staff costs to scope and develop resources Design and print costs Developer time	Students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes and Asian students will feel fully equipped with the skills, knowledge and experience to support them to achieve their post-graduation intentions.	IS2

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Brookes Student Employer Programme	<p>Through offering quality part-time paid employment opportunities, we will contribute to the professional development of our students by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing guidance to internal recruiting managers on good practice in the contracting, support and professional development of students employed by Oxford Brookes. • Ensuring that students employed by Oxford Brookes are supported to identify and develop skills and competencies that will support them to progress into further work or study. 	<p>£23,565</p> <p>Staff costs to develop guidance and support</p> <p>skills development</p> <p>Developer costs</p>	<p>Recruiting managers confident in adhering to good practice in their approach to the contracting, support and professional development of Oxford Brookes students</p> <p>Students have a clear sense of how to identify, develop the skills and competencies they have developed</p> <p>Students feel confident in their ability to articulate the skills and competencies they have developed to future employers</p>	IS2
BrookesEDGE	<p>BrookesEdge is a co-curricular programme designed in partnership with students to recognise and reward commitment and engagement beyond a student's programme of study. Through taking part in the programme students develop a range of competencies within BrookesEdge, based on UNESCO's Key Competencies for Sustainability. We will embed the activities identified within our APP within this framework, supporting students to gain and articulate the competencies that they are developing.</p>	<p>£7,228</p> <p>BrookesEDGE coordinators</p> <p>APP leads</p>	<p>Students will be able to demonstrate and articulate the competencies developed through engagement in activities within our APP within a formal, competency-based framework.</p>	IS2

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Insight	Over the course of the APP we will undertake insight work to understand the drivers behind the indicator of risks relating to progression for students from different ethnic backgrounds. This will help to inform targeted interventions going forward.	£99,921 Research and data staff time to undertake insight work Student incentives to participate	We will have a better understanding of the barriers and challenges that Asian students face and develop activities to support their progression.	IS2

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

£508,908

Summary of evidence base and rationale

Consistent with our whole institution, whole lifecycle approach, achieving the Progression objective will depend on the activities identified in this Intervention Strategy working in combination with other APP activities, and also with core activity which supports the APP. Annex B presents Theory of Change models for each risk and these include a written narrative which articulates the risk level evidence. Table B3 in Annex B presents evidence for each Progression activity. Table B3 and the Theory of Change models for R2, R4, R5, R6 and R7 should therefore be read in combination as the evidence base for the Progression Intervention Strategy.

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Brookes Pioneering Peers	Increased sense of belonging Increased on-course retention / completion rates for target learners	Empirical (Type 2): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process evaluation followed by Impact evaluation 	Process evaluation insights - 2026 Early impact insights - 2027

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
	Increased progression rates to graduate study or employment for target learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed methods including TASO validated scale Longitudinal tracking using OfS continuation and completion data HEAT / HESA progression data 	Longer-term impact insights - 2028-29
Thrive Festival	<p>Increased understanding of progression pathways for target students</p> <p>Increase in progression rates to graduate study or employment for target students</p>	<p>Empirical (Type 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process evaluation (pilot) followed by Impact evaluation Mixed methods approach Longitudinal tracking using non-random comparison groups and internal progression data 	<p>Process evaluation insights - 2026</p> <p>Early impact insights - 2027</p> <p>Longer-term impact insights - 2028-29</p>
Development of resources and enhancement of existing activity	<p>Impacts of specific resources being developed (resource-specific outcomes TBD)</p> <p>Effectiveness of different types of communication with students</p>	<p>Empirical (Type 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore potential for using Small n. 	<p>Early evidence insights - 2026</p> <p>Longer-term impact insights - 2028-29</p>
BrookesEDGE	<p>Development of specific competencies at individual level</p> <p>Contribution of competency framework towards peer mentoring practices and outcomes</p>	<p>Empirical (Type 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process evaluation (pilot) followed by Impact evaluation Explore potential for using Small n. or mixed methods (qualitative interviews or questionnaires) 	<p>Process evaluation insights - 2026</p> <p>Early impact insights - 2027</p> <p>Longer-term impact insights - 2028-29</p>

Whole provider approach

Inclusivity is one of five guiding principles of Oxford Brookes University: we take positive steps to create an environment in which we celebrate, value, and provide equal opportunity to all.

In this context, our Access and Participation Plan (APP) sits alongside and in alignment with other institutional strategies to support the University in delivering against this principle, paying due regard to the Equality Act 2010. This includes our refreshed [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) Strategy](#), the development of which was informed by the work undertaken to understand the risks to equality of opportunity for prospective and current students as outlined in this APP. We will implement the interventions in this APP and those outlined in our EDI Strategy collaboratively, to ensure that collectively they contribute to the advancement of equality of opportunity. Our [People and Culture Strategy](#) supports our whole institution to bring our values to life in the way we work, and the way we attract, develop and retain our staff. Beyond specific strategies, as a guiding principle, inclusivity informs the way we deliver our overarching aims and objectives as an institution. We have also applied this principle to the development of our intervention strategies. In many cases these are not targeted at specific groups, but are initiatives designed to ensure that how we support our whole student body has a disproportionately positive impact on the student groups we have identified within our assessment of performance and objectives.

Strategic leadership on access and participation within Oxford Brookes is provided through a cross-University role at Pro Vice Chancellor level. This role leads our Access and Participation Group which brings together senior colleagues from across the University to oversee the development and delivery of initiatives to support equality of opportunity in relation to access and student success. Access and Participation Group reports directly into our Vice Chancellor's Group, with annual reporting on progress to the Board of Governors.

The development and delivery of measures to support access and student success involves a wide range of staff from across the University. Academic departments have embedded Widening Participation Coordinators - academics with funded, allocated time to support access activities - who form a community of practice across our faculties. Faculties also take responsibility for APP and EDI considerations through the implementation of Diversity and Inclusion groups which include student consultants to ensure students are represented within those discussions. We embed workshops related to inclusive programme design and risks to equality of opportunity within our learning and development programme for academic staff. All staff also undertake a compulsory EDI training module as part of their induction. We bring together staff from across teams who support specific groups of students, such as care experienced and estranged students, or refugees and asylum seekers, to form working groups to share good practice, and to identify and resolve specific barriers across the student lifecycle. More broadly we communicate developments related to access and participation through our regular staff update, wider staff forums, and departmental and team meetings. In the development of our risks to equality of opportunity, we used two all staff surveys to ensure we gathered as wide an input as possible.

Several University-wide initiatives support our access and participation ambitions. Our [Academic Advising Policy](#), implemented in September 2023, ensures that all students have timetabled Academic Advising tutorials scheduled within the formal teaching timetable. These tutorials sit alongside informal student drop-in sessions as well as formal teaching sessions. Evaluation of the impact of these tutorials adopts an access and participation lens to ensure the quality of Academic Advising meets the needs of students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds.

Other University-wide initiatives include submissions to Advance HE for the Race Equality Charter mark and the Student Minds Mental Health Charter. The self-assessments associated with these charter marks and the subsequent action plans will support the delivery of the access and participation agenda as well as our wider inclusivity commitment. The Pro Vice Chancellor, with responsibility for access and participation, chairs the Mental Health Charter Steering Group. Access and participation is also represented on the Race Equality Steering Group through the Associate Dean, Student Outcomes.

The interventions contained within our APP encompass the whole lifecycle - from early secondary education, through to support beyond graduation. When defining our risks to equality of opportunity, we have identified four themes which are relevant across the whole student lifecycle, and can be seen throughout our intervention strategies: successful navigation of transition points, sense of belonging, mental health and affordability. Our evaluation plan sets out how we will ensure that we are able to capture the discrete outcomes and collective impact of initiatives across the student lifecycle, and how we will endeavour to address current gaps in institutional and sector knowledge.

Student consultation

As an institution, we actively involve students in many aspects of our provision under our 'Students as Partners' initiative. We built on this model in early 2023 to recruit current students from diverse backgrounds to support the development of our APP. These are casually contracted staff, with an expectation that the students engage with early induction and training sessions. Subsequent APP sessions offer more flexibility, to align with students' study and personal commitments. During 2023 we held two recruitment rounds (April and September), with the support of our Careers and Employability Services team, advertising the roles during Freshers week and also via our JobShop Service. Students who were recruited early in the year supported the advertising of the subsequent roles, with the September recruitment resulting in over 70 applications. In total, 18 students were appointed, including undergraduate, postgraduate, home and international students.

Induction sessions introduced the student consultants to the concept of access and participation in order to provide the context within which their subsequent contributions would be made. Both the April and September cohorts received introductory sessions to the APP, which gave the regulatory context in addition to our own context based on our assessment of performance and the interventions that we were implementing under the current APP. Students recruited in April were heavily involved in the development of our overarching Theories of Change for access, success and progression, participating in workshops with staff to develop goals, objectives and outcomes, to inform or intervention strategies. The September intake progressed this work by focussing specifically on potential interventions that would support these objectives. Subsequent discussions focused on the detail of these interventions specifically in relation to the barriers that students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds might face.

The Student APP Consultants group also includes members of Brookes Students' Union to support the ongoing development of our APP. We have worked with the Students' Union, sharing the outputs of our discussions with them in order to seek feedback from the wider student body. The mapping of the EORR and considerations for care experienced and estranged students by the Students' Union, contributed to revisions to the APP in relation to Risk 1 and the inclusion of students with no living parents into our definition of estranged students. This demonstrates the collaborative approach that we have adopted in developing our APP. The increased threshold for

our bursary scheme was influenced in part, through the work that the Students' Union has done in raising the profile around the challenges students are facing in relation to increased cost of living.

The student consultants will continue to be involved in the implementation of our APP as we move into the next phase. It is anticipated that there will be some continuity of student consultants currently engaged as well as subsequent recruitment rounds. Students will join working groups that will be established to deliver the various activities and will act as critical friends in relation to monitoring impact and identifying subsequent activities to support our overarching objectives. We aim to develop the model to provide a more structured approach that not only supports our APP but provides developmental opportunities for the students more generally. The APP student consultant group will be pivotal to ensuring we are delivering our APP commitments and that they are having the positive impact that we anticipate.

From June 2022 to July 2023, we ran a pilot Level 3 student partnership programme based on the principles of equitable partnership and co-creation. Twelve Year 12 students were recruited from three local schools to undertake paid roles as student partners. The project aimed to discover the ways in which Oxford Brookes can: meet the needs and reflect the lived experiences of a diverse range of prospective students; make the content and delivery of activity attractive and appealing to a diverse range of students. Drawing on design thinking, the student partners participated in five on-campus active collaborative learning workshops, and kept reflective diaries. We have used the findings from this project to inform the identification of our risks to equality of opportunity and the design of our interventions. We will also be using our learning from this programme to inform future approaches to student co-creation within our outreach work.

Evaluation of the plan

Monitoring of the plan

The Access and Participation Group will monitor the implementation and impact of the APP at its regular meetings, through reports from activity leads and through consideration of evaluation findings. The Access and Participation Management Group will oversee operational delivery. An annual report will be presented to the Vice Chancellor's Group and Board of Governors.

OfS self-assessment tool

To understand the current strengths and areas of potential improvement in our current evaluation practice we carried out a self-assessment using the [OfS self-assessment tool](#). This exercise highlighted aspects of emerging good practice, as well as several areas where consolidation and development opportunities exist. A summary table of our self-assessment can be found in Annex B.

Insights gleaned from the tool include that we are 'emerging' into good practice across most areas, with 'good' elements being identified in relation to evaluation design. Our identified strengths include consistent use of NERUPI aims and objectives for Access activity delivery, as well as strong qualitative and quantitative data collection processes and increased financial and strategic investment in the Evaluation Team. Key areas to focus on developing include upskilling staff to feel confident to undertake Type 2 evaluation consistently, as well as consistent and meaningful use of Theory of Change to undertake Type 2 evaluation. We have also identified that work needs to be done to implement Type 3 evaluation approaches and counterfactuals to better contribute to our in-house and sector causal evidence.

Evaluation capacity

As identified in the 'strengths' from our self-assessment, we are investing significantly in evaluation with specific initiatives and areas of investment in the newly-established Impact Evaluation and Insight Team. This builds on and significantly enhances the remit of the previous evaluation team with additional investment to support a strategic, whole institution approach to evaluation and particularly to impact evaluation. The team will ensure we can embed and implement evaluation across the student lifecycle, establish efficiencies via rigorous process evaluation, undertake long-term impact evaluation for our interventions, and to facilitate publication of interim and summative findings across the evaluation cycle. The team will also work to embed a culture of evaluation across the University, with approval to establish a Centre for the Evaluation of Access, Participation and Student Success (CEAPSS). This Centre will become a central resource for in-house evaluation expertise as well as a resource for staff to share outcomes and reports from their own programmes, projects or evaluations, and to share updates and information, resources, tools and good practice from the sector.

The Impact Evaluation and Insight Team will focus on work that will generate the most useful insight. Activities will be prioritised in terms of their:

- Potential to meet APP objectives;
- Resource input, taking into account indirect as well as direct costs;
- The extent to which they are innovative, particularly where there are corresponding evidence gaps for the sector and/or institution, and the
- Extent to which they are scalable particularly where wider roll-out is anticipated.

Evaluation plan and methodology

Within our underlying evaluation strategy, we have identified a set of principles. Evaluation of APP activities within Oxford Brookes will:

- be based on robust Theory of Change models, developed at an appropriate scale(s);
- be embedded in the design of APP activities to enable the most appropriate and effective evaluation designs to be implemented, and to enable evaluation to be formative;
- be designed to include both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods to answer *how* and *why*, as well as *how much* questions;
- focus on reaching conclusions and recommendations with practical relevance to inform the design and development of APP activity;
- seek to provide robust evidence and learning for the sector as well as to inform the ongoing development of interventions within Oxford Brookes;
- involve students where possible in evaluation design and implementation to make it participatory so that it contributes to mitigating the belonging and shaping risk (Risk 4).
- take a collaborative approach to evaluation, where feasible, engaging with stakeholders to help ensure findings are relevant and have most potential for implementation.
- be undertaken with ethical approval from Brookes' Research Ethics Team and informed by TASO's research ethics guidance.

Principles for methodology development

Evaluation will usually follow a phased approach, with early emphasis on process and formative evaluation moving towards increasing our understanding of impacts. Robust process evaluation drawing on operational data, as well as the views of stakeholders and beneficiaries, will ensure that activities are being implemented as planned (have fidelity), and will inform their ongoing development to improve effectiveness and efficiency.

For understanding impact, opportunities to collect Type 3 evidence will be given full consideration. Decisions to use experimental or quasi experimental (QE) methods will depend on the extent to which the evidence they provide will be robust, useful and also meet ethical standards. The availability of resources, skills and capacity within the institution for their effective implementation will also determine their inclusion in evaluation designs. We recognise the value of measuring causal impact and have a particular interest in exploring the Difference in Difference approach for interventions implemented at the scale of degree programmes. When experimental or QE methods are used, they will always be combined with qualitative evaluation to provide insight to how and why impacts have occurred (or not). For evaluating financial support (the Brookes Bursary) the OfS Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit will be used.

When Type 3 evidence is not a practical option, or would not provide useful results, Type 2 evidence will be used to assess the changes associated with APP activities. We will explore the potential for more sophisticated tracking of associations between interventions and outcomes using institutionally held student records (e.g. HEAT data) and survey data. For individual activities, pre and post intervention surveys utilising validated questions from the TASO Access and Success Questionnaire will be useful. In the spirit of skill development and experimentation, Small n methods will be used if they have strong potential to provide alternative or additional insight to whether and how APP activities are generating the intended impact, and if we have the capacity to implement them effectively.

The potential for economic evaluation of APP activities will be partly determined by the availability of Type 3 evidence. Some inclusion of elements of economic assessment into evaluation studies may be included where the resulting information will help to guide the development or scaling of APP interventions.

Each intervention strategy details the ways in which activity will be evaluated for the duration of the APP. We have primarily identified opportunities to undertake Type 2 and Type 3 evaluation.

Sharing findings

Unless otherwise specified we will ensure research and evaluation findings are shared in appropriate formats and in a timely way. As a minimum, formative, interim and summative findings from APP activities will be published on our website and will also be communicated across our external sector networks. We will ensure that formative findings and impact evidence are communicated through internal channels via internal newsletters and staff updates, and that these are also shared directly with Evaluation Champions within the Access Team. Early, indicative and formative findings will be shared via our in-house communication channels as well as through organisations such as FACE.

Evaluation reports for larger-scale projects will be shared with delivery teams as well as via Brookes' communication channels and to be accessible to the public and colleagues from across the sector. Channels for external dissemination of evidence will include conferences and sector forums (e.g. TASO, NERUPI, APPSIG, NEON, FACE, HEAT); we are also a member of the APP Special Interest Group (APPSIG) for operational leads of access and participation work, and will share findings from our evaluation activities with other members, adding our reports and findings to a database for the sector. Wherever possible we will seek opportunities to publish impact findings via peer review publication.

Evaluation partnerships

Where possible we will work in partnership or collaboration with other providers, organisations and schools to undertake evaluation of our APP interventions. Across the duration of the plan we will pursue and act on opportunities to develop new evaluation partnerships and evaluation projects which maximise the potential intrinsic to collaboration with other partners developing and delivering similar or comparable interventions.

Who	Project/programme
Study Higher	Study Higher are the UniConnect partnership for Bucks, Berks, Oxon and Swindon and are based within Oxford Brookes as lead institution. Depending on future UniConnect funding arrangements, we will continue to implement collaborative evaluation approaches with Study Higher to maximise evaluation capacity and rigour of outcome and impact findings
Internal collaboration with School of Education, Humanities and Languages	Collaboration to evaluate a Teacher Action Research Project with a local 11-18 Academy
NERUPI	Ongoing collaboration with the NERUPI Network to share best practice and findings
HEAT	Continued collaboration to support our own delivery of impact evaluation to produce quality evidence of what works and what does not work within our context, and as a member of the HEAT steering group to inform development of tools, resources and evaluation approaches to support the sector

Provision of information to students

Information about the fees and financial support that apply to prospective and current students will continue to be published clearly on our website. Tuition fees on individual course webpages and our student finance webpages are accompanied by further information to support students in understanding the potential changes to tuition fees and the University's approach to implementing any changes.

In addition, we produce printed materials for open days and recruitment events, deliver finance talks and have members of our finance team available to answer questions at our open days. All recruitment and outreach staff, as well as our team of student ambassadors, have up to date knowledge of fees and financial support.

Our offer letters confirm the tuition fee for the year of entry on the relevant course.

We automatically assess students' eligibility for the Oxford Brookes Bursary using their household income assessment through the Student Loans Company. We contact offer holders prior to enrolment to inform them of their eligibility for the Brookes Bursary and payments are made automatically.

The eligibility criteria and value of financial support for the Oxford Brookes Bursary is set out below:

Household income	Oxford Brookes Bursary (per year, for each year of your course)
Under £35,000	£1,250
£35,000 - £45,000	£1,000

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

A1. Our approach to identifying our risks to equality of opportunity

We undertook a detailed assessment of performance, building on our existing understanding of gaps in representation and student outcomes. We utilised our analyses, evidence of national trends, and staff and student input, to identify our most significant indications of risk. We then considered the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR), our staff and student consultation as well as internal and external insight and evidence to identify and understand the risks to equality of opportunity which affect students' opportunities to access and succeed in higher education at Oxford Brookes.

A1.1 Methodology

Our assessment of performance was informed by multi-stage analyses. For each lifecycle stage we carried out an initial gap analysis and, where we identified gaps or variances in student outcomes, we supplemented this with further detailed analyses of the data in order to gain a better understanding of the key drivers and factors involved. Where necessary, individualised data together with technical guidance documents were used to rebuild indicators for detailed analyses.

Our analyses included the following datasets:

- UCAS end of cycle reports for applicant data
- OfS Access and Participation dashboard and dataset
- Internal data from our student record system
- National data, including that from HESA and OfS dashboards
- NSS data
- Graduate Outcomes (GO) data
- Regional demographic data including Census 2011 and 2021, School Census 2021-22, and ONS population estimates

A1.2 Gap analysis

Our initial analysis of **access** performance was conducted using internal data on student intake and regional and national population data. To identify potential gaps, we compared the proportion of students with particular demographic characteristics in our intake with those in our recruitment region. This analysis was carried out on weighted benchmarks for each characteristic calculated as the average proportion of young people in the population with a particular characteristic, weighted by the regions that we have recruited from in recent years. The analysis focused on all types of undergraduate provision but was restricted to our intake of young (under 21) students to better reflect the national data. This also reflects the fact that the majority of our student population is aged under 21 (81% of our 2022 intake).

In addition, we explored UCAS data for placed applicants (which includes data for the intake year 2023 and otherwise unavailable data for certain characteristics) in order to assess our own performance for these demographic groups against sector average.

For our initial overview of **success and progression** performance, we used provider specific access and participation data, focusing on statistically significant gaps ($\geq 95\%$ of statistical uncertainty distribution above or below 0). Gaps were then ranked on the basis of persistence and trend in the gaps to determine priorities.

We conducted further analysis using individualised data together with technical guidance documents to rebuild indicators for detailed analyses where necessary.

A1.3 Intersectional and multivariate regression analyses

Through the findings of our initial gaps analysis we decided that a multivariate approach would be needed to add context to the simplistic gaps analysis, as students' lives are complex and observed outcomes are not usually one-dimensional. We used multivariate logistic regression to better understand the drivers and most influential factors determining success and progression outcomes. 11 factors were considered simultaneously in these analyses: entry qualifications, subject of study, year of study and 8 demographic factors, allowing the analysis of the performance of specific groups of students whilst controlling for all other factors.

We probed intersections of disadvantage in two ways. First, we investigated double interactions of seven characteristics (age, ethnicity, sex, IMD, eligibility for FSM, disability type, and TUNDRA) using an absolute gap analysis on OfS dashboard data aggregated over 4 years. We identified intersections with rates lower than their individual groups and tested those for statistical significance.

In addition to this, we investigated double intersections of four characteristics (age, ethnicity, sex and IMD) using logistic regression, where we controlled for entry qualifications, subject of study and year, as these were three of the most important factors identified in our holistic analyses of student outcomes (logistic regression, 11 factors considered). We considered the double intersections together with the interaction terms. As a result, we were able to identify several potential drivers of the gaps between characteristics and several significant interaction terms, where the effect of one characteristic was modified by the other characteristic.

We are continuing to explore the interactions further. For the span of this APP, we will focus on the factors and intersections that featured most consistently in the analyses listed above.

A1.4 Decisions on data

As part of our analyses, we have made decisions about the demographic indicators we have chosen to underpin our assessment of performance, objectives and targets.

Throughout this assessment we have used both FSM and IMD as proxies for income status. We recognise that IMD is an area based measure and that the nature of the risks that our students face are not necessarily primarily geographic. However, we have undertaken a statistical analysis into the association between FSM eligibility and IMD 2019 and have found moderate but statistically significant correlation between FSM and IMD Q1+2 in our student body. Furthermore, the coverage of IMD is greater and we are still developing our internal data maturity for FSM. Therefore, whilst we have used FSM wherever possible, we have used IMD as the primary proxy for income status/disadvantage and have set targets against IMD. We will use FSM as well as IMD wherever possible when we are targeting interventions, and will continue to monitor FSM data with a view to potentially setting targets against FSM in place of IMD once we have more robust data.

We included POLAR4 and TUNDRA in our analyses but will not be using these within our indications of risk or objectives. These measures tell us where participation is low, but not what the underlying causes of this might be. As an area-based measure, IMD more accurately reflects disadvantage.

ABCS does not feature within our indications of risk as we have undertaken our own detailed intersectional analysis, as outlined above. This has allowed us to investigate individual characteristics that are driving intersectional findings, to better inform our targeting and interventions.

A1.5 Students with particular characteristics

Within our assessment of performance, we have included analysis of care experienced students where this data was robust enough to deliver reliable findings. Our assessment of performance of care experienced students is primarily based on HESA data in order to ensure consistency with the OfS APP data and indicators, however, we believe that the actual number of care experienced students at Brookes is higher than this data reports. We have taken action over recent years to improve our understanding of data reporting on care experienced students, and have developed our data capture and validation approaches to increase our confidence in our internal and external data. We therefore expect the variance between internal data and HESA data to diminish over time. We have also looked at UCAS placed applicant data in order to look at longer-term trends and more recent data. We recognise that the assessment of performance of care experienced students is obscured by the phenomena of self-reporting, possible underreporting, small populations, data quality issues and non-consistency of the definitions in the sector. Despite this, we continue to monitor the performance of care experienced students across all life-cycle stages and use statistical methods appropriate for small populations where possible.

For student groups where we have small numbers, or lack reliable data, we have taken a qualitative approach to identifying the risks to equality of opportunity, alongside our consideration of the national EORR. We have undertaken specific consultation in relation to care experienced and estranged students, including input from Oxfordshire Virtual School. Through this, we have identified enhanced risk factors for care experienced and estranged students, which we have worked with Brookes Students' Union to map against our EORR and the national EORR to highlight the specific needs of this group of students. These enhanced risk factors are outlined in section A4.1 and we will use them to undertake an equality risk assessment of our interventions in relation to specific risks. We intend to undertake a similar piece of work in relation to students from service families, along with other smaller populations of students identified in collaboration with Brookes Students' Union.

We have also used this approach to differentiate how risks to equality of opportunity present for students studying through our collaborative partners. Our subcontracted provision consistently attracts a more diverse cohort of students. While this is an important element of our commitment to make an Oxford Brookes degree accessible to a wide range of students, it does not replace our commitment to ensure our on campus student body is diverse and inclusive. Future data will include significant numbers of students studying through collaborative partners and at this stage we intend to disaggregate our data to ensure we retain a focus on the diversity of our on campus students, as well as indications of risk specific to students studying at a partner.

A2. Findings

In our assessment of performance, we have identified a large number of indications of risk for a variety of student groups, beyond what would be a practical or realistic number to target within this APP. We have used our detailed analyses and our understanding of the national EORR and other literature in order to inform our prioritisation of indications of risk. Table A1 provides a high level summary of our indications of risk. In this section, we have set out the analyses we undertook for our assessment of performance, and our rationale for decisions on prioritisation.

	Access	Success - Continuation	Success - Completion	Success - Attainment	Progression
English IMD	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
FSM	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Disability	Green	Amber	Red	Amber	Amber
Ethnicity	Red	Red	Amber	Red	Red
Age on entry	Amber	Amber	Amber	Red	Amber
Sex	Green	Red	Red	Red	Amber

Table A1: Summary of indications of risk. This grid shows where we have identified indications of risk across the student life cycle stages and the main demographic groups. Red = indications of risk which we have assessed to be a priority for instance due to interactions/drivers impacting other groups. Amber = indications of risk which are either inconsistent or unclear and which we will continue to monitor but will not prioritise in this APP. Green = no indication of risk.

A2.1 Access

Our assessment of performance identified the following key indications of risk:

RI1: Disproportionately low numbers of students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes

RI2: Disproportionately low numbers of students from black and mixed ethnicities

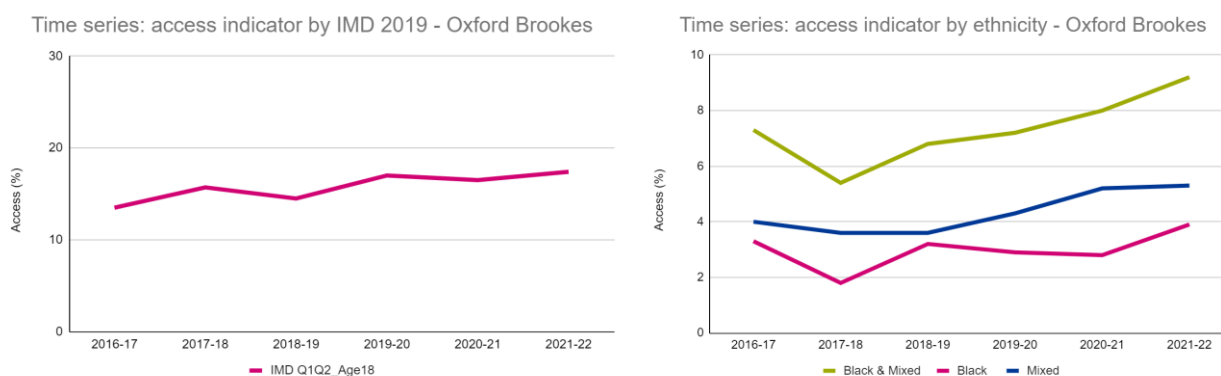


Figure A1. Charts showing access indicators across a time series for areas identified as key indications of risk. Source: OfS Access and Participation dataset for Oxford Brookes.

Oxford Brookes typically recruits a large proportion of its UK undergraduate intake from a region that covers the Midlands, the South East, South West and London. When assessing representation within our intake, we therefore wanted to understand the extent to which our intake is representative of the region we recruit from, while giving regard to national gaps in representation. Our analysis showed that our recruitment region has a lower proportion of young people living in areas of socio-economic disadvantage than the national average, as well as a lower proportion of students eligible for free school meals. The ethnic demographics of our recruitment region are similar to the national average. Whilst we were not able to calculate equivalent statistics for our recruitment of care experienced students, our analysis showed that there are similar proportions of care experienced young people in our recruitment region as in the national population.

Compared to our recruitment region, we continue to have disproportionately low numbers of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD Q1+2, FSM). We also continue to have disproportionately low numbers of students from black ethnic groups, and have identified an increased indication of risk in relation to low numbers of students from mixed ethnic groups. These gaps are particularly pronounced within our young population which accounted for 81% of our intake in 2022.

We know that underrepresentation among students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, black and mixed ethnicity students is driven by low initial applications. We have also identified some areas where this is compounded by differential success rates through the application process. Our analysis of UCAS applications data showed that applicants from IMD Q1, applicants eligible for FSM and applicants from black ethnic groups were less likely to receive an offer than their counterparts, even when adjusting for the subject of study.

We have chosen to monitor changes in the number of students from black and mixed ethnicities as a combined target to reflect the anticipated population changes among young people. However, we will monitor this target through disaggregated data and take a more granular focus on black ethnicities through our Race Equality Charter work, to ensure that progress in one ethnic group does not mask continued underrepresentation in another.

Our analysis shows that we have enrolled increasing proportions of students from Asian backgrounds, meeting or exceeding the milestones within our 2020-2025 APP. As a result, our intake of students from Asian and other ethnic groups is now similar to our recruitment region.

Our analysis of UCAS placed applicant data identified a statistically significantly higher proportion of placed applicants with a known disability (no individual disability type was statistically significantly higher but “specific learning difficulty” had the largest gap). Also of note was a higher than sector proportion of placed applicants with a parent in the armed forces (but not statistically significant) and an increasing number and proportion of care experienced students (doubling from 2016 to 2023).

UCAS data shows a consistent trend of increasing placed applicants who are care leavers. The proportion of care experienced students at Oxford Brookes is similar to the sector average ([OfS student characteristics data 2010-11 to 2021-22](#)), although as outlined above we believe that our figures are underreported. Population statistics suggest that the proportion of children aged 16+ in care living in our recruitment region is similar to the national average (1% in both cases).

Intersectional data analysis of our enrolment data suggests significant overlaps between several groups of students highlighted in our overall objectives. For instance, Asian, black, mixed, and other ethnic groups (independently and collectively) are more likely to be from IMD Q1+2 than white students. IMD Q1+2 students are more likely to be mature, and mature and of black ethnicity, although there is also a relationship with some young students from specific ethnic groups. Furthermore, commuter students are more likely to be Asian, black or from IMD Q1+2 than non-commuter students. Taken together, this analysis suggests that a wide ranging approach to intervention setting may be required to target improvements in the metrics for specific groups, and also that through setting targets for specific groups, we will likely see improvements in other underrepresented groups that have relationships with our target groups (for instance we estimate that for every 1 pp increase in the IMD Q1+2 population, there will be a 0.33 pp increase in the Asian, black, mixed and other population).

A2.2 Success: continuation and completion

Our assessment of performance identified the following key indications of risk:

RI3: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to continue their studies one year after starting.

RI8: Students with declared mental health conditions are less likely to complete their study programme.



Figure A2. Charts showing continuation and completion indicators across a time series for areas identified as key indications of risk. Source: OfS Access and Participation dataset for Oxford Brookes.

Our initial analysis identified a number of different demographic characteristics associated with lower continuation and completion rates. These included students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD Q1+2, FSM), students with multiple impairments, and male students. In addition, Asian, black and mixed ethnicity students, and mature students had lower continuation rates, while students with mental health conditions and social and communication difficulties had lower completion rates.

For care experienced students, we identified statistically significant gaps in continuation and completion in several historic years and in the 4 year aggregate. The most recent 2 year aggregate was not significantly different between care experienced students and not care experienced students on continuation, but remained significantly different on completion, although the gap was smaller.

Having identified our indications of risk, we have used logistic regression to identify the potential causes of low continuation rates. We considered 11 different factors holistically: entry qualifications, subject of study, year of study and 8 demographic factors. This analysis showed that entry qualifications and subject of study are two of the most important factors determining both continuation and completion. Year of entry was also significant: students commencing their studies in 2020/21 were significantly less likely to continue. Controlling for other factors, students from the following groups have lower continuation rates: low socioeconomic status (eligible for FSM), male, mixed ethnicity. Controlling for other factors, no relevant demographic groups of students have lower completion rates but students from the following groups have higher completion rates: Asian, IMD Q2.

In order to better understand the disaggregated performance of students with declared disabilities by disability type, we carried out a further logistic regression analysis controlling for entry qualification, subject and year. This analysis showed that students with disabilities had no significant difference in rates of continuation compared to students with no known disability regardless of disability type. On completion, students with mental health conditions had significantly lower rates of completion compared to students with no known disability. All other disability groups had no statistical difference.

We supported our statistical analysis with thematic analysis of NSS 2023 responses, including verbatim comments. Disadvantaged and underrepresented groups tended to have higher positivity measures, especially ethnic minorities (for black students, statistically significant differences appear in 12 questions and there are 3-4 questions with a statistically significantly higher positivity measure for Asian, mixed and other ethnicity students), but also mature students, and to some extent IMD Q1+2. On the other hand, students with disabilities tended to have lower satisfaction rates, especially students with cognitive or learning difficulties. Differences between demographic groups are consistent with those seen at sector level, with the exception of students from mixed, other and Asian ethnic groups who had higher positive satisfaction measures than white students at Oxford Brookes.

We particularly focused on responses to the mental wellbeing question on the NSS. Students from black ethnicity, mature, and students from low socioeconomic status (IMD Q1+2) were statistically significantly more likely to give positive responses to this question, while students with cognitive or learning difficulties were more likely to give less positive responses. Based on thematic analysis of comments, we believe that this question was understood by respondents to be more broadly about mental health.

Through the multivariate modelling and analyses mentioned above, we identified that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and male students had the most persistent unexplained gaps in continuation rates when controlling for other factors. Ethnicity featured in some analyses, but its interaction with sex and socioeconomic background hinted that there are potential drivers to the ethnicity gap and further research is needed. We have therefore decided to focus our objective and target on the continuation of students from low socioeconomic background (IMD Q1+2) while committing to further monitoring and analysis of ethnicity and sex as drivers of low continuation rates.

We believe that improving continuation rates for these groups will have a positive impact on completion rates, and we have therefore chosen to focus on this stage of the lifecycle within this APP.

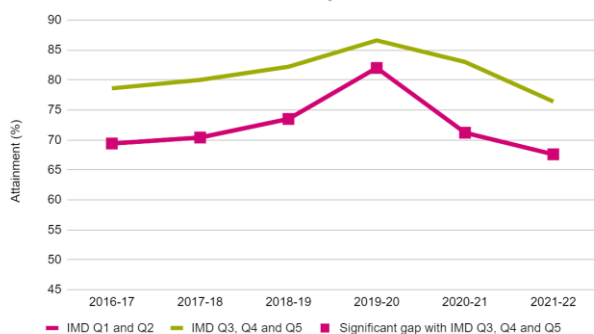
A2.3 Success: Degree outcomes

Our assessment of performance identified the following key indications of risk:

RI4: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above

RI5: Black and Asian students are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above

Time series: attainment indicator by IMD 2019 - Oxford Brookes



Time series: attainment indicator by ethnicity - Oxford Brookes

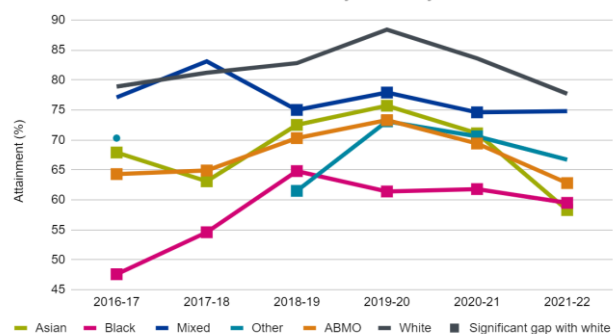


Figure A3. Charts showing attainment indicators across a time series for areas identified as key indications of risk. Source: OfS Access and Participation dataset for Oxford Brookes.

Our initial analysis of degree outcomes identified lower outcomes for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD Q1+2), Asian, black, mixed, and other ethnic groups, male students, and mature students. We undertook further analysis focussed on age, ethnicity and IMD quintile, using the three most recent years and found that no single characteristic was shown to further increase the gap existing in other characteristics. However, we are aware that degree outcomes during these years may have been affected by the impacts of the pandemic.

We have not detected any statistically significant differences in degree outcomes between care experienced students and those who are not care experienced.

In order to investigate the possible drivers of differences in degree outcomes, we used multivariate analyses (logistic regression where 11 factors were considered). Through this we found that entry qualifications and subject of study are two of the most important factors determining both continuation and degree outcomes, whilst year of study was influential as well. When controlling for these factors, mature students (age 26-30 and 31-40) had higher degree outcomes. However, lower attainment rates persisted for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD Q1+2), Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic groups, and male students. In a parallel analysis we also identified lower degree outcomes for students with cognitive or learning difficulties compared to students with no known disability.

We have considered the various analyses we have undertaken, focussing on where lower degree outcomes are most persistent and consistent across analyses. As a result of this, our targets will focus on increasing the proportion of students from low socioeconomic background (IMD Q1+2) who are awarded a 2:1 or above, and the proportion of black and Asian students who are awarded a 2:1 or above. We will undertake further research into the role that sex has on student outcomes.

A2.4 Progression

Our assessment of performance identified the following key indications of risk:

RI6: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study

RI7: Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study

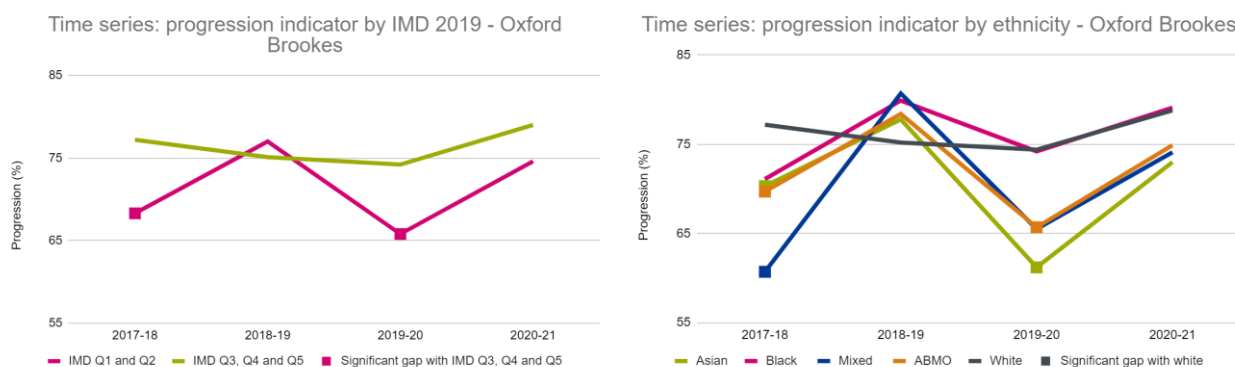


Figure A4. Charts showing progression indicators across a time series for areas identified as key indications of risk. Source: OfS Access and Participation dataset for Oxford Brookes.

Our initial analysis identified lower levels of progression among students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD Q1+2, eligible for FSM), students with a declared mental health condition, students from ethnic groups other than white, female students and young students (age under 21).

We have not detected any statistically significant differences in progression between care experienced students and not care experienced students.

Our multivariate analyses identified that subject of study, entry qualifications and year of qualification are three of the most important factors determining progression (subject is the most important one). Controlling for other factors, Asian students have lower attainment rates. Further logistic regression focussed on disability type found that students with disabilities had no significant difference in rates of progression compared to students with no known disability regardless of disability type.

We have considered the various analyses we have undertaken, focussing on where lower progression rates are most persistent and consistent across analyses. As a result of this, our targets will focus on increasing the proportion of students from low socioeconomic background (IMD Q1+2), and the proportion of students from black, Asian, mixed and other ethnic groups, who progress into graduate employment or further study.

A3. Key indications of risk

RI1: Disproportionately low numbers of students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes

RI2: Disproportionately low numbers of students from black and mixed ethnicities

RI3: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to continue their studies one year after starting

RI4: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above

RI5: Black and Asian students are less likely to be awarded a 2:1 or above

RI6: Students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study

RI7: Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study

RI8: Students with declared mental health conditions are less likely to complete their study programme.

A4. Oxford Brookes risk register

Risk	Risk description	Indication of risk	Lifecycle stage	Objectives	Related national EORR risks	Interconnected Brookes risks
R1: Perceptions of HE and of Oxford as a place to study	Students may not apply to HE, or consider Oxford as a place to study, despite being qualified.	RI1 RI2	Access	O1	Risk 3: Perception of HE	R4, R7
R2: Knowledge, skills and experience	Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills needed to enter, succeed and progress from higher education	RI1 - RI7	Access Success Progression	O1 - O4	Risk 1: Knowledge and Skills Risk 2: Information and guidance Risk 6: Insufficient academic support Risk 7: Insufficient personal support Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus	
R3: Recruitment and selection	Students may not have an equal chance of being accepted onto a course at Oxford Brookes despite having the potential to succeed	RI1	Access	O1	Risk 4: Application success rates	R2

Risk	Risk description	Indication of risk	Lifecycle stage	Objectives	Related national EORR risks	Interconnected Brookes risks
R4: Belonging and shaping	Students may not have a positive student experience while at Oxford Brookes because they don't feel they belong within the University community	RI3 - RI8	Success Progression	O2 - O6	Risk 6: Insufficient academic support Risk 7: Insufficient personal support Risk 8: Mental Health	R1, R7, R6
R5: Student support	Students may not have equal access to the academic and personal support they need to succeed in and beyond higher education	RI3 - RI7	Success Progression	O2 - O6	Risk 6: Insufficient academic support Risk 7: Insufficient personal support Risk 12: Progression from HE	R2, R4, R6, R7
R6: Mental health	Students may experience mental health difficulties that may impact their studies	RI8	Success	O2 - O6	Risk 8: Mental Health	R5, R7
R7: Affordability	Increased cost of living may affect a student's ability to access and succeed in higher education	RI1 - RI7	Access Success Progression	O2, O3, O5	Risk 10: Cost Pressures	R1, R4, R5, R6

A4.1 Enhanced risk factors

Through our consideration of risks to equality of opportunity and consultation with staff and students, we have identified some groups of students who may experience increased likelihood or impact of the risks listed above. We have developed these for two groups of students as outlined below, and intend to expand this approach to other specific groups of students where our data is not robust, or we have small numbers of students. We will use these enhanced risk factors to inform equality risk assessments for our intervention strategies, and where they identify a new risk rather than increased likelihood or impact of our existing risks, we will submit a variation to outline an additional intervention strategy.

A4.2 Care experienced and estranged students

We developed the enhanced risk factors outlined below in consultation with staff experienced in supporting care experienced and estranged students, as well as current students and input from Oxfordshire Virtual School. We worked with Brookes Students' Union to map these to our risks to equality of opportunity and the EORR, to identify specific areas of heightened risk.

We have included the following characteristics as in scope of these risk factors: care experienced and estranged students, including other related groups of independent students such as students under 25 years of age with no living parents and unaccompanied asylum seekers.

Enhanced risk factors

1. Relationship with adults: students may experience additional barriers to forming appropriate relationships and boundaries with university staff due to previous interactions with adults in positions of authority
2. Independence: Students may have different levels of experience of independent living compared to their peers. This could be greater levels of independence than peers their age, or less experience due to significant external input in their life prior to university.
3. Agency: Students may place greater value on establishing and maintaining their own sense of agency while applying to and studying at university
4. Relationship with peers: Students may face increased barriers related to forming friendships and trust among peers. Students may be less likely to feel they meet people who understand their prior experiences.
5. Impact of coronavirus: Some students living in local authority care may have experienced greater restrictions during the pandemic, with increased impact on mental health and sense of agency.
6. Transition: Students may have had increased experience of transition points prior to coming to university, and the process of transitioning may trigger prior negative experiences. Students leaving care experience a significant change in the structures and levels of external support.
7. Hierarchy of needs: Students may have physiological and safety needs which should be met prior to any wider sense of belonging or mattering.

Table A2: Mapping care experienced and estranged students enhanced risk factors

	Risk 1	Risk 2	Risk 3	Risk 4	Risk 5	Risk 6	Risk 7
	Perceptions of Oxford	Knowledge, skills and experience	Recruitment and selection	Belonging and shaping	Student support	Mental health	Affordability
<u>Related EORR risks</u>	Risk 3	Risk 1, 2, 6, 7, 9 and 12	Risk 4	Risk 6, 7 and 8	Risk 6, 7 and 12	Risk 8	Risk 10 and 12
Relationships with adults	Red	Red		Red	Red	Red	Amber
Independence	Amber	Amber	Red	Amber	Red	Red	Red
Agency	Red		Red	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Relationships with Peers	Red	Red		Red	Red	Red	Amber
Impact of coronavirus	Amber			Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Transition	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Hierarchy of needs	Red	Amber	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red

A4.3 Subcontracted provision

Oxford Brookes validates level 5 and 6 qualifications for delivery through eight UK-based partner organisations. These are long-term partnerships, where course content and approaches to teaching, learning and assessment are designed collaboratively to meet the needs of the students who access HE through colleges, Institutes of Technology, and alternative providers. We know that these programmes support students who face more significant barriers to accessing traditional on campus or residential university study. Our students studying through subcontracted provision are more likely to be from low socioeconomic backgrounds and are more likely to be returning to study over the age of 21.

Our data shows that this cohort of students has lower continuation and completion rates, although their attainment and progression rates can be higher than those of their more advantaged peers. In collaboration with our partners, we have identified four enhanced risk factors that may be experienced by students studying through subcontracted provision.

1. HE identity

Students studying for an Oxford Brookes degree through a partner institution may not have a strong sense of identity as an HE student. This can be because they may not have a strong sense of connection with the University (Oxford Brookes Risk 4: Belonging and shaping), or because they have certain perceptions of the institution they are studying at, which is often local to them (EORR

Risk 3: Perception of higher education). In addition, where students have progressed from level 3 study within the same institution, there can be challenges in transitioning into the experiences, expectations and identity of an HE learner (Oxford Brookes Risk 2: Knowledge, skills and experience).

2. Access to financial resources

Students based within a partner institution may have additional barriers to identifying and securing financial support they are eligible for (Oxford Brookes Risk 7: Affordability). This includes practical barriers: the challenge of clearly communicating each university's support to different cohorts of students within a college-based HE community; lack of awareness from staff; lack of clear communication from Oxford Brookes about their eligibility.

3. Physical and mental health conditions

Our subcontracted provision attracts a similar proportion of students with a declared disability or mental health condition as our on campus provision. However, our partners report supporting significant numbers of students without a formal diagnosis and increasing numbers of students with complex or multiple mental and physical health conditions.

Students may choose to progress to HE within their college because of the continuity of environment, staff and support. However, in reality they can face a challenging transition from support defined and funded through an EHCP to the DSA process.

4. Ongoing impact of coronavirus

Our subcontracted provision typically has inclusive entry requirements supporting access for students with less traditional prior academic achievement. This is reflected in the pedagogical approach and structure of the programmes. However, in some cases, partners have experienced a significant change in the foundational subject knowledge and overall resilience and HE readiness of students who took GCSEs and level 3 qualifications during the pandemic (Oxford Brookes Risk 2: Knowledge, skills and experience).

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

B1. Summary of OfS Evaluation Self-Assessment

The OfS self-assessment tool aims to assist providers to review whether their evaluation plans and methodologies go far enough in generating high quality evidence about the impact of activities in their Access and Participation Plan. The intention of the tool is to promote reflection and discussion on effective practices and to help providers identify where efforts might be focused in future to improve the strength and quality of evaluations. The self-evaluation matrix is subjective and rates whether different impact evaluation practices are already in evidence ('good'), are exceeding base expectations for evaluation ('advanced'), partially in place/in process of being developed ('emerging'), or not currently used ('below minimum'). The Office for Students publishes [further information about the tool and scoring](#).

Area	Score	Key strengths	Key weaknesses	Future commitment
Strategic context	13 – emerging	Oxford Brookes is investing significantly in evaluation with specific initiatives and areas of investment and associated budget for the new Impact Evaluation and Insight Team to support a strategic, whole institution approach to evaluation, and particularly to impact evaluation.	There are variable levels of confidence around evaluation approaches among practitioners. We will develop our in-house training to ensure consistency in approaches and that staff feel confident to undertake robust process and impact evaluation.	Improve our current score in this area to 'advanced'
Programme design	14 – emerging	There is proactive engagement with research and evidence to inform programme and activity design and evaluation plans are in place for practitioners to refer to for activity evaluation, all existing within the context of the broader evaluation matrix which tracks each activity against objectives. All programmes have accompanying pre-established measurables; many have a pre- and post-evaluation approach embedded for short term outcomes,	Theory of Change development needs to be addressed at individual activity level to maximise impact evaluation. The evaluation cycle for programmes also needs implementing more robustly to facilitate the evaluation cycle evidence feedback loop.	Improve our current score in this area to 'advanced'

Area	Score	Key strengths	Key weaknesses	Future commitment
Evaluation design	7 – good	Type 1 evaluation is already in place for all programmes. There is an increasing amount of Type 2 evaluation emerging and a greater understanding of the manifold reasons we need to procure this standard of evidence, particularly in the Access Team. The NERUPI framework has been embedded for Access activities	More work needs to be done to implement Type 3 evaluation approaches and counterfactuals to better contribute to our in-house and sector causal evidence.	Continue to work to produce Type 2 evaluation to a high standard consistently and robustly, and explore pilot options for robust Type 3 counter-factual and 'difference in difference' evaluation.
Evaluation implementation	14 – emerging	We have developed robust data collection methods and processes and activity evaluation is outcome-focused and typically informed by both qualitative and quantitative data sources.	As we look to consistently and rigorously embed Type 2 and 3 evaluation approaches we will need to obtain ethical approval for activity and better plan risk assessments and associated mitigations for evaluation plans and approaches.	Improve our current score in this area to 'advanced' and obtain ethical approval for activities as required for Type 2 and 3 evaluation
Learning from evaluation	8 - emerging	Mixed methods approaches are maximised wherever possible to affect change to activity delivery in the short-term. We have experience of undertaking robust impact evaluation of attainment raising and bursary support which contributed to our understanding of how to frame our APP interventions in these areas.	Dissemination of evidence requires central coordination and to be embedded within evaluation cycles for programmes and activities. This is something we are committing to for APP interventions as well as broader Access activity to ensure learning and findings does not become 'siloed' within teams.	Improve our current score in this area to 'advanced', ensuring findings are disseminated and contribute to the evidence base

B2. Our Theories of Change

R1: Perceptions of HE and of Oxford as a place to study

Acknowledging the wider national EORR risk related to overall perceptions of HE, we have identified a specific articulation of this risk as relevant to Oxford Brookes University. Evidence suggests negative perceptions of Oxford linked to local living costs, together with a perceived lack of cultural diversity and potential to fit in serve as a specific barrier to recruitment. Students from black, Asian, mixed and other ethnic groups, and students from IMD Q1+2 were more likely to cite cost of living, general feel, and reputation, as reasons to decline Oxford Brookes (OBDS, 2022).

Anticipated belonging has been found to influence university choice (Ball et al., 2002; Ball et al., 2010) and UCAS (2019) report potential to fit in to be an important influence on both making a firm choice and declining. Our own market research indicates that students and parents with characteristics currently underrepresented at Oxford Brookes had negative perceptions of Oxford as a place to study, and of the diversity and inclusivity of the University. In some cases this was related to perceived connections with the University of Oxford (Shift Learning, 2019). Of importance to our approach, the perceptions research found views consistently more negative among those with no links to the University, indicating that perceptions do not genuinely and fully reflect the experience of studying with Oxford Brookes.

Numerous complex and interrelated factors affect perceptions of universities, their localities and study choices (Ball et al., 2002; Ball et al., 2010; Davies and Donnelly, 2023). Changing perceptions will necessarily be achieved through a broad mix of APP and core activity. The theory underpinning our approach to R1 has two strands: that activities within our APP will increase the tangible ways in which Oxford Brookes is attractive to prospective students currently underrepresented at Brookes, and that we have effective approaches in place to communicate information about the university and the city. This is underpinned by awareness that all touchpoints with prospective students can be influential.

The following APP and core activities are those we expect to make the greatest contribution:

Activities with potential to create tangible differences in attractiveness	Activities with potential to support accurate and positive messaging
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Training and development for all staff involved in the assessment of applications and design of assessment criteria (APP)● Pioneering Peers and Brookes Bridges peer support and transitions support tailored to meet the needs of students from underrepresented groups (APP)● IDEAS curriculum change programme working with students as partners (APP)● Varied accommodation options (core)● Contextual offer policy and broader admissions policies and practices (core)● Brookes Bursary (APP) and other financial support (core)● EDI initiative to improve staff diversity (core)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Training and development for all staff involved in the assessment of applications and design of assessment criteria (APP)● Financial literacy programme (APP)● Support to transition into HE including support with navigating the admissions process (APP)● Money Advice team (APP)● Outreach activity (core)● Marketing and communications (core)

Risk 1: Perceptions of HE and Oxford as a place to study

Situation	Compared to our recruitment region, we have disproportionately low numbers of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD Q1+2) and from black and mixed ethnicities. Underrepresented (UR) students may choose not to apply to Oxford Brookes, even if they are qualified, because of their perceptions of Oxford as a place to live and study.			
Aims	To contribute to O1(A) by increasing the appeal of Oxford Brookes to underrepresented students through the communication of positive and accurate narratives that show the city as offering social and economic opportunities, and the university as a place they will belong and find success.			
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Processes			Impact	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time for associated APP activities (see Activities) Additional financial inputs for the Brookes Bursary and supporting additional staff for delivery of associated APP activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff training and development for staff involved in admissions Brookes Bursary for students with low household income Financial literacy programme with targeted money advice at the application stage Student employer framework Support to transition into HE including through admissions Pioneering Pioneers and Brookes Bridges buddying and peer mentoring linked to transitions support IDEAS inclusive curriculum change programme involving students as partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff trained in admissions design and implementation Student employer framework developed UR prospects/students receiving financial advice UR students receiving a bursary UR students gaining employment internally UR students engaged in buddying or mentoring Evidence from IDEAS for student partnerships and inclusive study experience 	<p>Short:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APP activities provide tangible improvements in potential of Oxford Brookes to meet UR student's needs Useful and accurate images and narratives for student comms portray Oxford and Oxford Brookes in a positive and inclusive way Oxford and Oxford Brookes are more accurately perceived <p>Intermediate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APP activities have led to increased tangible ways in which the University supports a diverse range of students Prospective students from UR groups more frequently want to study in Oxford and with Oxford Brookes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased engagement of UR students in 'top of funnel' recruitment activities such as Open Days Increased number of applications from UR students Increased conversion rates from offer to accept (UR)
Rationale and assumptions	<p>Rationale: strengthening Oxford Brookes as a diverse, inclusive and equitable university, together with more positive messaging about the university and the city, will increase their appeal for students in underrepresented groups.</p> <p>Assumptions: related activities provide tangible improvements in inclusivity; resulting narratives are captured, communicated and received by underrepresented students; narratives increase appeal to prospective students in underrepresented groups.</p>			

R2: Knowledge, skills and experience

According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS, 2022), despite decades of policy attention there has been virtually no shift in the 'disadvantage gap' in GCSE attainment over the past 20 years. A variety of Sutton Trust research has shown that those from disadvantaged backgrounds fall behind their peers during school years 7-11 where the gap for disadvantaged learners can grow to leave them 18.1 months behind their peers (IFS, 2008; Education Datalab, 2015). The IFS suggests that addressing inequalities in imparting knowledge and skills is 'a fundamental part' of supporting young people to reach their full potential. Targeted tutoring for disadvantaged learners can offer 'greater levels of interaction and feedback [...] which can support pupils to spend more time on new or unfamiliar [information or concepts], overcome barriers to learning and increase their progress through the curriculum' (EEF, 2024b). TASO's summary of the evidence finds that attainment is higher when students employ study strategies in an intentional, task-dependent way, and that there is evidence that deploying study skills interventions and fostering metacognitive learning strategies at the Access stage can contribute significantly to attainment and other soft skills, such as academic self-efficacy (Schneider and Preckel, 2017) and growth mindset (Gutman and Schoon, 2013; Good et al., 2003).

Evidence also shows that high-quality teaching has a significant impact on the outcomes of all learners, and can have a disproportionately positive impact for disadvantaged learners (EEF, 2024a). Other research finds that engaging teaching professionals in opportunities to engage intellectually with the theoretical, ethical and practical challenges of the profession allows them to develop and sustain a positive professional identity (Alexander and Perche, 2022). Supporting students to become self-directed and independent learners also enhances success at university (Arndell et al., 2012, as cited in Higgins et al., 2015), although Oxford Brookes recognises that challenges around ensuring that knowledge, skills and relevant experience are accessible and equitable persist in HE. Menz (2021) reports that many employers find that students are not equipped with the job-related skills that are needed, even after 3 years of degree education; other research suggests that using a skill-based approach can help students grasp concepts faster and strengthen what they already know (Podareducation, 2021). Our whole lifecycle approach to supporting skills and knowledge at each stage of the lifecycle acknowledges that gaps in students' learning, knowledge and skills can occur across the lifecycle and need to be identified and mitigated at the earliest possible stage and should be supported on an ongoing basis to maximise opportunities for success and progression in HE.

With the above evidence in mind, the following activities have been identified to address this risk within the APP:

- Teacher action research (A): a new project delivered in collaboration with a local 11-18 Academy with the aim of supporting the development of high quality teaching leading to raising attainment of disadvantaged learners.
- Tutoring programme (A): a co-designed tutoring programme focussed on increasing attainment among disadvantaged students and underpinned by joint analysis of the school's attainment and attendance data
- Knowledge and skills outreach (A): an evidence-based, progressive 'spine' of study skills content which will be delivered through our existing outreach programmes and partnerships with schools and colleges.
- BrookesBridges (S, P): a programme of interventions aimed at supporting students to develop the knowledge and skills required for successful transition into, through and beyond Oxford Brookes
- BrookesEDGE (P): a co-curricular programme designed in partnership with students to recognise and reward commitment and engagement beyond a student's programme of study. Through taking part in the programme students develop a range of competencies, based on UNESCO's Key Competencies for Sustainability. We will embed the activities identified within our APP within this framework, supporting students to gain and articulate the competencies that they are developing.

- Thrive (P): a pilot workshop within the Thrive festival run by Brookes Enterprise Support, specifically aimed at students from IMD Q1+2, Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities. We will also work with Brookes Enterprise Support to develop a series of industry-focused events, including guest speakers, and networking opportunities targeted for the specific needs of these students.
- Pioneering Peers (S): a pilot buddying scheme to support students throughout their studies and hoped to benefit buddies in addition to buddies and targeted to appeal to students from IMD Q1+Q2.
- Pioneering Peers (P): a new pilot to extend an existing model of peer support, focused on preparation for post-graduation recruitment and selection processes, to a larger programme within the business school with the intention of specifically understanding the impact on IMD Q1 and Q2 students.
- Resources and enhancement of existing activity (S, P): to include a Graduate Guidance Pack, with a strong focus on mental health, and an eLearning module. Existing Careers and Employability support will be enhanced to enable more targeted events, which are effectively communicated.
- Academic Advising (S): implementation of the Academic Advising Policy which commits a minimum of 2 hours Academic Advising tutorials per student as part of the formal teaching timetable.

Risk 2: Knowledge and skills

Situation	Compared to our recruitment region, we have disproportionately low numbers of students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes and from black and mixed ethnicities. 2022 data suggests that disadvantaged pupils in Oxfordshire perform less well than their peers nationally at all key stages. This gap is widening in Oxfordshire more than in national changes (Oxfordshire Education Commission, 2023, p27). Several coalescing factors relating to insufficient knowledge and skills, including digital literacy and academic skills, contribute to this situation. Providing effective knowledge and skills to support students at crucial points of their student journey is therefore pivotal.			
Aims	O1(A): Halve the gap in representation between our intake and the demographics of our recruitment region; O3(S): Make substantial progress in improving continuation rates for students from IMD Q1+Q2 postcodes; O4(S): Make substantial progress in improving degree outcomes for students from IMD Q1+Q2 postcodes and black and Asian students O5(P): Reduce the known inequalities in progression to further study or higher level employment for Asian students and students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes.			
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Processes			Impact	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OBU Staff resource for workshops, resource creation, research • Student Ambassadors • Buddies and mentors • Research resource • Guest speakers/industry role models • School targeting and attainment data • Collaboration to gather evidence to establish focus re skills and attainment raising • Academic Advising tutorials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Action Research • Co-creation and delivery of a school-based tutoring programme • Delivery of an evidence-based, progressive 'spine' of study skills content through our outreach programmes • Pioneering Peers buddying and mentoring schemes • Brookes Bridges • Thrive Festival workshops • Engagement with BrookesEdge • Development of resources • Implementation of the Academic Advising Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings and actions from Teacher Action Research project • Targeted students receive tutoring • Study skills content and resources • Students engage and have a positive experience of mentoring and buddying, and through the with Thrive workshops • Students receive resources to support their transition • prompts/guides and training of buddies and mentors • Students receive effective academic support through their Academic Advising tutorials 	<p>Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased levels of engagement with school learning, improved attendance • UR students are supported to develop academic, cognitive, meta-cognitive and self-efficacy skills • Reduction in gap in attainment between target students and their peers. • Teachers have increased intellectual wellbeing <p>Success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UR students develop the knowledge and skills required to enable greater self-efficacy in relation to their education journey and beyond <p>Progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UR students are better prepared with the knowledge, skills and confidence to progress to highly skilled employment or further study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil attainment improves • Students can achieve the L2 and L3 grades they need to make a competitive application • Retention of high quality teachers improves • Improved continuation rates from Year 1 to Year 2 • Improved degree outcomes for UR students • More UR students progress to highly skilled employment or further study

Rationale and assumptions

Rationale: addressing knowledge and skills gaps across the student lifecycle should enable more target students to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to access HE and achieve equitable grades and outcomes.

Assumptions: students and schools engage with activities. Students autonomously practice and apply acquired knowledge, skills and experience in a way which enables them to access and succeed in HE and beyond.

R3: Recruitment and selection

Substantial effort and resources have already been invested to create fair and transparent admissions policies and processes through the development and introduction of targeted contextual admissions combined with a suite of supporting measures. Our approach is designed to ensure that we accept as wide a range of relevant qualifications as possible; that the admissions team has the resource and expertise to consider non-traditional applications; and that our requirements are communicated in a clear and transparent way so applicants understand how their qualifications relate to our entry requirements. We aim for applicant interactions with admissions to be tailored to their individual needs and for a high level of customer service overall. Disparities in offer rates have reduced as a result. However, compared to our recruitment region, we still have disproportionately low numbers of 18-year old entrants from low socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD Q1+2) (17.4% in 2012/22) and from black and mixed ethnicities (9.2% in 2021/22). We know that IMD Q1, black, and FSM applicants are less likely to receive an offer, even when adjusting for subject of study. Something other than the subject of study is therefore driving lower offer rates in these groups. Asian, mature, POLAR Q1, TUNDRA Q1, female applicants are also less likely to receive an offer but this gap disappears when adjusting for the subject of study.

In line with our experience, sector evidence shows that holistic assessment can be effective for reducing inequitable access to HE although the potential for sector impact has not been fully realised (OfS, 2019; Bolivar et al. 2017; Mountford-Zimdars, 2020; Rowbottom, 2017). Challenges include the availability and use of contextual data for developing policies, but also the way that policies are applied in practice because of difficulties ensuring consistent understanding of data, and its use in decision-making by the typically extensive range of staff involved in admissions processes (Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2020; Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2021). The theory underpinning our approach to Risk 3 is that our potential to further reduce differential offer rates is limited without a clear understanding of the reasons underlying these. Gaining this insight will enable us to implement effective training and staff development leading to consistent application decisions. We will also be able to effectively identify individuals who might benefit from individualised or personal support through the application process meaning that applicants in the priority groups will receive an offer that accounts for educational context, and that they want to accept.

The activities included within the APP to address R3 are:

- Further analysis to understand the underlying causes of unexplained differences in offer-rates between white and black students and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.
- A programme of training and development for all staff involved in the assessment of applications and design of assessment criteria.
- Support to transition into HE including targeted use of contextual offers and transition mentoring with help to navigate the applications process.

Risk 3: Recruitment and selection

Situation	Compared to our recruitment region, we have disproportionately low numbers of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD Q1+2) and from black and mixed ethnicities. Students may not have an equal chance of being accepted onto a course at Oxford Brookes despite having the potential to succeed.			
Aims	To contribute to O1(A) by gaining understanding of how admissions policies and processes affect equitable access, and using this insight to ensure the admissions process is fair through admissions process changes and team training.			
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Processes			Impact	
Training and development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff resource to conduct analysis Design and deliver training for staff Staff time to participate Support from Digital Services team to create online training modules Transition into HE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time to support mentoring platform costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further investigation into differential offer rates to understand why these are persisting for some groups Training & development programme for all staff involved in admissions decisions Support to transition into HE including the use of contextual offers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output of investigation into differential offer rates Training materials developed Training delivered to staff with responsibility for admissions decisions Staff engaged in training Method for identifying applicants who would benefit from additional or personalised support 	Short: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We understand why some applicants are less likely to receive an offer. We can identify applicants who would benefit from additional or personalised support Staff involved in the processing of applications have the knowledge and skills to undertake their role Intermediate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment and selection processes are delivered in a way that supports equitable access All applicants experience a transparent and fair application process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased engagement of UR students in 'top of funnel' recruitment activities such as Open Days Increased rate of successful applications Increased conversion rates from offer to accept Increased progression to HE rates
Rationale and assumptions	<p>Rationale: measures to reduce differential admissions (e.g. contextual offer policies) depend on how they are configured and implemented; the admissions process includes multiple touch points for prospect students which can influence their perceptions and choices; some will benefit from personalised support at this stage.</p> <p>Assumptions: it will be possible to gain insight to differential offer rates; necessary process changes can be implemented, training will lead to differences in admissions decisions that will reduce differential offer rates; additional offers will be accepted.</p>			

R4: Belonging and shaping

Belonging is recognised as a fundamental human need and within the higher education context, research shows an association between a sense of belonging and increased levels of motivation, enjoyment and retention (Pedler et al., 2020). Studies also show 'belonging' can be negatively affected by factors associated with under-representation and inequitable outcomes from HE (Ahn and Davis, 2023; Blake et al., 2022; Pedler et al., 2020). In combination the evidence provides a strong rationale for action to reduce inequitable student outcomes by seeking to increase a sense of sense of belonging with a focus on students in groups with evidenced outcome gaps.

Risk 4 combines 'belonging' with 'shaping', placing these concepts within the frame of citizenship. The phrasing mirrors the overarching APP Theory of Change for student success, which includes an objective to ensure 'students are equal citizens within the University and shape the institution to meet their needs and aspirations'. Citizenship in this context is aligned with non-formal modes, which recognise communities as heterogeneous with plural voices, and where not fitting in is not to be deficient (Bagnall, 2010). The theory underpinning our approach to Risk 4 is that developing a greater sense of belonging contributes to empowering students to be active citizens within the university environment, and support their contribution to wider society as they progress through their educational journey and beyond. Belonging can be affected by all aspects of student life and an extensive set of factors and activities across faculties, departments, central services and campuses will contribute. Within this APP the following activities have been included to address this risk with a specific focus on the study environment:

- IDEAS (Success): Oxford Brookes' comprehensive change programme for curriculum and teaching and learning, involving student consultants as partners. Phase 2 will involve programme level evaluation of the impact of IDEAS on programme design and subsequently on students, particularly those identified within our indicators of risk.
- Pioneering Pioneers (Success): a pilot buddying scheme to support students prior to course start and throughout their studies. Open to all students but with a specific focus on ensuring buddies are representative of the diverse needs of our students. Communications will be targeted to appeal to students from IMD Q1+Q2. Buddies will be trained in diversity and inclusion.
- Brookes Bridges (Success and Progression): an activity leveraging buddying from Pioneering Pioneers to support transition into, through and out of Oxford Brookes, supporting students at key points of their study journey. Resources such as a Transitions Quick Start Guide and a 'key information card' will support progression into Year 2 or Year 3. Brookes Bridges will be informed by further analysis of reasons for low continuation rates.
- Thrive (Progression): a pilot workshop within the Thrive festival run by Brookes Enterprise Support, specifically aimed at students from IMD Q1+2, Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities. We will also work with Brookes Enterprise Support to develop a series of industry-focused events, including guest speakers, and networking opportunities targeted for the specific needs of these students.

Risk 4: Belonging and shaping

Situation	To contribute to O3(S), O4(S) and O5(P) through a suite of activities designed to ensure students do know and feel they belong at Oxford Brookes, and that they are empowered to shape the university, particularly in relation to the study environment and study experience.			
Aims	Persistent outcome gaps for continuation, degree awarding and graduate outcomes suggest that aspects of study and university life may not provide an equitable experience for students in affected groups, leading to a reduced sense of belonging. This may be both a cause and effect of not being sufficiently empowered to work as partners in shaping the university to meet their needs and aspirations.			
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Processes			Impact	
IDEAS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Workshop costs Student consultants Pioneering Peers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licence fee for Aluminati Paid student buddies/mentors 0.6 co-ordinator Brookes Bridges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Resource costs Thrive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDEAS: curriculum and teaching & learning change programme involving students as partners Pioneering Peers: Buddying throughout study, with focus on IMD Q1 & Q2 Brookes Bridges: transitions support with input from Pioneering Peers Thrive: pilot workshop and additional activity focused on IMD Q1+2, Asian, Black, mixed and other ethnicities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to programmes identified through working with (APP) students) Changes to programmes implemented (APP) students engaged in buddying /transitions activities (APP) Students matched with buddies to their satisfaction Buddy interactions (e.g. meetings, workshops) Transitions materials developed Engagement with Thrive 	Short: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See themselves reflected in the institution Increased understanding of own options Relevant and actionable insights Increased self-efficacy See potential to contribute and influence decisions Intermediate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become active partners in decisions Have an equitable study experience Increased belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved rates of retention Improved continuation Good degree outcomes with potential to reduce awarding gaps identified in the APP Improved graduate outcomes
Rationale and assumptions	<p>Rationale: belonging is associated with improved participation in HE and study outcomes, while empowerment to shape and contribute supports belonging and helps ensure changes better reflect students' backgrounds, strengths, needs and aspirations.</p> <p>Assumptions: students in affected groups will engage with activities. This engagement helps shape the university in a way that is beneficial for other students in these groups. The changed environment enhances belonging and empowers students to continue and succeed in their studies.</p>			

R5: Student support

Ensuring that academic and personal support is reflective of and responsive to the needs of individual students is pivotal, requiring an understanding of the circumstances and barriers that some students may face. Emerging sector evidence suggests peer support interventions have potential to increase belonging and engagement and to improve success and progression outcomes (Bettinger and Baker, 2011; Kerrigan and Manktelow, 2021), and there is some evidence to suggest matching individuals with similar characteristics may lead to better outcomes (Morales et al., 2018; University of Manchester, 2019). Hussain and Jones (2021) present evidence that diverse peer interactions along with an institutional commitment to diversity can also positively affect belonging and highlight the value of these factors for an inclusive learning experience. Our focus on post-entry transition(s) draws on critical perspectives identifying the need for universities to move beyond transition into HE, towards a more developmental approach focused on the whole study journey, and which is supported by wider institutional efforts for reducing inequitable outcomes (Gale and Parker, 2014; Gravett, 2021). The additional enterprise education elements are designed to support transition out of HE, and to contribute to development of a wider set of practical and cognitive skills.

The theory underpinning our approach to Risk 5 draws on a whole lifecycle model to improve student outcomes through a transformational process in which students' own lived experience is centrally important, and where 'support' is a means of empowerment to encourage the capabilities and decision-making abilities needed to achieve success on their own terms. Towards this aim we will implement a suite of peer support activities combined with transitions support at key points and an APP focused enterprise offer. Common features are the recruitment of individuals with similar backgrounds to beneficiaries for delivery, with activities tailored to appeal to specific groups. The following activities are intended to augment and interact with our core student support services, which include using student analytics modelling to guide academic advising, within the context of the Academic Advising Policy which was launched in September 2023 which commits the University to offer a minimum of 2 hours Academic Advising tutorials, within teaching timetables, alongside other non-timetabled sessions e.g. drop-ins.

- Pioneering Peers (S, P): a pilot buddying scheme to support students throughout their studies and hoped to benefit buddies in addition to buddies and targeted to appeal to students from IMD Q1+Q2.
- Pioneering Peers (P): a new pilot to extend an existing model of peer support, focused on preparation for post-graduation recruitment and selection processes, to a larger programme within the business school with the intention of specifically understanding the impact on IMD Q1+Q2 students.
- Brookes Bridges (S, P): supporting transition into, through and out of Oxford Brookes at key points of students' study journey. Resources such as a Transitions Quick Start Guide and a 'key information card' will support progression into Year 2 or Year 3. Brookes Bridges will be informed by further analysis of reasons for low continuation rates.
- Academic Advising (S, P): policy implementation to provide academic support for students as part of the formal teaching timetable. Key to the APP will be the evaluation of the impact of the tutorials on student continuation and degree outcomes.

Risk 5: Student support

Situation	Students from IMD Q1+Q2 postcodes are less likely to continue their studies from Year 1 to Year 2. Our investigations have highlighted a perceived lack of awareness by some students of the support services that are available. Increasing numbers of students needing to work alongside their studies also places additional pressures on students to access the wider academic and personal support that may be more accessible to other students.			
Aims	To contribute to O3(S), O4(S) and O5(S) by delivering a suite of student support activities designed to augment our core student support services in a way that contributes to an inclusive learning experience.			
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Processes			Impact	
Pioneering Peers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licence fee for aluminate • Paid student buddies/mentors • 0.6 co-ordinator Brookes Bridges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • Design & print costs • Academic Advisors • Senior Academic Advisors • Check-in system developer time • Administrative support • Development and delivery of CPD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pioneering Peers (Success) Buddying throughout study, with focus on IMD Q1 + Q2 • Brookes Bridges transition support with input from Pioneering Peers • Pioneering Peers (Progression) extension of recruitment and selection focused mentoring to explore impacts for IMD Q1&Q2 • Academic Advising Policy: • Timetabled tutorials • Check-in process effectively enacted • Role boundaries and referral process effectively communicated and enacted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students engaged in buddying /mentoring • Students matched to their satisfaction • Buddy /mentor interactions e.g. meetings/workshops • Management reports to ensure Policy compliance • Student attendance and engagement • CPD materials • Role boundaries and referrals process documents 	Short: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students see themselves reflected in the institution • Relevant and actionable insights Intermediate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More students are aware of and access existing student support services • Improved BSS and NSS scores • Greater sense of belonging • Greater self-efficacy in relation to study and beyond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved rates of retention • Improved continuation rates • Improved Good degree outcomes • Improved graduate outcomes
Rationale and assumptions	<p>Rationale: inclusive teaching and learning design contributes to a positive learning experience and student support that is reflective and responsive to the needs of individual students is pivotal.</p> <p>Assumptions: students at risk of not continuing will engage in these activities at an appropriate point, those delivering activities will be appropriately diverse to reflect the backgrounds of students they are supporting; there will be effective signposting between mentors/buddies and core/other support services, including academic advising.</p>			

Risk 6: Mental health

For some students poor mental health can have a negative impact on ability to participate in and complete higher education courses, with differences in outcomes in continuation, completion, and progression rates (OfS, 2023). Within Oxford Brookes' context, more students are being referred to student support in relation to mental health which is often being exacerbated by other external factors (R4, R7). Universities UK (2023) have issued a call to action for universities to become 'places that promote mental health and wellbeing, enabling all students and all staff to thrive and succeed to their best potential' and to 'achieve this by [...] making mental health a strategic priority and adopting a whole university approach'.

While we recognise that some students will require specific support due to a formal diagnosis or ongoing mental health condition, often students can be affected more broadly by a combination of environmental, organisational and personal factors. Our approach to addressing Risk 6 is to establish mental health as a consideration across all of the risks we have identified as well as a risk in its own right, and to consider evidence and research for activities and interventions which can be implemented across the student lifecycle. TASO categorises this as a settings-based or 'whole system' approach as it aims to consider the whole student experience and integrate interventions to address challenges in any areas that might make a student's life difficult.

The evidence base for interventions aimed at supporting students' mental health is categorised by TASO as 'weak'; however, a systematic review by Fernandez et al. (2016) concluded that as dynamic environments which can present challenges that may affect the mental health of its community, universities should promote public health and wellbeing and invest in creating supportive physical, social and academic environments that promote mental wellbeing. Articles relating to the impact of policies on mental health, social marketing strategies and academia-based strategies were reviewed with only the latter indicating any direct causal relationship between changes to curriculum and mental health. Academia-based strategies were related to changes in the way students are taught and assessed, an element incorporated within our IDEAS model. They also related to contact hours and learning communities, aspects of which are being delivered through our Academic Advising Policy and the new Attendance Monitoring Policy.

To holistically address Risk 6, APP activity will complement and supplement existing mental health-related provision including existing student support and wellbeing services. Activities identified within the success and progression intervention strategies will also complement our overarching aim to ensure students have effective mental health support. Academic and pastoral support are incorporated together within the model in recognition of the importance of a holistic approach to supporting student mental health and that both types of support mutually complement and enhance each other. We have identified the following combination of APP activities and services which address the common causal factors affecting student mental health and wellbeing (e.g. affordability of study, cost of living, sense of belonging, etc.) across the student lifecycle, and in support of our commitment to the Student Mental Health Charter. Specifically, we will focus some of the evaluation of our Academic Advising Policy on the impact on supporting students' mental health.

- Pioneering Peers 'buddying' (S): a pilot buddying scheme to support students prior to course start and throughout their studies. This activity offers the opportunity for students to meet with their buddies throughout the course of their study, providing a safe and supportive, non-academic environment and structure that will contribute to supporting a student's mental health.
- Pioneering Peers 'mentoring' (P): a peer mentoring programme aimed at Year 2 students in supporting their industry placements and their post-graduation recruitment approaches. Aligned with Risk 2, this activity will support students' mental health through taking some of the pressure out of finding placements and job-seeking post-graduation.
- IDEAS (S): a curriculum model and design tool that will support programme teams at Oxford Brookes with inclusive, digitally enabled curriculum development. The model embodies the philosophy of Education for Sustainable Development in "allowing every human being to acquire the

knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to shape a sustainable future” (UNESCO, 2012) and ensures the teaching and learning environment is accessible and functions with recognition and awareness of the types of things which may impact student mental health.

- Oxford Brookes Student Employer Framework (P): supports Risk 7 (Affordability) by providing high quality paid employment, mitigating some of the financial pressures for students which are known to be one of the main issues impacting on students’ mental health, whilst also acquiring professional skills which will benefit students post-graduation and/or during placements.
- Academic Advising Policy (S): aims to ensure all students receive a minimum of 2 hours of Academic Advising tutorials within the formal teaching timetable. This is in addition to drop-in hours which are outside of the formal timetable. Check-ins ensure that students’ tutorials have been scheduled and students are attending, with the aim of identifying and responding to students who may not be engaging, for various reasons. The aim is to ensure students who may be facing mental health challenges are picked up and supported as early as possible.

Risk 6: Mental health

Situation	There has been a steep increase (up 450%) in disclosure of mental health conditions at the point of application to HE over the last ten years (UCAS, 2021). Finance, time and personal pressures increasingly impact on students' mental health and we have seen a growing number of students being referred to our mental health support services. Within Oxford Brookes' context, more students are being referred to student support in relation to mental health which is often being exacerbated by other external factors identified (R4, R7). From in-house data we know that students from IMD Q1+Q2 postcodes are less likely to continue their studies from Year 1 to Year 2.			
Aims	To contribute to O2, O3, O4, O5 and O6, and to proactively and practically take action on our commitment to the Mental Health Charter, by strategically implementing effective strategies, activities and interventions to support mental health and wellbeing for students at all stages of the student lifecycle.			
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Processes			Impact	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buddying and mentoring resources, training and infrastructure IDEAS workshops (sprints and sprites) Development of Student employer framework Staff time Student engagement Academic Advising Tutorials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pioneering Peers buddying and mentoring IDEAS Oxford Brookes Student Employer Framework Mental Health Charter submission (cross-institution initiative) Implementation of the Academic Advising Policy: check-in process, follow up interventions, referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer mentoring interactions through peer mentoring Delivery of inclusive curriculum design workshops Changes to programmes implemented Student employer framework Engagement with Thrive Mental Health Charter working groups and action plan in place 	<p>Short:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students in target groups access and receive the appropriate support they need to thrive and succeed at each stage in the student lifecycle Common causal factors affecting students' mental health are mitigated upfront Increased accessible opportunities for student employment Increased understanding of the effectiveness of our mental health support and the actions we need to take to further improve this <p>Intermediate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease in student referrals to OBU support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in Year 1 to Year 2 continuation rates for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes Improved degree outcomes for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes Improved degree outcomes for black and Asian students Increase in progression to further study or higher-level employment for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes as well as students from Asian, Black, mixed and other ethnicities
Rationale and assumptions	<p>Rationale: a combination of activities which address some of the common causal factors affecting student mental health and wellbeing (e.g. affordability of study, cost of living, sense of belonging, etc.) across the student lifecycle will mitigate mental ill-health for some students.</p> <p>Assumptions: students in affected groups engage with activities; mitigating causal factors affecting student mental health upfront will result in a decrease in students self-referring to student services and wellbeing support.</p>			

R7: Affordability

According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2023) over three-quarters of students are “concerned” rising costs may affect how well they do in their studies. Black students, students aged over 25, and students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are likely to be hardest hit by rising costs of food, transport, rent and energy (MillionPlus, 2022). Increasing costs of living, if not adequately addressed, may result in an increasing number of students undertaking part-time or full-time employment alongside their studies, poorer mental and physical health for students, reduced attendance on-course, and less time to study. Together, these may increase the risk of lower on-course attainment rates and lower continuation rates. The cost of living crisis may also impact on access to university, as students may be less likely to apply to higher education and/or limit their higher education choices according to financial need (e.g. a student may only apply to a provider near their home, or may limit their choice to part-time courses). Our in-house evidence finds cost (including accommodation costs) to be a contributory factor for two thirds of our undergraduate decliners in making a different final choice of university.

Mountford-Zimdars et al. (2015) review of the evidence cites multiple studies pointing to ‘nuanced evidence’ that financial support or the lack thereof does make a difference to continuation as well as to continuation within HE. TASO’s summary of the evidence finds that financial support has been shown to improve on-course attainment (Bettinger, 2015; Castleman and Long, 2016) and can enable students to work fewer hours in off-campus employment (Brotton et al., 2016), a necessity for some students which some studies conclude is negatively associated with academic performance (Zhang and Yang, 2020). Nursaw Associates (2015, p.4) also found institutional evidence that students in receipt of financial support felt more able to continue on their course, and that they consider withdrawing less than their peers’.

Kaye (2021) finds that the effectiveness of bursaries to address discrepancies in HE take-up, differential experiences and outcomes for students from different backgrounds depends not only on the ability to compensate for financial disadvantage but also on the impact this can have on students’ attitudes and sense of integration at university. Our strategy relating to affordability as a risk recognises this intersectional nature of factors affecting students across the whole student lifecycle, and seeks to address affordability in tandem with other associated risks (e.g. sense of belonging, mental health) as well as challenges relating to success and progression (e.g. access to placements, support and guidance, etc.).

Within this APP the following activities have included to address affordability as a specific risk:

- Money Advice team (A, S, P): extending our 1:1 financial advice service to targeted applicants. This will be targeted at students identified during the application process to be from low socio-economic backgrounds or with independent student status (e.g. students with no living parents).
- Financial literacy programme (A): a pre- and post-enrolment financial literacy information, advice and guidance programme;
- Brookes Bursary (S): expansion of our Brookes Bursary scheme to include an increased standard bursary for students with household incomes below £35k, and new support for students with household incomes between £35k and £45k.
- Oxford Brookes Student Employer Framework (P): development of a framework to support good practice in the contracting, support and professional development of student employees, and would be supported by a community of practice for those currently or seeking to employ current students.

Risk 7: Affordability

Situation	Affordability continues to be a significant risk to equality of opportunity for some students. The rising cost of living has not been matched by similar increases in Government financial support, and as a result more students have increasing reliance on part-time work. Our evaluation shows that our current bursary and scholarships makes a material difference to the likelihood of a student continuing on their course, however, not all students receive sufficient funding through the Brookes bursary to meet their needs. We know that the higher cost of living in Oxford makes this a particular risk for prospective and current students.			
Aims	Contribute to O5(A), O2(S), O3(S) and O1(P) by ensuring that students know about and are able to access the full range of financial support available to them; that our package of financial support is effective at supporting our UR students; that students can access high-quality paid work alongside their studies; and that students are not disadvantaged by financial barriers to successful, affordable and enjoyable study.			
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Processes			Impact	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial investment Money Advice Team time and resources Access Team time and resources Financial AIG resources Employer input Student input OBUSU input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of our Brookes Bursary scheme to include an increased standard bursary for students with household incomes below £35k, and new support for students with household incomes between £35k and £45k. Further investment in the Money Advice team to meet current student needs and extend the service pre-enrolment. Provision of improved pre- and post-enrolment financial literacy IAG Implementation of the OBU student employer framework to support good practice in the contracting, support and professional development of student employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of direct financial support for target students Practical support and AIG to access other sources of funds beyond direct financial support provided by the University, including high-quality paid part-time work Delivery of pre- and post-enrolment financial literacy and AIG for secondary students, parents/carers and teachers Practical resources to support access to high-quality part-time work as needed while studying Engagement in AIG sessions Employer framework 	<p>Short:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More students perceive study at OBU to be affordable and understand what financial support they will be eligible to receive More students are able to access high-quality paid part-time work that supports them to continue studying and develop longer term employability skills More students without recourse to family support (especially care experienced and estranged students, or with structural barriers to accessing part-time work) are able to access additional financial support <p>Intermediate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased sense of belonging at Brookes More students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds enrol to study at OBU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved rates of retention, completion and continuation to employment and postgraduate study More students progressing to high quality employment
Rationale and assumptions	<p>Rationale: Direct financial support, access to high quality part-time work and financial advice will make a material difference to the affordability of studying at Oxford Brookes for students from low income households</p> <p>Assumptions: Investment will be sufficient to sustain provision of effective financial support during the course of the APP; Students eligible to financial support proactively pursue and access this; AIG and financial literacy pitched and delivered appropriately and in an accessible way.</p>			

B3. Evidence base

Table B1: Access intervention strategy evidence base

<i>O1: To enable equitable access to Oxford Brookes University which results in a student intake that is representative of our recruitment region</i>		
Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
Teacher Action Research	<p>According to TASO there is ‘anecdotal evidence suggesting that school-university partnerships and school sponsorship positively influences student attainment’. However, most evidence from the UK is rated ‘weak’ and focuses predominantly on teacher training and school governance.</p> <p>The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) finds that high-quality teaching has a significant impact on the outcomes of all learners, and can have a disproportionately positive impact for disadvantaged learners. High-quality teaching has a significant impact on the outcomes of all learners, and can have a disproportionately positive impact for disadvantaged learners (EEF, 2024a).</p> <p>Opportunities to engage intellectually with the theoretical, ethical and practical challenges of the profession allows teachers to develop and sustain a positive professional identity (Alexander and Perche, 2022).</p> <p>Universities and schools engaged in teacher training should explore how each route could have a component part that familiarises teachers with the widening participation agenda (Universities UK, 2016, p.34).</p> <p>EEF (2018): RETAIN was a year-long CPD course for early career teachers (ECTs) who were teaching KS1 pupils in disadvantaged areas with the aim of improving pupil outcomes and increasing retention rates of ECTs. The EEF funded RETAIN as a pilot study which took place between 2016-2017 across 10 schools to assess its promise as an intervention which can deliver greater knowledge and confidence and reduce the likelihood of teachers leaving the profession. Key findings: Increases in ECTs’ knowledge and understanding of approaches to teaching disadvantaged students and changes in their classroom practice; increased self-efficacy, confidence and research-use; benefits to professional and career development; sustained teacher retention across the pilot.</p>	Risk 2
Tutoring programme	<p>Current evidence suggests a link between mentoring and attainment and progression outcomes. TASO describes the existence of a ‘reasonable evidence base’ to support the use of tutoring to improve pupils’ outcomes and attainment. The EEF report that peer tutoring approaches in particular have been shown to have a positive impact on learning, with an</p>	Risk 2

O1: To enable equitable access to Oxford Brookes University which results in a student intake that is representative of our recruitment region

Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
	<p>average positive effect equivalent to approximately five additional months' progress within one academic year, and that although all types of pupils appear to benefit from this there is some evidence that pupils who are low-attaining and those with special educational needs make the biggest gains.</p> <p>EEF suggests that collaborative learning approaches can have a high impact in relation to attainment raising against low cost: however, tasks and activities need to be designed carefully so that working together is effective and efficient. TASO also cites anecdotal evidence suggesting that school-university partnerships and school sponsorship positively influences student attainment. Impact is similar (+5 months) for both literacy and mathematics, although lower-attaining pupils tend to benefit more (+6 months) than higher attaining pupils.</p> <p>TASO cites a small number of UK studies which reveal emerging evidence that students taking part in tutoring and peer mentoring activities have better outcomes - particularly in relation to aspirations/attitudes and HE participation - than those who don't (by using 'comparison' groups of non-participants). TASO cites an evaluation undertaken by Brightside relating to one of their online mentoring programmes which has shown a correlation between participation and both HE entry and attainment outcomes, based on tracking students over time (Brightside, 2020).</p> <p>EEF (2024a) found that peer-led tutoring approaches may help pupils to close gaps in their learning by offering targeted, peer-led support to consolidate in-class learning, practice skills, and identify and overcome misconceptions. There is also some evidence to suggest that peer-led tutoring can offer tutors the chance to revisit and revise skills, prior knowledge, and develop metacognitive understanding of topics. They also specifically note broader positive impacts such as supporting the social and personal development of pupils and boosting their self-confidence and motivation for learning.</p> <p>Targeted tutoring for disadvantaged learners can offer 'greater levels of interaction and feedback [...] which can support pupils to spend more time on new or unfamiliar, overcome barriers to learning and increase their progress through the curriculum' (EEF, 2024b).</p>	

O1: To enable equitable access to Oxford Brookes University which results in a student intake that is representative of our recruitment region

Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
Knowledge and skills outreach	<p>The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS, 2022) suggests that addressing inequalities in imparting knowledge and skills is ‘a fundamental part’ of supporting young people to reach their full potential.</p> <p>Supporting students to become self-directed and independent learners enhances success at university (Arndell et al., 2012, as cited in Higgins et al., 2015).</p> <p>TASO cites evidence that metacognitive learning strategies (which aim to improve the way pupils approach and think about studying) and more general study skills interventions can contribute significantly to attainment. TASO also cites research showing positive relationships between attainment and other soft skills including academic self-efficacy (Schneider and Preckel, 2017) and ‘growth mindset’ (Gutman and Schoon, 2013; Good et al., 2003).</p> <p>Using a skill-based approach can help students grasp concepts faster and strengthen what they already know (Podareducation, 2021).</p>	Risk 2
Support to transition into HE	<p>Successful peer mentoring approaches can benefit both tutors and mentees and may also have other benefits. The DfE articulates that opportunities created by schools to foster and facilitate positive peer relationships can contribute to better mental health and wellbeing (which may logically have a beneficial impact on attendance, although there is currently no causal evidence of this connection).</p>	Risk 3
Admissions Assessment training and development	<p>Implementing a grade discount for eligible students can result in an increase in the number of these students being accepted into prestigious universities (Sutton Trust, 2018).</p> <p>Challenges currently exist around the availability and use of contextual data for developing policies, but also the way that policies are applied in practice because of difficulties ensuring consistent understanding of data, and its use in decision-making by the typically extensive range of staff involved in admissions processes (Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2020; Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2021)</p>	Risk 3

O1: To enable equitable access to Oxford Brookes University which results in a student intake that is representative of our recruitment region

Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
Financial Literacy Programme	<p>According to a report by Universities UK and NEON (2018), ‘although some sources of financial information are useful for prospective students, they are not always easy to access’ (p.12). They conclude that ‘improved, more detailed information on the costs and benefits of higher education is needed’ (p.33).</p> <p>TASO cites evidence that provision of financial information alone may be ineffective and should be used to supplement other ongoing or intensive activity, and/or accompanied by personalised support to be truly effective. Some UK-based research (McGuigan et al., 2016; Silva et al., 2016) supports this as it indicates negative or no effects on aspirations or attitudes relating to higher education, suggesting that this kind of information may be best combined with other forms of support to be effective.</p> <p>Focus groups conducted by Universities UK and NEON (2018) found that ‘prospective students were not always aware of the obligations of the student loan system, including the repayment thresholds’ (p.7) and that ‘financial information about higher education was limited, and sometimes distorted’ (p.15). They identify a need to ‘alleviate concerns over living costs and future debt levels’, suggesting that this may be achieved through ‘more tailored and targeted financial advice to prospective and undergraduate students’ (p.34), and also find that university sources (i.e. websites, open days, visits etc.) are a highly valued source of information for prospective students on the long-term costs and benefits of higher education (p.33).</p>	Risk 7
Perceptions of Oxford	<p>Students from black, Asian, mixed and other ethnic groups, and students from IMDQ1+2 were more likely to cite cost of living, general feel, and reputation, as reasons to decline Oxford Brookes (OBDS 2022). Oxford Brookes Decliners Survey (OBDS) (2022).</p> <p>Anticipated belonging has been found to influence university choice (Ball et al., 2002; Ball et al., 2010).</p> <p>Our own market research indicates that students and parents with characteristics currently underrepresented at Oxford Brookes had negative perceptions of Oxford as a place to study, and of the diversity and inclusivity of the University. In some cases, this was related to perceived connections with the University of Oxford (Shift Learning, 2019).</p>	Risk 1
Perceptions of HE	<p>Numerous complex and interrelated factors affect perceptions of universities, their localities and study choices (Ball et al., 2002; Ball et al., 2010; Davies and Donnelly, 2023).</p> <p>A UCAS (2019) report outlines that potential to fit in to be an important influence on both making a firm choice and</p>	Risk 1

<i>O1: To enable equitable access to Oxford Brookes University which results in a student intake that is representative of our recruitment region</i>		
Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
	<p>declining.</p> <p>Belonging is recognised as a fundamental human need and within the higher education context, research shows an association between a sense of belonging and increased levels of motivation, enjoyment and retention (Pedler et al., 2020).</p> <p>Studies show that ‘belonging’ can be negatively affected by factors associated with under-representation and inequitable outcomes from HE (Ahn and Davis, 2023; Blake et al., 2022; Pedler et al., 2020).</p>	

Table B2: Success intervention strategy evidence base

<i>O2: To improve continuation rates for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes</i>		
<i>O3: To increase the proportion of students from IMDQ1+2 who achieve a 2:1 or above</i>		
<i>O4: To improve the proportion of black and Asian students who achieve a 2:1 or above</i>		
Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
Peer mentoring	<p>Emerging sector evidence suggests peer support interventions have potential to increase belonging and engagement and to improve success and progression outcomes (Bettinger and Baker, 2011; Kerrigan and Manktelow, 2021), and there is some evidence to suggest matching individuals with similar characteristics may lead to better outcomes (Morales et al., 2018; University of Manchester, 2019).</p> <p>Foy and Keane (2018) find that peer mentoring has a positive impact on student retention within a course, as well as offering valuable opportunities for mentors to develop employment-related skills.</p> <p>A peer mentoring model where older students support younger students with their academic and/or personal development is likely to be impactful for mentees. TASO also refer to some qualitative evidence procured in a study by Gartland (2014) which suggests role model interventions are ‘most effective when students see the role model as relatable’ and explain that ‘this finding is often interpreted as requiring students and role models to be from the same background or of the same gender’.</p>	<p>Risk 2</p> <p>Risk 4</p> <p>Risk 5</p> <p>Risk 6</p>

O2: To improve continuation rates for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes

O3: To increase the proportion of students from IMDQ1+2 who achieve a 2:1 or above

O4: To improve the proportion of black and Asian students who achieve a 2:1 or above

Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
	Evidence from Brightside's online mentoring programme has shown a correlation between participation and both HE entry and attainment outcomes based on tracking students over time (Brightside, 2020).	
Transitions support	Research suggests that students need help in adapting to university life and becoming autonomous learners and that feeling positive and having a friendship group greatly aids social and emotional adjustment to higher education (Hunter and Clarke, 2012, pp.2-3).	Risk 2 Risk 4 Risk 5 Risk 6
IDEAS	<p>Burke (2019) cites several studies which conclude that increases in a student's sense of belonging enhances the likelihood of them persisting from the first year to the second year of their studies.</p> <p>Pedler, Willis, and Nieuwoudt (2022) also find that HE students in possession of a greater sense of belonging demonstrate improved academic performance, increased levels of motivation, greater academic self-confidence, and increased levels of academic engagement.</p> <p>The five elements of IDEAS represent current sector-wide best practice in inclusive learning design and Education for Sustainable Development. The model incorporates learning from existing inclusive curriculum models (such as the path-finding 'inclusive curriculum framework' of Kingston University) and a wide body of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning covering sustainability, equality, student belonging and the reduction of awarding gaps.</p> <p>Specific literature informing design and development of the model:</p> <p>Bird, J. (1996) Black Students and Higher Education: Rhetoric and Realities. Buckingham: SRHE.</p> <p>Haggis, T. (2006) Pedagogies for diversity: retaining critical challenge amidst fears of 'dumbing down'. Studies in Higher Education, 31(5), pp.521–535.</p> <p>Hockings, C. (2010) Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education: a synthesis of research. York: Higher Education Academy.</p>	Risk 4 Risk 5 Risk 6

O2: To improve continuation rates for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes

O3: To increase the proportion of students from IMDQ1+2 who achieve a 2:1 or above

O4: To improve the proportion of black and Asian students who achieve a 2:1 or above

Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
	<p>Hockings, C., Cooke, S., and Bowl, M. (2010) Learning and teaching in two universities within the context of increasing student diversity: complexity, contradictions and challenges. in David, M. (ed.) Improving learning by widening participation. London: Routledge</p> <p>Knight, P. T. and Yorke, M. (2003) Assessment, learning and employability. Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press.</p> <p>Land, R., Cousin, G., Meyer, J. H. F. and Davies, P. (2005) Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge (3): implications for course design and evaluation. in Rust, C. (ed.) Improving Student Learning 12 - Diversity and Inclusivity. Oxford Brookes University, pp.53-64.</p> <p>Lefever, R. (2012) Exploring Student Understandings of Belonging on Campus. Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education 4:2, pp.126-141.</p> <p>May, H. and Bridger, K. (2010) Developing and embedding inclusive policy and practice in higher education. York: Higher Education Academy.</p> <p>Mbembe, A.J. (2016) Decolonizing the University: New Directions. Arts and Humanities in Higher Education 15:1, pp.29-45.</p> <p>Northedge, A. (2003) Rethinking teaching in the context of diversity. Teaching in Higher Education, 8(1), pp.17-32.</p> <p>Richardson, J., T. E. (2008) The attainment of ethnic minority students in UK higher education. Studies in Higher Education, 33(1), pp.33-48.</p> <p>Warren, D. (2002) Curriculum design in a context of widening participation in higher education. Arts and Humanities in Higher Education 1, pp.85-99.</p> <p>Sector evidence shows that holistic assessment can be effective for reducing inequitable access to HE although the potential for sector impact has not been fully realised (OfS, 2019; Bolivar et al., 2017; Mountford-Zimdars, 2020; Rowbottom, 2017).</p>	

O2: To improve continuation rates for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes

O3: To increase the proportion of students from IMDQ1+2 who achieve a 2:1 or above

O4: To improve the proportion of black and Asian students who achieve a 2:1 or above

Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
Brookes Bursary scheme	<p>According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2023) over three-quarters of students are “concerned” rising costs may affect how well they do in their studies.</p> <p>Black students, students aged over 25, and students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are likely to be hardest hit by rising costs of food, transport, rent and energy (MillionPlus, 2022).</p> <p>Mountford-Zimdars et al. (2015) review of the evidence cites multiple studies pointing to ‘nuanced evidence’ that financial support or the lack thereof does make a difference to continuation as well as to continuation within HE.</p> <p>Kaye (2021) finds that the effectiveness of bursaries to address discrepancies in HE take-up, differential experiences and outcomes for students from different backgrounds depends not only on the ability to compensate for financial disadvantage but also on the impact this can have on students’ attitudes and sense of integration at university.</p> <p>TASO reports that statistical analysis from most providers found ‘strong evidence of their bursary effectiveness on student outcomes’ (i.e. retention, completion, achievement and positive grad. outcomes).</p> <p>Financial support has been shown to improve on-course attainment (Bettinger, 2015; Castleman and Long, 2016) and can enable students to work fewer hours in off-campus employment (Broton et al., 2016), a necessity for some students which some studies conclude is negatively associated with academic performance (Zhang and Yang, 2020).</p> <p>Nursaw Associates (2015, p.4) also find institutional evidence that students in receipt of financial support felt more able to continue on their course, and that they consider withdrawing less than their peers’.</p> <p>TASO also noted apparent causal effects of needs-based bursaries on UR completion rates, annual course scores and degree quality. According to one study by Murphy and Wyness (2016), ‘increasing financial aid by £1,000 increased the likelihood of obtaining at least an upper second-class degree by 3.7 percentage points’.</p>	Risk 7

O2: To improve continuation rates for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes

O3: To increase the proportion of students from IMDQ1+2 who achieve a 2:1 or above

O4: To improve the proportion of black and Asian students who achieve a 2:1 or above

Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
	<p>Mountford-Zimdars et al. (2015) reviewed a number of studies which found (non-causal) evidence of ‘a correlation between financial support and a reduction in anxiety about HE studies, better integration into University life, less need to combine work and study, and the ability to buy high-cost items such as books’.</p> <p>Existing in-house evaluation shows that Oxford Brookes’ bursary had a substantial impact on reducing financial concerns of recipients and also had a levelling effect on retention rates between recipients and their peers. Students in receipt of the bursary have a higher continuation rate than those who don’t receive university financial support. This was particularly significant for those in receipt of the enhanced bursary, with a correlation between increased financial support and a bigger gap in continuation rates between recipients and non-recipients. Applicants to Brookes from lower HE participation areas, and ABMO students, deem accommodation cost particularly significant in making their choices.</p>	
Mental Health support-contextual evidence	<p>Universities UK (2023) have issued a call to action for universities to become ‘places that promote mental health and wellbeing, enabling all students and all staff to thrive and succeed to their best potential’ and to ‘achieve this by [...] making mental health a strategic priority and adopting a whole university approach’.</p> <p>As dynamic environments which can present challenges that may affect the mental health of its community, universities should promote public health and wellbeing and invest in creating supportive physical, social and academic environments that promote student and staff mental wellbeing (Fernandez et al., 2016).</p>	
Oxford Brookes Student employer framework	<p>There is a small and non-causal evidence-base pointing to a range of benefits of and learning points for the employment of students by universities. Glendinning and Hood (2010) evaluated a student employment scheme at a post 1992 university in the UK finding reported benefits including greater financial stability for students, making friends from different countries and cultures and improved student retention. A further benefit was the convenience of employment location and flexibility of hours to fit around study and other commitments. Student benefits were reported alongside a set of benefits for the university including increased loyalty.</p>	<p>Risk 7</p> <p>Risk 6</p>

O2: To improve continuation rates for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes O3: To increase the proportion of students from IMDQ1+2 who achieve a 2:1 or above O4: To improve the proportion of black and Asian students who achieve a 2:1 or above		
Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks

Table B3: Progression intervention strategy evidence base

Progression intervention strategy evidence base O5: Improve progression to further study or higher level employment for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes O6: improve progression to further study or higher level employment for students from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities (ABMO)		
Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
Thrive programme in Brooks Enterprise Support	<p>From a systematic review of the impact of entrepreneurship education (EE) in higher education, Nabi et al. (2017) find the most reliable evidence for the impact of EE on lower-level impact indicators including entrepreneurial intentions (the intention to start a business). The authors report some evidence specifically for the impact of short term intensive experiential programmes on these 'lower level' indicators. Impact on higher level indicators including actual start-ups was stronger for pedagogical EE methods based on competency development and real-world problem solving. There is an acknowledged lack of more granular evidence for how EE impacts those with different backgrounds but some studies suggest impacts are greater for those with less entrepreneurial exposure or experience. A further identified knowledge gap relates to the impact of EE on the development of 'entrepreneurial mindset' defined as 'cognitive phenomena deeper than intent' and includes aspects of cognition such as 'dispositional optimism' and 'uncertainty/ambiguity tolerance'. These aspects are considered to be beneficial, not just in the process of venture creation but more broadly for improving the employability and progression of university graduates, alongside the wider utility of more practical entrepreneurial competencies and skills (Beaumont, 2023). The sector currently lacks a framework that effectively draws together employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship (Beaumont, 2023) and, inevitably therefore, lacks evidence of how EE activities impact more broadly on graduate employability and progression from HE.</p>	<p>Risk 2</p> <p>Risk 4</p> <p>Risk 5</p>

Progression intervention strategy evidence base

O5: Improve progression to further study or higher level employment for students from IMDQ1+2 postcodes

O6: improve progression to further study or higher level employment for students from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities (ABMO)

Activity	Sector and Oxford Brookes evidence	Risks
	There is some evidence from other student support contexts to suggest that delivery of activities by individuals with similar backgrounds to beneficiaries might be a factor in their success (University of Manchester, 2019; Morales et al., 2018).	
Development of resources and enhancement of existing activity to support progression	TASO's review of the current evidence finds that IAG can be beneficial for improving students' employability and graduate employment outcomes. They cite a meta-analysis by Whiston et al. (2017) which pooled 55 papers on IAG interventions, with findings suggesting reliable evidence of a positive association between these interventions and recipients' ability to make effective career choices.	Risk 2 Risk 4 Risk 6
Placement and recruitment focused peer mentoring	Moore and Gatrack (2023) present some non-causal evidence for the effectiveness of peer involvement in delivering careers and employability support through the University of Liverpool's Careers Studio. That model is based on a definition of peer mentoring as 'support provided by and for people with similar experiences' and is based on prior evidence suggesting that stress and anxiety might be reduced through engaging with peer mentoring because it offers the opportunity to share experiences. A University of Manchester study conducted for the Office for Students, albeit in a different context, suggested delivery individuals having a similar background to beneficiaries to be a factor associated with success of the intervention (University of Manchester, 2019).	Risk 2 Risk 4 Risk 5
Oxford Brookes Student employer framework	<p>There is a small and non-causal evidence-base pointing to a range of benefits of and learning points for the employment of students by universities. Glendinning and Hood (2010) evaluated a student employment scheme at a post 1992 university in the UK finding reported benefits such as improved skills and expertise including team working. A range of benefits for the university are also reported.</p> <p>There are studies looking at the link between employability skills and employment outcomes, and between employability programmes and specific skills.</p>	Risk 1 Risk 2 Risk 4 Risk 7

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B5. List of abbreviations, glossary and data definitions

List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
ABCS	Associations Between Characteristics of Students
APP	Access and Participation Plan
APPSIG	APP Special Interest Group
ABMO	Asian Black Minority Other
BSS	Brookes Student Survey
ECT	Early Career Teacher
EEF	Education Endowment Foundation
EDI	Equality Diversity and Inclusion
EORR	Equality of Opportunity Risk Register
FACE	Forum for Access and Continuing Education
FSM	Free School Meals
FE	Further Education
GO	Graduate Outcomes
HE	Higher Education
HEAT	Higher Education Access Tracker
IAG	Information Advice and Guidance
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
NEON	National Education Opportunities Network
NERUPI	Network for Evaluating and Researching University Participation Interventions
NSS	National Student Survey
OfS	Office for Students
ONS	Office for National Statistics

Abbreviation	Meaning
POLAR4	Participation of Local Areas (4th version)
QE	Quasi experimental
RCT	Randomised Control Trial
TASO	(Centre for) Transforming Access and Student Outcomes
TASO ASQ	TASO Access and Success Questionnaire
TUNDRA	Tracking Underrepresentation by Area
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Glossary

Term	Definition
Access and Participation Plan	<p>Access and Participation Plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education. A university or college must have an Access and Participation Plan if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are registered with the Office for Students in the 'Approved (fee cap)' category; • they want to charge above the basic tuition fee cap.
Action research	Research (often carried out by practitioners focusing on their own practice) that is designed to solve a problem through application of the insights generated and continued learning from the experience of doing so.
Annual Quality Review Process	<p>An internal Oxford Brookes process to enable the University to consider the currency and effectiveness of programmes in meeting their stated aims, and reflect on the success of students in attaining the intended learning outcomes. Annual monitoring also has a key role to play in facilitating action to continuously enhance the provision, and create a supportive and effective learning environment.</p>

Term	Definition
Assessment of Performance	A required section within an APP intended to identify the most pressing or significant equality of opportunity challenges for that provider and which it will seek to address through the commitments it makes in its plan. To do this, the OfS expects the university to identify the ways in which risks may be manifesting for different student groups. (Abbreviated from OfS Regulatory Notice 1, paragraph 43).
Census 2021	The Census takes place every 10 years. It gives us a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales.
Cognitive skills	Cognitive skills are thinking skills and include critical thinking and metacognition.
Contextual offer	An offer for a university place that takes into account whether a student has faced any particular circumstances or challenges that may have impacted their education or results. By looking at an applicant's achievements in context, the university may adjust its usual offer to give students a fairer chance to access their chosen course.
Counterfactual	In evaluation terms the counterfactual scenario (sometimes called the counterfactual case) is what would have happened in the absence of the intervention being evaluated.
Design thinking	Design thinking is an approach based on ‘thinking like a designer’. It originates from the mid-20th Century and usually follows a phased process where teams: Empathise (with users); Define (the problem); Ideate, Prototype and Test before implementation.
Difference in Difference	A quasi-experimental evaluation design employing longitudinal data from intervention and comparison groups to provide a counterfactual so that a causal effect can be estimated. Rather than assuming the treatment and comparison groups to be the same, both can be different but the size of the difference must have been constant over a suitable period of time. After the intervention has been implemented, the difference in the size of the difference between the two groups enables the impact of the intervention to be estimated.
Disadvantaged	A term used by OfS and across the sector to describe groups of students for whom there is evidence of inequitable outcomes in relation to HE.

Term	Definition
Economic evaluation	Evaluation designed to understand if an intervention has provided good value for money. Economic evaluation can be carried out at the design stage, and can be used comparatively to assess the potential value for money of different activities.
Evaluation Champions	Staff members who lead others by example in good practice around planning and embedding evaluation, providing peer support and representing the thoughts and interests of the Access and Outreach team on this subject.
Evidence base	Evidence used to provide a rationale for an intervention, programme or strategy, and usually to inform its design. Evidence can relate to local circumstances and/ or what has worked previously in the local or other contexts.
Financial literacy	The knowledge and skills needed to make financial decisions.
Further education	Further education includes any study after secondary education that is not part of higher education (that is, not taken as part of an undergraduate or graduate degree).
Graduate outcomes	A term used to capture what students do after graduating from their course. OfS have defined a set of possible graduate outcomes and aim to measure these through the Graduate Outcomes survey.
Higher Education Access Tracker	HEAT is a collaborative database used by many Higher Education providers and widening participation (WP) outreach teams to track students' participation in outreach activity and their educational journeys and outcomes.
Impact evaluation	Impact evaluation designed to understand what has happened as a result of an intervention being implemented.
Institutes of Technology	Institutes of Technology are Post 16 education providers that offer qualifications from Level 3 to Level 7, with a specific focus on providing the technical and professional skills needed by businesses.
Intervention strategy	Intervention Strategies are required within an APP to set out the means by which the university's objectives will be met. The Oxford Brookes APP includes intervention strategies for 'equality of access', equality of student outcomes, equality of progression.
Key Stage	The national curriculum is organised into blocks of years called 'key stages' (KS): KS 1 = Y1 and Y2 (ages 5-7) KS 2 = Y3 - Y6 (ages 7 - 11)

Term	Definition
	KS 3 = Y7 - 9 (ages 11-14) KS 4 = Y10 -11 (ages 14 - 16)
Qualification levels	Level 1: GCSE Grades D - G or equivalent Level 2: GCSE Grades C - A* or equivalent Level 3: A level or equivalent Level 4: Higher national certificate, (HNC) Higher apprenticeship or equivalent Level 5: Foundation degree, higher national diploma (HND) or equivalent Level 6: undergraduate degree or equivalent Level 7: masters degree or equivalent Level 8: PhD or equivalent
Metacognitive skills	Metacognitive skills refers to the cognitive ways learners monitor, plan and direct their learning. Metacognition is sometimes described as thinking about thinking.
Multivariate regression analysis	Regression analysis is a statistical technique used to estimate the relationship between an outcome variable (the dependent variable) and a predictor variable (the independent variable). Multivariate (or multiple) regression is used to explore the relationship between variables where there is more than one outcome variable.
Office for Students	OfS is the regulatory body for higher education in England. The University is accountable to the OfS.
OfS Financial Support Toolkit	A set of evaluation tools provided by the OfS for use by universities when evaluating their financial support. OfS strongly recommend universities use the toolkit.
Outreach	A range of activities, support and information delivered by Oxford Brookes to prospective students, teachers, and parents. Intended to support students in thinking through their future options and gaining the information, skills, and experiences that will help them to progress onto university.
Process evaluation	Process evaluation is designed to understand whether an intervention is being implemented as planned, and where adjustments, or larger changes might increase the potential for impact and / or efficiency.
Quasi-experimental	Quasi experimental evaluation designs employ a comparison group to provide the counterfactual scenario, but without creating a randomised control group as in a randomised control trial.

Term	Definition
Randomised control trial	Randomised control trials employ a randomly selected control group who are not offered the intervention, but are otherwise similar to the intervention group to provide the counterfactual scenario. These are often referred to as experimental evaluation designs.
School Census	A statutory survey used to collect vital data about primary, secondary, special schools and pupil referral units, used to inform funding allocation and national education statistics.
Self-efficacy	Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to plan and carry out an activity or behaviour. It is often defined in terms of a specific goal or type of activity.
Small n methodologies	Small n methodologies can be used to understand impacts when use of an experimental or quasi-experimental design is not suitable. These methodologies tend to provide in depth insight to the nature and likely causes of impacts rather than giving an estimate of their scale.
Study Higher	A partnership of universities, further education colleges and other stakeholders funded by the OfS and working together to provide young people with high quality impartial advice and guidance about education opportunities. It is part of the UniConnect programme.
Subcontracted provision	Subcontracted provision describes a relationship, based on a formal contract, in which a lead provider - in this case, Oxford Brookes University - allows another provider (the delivery provider) to deliver all or part of a programme which has been designed and approved by the University. The lead provider retains overall control of the programme's content, delivery, assessment and quality assurance arrangements. A student on a subcontracted course would usually have all learning, teaching and student support delivered by the delivery partner.
TASO	TASO is an independent hub for higher education professionals to access research, toolkits and evaluation guidance to eliminate equality gaps.
TASO Access and Success Questionnaire	The TASO ASQ is designed to help the higher education sector to better evaluate its access and student success activities by providing a set of validated scales that can be used to measure the key intermediate outcomes these activities aim to improve.
Theory of Change	Theory of Change is a description of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It maps out what activities or interventions set out to accomplish and how that leads to desired goals being achieved. A

Term	Definition
	Theory of Change is usually presented through a diagram, often with an accompanying narrative, which identifies the desired long-term goals then works back from these to identify all the conditions that must be in place for the goals to be achieved.
Type 1, 2 and 3 evidence	<p>The OfS Standards of Evidence guide presents three types of evaluation evidence:</p> <p>Type 1: narrative evidence (usually from an evidence review and Theory of Change) - allows us to say why an intervention is expected to result in a change;</p> <p>Type 2: empirical (observed but non-causal) evidence - allows us to report associations between an intervention and change to infer impact; and</p> <p>Type 3: causal evidence (from employing an RCT or QE method) allows us to say that impact has happened because of an intervention.</p>
Underrepresented	A term used by OfS and across the sector to describe groups of students for whom there is evidence of inequitable Access to HE.
Uni Connect	The Uni Connect programme was set up in 2017 to support the government's social mobility goals to increase the number of young people from underrepresented groups going to higher education. The programme aims to ensure that young and adult learners are equipped with impartial information to help them make an informed choice about progressing to higher education.

Data definitions

The following documents provide definitions for the student characteristics, outcomes and measures included in the APP.

[OfS definitions for the student characteristics included in the APP](#)

[OfS student experience and outcome measures](#)

[OfS student characteristics document: technical data](#)

Note: HE attainment measures are referred to by OfS as degree outcome measures

Annex C: Targets, investment and fees

The OfS will append the information from the fees, investment and targets document when an access and participation plan is published.

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Oxford Brookes University

Provider UKPRN: 10004930

Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations we will increase fees each year using RPI-X

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	OBU - UG degree courses at OBO, OBS, DL, excl. Study abroad	N/A	9250
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	Foundation years for Built Env, Business, Humanities, Law, Int Found Art Hum & Law, Bus & Tech, Int Foundation	N/A	5760
Foundation year/Year 0 HNC/HND	OBU - FD FYR award courses at OBO	N/A	9250
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	OBU - PGCEQ, PGCEP-PCE	N/A	9250
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	OBU - UG degree courses at OBO with SW attribute	N/A	1700
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	OBU - UG degree courses on study abroad	N/A	1385
Other	OBU - PG with UG funding - MARCD-ADA	N/A	9250

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	Abingdon and Witney College - AW - UG degree courses	10000055	7700
First degree	Activate Learning - AL - UG degree courses	10004927	7700
First degree	Bridgwater and Taunton College - BW - UG degree courses	10000878	7700
First degree	Brooklands College - BR - UG degree courses	10000950	7700
First degree	Global Banking School Limited - GBS - UG degree courses	10042500	9250
First degree	Solihull College and University Centre - SH - UG degree courses	10005946	7700
First degree	Swindon College - SW - UG degree courses	10006463	7700
First degree	Wiltshire College and University Centre - WT - UG degree courses	10007527	7700
Foundation degree	Abingdon and Witney College - AW - UG FD award courses degree courses	10000055	7700
Foundation degree	Activate Learning - AL - UG FD award courses degree courses	10004927	7700
Foundation degree	Bridgwater and Taunton College - BW - UG FD award courses degree courses	10000878	7700
Foundation degree	Brooklands College - BR - UG FD award courses degree courses	10000950	7700
Foundation degree	Solihull College and University Centre - SH - UG FD award courses degree courses	10005946	7700
Foundation degree	Swindon College - SW - UG FD award courses degree courses	10006463	7700
Foundation degree	Wiltshire College and University Centre - WT - UG FD award courses degree courses	10007527	7700
Foundation year/Year 0	Global Banking School Limited - GBS - UG degree courses with SF attribute	10042500	9250
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	OBU - UG degree courses at OBO, OBS, DL	N/A	5775
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	Foundation years for Built Env, Business, Humanities, Law, Int Found Art Hum & Law, Bus & Tech, Int Foundation	N/A	3600
Foundation year/Year 0 HNC/HND	OBU - FD FYR award courses at OBO	N/A	5775
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:
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First degree	Abingdon and Witney College - AW - UG degree courses	10000055	3850
First degree	Activate Learning - AL - UG degree courses	10004927	3850
First degree	Bridgwater and Taunton College - BW - UG degree courses	10000878	3850
First degree	Brooklands College - BR - UG degree courses	10000950	3850
First degree	Global Banking School Limited - GBS - UG degree courses	10042500	6160
First degree	Solihull College and University Centre - SH - UG degree courses	10005946	3850
First degree	Swindon College - SW - UG degree courses	10006463	3850
First degree	Wiltshire College and University Centre - WT - UG degree courses	10007527	3850
Foundation degree	Abingdon and Witney College - AW - UG FD award courses degree courses	10000055	5140
Foundation degree	Activate Learning - AL - UG FD award courses degree courses	10004927	5140
Foundation degree	Bridgwater and Taunton College - BW - UG FD award courses degree courses	10000878	5140
Foundation degree	Brooklands College - BR - UG FD award courses degree courses	10000950	5140
Foundation degree	Solihull College and University Centre - SH - UG FD award courses degree courses	10005946	5140
Foundation degree	Swindon College - SW - UG FD award courses degree courses	10006463	5140
Foundation degree	Wiltshire College and University Centre - WT - UG FD award courses degree courses	10007527	5140
Foundation year/Year 0	Global Banking School Limited - GBS - UG degree courses with SF attribute	10042500	6160
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: Oxford Brookes University

Provider UKPRN: 10004930

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	£1,540,000	£1,573,000	£1,606,000	£1,638,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£5,011,000	£5,216,000	£5,368,000	£5,602,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£290,000	£302,000	£314,000	£362,000

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 (£)	£382,000	£391,000	£399,000	£407,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£979,000	£998,000	£1,019,000	£1,040,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£179,000	£184,000	£188,000	£191,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (£)	£1,540,000	£1,573,000	£1,606,000	£1,638,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (as % of HFI)	4.7%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%
Access activity investment	Total access investment funded from HFI (£)	£1,540,000	£1,573,000	£1,606,000	£1,638,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£4,445,000	£4,642,000	£4,785,000	£5,010,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£566,000	£574,000	£583,000	£592,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (£)	£5,011,000	£5,216,000	£5,368,000	£5,602,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)	15.2%	15.1%	15.0%	15.2%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£290,000	£302,000	£314,000	£362,000
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Oxford Brookes University

Provider UKPRN: 10004930

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 increase the proportion of new students from IMD Q1+2 postcodes	PTA_1	Access	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	N/A	The target will measure the proportion of new 18 year old students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2. Achieving this target would halve the gap in representation between our intake and the demographics of our recruitment region (based on current national population statistics) by 2028/29. The progress towards the target increases in each milestone year to reflect the anticipated time it will take for the outcomes of our interventions to take full effect.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage	17.4%	17.8%	18.5%	19.6%	21.0%
To increase the proportion of new black and mixed ethnicity students	PTA_2	Access	Ethnicity	Not specified (please give detail in description)		The target will measure the aggregate proportion of new 18 year old black and mixed ethnicity students. Achieving this target would halve the gap in representation between our intake and the demographics of our recruitment region (based on current national population statistics) by 2028/29. The progress towards the target increases in each milestone year to reflect the anticipated time it will take for the outcomes of our interventions to take full effect.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage	9.2%	9.4%	9.9%	10.6%	11.5%
	PTA_3														
	PTA_4														
	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 halve the gap in continuation rates between students from IMD Q1+2 and IMD Q3-5 postcodes	PTS_1	Continuation	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5	The target will measure the percentage point gap in continuation rates between students from IMD Q1+2 and IMD Q3-5. The progress towards the target increases in each milestone year to reflect the anticipated time it will take for the outcomes of our interventions to take full effect. The target is based on halving the gap in the baseline year by 2028/29.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	4.5	4.2	3.8	3.1	2.2

[illegible]