



Access and Participation Plan

2025-2026 to 2028-2029

Degrees at
Bradford College

Access and Participation Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

1. Introduction and Strategic Aim

Bradford College's vision is *'To Create a Better Future for all Through Education and Training'*. At the heart of this vision, is the mission of *'Working together to transform lives'*. The college is proud to provide education and training on behalf of the communities of Bradford and staff share in the aspiration that all students can and should be able to succeed, whatever their life and educational experience prior to entering study.

Bradford College is a community college serving the 13th most deprived local authority out of 317 in England¹. Through working in partnership with public sector organisations and employers, the college plays a vital role in providing opportunity and improving social mobility for many disadvantaged learners within our community. The college higher education cohort is diverse, drawn predominantly from the Bradford area. and is analysed at Annex A.

As we launch this new Access and Participation Plan, we have restated our strategic intent to become a Truly Inclusive Outstanding College. Inclusion is a driving principle of the college and as this plan outlines informs curriculum design, partnership decision, curriculum delivery, student support and additionality programmes.

The college's seven strategic objectives, outlined in section 5, are supported by strategic plans which are regularly reviewed to ensure that we intensify or adapt our work towards achieving our goals. All targets associated with higher education are recorded at institutional and departmental level through a master target file that governs our management of quality improvement and assurance. In addition to our strategic planning, we also work across the district to develop strategic partnerships which inform and influence our future planning and delivery, for example:

- i. Bradford Council to implement its commitment to equalities as set out in its Equality Plan 2021-2025 (Ref 1.3.1, Bradford Council, 2021) through membership of the Systems Equality Group which support the Council's Wellbeing Board.
- ii. Empowering Minds, a third sector Bradford-based organisation which aims to engage, educate, and inspire individuals through diversity, cohesion and citizenship. This has led to the college piloting a student intervention programme to challenge difficult behaviour in some of our most hard to reach students.
- iii. Black¹ FE Leadership Group on the *'Making the most of Bradford's Ethnicities'* research project, funded by the Education & Training Foundation (ETF) (BFELG, 2021). The core objective of the research was to place the increasing ethnic diversity prevalent in Bradford, front and centre of local considerations to reshape college planning and provision up to L7 study.

We are committed to working collaboratively in our local area through Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY) to take a coherent, county-wide approach to reducing inequalities in access to, success in and progression from higher education. We co-fund the core function of the partnership which covers the whole student lifecycle, support our staff to contribute to collaborative activity for the benefit of the wider partnership, and its Uni Connect programme. The aim of the partnership is to bring together members and stakeholders to ensure that higher education – in all its varied forms – is an accessible option that is considered by a wider and more inclusive audience in our local area, and to support these prospective students in and through our institutions.

¹ Bradford Metropolitan District Council <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/poverty-in-bradford-district/>

In addition, the college works in partnership with Leeds Trinity University to deliver teacher education provision and the University of Bolton to validate foundation and honours degree provision. These partnerships, founded in a collective commitment to equality and diversity, enable the college to share in impactful practice relating to access and participation with key universities in diverse northern cities. Our synergies in mission, our commitment to widening participation and the similarity in our students' demographic profiles support us all to have a positive impact on our communities.

College HE provision is predominantly aligned with skills gaps in the city region. The delivery of teacher education, social work and ophthalmic dispensing supports the region with key public sector and health care professionals. In addition, the college's commitment to culture and digital sectors contribute to the city's rich heritage and focus on emerging technologies.

This Access and Participation Plan responds to the challenges potential HE students in the Bradford city region have in accessing higher level education. The college is uniquely positioned to support these students through its broad outreach activity in community settings and its large further education provision. However, challenges persist and this Access and Participation Plan responds to the barriers potential HE students in the Bradford city region have in accessing higher level education. While these include common barriers of financial support and educational attainment, the college has also identified challenges relating to the acquisition of non-perishable skills, confidence and familial support. This plan outlines strategies which address these psychological and social barriers.

2.0 Risks to Equality of Opportunity

Utilising the OfS Dashboard we have identified performance gaps relating to Access, Continuation, Completion and Progression. Our analysis of these gaps is outlined in Annex A. Of the gaps identified, the college has proposed objectives which will address the most significant and those which will lead to the highest level of social impact: either in relation to narrowing gaps in demographic performance or in making the most substantial impact on the culture and performance of the city we serve.

In accordance with the OfS' Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) we have identified risks which, when considered against our analysis of performance are relevant to our student cohort. Of these, some risks are relevant to our whole student population:

NR2: Information and guidance

NR3: Perception of higher education

NR10: Cost pressures

NR13: Sense of belonging

The college will continue to work with civic partners, colleges, schools and universities across the Bradford district to address these common issues to access and participation in higher education.

Additional risks are felt most acutely by different demographic groups. Below we identify the key risks facing our diverse student cohort at each step of the student lifecycle.

2.1 Access Risks to Equality of Opportunity

Bradford District is the 13th most deprived local authority out of 317 in England (Bradford Metropolitan District Council, 2019). Bradford's position, relative to other English districts has worsened by six places since IMD 2015². Students from under-represented groups and disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to have either a want or a requirement, or both, to study at a local HE provider (Donnelly and Gamsu, 2018).³ Provision of local HE is therefore a significant enabler of equality of opportunity to those students from communities characterised by education, skills and training deprivation (Go Higher West Yorkshire, 2022⁴).

The college recognises that poverty, structural disadvantage and poor pre-16 outcomes impact on a student's ability to access and succeed in higher education. Students with the following characteristics are the most under-represented across our HE provision:

- ABMO students in Creative Industries
- Females in STEM subjects
- Males in Arts, Education & Healthcare

These risks map against the NR 2: Information and Guidance, NR3: Perceptions of Higher Education and NR5: limited choice of course type and delivery. **Objectives 1a – 1d** capture our commitment to address these risks to access and propose actions to address these risks during the lifecycle of this plan.

2.2 Success Risks to Equality of Opportunity

2.2.1 Risk to Continuation

The College's assessment of performance clearly indicates that continuation gaps for students facing multiple disadvantages arise prior to commencement of higher education⁵. Through analysis of the interactions of disadvantage, we understand that individual characteristics, external pressures and poor experiences of education act as variables leading to risk of student disengagement. We draw on significant research that seeks to articulate this causality⁶. The college employs a student-centred approach to identifying and addressing individual risk.

Key risks to continuation for students at Bradford College are:

- Male students' continuation is consistently lower than female students (-13.7pp over the last 4 years and -8.1pp in the last 2 years)
- IMD quintile 1 students' continuation is lower than IMD Q2 to Q5 students (8.7pp gap in the last 2 years)

These risks map against the NR6: Insufficient Academic Support, NR7: Insufficient Personal Support and NR8: Mental health, together with practical barriers to continuation and completion encapsulated in NR10: Cost Pressures and NR11: Capacity Issues. **Objectives 2a - 2e** capture our commitment to address these risks to during the lifecycle of this plan.

² Bradford Metropolitan District Council, 2019

³ Donnelly and Gamsu, 2018 Spatial Imaginaries and Geographic Division within the UK: Uneven Economic Development, Ethnicity and National Identity

⁴ [Annual Report - Go Higher West Yorkshire](#)

⁵ Multiple disadvantage and KS4 attainment: evidence from LSYPE2 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁶ [Protocol-review-of-socioeconomic-disadvantage-and-the-attainment-gap.pdf \(d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net\)](#)

2.2.2. Attainment Risk to Equality of Opportunity

A review of college data shows that mature students often outperform their younger counterparts. Understanding why this happens requires a deep dive into factors such as course selection, life experience, motivation, and personal resilience. Socio-economic factors, Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) status, and previous learning experiences also play a crucial role, particularly when comparing the different motivations and backgrounds of young and mature students.

Data indicates that mature learners at college tend to opt for vocational or professional courses that align with their career aspirations or build on their previous work experiences⁷. These courses, for example teaching or social work, are PSRB accredited and directly applicable to graduate level employment. This intrinsic motivation, linked to a clear sense of career supports students in their resilience and motivation across pathways. The college has reshaped its curriculum offer to ensure that all programmes now lead to graduate level careers to support all students to attain well and progress well.

The college's young students often struggle with the transition to higher-level study. Many lack the self-directed learning skills that are necessary for success in higher education. As a result, the college continues to invest in academic skill development roles that aim to support successful transition.

The following objectives are proposed to advance the college's commitment to equality of attainment across age cohorts:

- The attainment gap between young and mature students is too large at -13.77pp over the last two years
- The attainment gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q2 to Q5 is too large at 18pp over the last two years

2.3 Progress Risks to Equality of Opportunity

Bradford sits at the heart of West Yorkshire; a county characterised by a low skills base, with a deficit of people qualified to Level 4 and above (ONS, 2022⁸) which impacts on employment. The majority of employed residents work within the local area, but those who travel further afield for their work are more likely to be employed in roles which require higher levels of skills. Further to this, the employment rate for those from minority ethnic backgrounds is lower than the rate nationally, and lower than the local rate for those from White backgrounds (West Yorkshire Combined Authority, 2022).⁹

Analysis of data indicates the following risks of progression to highly skilled graduate jobs:

Young (under 21) students compared to mature (21 and over) students (with the progression gap at -7.0pp over the last two years and -8.9pp over the last 4 years). This risk maps against NR12: Progression from Higher Education. Objective 6 captures our commitment to address this risk during the lifecycle of this plan.

⁷ <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/mature-learners-synthesis-research>

⁸ <https://www.ons.gov.uk> Education, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

⁹ State of the Region Report - West Yorkshire Combined Authority (westyorks-ca.gov.uk)

3.0 Objectives

Objectives Relating to Access to Higher Education at Bradford College

Bradford College's performance relating to Access to HE at an Institutional level is strong.

The college's Admissions, Advice and Guidance Service has a dedicated higher education team, which recognises the clear barriers to accessing Higher Education across our city. This team will include a specialist higher education admissions officer, supported by an admissions advisor and two dedicated HE Access and Conversion Officers who give individual advice and guidance to ensure appropriate study options are identified. This team work closely with the Go Higher West Yorkshire employed Access officer for Bradford, based on campus. In line with the OfS guidance, the college will work in partnership with other HE providers to ensure the cross-referral of applicants to other providers based on individual student aspirations, and regularly attend Bradford University Open Days.

Our Outreach team lead the college's ambitious plans for growing the college's influence through:

- Answering student questions about Higher Education. Help students understand their options so they can excel in their next steps. They will help students find the support available to target individual needs.
- Proactively working with school partners to deliver pre-16 aspiration and skill raising activities and facilitating other university aspirations raising activity in the city (such as OxFest).
- Engaging schools to deliver pre-16 aspirational career workshops. (Using school performance statistics to inform our priorities for school engagement around raising attainment).

The following objectives are proposed to address ongoing gaps in access across the college's curriculum offer:

Objective 1a: Bradford College will increase the percentage of ABMO students in Creative Industries to 40% by 2029, from a starting point of 24% in 2024.

Objective 1b: Bradford College will increase the percentage of females studying STEM to 30% by 2029, from a starting point of 5% in 2024.

Objective 1c: Bradford College will increase the percentage of males studying arts programmes to 40% by 2029, from a starting point of 28% in 2024.

Objective 1d: Bradford College will increase the percentage of males studying education and health care to 40% by 2029, from a starting point of 17% in 2024.

Objectives Relating to Participation in Higher Education at Bradford College

The multiple disadvantages faced by students entering higher education creates risk to continuation, completion and progression. College research clearly indicates the correlation between number of disadvantages facing each student and their successful participation in higher education. As a result, the college targets its investment and intervention strategies on addressing the impact of barriers to successful participation. The college continues to shape its student experience to be culturally and socially responsive and as a result gaps in participation have narrowed. However, this plan proposes activity to address remaining gaps.

The following objectives are proposed to address ongoing gaps in participation across the college's curriculum offer:

Objective 2a: To close the continuation gap between male students and female students to +/- 2% by 2029, from a starting point of -8.1pp in the last two years.

Objective 2b: To close the continuation gap between IMD Q1 students and IMD Q2 to Q5 students to +/-2% by 2029, from a starting point of -8.7pp

Objective 2c: To close the attainment gap between young and mature students to +/- 2% by 2029, from a starting point of -13.77pp.

Objective 2d: To close the attainment gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q2 to Q5 to <5% by 2029, from a starting point of 18pp.

Objective 2e: To close the progression gap between young and mature student to +/-2% by 2029, from a starting point of -7.00pp in the last two years.

4. Intervention Strategies and Expected Outcomes

The specific target groups and a summary of related interventions and evaluation tools are set out below with the specific percentage changes and timeframes for improvement clearly outlined in the supporting Target and Investment Plan.

In addition, the evidence based for each intervention strategy is recorded, drawing on previously impactful work at the college and external research of methodologies for addressing disparities across the student lifecycle.

Evaluation plans accompany each intervention strategy. These detail the method of evaluation and the publication output that will be available at the completion of the activity. While the decisions made relating to evaluation have been made based on previously impactful interventions, we anticipate that our theory of change evaluation methodology will result in changes to evaluation strategies during the course of this plan. These publications seek to share best practice across the college and across key sector partners.

Interim findings will be shared internally and assessed by the college's Academic Board and EDI Committee. Further details of the evaluation plan, together with the evidence base for each intervention is recorded in the grids below.

Title	Increasing Diversity Across Creative Arts Education			
Evidence Base:	<p>This intervention strategy aims to develop and support positive perceptions of creative arts education for ABMO applicants from the 2025/2026 applicant cycle. In designing this intervention, the college draws on the following evidence and existing impactful strategies:</p> <p>Outreach and student recruitment</p> <p>UK students from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds face heightened barriers to pursuing a creative career when it comes to parental influence, with 52% admitting to this being a deterrent, compared to only 37% for white students¹⁰. It is not just the learners' perceptions of careers in Creative Industries, but the family circles of influence that form barriers to studying arts subjects for these cohorts. (Arts Council England 2017-18¹¹). Our Outreach and HE Outreach and Conversion Officers include 'family circle' and community engagement activity in their annual recruitment plans to address these barriers. Working in partnership with Bradford 2025 City of Culture we are integral in their legacy programme promoting the arts and creative carers for the future of Bradford.</p> <p>Role models for ABMO in Creative Industries</p> <p>An Access to HE study¹² found as far back as 2015 there was complex intersectionality of class, race and economic barriers to aspiration to study Higher Education in the Arts for ABMO learners. With fewer than 20% ABMO role models in theatrical leadership in London for example – where are the role models to inspire these learners? We aim to create them discover them and show them to all of Bradford throughout this plan.</p>			
Related Objectives	Objective 1a: Bradford College will increase the percentage of ABMO students in Creative Industries to 40% by 2029, from a starting point of 25% in 2024.			
Risks to Equality of Opportunity	1) Knowledge & Skills 2) IAG 3) Perception of HE 10) Cost pressures			
	Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross Intervention
	<p>Launch culturally relevant outreach initiatives highlighting successful ABMO professionals in the creative industries.</p> <p>Collaborate with local cultural organizations to host events and workshops that attract ABMO students to creative fields.</p>	<p>HE Access and Conversion Officers – element of their work towards this plan 0.4 FTE</p> <p>Bespoke marketing budget</p> <p>Testimonials from ABMO graduates in the creative industries</p> <p>Partnership work with Bradford 2025 City of Culture and legacy programme</p> <p>37 community venues to feature marketing materials relating to ABMO students in creative industries</p>	Increase in enquires and applications from ABMO students to the Creative Arts curriculum at Bradford College	1C

¹⁰ [BAME students struggle to find creative role models | News | ArtsProfessional](#)

¹¹ [Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case: A Data Report, 2018-19 | Arts Council England](#)

¹² ["The more colours you add, the nicer the picture": unlocking artistic potential in London](#) (AccessHE Alberts, Atherton 2016)

		Extension of in-college ESOL and Community utilisation of Arts and Culture as a core of curriculum delivery		
	Develop scholarships and financial support packages tailored to ABMO students interested in the creative industries.	BD25 Legacy Arts Scholarships for ABMO students studying L4 arts and creative industries at Bradford College. 10 x £500 Bursary	Increase of conversion rates of ABMO applicants to enrolments within the Creative Industries Curriculum.	
	Offer portfolio development workshops and mentoring specifically designed to support ABMO students in preparing for admission to creative programmes.	Build and deliver 'Virtual Art School' in 2025-26, an online resource bank of support to help you develop your portfolio for arts-based degrees (in parallel with our Access to Higher Education Arts programme.	Increase in progression rates from our L3 creative industries ABMO student base into higher education (Bradford College or other HEIs).	
	Through our existing family education programmes, work across generations to myth-bust preconceived ideas relating to the value of an arts education.	Develop collateral to promote arts and creative careers – web based, but with print for family learning provision to use.	Increase in FE applications from ABMO into creative industries at Bradford College – that will be the pipeline to our higher education curriculum	
Total Investment over the lifetime of the plan	£170,000			
Evaluation	Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
	Culturally Relevant Outreach Initiatives Highlighting Successful ABMO Professionals	<p>Increase awareness and interest among ABMO (African, Black, Minority, and Other) students in creative industries.</p> <p>Inspire ABMO students by showcasing successful role models.</p> <p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):</p> <p>Number of ABMO students attending outreach events.</p> <p>Increase in inquiries/applications from ABMO students to creative programs.</p> <p>Social media engagement (likes, shares, comments) on content featuring ABMO professionals.</p> <p>Feedback from students regarding the impact of these initiatives.</p>	<p>Surveys/ Questionnaires: Distributed to participants to measure interest, awareness, and impact (type 1)</p> <p>Enrolment Data Analysis: Track the number of inquiries and applications from ABMO students before and after the initiatives (type 2)</p> <p>Social Media Analytics: Measure engagement metrics on posts featuring ABMO professionals (type 2)</p> <p>Focus Groups: Conduct focus groups with ABMO students to gain qualitative insights into the effectiveness of the outreach (type 1)</p>	<p>Initial Outreach: Evaluate after the first series of events (3-6 months).</p> <p>Long-term Impact: Assess application and enrolment data annually.</p>

	Collaboration with Local Cultural Organizations to Host Events and Workshops	<p>Increase ABMO student participation in creative industries by leveraging local cultural organizations. Build stronger community ties that encourage ABMO students to consider creative fields.</p> <p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Number of events hosted in collaboration with cultural organizations. Attendance rates of ABMO students at these events. Number of partnerships formed with local cultural organizations. Participant satisfaction and perceived relevance of the events/workshops.</p>	<p>Event Attendance Tracking: Monitor the number of ABMO students attending each event (Type 2)</p> <p>Partnership Analysis: Track the number and quality of partnerships with cultural organisations (type 1)</p> <p>Post-Event Surveys: Collect feedback from attendees on the usefulness and impact of the events (type 1)</p> <p>Longitudinal Studies: Follow up with participants to see if they pursue creative programmes at Bradford College (type 2)</p>	<p>Event-based Evaluation: After each event or workshop.</p> <p>Partnership Review: Annually, to assess the strength and effectiveness of collaborations.</p>
	Scholarships and Financial Support Packages Tailored to ABMO Students	<p>Increase the enrolment of ABMO students in creative programs by reducing financial barriers. Support ABMO students in their pursuit of creative careers.</p> <p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Number of Scholarships Awarded: Track the number of scholarships specifically given to ABMO students interested in creative industries. Increase in Enrolment: Measure the change in the number of ABMO students enrolling in creative programs as a result of the financial support. Retention and Completion Rates: Assess whether students who receive scholarships stay in the</p>	<p>Scholarship Application Tracking: Keep detailed records of the number of ABMO students applying for and receiving scholarships. This includes tracking demographic data to ensure the scholarships are reaching the intended students. (type 2)</p> <p>Enrolment Data Analysis: Analyse enrolment trends before and after the introduction of scholarships to identify any significant increases in the number of ABMO students in creative programs. (type 2)</p> <p>Retention and Completion Tracking: Monitor the academic progress of scholarship recipients over time to see if financial support contributes to higher retention and graduation rates among ABMO students. (type 2)</p>	<p>Initial Launch: Begin evaluating after the first academic year in which scholarships are awarded.</p> <p>Annual Review: Conduct an in-depth review at the end of each academic year to assess the ongoing impact of the scholarship program on ABMO student enrolment, retention, and completion.</p> <p>Long-Term Impact: Assess the long-term outcomes for scholarship recipients, such as career placement or further education, to understand the broader impact of financial support and adjust based on findings where necessary.</p>

		<p>program and successfully complete their studies.</p> <p>Student Satisfaction: Evaluate the satisfaction levels of ABMO students with the scholarship application process and the impact of financial support on their ability to pursue creative studies.</p>	<p>Feedback Surveys: Distribute surveys to scholarship recipients to gather feedback on the application process, the adequacy of financial support, and how the scholarship has impacted their ability to focus on their studies. (type 1)</p>	

Title	Improving Access to STEM Study for Female Applicants			
Evidence Base:	<p>This intervention strategy aims to improve the percentage of females studying for awards in STEM subjects. In designing this intervention, the college draws on the following evidence and existing impactful strategies:</p> <p>Mind the gap There is a noticeable gap between girls and boys that study STEM subjects beyond GCSE (35% of girls and 80% of boys¹³). A fear of being stereotyped, in classes full of boys is often cited as the main reason for this.¹⁴ Our campaigns need to normalise not highlight the gaps in order to be effective.</p> <p>Circles of influence In the UK only 15.5% of STEM jobs (exc. Medical) are filled by women, and lower still only 8% when you look at engineering jobs. The bias around gender does not just sit with the individual, but also their parent as well.¹⁵</p> <p>The third hurdle As well as a lack of role models, sexism experienced by women studying STEM is more prevalent than for those studying non-STEM¹⁶. So not only are there not enough role models, even when you do study there continue to be barriers to success. Our strategies need to go beyond student recruitment and work across the student life cycle too ensure impactful change.</p>			
Related Objectives	Objective 1b: Bradford College will increase the percentage of females studying STEM to 30% by 2029, from a starting point of 10% in 2024.			
Risks to Equality of Opportunity	4) Knowledge & Skills 5) IAG 6) Perception of HE 10) Cost pressures			
	Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross Intervention
	Host "Women in STEM" workshops and events in partnership with local schools and community groups.	Schools & Community engagement plan to include halo annual event as well as regional activity around specific curriculum areas, Engineering, Digital, Applied Sciences	Increase in applications of females into STEM HE at Bradford College	

¹³ [Women in Technology | Why is There a Small Amount of Women in STEM? - Women in Technology](#)

¹⁴ [Women in Technology | Why is There a Small Amount of Women in STEM? - Women in Technology](#)

¹⁵ [Opinion: Why don't more girls choose to study STEM? | BCS](#)

¹⁶ [Women STEM students up to twice as likely as non-STEM students to have experienced sexism - HEPI.](#)

	Develop female-focused STEM taster days, showcasing role models and career opportunities.	Schools' liaison plan to diary female only taster days as part of their annual plan for outreach and engagement activity	Increase in applications and conversion to enrolments of females into STEM HE.	
	Create mentoring programs pairing Bradford College FE female STEM students with industry professionals to raise aspirations of STEM higher technical careers.	Year one build a bank of professional mentors, and host 2 group coaching sessions. Year 2-4 roll out of 1-2-1 mentors where we have been able to build a volunteer pool of support. HE Access and Conversion Officers – element of their work towards this plan 0.2 FTE	Increase in internal progression rates from Bradford College FE into STEM HE for female students.	
	Create a stand-alone marketing campaign to promote female careers in STEM to raise aspirations to higher technical qualifications for females in STEM subjects.	Using case studies, blogs and positive representation in mainstream advertising campaigns, promote females in STEM subjects.	Increase in enquiries and applications of females for HE STEM subjects at Bradford College.	
	Develop scholarships tailored to support female students interested in studying STEM subjects.	Introduce 10 x £500 scholarships for Female STEM students.	Increase in conversion from application to enrolment data for female learners into STEM subjects	
Total Investment over the lifetime of the plan		£120,000		
Evaluation	Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
	Host “Women in STEM” workshops and events in partnership with local schools, colleges and community groups.	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Engagement in early outreach activity that has never been delivered before will form the base line KPIs for this plan. We will then look to iteratively increase engagement year on year.	Data analysis: Record the number of participants in outreach programs, workshops, and events. (type 2) Surveys: Collect qualitative feedback from participants through post-event questionnaires or focus groups. Monitor repeat participation and progression of participants into related courses or events. (type 1)	Annual review: Track and compare enrolment data for before and after the strategies have been undertaken to evaluate distance travelled.
	Develop female-focused STEM taster days, showcasing role models and career opportunities.	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Event and programme participation tracking will monitor levels of engagement and progress throughout this plan.		

	Create mentoring programs pairing Bradford College FE female STEM students with industry professionals to raise aspirations of STEM higher technical careers.	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): 20 students paired up in year one with incremental growth planned for the rest of the plan.	Data analysis: Tracking of progress of all those who engaged with the programme to determine positive destinations into STEM Higher Education (type 2)	
	Create a stand-alone marketing campaign to promote female careers in STEM to raise aspirations to higher technical qualifications for females in STEM subjects	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): GOALS set up and analysed to assess effectiveness of campaign, will include engagements, applications and enrolment data	Data analysis: will demonstrate good value for campaign spend (ROI) (type 2)	

Title	Addressing the Gender Disparity in Arts and Education
Evidence Base:	<p>This intervention strategy aims to improve the percentage of males studying arts programmes and males studying education and health care. In designing this intervention, the college draws on the following evidence and existing impactful strategies:</p> <p>Gender stereotyping in arts We are battling a long trend of arts disengagement from GCSEs and beyond since 2014, entries to arts subjects have fallen by more than 150,000, a decrease of 28%.¹⁷</p> <p>Understanding the intersections between gender roles, cultures and societal expectations for males and females and how they impact student choice of higher education in a specific Bradford context is key for this plan to succeed.¹⁸</p> <p>Bad education There is a long history of the gendered profession of teaching over the last century, with the majority of teachers being female (72% in UK and +90% in primary phase¹⁹) creates a cycle that perpetuates this norm, without male role models in schools, how can boys aspire to grow up to teach?²⁰ We will explore role modelling and gender stereotyping norms and debunk them as a key factor in our strategy to drive more males into teacher training.</p>

¹⁷ ONS national student database

¹⁸ *Why Are There Fewer Boys than Girls In Art Class?* (Gehl, [2020](#)).

¹⁹ [Why don't men want to teach? – newteachersblog \(wordpress.com\)](#)

²⁰ [Why don't more boys want to become teachers? The effect of a gendered profession on students' career expectations - ScienceDirect](#)

Related Objectives	Objective 1c: Bradford College will increase the percentage of males studying arts programmes to 40% by 2029, from a starting point of 27% in 2024. Objective 1d: Bradford College will increase the percentage of males studying education and health care to 40% by 2029, from a starting point of 20% in 2024.			
Risks to Equality of Opportunity	7) Knowledge & Skills 8) IAG 9) Perception of HE 10) Cost pressures			
	Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross Intervention
	Organise outreach events in local schools and community centres aimed at breaking stereotypes and encouraging male students to consider careers in the arts, education, and care.	Build an annual calendar of events into the existing outreach and schools liaison plan – linking into BD25 legacy and Get into Teaching national campaigns. HE Access and Conversion Officers – element of their work towards this plan 0.4 FTE	Uplift in enquiries and applications or male students into arts, education and health HE curriculum	1A
	Create marketing campaigns that showcase successful male students and professionals in the arts, education, and care sectors.	Ring fence dedicated marketing budget of £10,000 per year to creating and promoting this content.	Increased traffic to website, logged enquiries in the CRM and eventual applications	
	Offer financial incentives, such as scholarships, specifically for male students enrolling in these underrepresented areas.	Launch 10 x £500 scholarships per year for Males into Arts, Health and Education	Scholarships will convert enquire to enrolment statistic for these specific demographics	
Total Investment over the lifetime of the plan	£160,000			
Evaluation	Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
	Organise outreach events in local schools and community centres to encourage male students to consider careers in the arts, education, and care.	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Increased awareness and interest among male students in pursuing careers in underrepresented fields like the arts, education, and care.	Data analysis: Attendance numbers at events. (type 2) Surveys measuring change in perceptions and interest pre- and post-event (type 1)	Report on outreach event outcomes and impact on perceptions, shared with stakeholders, local schools, and community partners. Case study in institutional publications.

	Create marketing campaigns showcasing successful male students and professionals in the arts, education, and care sectors.	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Increased visibility of male role models in these fields, leading to improved enrolment of male students in relevant programmes.	Data analysis: Engagement metrics (e.g., social media likes, shares, reach). Tracking application/enrolment numbers of male students (type 2)	Publish marketing case studies in communications reports. Article or blog post series featuring male role models in these sectors.
	Offer financial incentives, such as scholarships and bursaries, specifically for male students enrolling in underrepresented areas.	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Financial barriers reduced, leading to increased enrolment of male students in arts, education, and care-related programmes.	Data analysis: Number of applications for scholarships/bursaries. - Tracking retention and success rates of scholarship/bursary recipients (type 2)	Financial aid impact report highlighting the success of targeted scholarships. Share success stories in internal and external publications to inspire further participation.

Title	Addressing Continuation Gaps for Male IMD1 Students
Evidence Base:	<p>This intervention strategy aims to improve continuation gaps for male students and students from IMD1 in comparison to their female and IMD 2-5 peers. In designing this intervention, the college draws on the following evidence and existing impactful strategies:</p> <p>Ambition Hub: The college recognise that it is in a strong position to influence the preparedness for HE study through its own FE, community and school-partnership provision. Taking feedback from employers that graduates are lacking the skills they'd prioritise²¹ (CBI, 2019), it identifies the need to improve non-perishable skills to support students from diverse backgrounds into higher education and employment. As a result, in 22/23 the college launches an Ambition Hub for L3 learners – utilising employer masterclasses, work-based projects and an enhanced enrichment offer. The work-skills and non-perishable elements of this offer will be extended into community settings from 25/26 to help drive access to higher education.</p> <p>Academic skills development package: We recognise that some of our cohort do not have the necessary academic skills that students coming to us more traditional routes into Higher Education possess; as a result, a trend of disengagement and withdrawal at Level 4 study precipitated a review of supportive processes. Utilising our student circle approach to individualised support, subject librarians, academic study skills tutors, learning support staff and academic tutors work together to improve self-directed academic skills. These include support in accessing learning resources, understanding good academic practice and building academic confidence. A range of approaches are utilised including 1:1 support, tutorials, on-line academic skills packages and self-diagnostic tools. In addition, discrete study skill modules were embedded at L4 in all programmes from 2020. Students will evaluate the effectiveness of these module through the module review process. We will continue to adapt the content of these modules in response to student and staff feedback and attainment data analysis.</p>

²¹ [Education and Learning for the Modern World: CBI/Pearson 2019 Education and Skills Survey report | CBI](#)

	<p>Bespoke Tutorial and Progression Support: From 2019, the college has operated a student circle approach to supporting each individual student. Academic colleagues are supported by a range of pastoral staff who utilise their expertise to support and guide students through their study. The core members of the student circle include academic writing support staff, intervention and attendance officers, progression coaches, mental health and wellbeing advisers and dedicated HE financial support staff. Evaluation of data has demonstrated that by intervening quickly, barriers to learning can be managed before they become overwhelmingly disabling²².</p> <p>All students participate in half-termly pastoral tutorials (detailed in the college's Enhanced Personal Tutor Policy) recorded through our Individual Learning Plan system. This provides each student with a view of individual targets and the workflow of any pastoral referrals (their bespoke support package). In addition, it is a critical tool in enabling us to evaluate the impact of our strategic measures. Embedding the principles of Kirkpatrick Model's of evaluation²³, students are asked to evaluate the immediate and longitudinal impact of supportive interventions on their learning, skills-acquisition and confidence. All students will be engaged through the enhanced tutorial policy by 2023.</p> <p>Attendance Policy: introduced in 2017-2018 our attendance policy, has quickly become an invaluable tool for staff to monitor students' engagement in their studies and to identify individual risk around disengagement. Attendance reviews provide evaluative information regarding the challenges that students are facing. By developing our knowledge of these barriers to accessing their education we will be more able to target improvements in our services to our students. Based on our data analysis of risk, all students with attendance below 85% for 3 weeks or more are identified and referred into the attendance process. We monitor attendance rates alongside achievement for all summative assessment and the inter-relationship is clear as illustrated opposite. While it is clear that this correlation is strong, we utilise this data to further understand the causes for disengagement and focus attention on removing barriers for each student.</p>			
Related Objectives	<p>Objective 2a: To close the continuation gap between male students and female students to +/- 2% by 2029, from a starting point of -8.1pp in the last two years.</p> <p>Objective 2b: To close the continuation gap between IMD Q1 students and IMD Q2 to Q5 students to +/-2% by 2029, from a starting point of -8.7pp</p>			
Risks to Equality of Opportunity	<p>10) Knowledge & Skills 11) IAG 12) Perception of HE 10) Cost pressures</p>			
	Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross Intervention
	Roll out Ambition Hub model across all L2 and L3 provision to support the acquisition of non-perishable skills for the 16-18 cohort	0.5 FTE project manager resource in place for 2025/2026 academic year	<p>Ambition Hub roll-out complete by 2027.</p> <p>Skills scan at L4 for internally progressing students show no gaps in performance in non-perishable skills for male students or students from IMD Q1 students (to be measured from 2027 onwards).</p>	

²² Robins. S.(2012) PASS Intervention: mentoring poorly performing first-year students and turning their academic performance around from failure to success. Oxford Brookes University.

²³ <https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/the-kirkpatrick-model/>

	Introduction of inter-level mentorship programme for male students and students from 1 st generation HE study	<p>Personal tutor time of 20 hours per annum to arrange and introduce mentors to mentees.</p> <p>Student Engagement Officer time of 10 hours per term to arrange and convene enrichment events for HE mentors and mentees.</p>	<p>Male continuation to improve to <2% of female continuation; overall continuation to improve to above threshold for all</p> <p>IMD1 student continuation to improve to <2% of IMD2-5 student continuation, overall continuation to improve to above threshold for all</p>	
	Introduction of a Skills Hub for HE students to ensure gaps in non-perishable skills are supported	0.5FTE resource of a HE skills hub coordinator	Full programme of activity designed to support the development of non-perishable skills across HE community and support the removal of perceived and actual barriers to learning	
	Deliver a revised bespoke tutorial programme which supports students to identify their barriers to learning and supports referral into central support services	HE pastoral lead 0.5FTE	<p>100% compliance with student tutorial programme; with all students have SMART actions to address individual barriers to learning recorded in EBS system</p> <p>95% of HE students agree that the college has supported them to address their barriers to learning</p>	
	Launch new financial support programme that responds to individual barriers to learning	Financial support recorded in section 8.2, HE student Hardship Fund circa. £50,000 per year.	Informed decisions on supporting students financially to address barriers to accessing learning	
	Continue to deliver attendance policy and procedures to identify and resolve disengagement in L4 and L5 study	1 x FTE quality analyst role within quality department	92% attendance target reached – with no statistically significant demographic gaps in attendance (<2%).	
Total Investment over the lifetime of the plan	£500,000			
Evaluation	Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
	Objective 1: Roll out the Ambition Hub model across all L2 and L3 provision to support non-perishable skills for the 16-18 cohort	Students aged 16-18 acquire essential non-perishable skills (e.g., communication, collaboration, critical thinking) through the Ambition Hub model.	- Student skills audit pre- and post-participation (type 2) - Feedback from students and teachers on skill development (type 1)	Publish case studies in internal newsletters highlighting key student outcomes, and external blog posts on the impact of non-perishable skills acquisition.
	Objective 2: Introduce inter-level mentorship programme for male students and 1st-generation HE students	Male students and 1st-generation HE students experience enhanced peer support through mentorship,	- Monitoring participation rates and feedback from mentors/mentees. - Tracking mentee progression,	White paper on mentorship's impact on male and 1st-generation students, featuring qualitative and quantitative

		improving retention, engagement, and success.	continuation, and success rates (type 1)	data. Publish in student development journals.
	Objective 3: Introduce a Skills Hub for HE students to address gaps in non-perishable skills	HE students can identify and address gaps in non-perishable skills via the Skills Hub, improving employability and academic success.	- Skills diagnostics pre- and post-engagement with the Hub (type 2). - Student feedback on Skills Hub services (type 1)	Research brief on closing skills gaps in HE, shared internally and externally via education forums. Blog posts featuring student and employer testimonials.
	Objective 4: Deliver a revised bespoke tutorial programme to identify learning barriers and support referral to central services	Students identify personal barriers to learning and are connected to appropriate central support services, improving retention and success.	- Student satisfaction surveys on tutorial support (type 1). - Monitoring the number and type of referrals to central support services (type 2).	Report summarising the impact of the tutorial programme, shared with academic teams. Presentation on effective referral systems in HE at relevant conferences.
	Objective 5: Launch a new financial support programme that responds to individual barriers to learning	Students receive financial support tailored to their individual barriers, improving access, retention, and achievement.	- Monitoring financial support uptake and its correlation with improved attendance and continuation (type 2)	Annual report on the financial support programme, with data on its impact on student outcomes. Feature in a case study for external funding bodies or institutional reports.
	Objective 6: Continue to deliver attendance policy and procedures to identify and resolve disengagement in L4 and L5 study	Early identification of disengagement among L4 and L5 students, leading to timely interventions and improved attendance and retention.	- Attendance tracking data. - Success rates of intervention strategies in re-engaging students (type 2)	Policy brief on the effectiveness of attendance policies, shared internally with leadership. Academic paper exploring intervention strategies in HE.

Title	Eliminating the Gap between Young and Mature IMD1 Student Attainment
Evidence Base:	<p>This intervention strategy aims to improve attainment gaps between young and mature students and those categorised as IMD1 (versus their IMD 2-5 peers). In designing this intervention, the college draws on the following evidence and existing impactful strategies:</p> <p>Universal Design for Learning²⁴ (UDL) is a set of principles for curriculum development and delivery that provides all students with equitable access to learning. UDL provides a scheme for producing learning approaches, methods, resources, and assessments that are inclusive and moves learning and teaching away from the traditional 'one-size-fits-all' approach. The college adopted the principles of UDL in 2019. They help us address our objectives relating to gender and Low Participation student groups who are more likely to have experienced disadvantage and poor educational confidence from a young age²⁵. UDL principles will be rolled-out to all curriculum areas by 2022.</p>

²⁴ Burgstahler.S.E.(2015) Universal Design from Principles to Practice. Harvard Press

²⁵ National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2010). *Persistent Fear and Anxiety Can Affect Young Children's Learning and Development: Working Paper No. 9.*

	<p>A project-based learning pedagogy has been trialled across the Bradford School of Art and Construction and Engineering provision through 2019-2021. This trial was informed by the significant body of research emerging that indicates this pedagogy is key to engaging students from disadvantaged backgrounds²⁶. As a result of the impact of this pilot, we are extending this pedagogy across all provision from 2022/23. As this model extends and further matures, the college is committed to introducing employer/academic team-teaching from 2023/24 so that the curriculum is constantly applied to live industry scenarios. The college is also aware of the emerging positive impact of project-based learning pedagogies in schools²⁷ and as a result are working through the MacMillan School of Education to teach our trainees these methodologies to utilise in their placement activities from 2022/3.</p> <p>Development of a culturally responsive curriculum²⁸ has been identified as a strategic priority to deliver a truly inclusive student experience²⁹. Completion of this work at L3 programmes in the college have clearly shown the impact on students' sense of belonging and engagement within their studies. As a result, the college is confident that a full roll-out of this activity across all levels of HE study will positively impact the attainment of students from diverse backgrounds, including 1st generation young people from Bradford's IMD Q1.</p>			
Related Objectives	<p>Objective 2c: To close the attainment gap between young and mature students to +/- 2% by 2029, from a starting point of -13.77pp.</p> <p>Objective 2d: To close the attainment gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q2 to Q5 to <5% by 2029, from a starting point of 18pp.</p>			
Risks to Equality of Opportunity	<p>13) Knowledge & Skills 14) IAG 15) Perception of HE 10) Cost pressures</p>			
	Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross Intervention
	Embed UDL principles across all L4-6 programmes to ensure inclusive learning strategies are in place for all	Toolkit development – 0.2FTE for 25/25 by Head of Disability Services 1 FTE Quality Analyst support for programme modifications	All L4-L6 programmes to embed UDL principles – diversifying LTA strategies and enabling students to access learning in a way that acknowledges their prior attainment and engagement in learning	
	Roll-out project-based learning pedagogies across all L4-L5 provision	VP Quality, Learning & Teaching's strategy 'to deliver an outstanding student experience' contains this activity. As a result, the college has endorsed and supported this through existing staffing structures.	New approaches to LTA will support students to gain confidence and access higher level study. Collaboration across projects will support sense of belonging – with 97% of HE students feeling part of a cohesive and inclusive community of learning.	

²⁶ A review of project-based learning in higher education: Student outcomes and measures <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101586>

²⁷ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/44839799_Inequality_in_Education_Comparative_and_International_Perspectives

²⁸ <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/culturally-responsive-teaching-culturally-responsive-pedagogy/2022/04>

²⁹ <https://theeducationhub.org.nz/what-is-culturally-responsive-teaching/>

	Development of a culturally responsive curriculum	VP EDI's strategy 'To be a Truly Inclusive College' contains this activity. As a result, the college has endorsed and supported this through existing staffing structures.	All learning materials contain diverse culturally-responsive references. Learners from all backgrounds will feel a sense of belonging and increased engagement in their studies.	
Total Investment over the lifetime of the plan	£80,000			
Evaluation	Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
	Objective 1: Embed UDL (Universal Design for Learning) principles across all L4-6 programmes	All L4-6 programmes incorporate UDL principles, ensuring inclusive learning environments that support diverse learners.	- Review of curriculum design for UDL adherence (type 1). - Student feedback on inclusivity and accessibility of learning experiences (type 1)	Publish a best-practice guide on embedding UDL principles in HE, with case studies from faculty and student testimonials on impact.
	Objective 2: Roll-out project-based learning pedagogies across all L4-L5 provision	L4-L5 students engage in project-based learning (PBL), leading to enhanced problem-solving, collaboration, and real-world application of knowledge.	- Analysis of student project outcomes and satisfaction surveys (type 1 and 2). - Faculty feedback on PBL implementation (type 2)	Academic journal article on the benefits of project-based learning in HE, with comparative data on student engagement and learning outcomes.
	Objective 3: Develop a culturally responsive curriculum	Curriculum integrates diverse perspectives, culturally relevant content, and addresses the needs of underrepresented student groups.	- Curriculum audit for cultural relevance and inclusivity (type 2). - Student feedback on cultural representation in learning materials (type 2).	Publication on HE culturally responsive teaching practices. Internal report highlighting curriculum changes and their impact on student engagement.

Title	Improving Progression Rates for Young Students			
Related Objectives	Objective 2e: To close the progression gap between young and mature student to +/-2% by 2029, from a starting point of -7.00pp in the last two years.			
Risks to Equality of Opportunity	16) Knowledge & Skills 17) IAG 18) Perception of HE 10) Cost pressures			
	Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross Intervention
	All HE programmes to be employer-endorsed by 2027	VP Curriculum's strategy 'To deliver a curriculum that meets the needs of students, employers and the community' contains this activity. As a result, the college	Objective achieved Student experience enhanced by employer-engagement in curriculum delivery	

		has endorsed and supported this through existing staffing structures.	Increase in progression rates across all cohorts and reduction in progression gaps between demographic gaps to <2%	
	HE programmes to attract additional professional accreditation by 2028	1 x FTE Higher Education Quality Manager role to support curriculum in achieving this activity.	All students to graduate with target award and additional professional accreditation Increase in progression rates across all cohorts and reduction in progression gaps between demographic gaps to <2%	
	College Careers planning service to work with each HE student from L5 onwards to support progression into highly skilled employment	1 x FTE qualified to Level 6 Careers Advisor	Students report positive impact of careers service on preparing them for the world of work (>90% satisfaction) Increase in progression rates across all cohorts and reduction in progression gaps between demographic gaps to <2%	
	Curriculum planning activities to consider progression rates across all HE programmes and to inform the character and shape of the curriculum moving forward	VP Curriculum's strategy 'To deliver a curriculum that meets the needs of students, employers and the community' contains this activity. As a result, the college has endorsed and supported this through existing staffing structures.	Programmes that are failing to produce high levels of progression are given notice to improve or are discontinued Quarterly review activities support progress towards outcome	
	All HE programmes to have formal work placement opportunities	Lead of VP Curriculum to establish work placement modules across all provision: to support the acquisition of graduate attributes and employment-readiness	Objective achieved Quarterly review activities support progress towards outcome	
Total Investment over the lifetime of the plan	£400,000			
Evaluation	Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
	Objective 1: Ensure all HE programmes are employer-endorsed by 2027	All HE programmes have formal endorsements from relevant industry employers by 2027.	Surveys/interviews with employers on their engagement and endorsement (type 1)	Publish an annual review showcasing employer endorsements and their contributions to programme design and curriculum development.
	Objective 2: Secure additional professional accreditation for HE programmes by 2029	Increase in HE programmes with professional accreditation from relevant bodies, enhancing programme credibility and employability.	Review of accreditation status for all programmes. Surveys	Report highlighting the value of additional professional accreditation, featuring student and employer testimonials shared to college's website and partners.

			with professional bodies (type 1)	
	Objective 3: College Careers planning service to work with each HE student from L5 onwards	Personalised careers guidance for all L5 and L6 students. Higher proportion of students progressing into highly skilled employment.	Student feedback on career services provided. - Tracking student employment outcomes through Alumni service and 6-month graduate outcome survey (internal) – (type 1)	Case studies on successful career transitions, including testimonials from students and employers shared to college website.
	Objective 5: Use progression rates to inform curriculum planning	Curriculum planning incorporates progression rates to ensure the design supports student success and employability outcomes.	Analysis of student progression data across all HE programmes (type 2). Feedback from academic staff on curriculum changes (type 1).	Internal curriculum development report shared with academic teams. Potential conference presentation on linking progression data to curriculum design.
	Objective 6: All HE programmes to have formal work placement opportunities	Through work with validating bodies, work placement opportunities are incorporated across all programmes.	Programme Specifications updated (Type 1)	Graduate attributes relating to work-readiness achieved, positive feedback from employers and graduates gathered.

5.0 Whole provider strategic approach

Bradford College sits at the heart of the city's community – a significant regional provider of post 16 education, it attracts c. 9000 Adult and Community learners per annum, 1400 Apprentices, 4300 16-18 students and has an outstanding 14-16 provision. It is a vibrant, diverse and inclusive community for staff and students. We witness the inter-related nature of inequality; we support our staff to understand the individual, organisational and structural impacts that inequality has on our students and wider community.

A cross-college and inclusive approach to the design, delivery and evaluation of access and participation activity is essential to be able to achieve our aims and objectives: our students, governors, academic community and stakeholders all participate in the drafting and monitoring of our access and participation work. Our APP objectives and strategic measures sit within our core college strategy.

The college's strategic objectives are:

1. To be a truly inclusive College
2. To deliver a curriculum that meets the needs of learners, employers and the community
3. To deliver an outstanding student experience
4. To be an employer of choice
5. To be financially sustainable
6. To grow the college's income through student recruitment
7. To Empower education through digital transformation

The strategic plans which accompany these objectives are active documents which are revised annually to ensure that we intensify or adapt our work towards achieving our goals. These targets are then disseminated to academic departments, enabling us to take a granular approach to assessing achievement based on departmental areas for improvement or strength.

5.1 Alignment with other strategies

In 2021, we collapsed all thematic strategies into our core strategic plans – to seek alignment against our core mission and to enable more consistent monitoring and evaluation processes.

In addition, the college has embedded equality impact assessments across our regulatory and procedural framework. Equality impact assessment is carried out for any new activity delivered as part of the implementation of this plan and where proportionate, positive action is used to address disparities.

The college's appointment of a Vice Principal for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in 2022 has provided further strategic focus on access and participation.

All decisions taken at the college are informed by the college's commitment to ED&I. All policies and procedures are accompanied by equality impact assessment and the college's academic board make an equality statement at the start of every meeting to ensure that this remains the driving principle by which decisions are made.

The college's EDI Committee (chaired by the VP EDI) review gaps in student attainment, continuation and progression to inform annual planning of work and investment. This is further

supported by the college's 1st strategic objective: To be a Truly Inclusive College. The strategic plan that accompanies this is approved by the college's governing body and monitored through the college's search and governance committee.

Support service investment is made as a result of this commitment: Disability services have dedicated HE advisors, expertise in accessible learning technologies and inclusive learning advisors; All HE-offering department have dedicated resource to support students in their academic skills; the Learning resource centres offer individual support in academic referencing and library utilisation. Within Annex B, the college gives further details of the evidence-based approach it has taken to date in providing appropriate support for student's pastoral and academic needs development.

6.0 Student consultation

Students are key partners in the development, monitoring and evaluation of the APP. Our Student Council, comprising students from all HE programmes at the college were consulted on access and participation themes, the content of the draft plan and asked for their views on how we can further improve the HE student experience. Student representatives are supported to use their voice in college by the student voice coordinator (who also supports students to navigate college procedures) and the HE Student Union Officer (elected by HE students annually). Students offered the following feedback which has informed the development of this plan: -

1. Clear information on financial support prior to application the college is required
2. Raise the profile of HE study at Bradford College across the community
3. Flexible and inclusive learning strategies are required to recognise the requirements of students to work and/or support their families
4. Increase the focus on the development of non-perishable and employability skills to support positive continuation and progression
5. Ongoing financial support for students while on programme ('a safety net') in the event that individual circumstances change

This feedback will continue to influence marketing, curriculum and organisational design.

Student consultation will continue throughout the lifetime of this plan to support evaluation activity. We support the roll-out of key strategic measures through focus groups and our quality department conducts 'stop and ask' conversations with students focused on key questions to help us inform our evaluation of impact. In addition, students participate in student surveys twice a year. We align the questions in these surveys to key measures within the APP to help gather student feedback. We analyse results of these surveys (which average an 80% return rate) across all protected characteristics – enabling up to complete equality impact assessments.

Feedback from Higher Education programme representatives will continue to be gathered at Student Councils each semester. These are in-person, discursive events where students and staff work together to analyse performance against key targets and to propose solutions. These solutions are then monitored through performance review activities and reports on progress are returned to the following council meeting.

As we launch this plan to the wider college community, the student ambassador scheme will be relaunched. This scheme positively approaches students from target groups to take up part-time employment. Our ambassadors represent the college at external events – including outreach at schools and in community settings. This targeted approach to the recruitment of student ambassadors allows our outreach to be informed by the experiences of underrepresented students.

7.0 Evaluation of the plan

7.1 Strategic Context

The college utilises a theory of change methodology to complete programme evaluation. We recognise that as a college we have been on a journey to improve the systems, competencies and data-capture necessary to drive an effective evaluation culture. This begins with effective sharing of information related to APP targets across the whole organisation. Staff development days, online training systems and college management awaydays provide whole-college platforms to ensure all

Higher Education staff understand their roles in discharging the strategic measures which are outlined in this plan.

Across the student lifecycle, key roles are explicitly aligned to access and participation: Our Student Outreach team, our progression, attendance and intervention officers, our HE quality analysts and student funding teams all hold key functional responsibilities for the delivery of this plan. Our learning, teaching and assessment team provide critical support for curriculum staff in incorporating the strategic measures within programme design and delivery.

7.2 Programme Design

The college's evaluation design follows A Theory of Change methodology (Harries et al. 2014³⁰). It has worked with the TASO (Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes) evaluation guidance. While we are focused on achieving our aims and objectives articulated in Section 2, our evaluation design also seeks to capture causal relationships between our strategic measures and the achievement of objectives. As a result, our evaluation framework incorporates explicit milestones and review points across each strategic measure. We also seek independent and external review of our key projects and our internal methods of review. We seek to collaborate with partners to support our delivery and evaluation.

7.3 Evaluation Design

We narrate our approach to monitoring progress towards achieving our aims and objectives and exploring the efficacy of our logic chains below:

7.3.1 Monitoring Absolute Progress towards Aims and Objectives

The college has embedded all APP targets within its Strategic Objective Action Plans. Members of the college's senior leadership team are accountable for a strategic objective; they are responsible for the evaluation of achievement against these targets – reporting to the Chief Executive and Governing Body. These targets are then cascaded to all departments through a suite of Master Targets. Participation, through Academic Board, in key activities is expected by all Heads of Curriculum Departments, who are then held to account on impact measures by the college's senior leadership team through Performance Review panels (a quarterly activity where data is presented against each target at department level). The college recognises that several aims and objectives can only be measures in absolute terms annually or post-graduation, so it employs proxy measures to enable in year assessment of progress (for example, in-year withdrawal rates, attendance rates and module pass rates). Any dataset failing to meet target is discussed and the Head of Department is expected to proposed SMART actions to address this. It is appropriate, due to the variation of diversity across our cohorts, that some actions are proposed at department or programme level.

7.3.2 Monitoring Progress towards Strategic Measures

While the role of the college's senior leadership is to monitor the achievement of our aims and objectives, the work of the Academic Board is to implement and evaluate the strategic measures proposed to deliver these. The Board's membership includes all Heads of Department and School together with the student union president and VP Recruitment and Communications. Key support service managers attend; include the Head of Disability Services, Head of Quality, VP Curriculum and the Head of Learning, Development and Inclusion. The Board is chaired by the VP Quality, Learning & Teaching. As a result, it brings together all leaders of the college who deliver higher education and is ideally placed to drive forward strategic work in the areas of access and participation.

³⁰ [Creating your theory of change: NPC's practical guide - NPC \(thinknpc.org\)](https://www.thinknpc.org/)

Through convening task and finish groups to design, implement and review the measures deployed to achieve our aims, the Board follows a theory of change approach to project delivery and review.

The Academic Board reports to the governing body through the Quality & Standards Committee. Quarterly reports on progress towards strategic measures will be presented to this committee for scrutiny.

7.3.3 Evaluation Implementation

All projects will have time-limited milestones which will be tracked through task and finish groups. Project evaluation will happen internally, through remission to staff and externally, through outsourced expertise and/or partnerships with Uni Connect partners and staff. At the end of each cycle of activity (milestones), these evaluators will undertake an independent evaluation of impact to understand the efficacy of strategic measures to achieve our stated aims and objectives.

In conducting their evaluation, the reviewer will:

- Triangulate and scrutinise evidence presented to assess thresholds for causality – highlighting assumptions that have not yet reached this threshold
- Propose key questions for discussion at college School Councils to support initial evaluative findings
- Identify any additional resources required to retest assumptions or (if causality has been established) move forward with the implementation plan
- Propose adjustments to the logic chain KPIs based on emerging evidence
- Propose further research requirements³¹
- Report back to academic board on findings post-evaluation.

7.4 Learning to Shape Improvements

Academic Board will have initial oversight of all evaluation findings and will instruct additional programmes of work as a result of findings. Where evaluation has shown particular strength or areas for improvement within departments these findings will report to the Performance Review panel.

College-level evaluation will be sent to the Senior Leadership Team and Quality & Standards Committee each quarter to monitor overall progress against milestones. In this we will prioritise impact assessments of each activity proposed to achieve our stated objectives.

In addition, we will utilise the Learning, Teaching and Assessment department to share evaluation findings with our academic community – convening communities of practice as appropriate. We will publish a summary statement for our evaluations on to the college website's access and participation page.

7.5 Collaborative and External Evaluation

The college will actively seek to utilise collaborative and external evaluation to assess progress towards the achievement of its aims and objectives:

- As Noted in section 2, the college works in partnership with external organisations to undertake research which contributes to our APP – most notably regarding barriers to participating in Higher Education.

³¹ Our college's research strategy focuses college support on projects which support outstanding learning and teaching or an outstanding student experience. Through research project funding, the college commissions staff to undertake research projects relating to key strategic measures.

- Through GHWY, we are also investigating collaborative ways to ensure that we use existing evidence to underpin our approaches, and to evaluate our own activity.
- We will seek external evaluation from peers in the sector for key projects – commissioning subject experts to review our findings, logic chains and impact assessments.
- Our annual self-assessment processes (which review departmental achievement of SMART targets) includes external experts from Industry and Education.

7.6 Information Systems for Evaluation

In our 2020-2025 Access and Participation Plan, we acknowledge that our utilisation of data and our information systems did not fully support our college community to identify risk and evaluate in-year performance. We began our journey towards improvement in 2019, having designed a new system for performance monitoring. Live data on cohort, target group data and individual achievement and continuation now informs quarterly performance review panels. These dashboards and reports are available to all staff – and training has been given to ensure that all staff are confident users of the resources available.

In addition, the college has invested in a new department focused on the utilisation of information to drive a culture of evidence-based decision making and to support the student experience. Data, evidence and information is now a key enabler for the college – it underpins all of our aims and objectives and enables the quick identification of risk across the student lifecycle.

Our student records system (EBS) has now been developed to ensure that the whole student journey is captured in a single resource – enabling longitudinal quantitative evaluation of access, progress, attainment and progression. The front-face of this system (Ontrack) enables student/staff recording of tutorials, self-assessment and support referrals. Data from this system indicates support packages agreed through tutorial for each student so we can track impact at individual and grouped student level. Crucially, this novel system also collates student self-assessment of their progress in academic and soft-skill development and individualised feedback regarding the impact of positive intervention on their student journey. This provides the college with key qualitative feedback, which we are able to triangulate with demographic, prior attainment and progress data.

7.7 Student Engagement in Evaluation

Students are our key partners in developing, implementing and assessing access and participation activities. We engage with students through mixed-methodologies as dictated by the nature of the question we are seeking answers to. For feedback on specific activities aligned with this plan, we prefer to incorporate key questions into existing surveys and tutorial activity – rather than conducting adjunct exercises. We also seek to conduct more discursive methodologies with our smaller cohorts of students. Finally – for novel projects we will pilot activities with discrete cohorts to assess impact against control groups.

Students are also engaged in the management of the APP through Academic Board, the Governing Body and at departmental level through our Student Councils – which are roundtable events where staff and students come together to unpick, discuss and work collectively on key issues facing the student population.

7.8 Financial Monitoring

This revised plan highlights an individualised approach to providing financial support to each student through bespoke support packages. The impact of financial support, will be tracked at individual student level across absolute and proxy measures for impact. Students benefiting from financial support will complete self-assessment of progress and their perceived impact of financial support within their tutorials. Aware of the potential for this dialogical approach to eschew the validity of the

data, we will also compare this to anonymised data analysis based on key characteristics and indices of disadvantage.

8.2 Financial Support

Bradford College offers a range of financial support to assist students in their access and participation to higher education. Aligned with this access and participation plan the college will award the following student entitlements:

To address objective 1,2 and 3:

- A bursary of £1,000 to each student where their annual household income is below £25,000. Awarded in the 1st year of study (capped at £100,000 per year).
- 10 x £500 scholarships for ABMO students enrolled on to Creative Industry programme (awarded following successful submission of semester 1 work at L4), awarded for academic excellence at the end of L4, semester 1.
- 10 x £500 scholarships for female students entering STEM study (awarded following successful submission of semester 1 work at L4), awarded for academic excellence at the end of L4, semester 1.
- 10 x £500 scholarships for male students entering into Arts, Health or Education study (awarded following successful submission of semester 1 work at L4), awarded for academic excellence at the end of L4, semester 1.
- Care Leaver / Estranged Student Bursary of £1,500 per year for each year of study (un-capped)
- Support of up to £3,000 per year for accommodation for care leavers and estranged students (un-capped)

In addition, to address objective 3-6, the college will maintain an access to learning fund that enables bespoke support to be given to students who are facing unforeseen financial challenge and are at risk of disengaging with their studies. Access to this fund will be through application with advice, guidance and support offered to students by the student funding team. This support fund will deliver approximately £50,000 per year of support but is needs-based and will not be capped.

A range of on-campus support services ensure that students undergoing difficulty relating to the cost of living or a change in circumstances are supported. This includes:

- Advice on student loan and maintenance eligibility
- Access to emergency accommodation
- Access to financial counselling and support

All details of the support offered to our students can be found on the college website.

1.0 Provision of information to students

8.1 The college will ensure that applicants and students have the right information, advice and guidance, at the right time to inform their decision making. We will deliver:

- A comprehensive and targeted marketing campaign to support all APP delivery focussing on information relevant to specific target groups. The campaign will include all online materials such as the website and access to digital resources.
- System upgrades to the admissions data collection and communication processes, to ensure timely and relevant information is disseminated, for example information around financial support for specific target groups or details of targeted applicant visit days.

- Course fees and additional course costs in a clear and accessible form across all marketing materials and applicant communications. This information will be available on our website, UCAS and printed resources such as the prospectus.
- A bespoke Admission Information and Guidance Service for all HE applicants – led by 2 newly appointed HE Access and Conversion Officers.
- Information about any financial support for underrepresented groups on our website and in any pre- and post-application communications.

Tuition Fees are agreed prior to the start of each applicant cycle and published to the college website at: <https://www.bradfordcollege.ac.uk/degrees/>

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

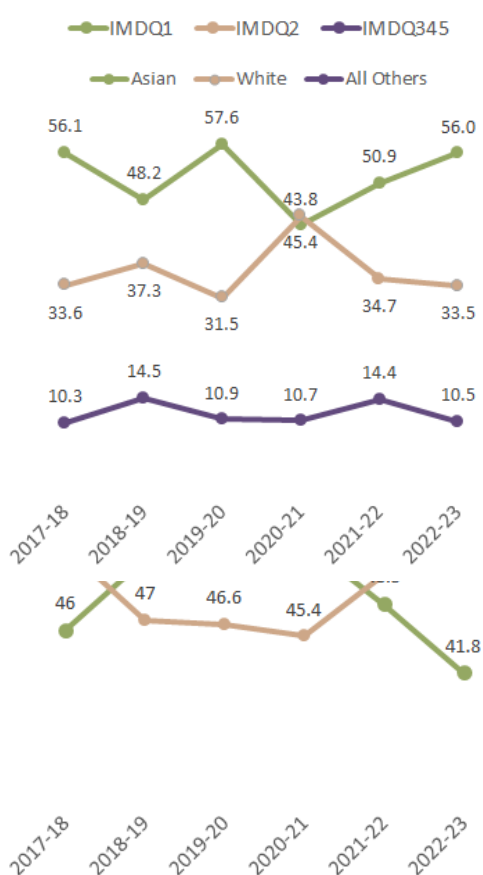
Introduction

Over the last 5 years (19/20 to 23/24), learners at Bradford College have achieved 2,428 level 4, 5 and 6 HE awards. 58% of these were achieved by learners with a home address in the Bradford local authority area.

Overall, 50.5% were awarded to learners living in the most deprived (IMD Q1) neighbourhoods and a further 22.5% awarded to those living in IMD Q2 areas. Of the 1,411 HE awards made to students living at Bradford addresses, 65.6% live in IMD Q1 areas and a further 23.2% in IMD Q2.

Bradford ranks 152nd out of 153 county/unitary local authorities for Asian residents who have a level 4 or above qualification with just 24.7%. Over the last 5 years, 57.3% of the level 4 to 6 HE awards were made to learners with a Bradford address were of Asian ethnicity.

Bradford College undergraduate students are more likely to be local (74.8% over the last four years were local, nearly three times the sector value of 26.2%³²). The majority of Bradford Full-time (FT) undergraduate entrants, 62.4% over the last four years (L4Agg) reside in the most disadvantaged areas (IMD Q1) (Figure 1). This is again nearly three times the sector average of 22.5% for IMD Q1³³. 35.3% of our entrants were eligible for free school meals (FSM), which is nearly twice as high as the sector average of 18.8%.



Analysis of Student Cohort by Age

49.8% (L4Agg) of FT undergraduate entrants are mature (Figure 2). This is high compared to the sector average of 28.5%. Bradford District has one of the youngest populations in the country: it ranks 4th out of 153 county/unitary local authorities with 23.0% of the population aged 15 years and under³⁴, but our institutional age profile is typical of college-based higher education.

Analysis of Student Cohort by Ethnicity

Figure 3 shows that the majority ethnic group of FT undergraduate entrants at Bradford College are British Asians, the majority of whom are British Pakistanis. They make up 52.4% (L4Agg) of the cohort while 36.1% are white, which reflects the local Bradford community. Nationally, the sector is 15.4% Asian and 65.6% white.

³² <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/size-and-shape-of-provision-data-dashboard/data-dashboard/>

³³ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/data-dashboard/>

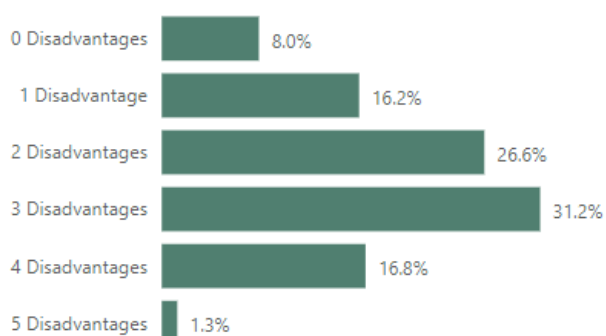
³⁴ Office for National Statistics, Nomis official census and labour market statistics, 2021 census statistics, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

Analysis of Student Cohort by Prior Attainment

FT undergraduates at Bradford College are far less likely to arrive with 3 A Levels at grade CDD or higher, compared with the sector average (4.7% vs 34.1% for the sector, Ref 1.2.3, OfS 2022b) and are more likely to arrive with BTECs lower than DDM (25.9% vs 8.6% for the sector. As Dinlot (Ref 1.2.4, Dinlot, 2022) highlights, students entering HE with just BTEC qualifications are almost twice as likely to drop out as a student entering with an A Level or mixed profile (11.4% versus 6.0%) and 1.7 times as likely to repeat their first year as a student with a similar tariff entry point who has studied just A-Levels.

Analysis of Student Cohort by Disadvantage

Figure 4: % of 21/22 Undergraduate Module Assessments by Disadvantage Count



The college analysis of data raises concerns about the impact of multiple disadvantages on students. This is shown in Figure 4, with a comparison of module assessments undertaken in 21/22 versus a count of disadvantages (where sex is male; learner has a learning difficulty or disability; learner is of not-white ethnicity; IMD Quintile is Q1; and study location is local).

The college recognises the additional support it must provide to support our student cohort to respond to the inherent disadvantages they face

from educational and social background and prior attainment. As a result, the college focuses on inclusive learning and teaching strategies that respond to individual student circumstances. It invests in student support, to address barriers to learning and the potential deficit in academic skills. In section 2 and 3, we outline these strategies.