

Myerscough College & University Centre Myerscough

Access and participation plan 2024-25 to 2027-28

Introduction and strategic aim

University Centre Myerscough (UCM) is specialist College Based Higher Education (CBHE) provider, set on an award winning 900-acre campus in rural Lancashire. UCM is the natural choice for students studying land-based, science, engineering and sport qualifications. We are committed to offering specialised degrees focussed on high academic and student experiences, equipping confident graduates for lifelong achievement in the global industries. We continue to build on our distinguished reputation for inspiring excellence, and our consistently outstanding delivery of an inspirational student experience. Our portfolio encompasses specialist subject disciplines such as: Agriculture and Countryside, Ecology, Agricultural Engineering, Motorsports, Animal Studies, Equine, Farriery, Veterinary Nursing, Sport Health and Performance (Football, Basketball, Golf and Cricket), and Greenspace (Landscape Architecture, Horticulture, Arboriculture, Sportsturf and Floristry). Our full-time, part-time and online degrees attract students, nationally and internationally, for those who relocate, we offer secure on campus residential accommodation, with a 24-7 residential team who offer personalised support. Our students are supported to achieve the highest personal, academic and employment outcomes.

Typical alumni include former degree students who are working in strategic roles. Examples include a former Agriculture and Countryside student is the Regional Director at the National Farmers Union (NFU) and a former Equine Management student who is now a Director of Diversity and Inclusion at Horse Scotland and the Horse Racing Academy. In addition, a former Golf Management student, Rick Shiels, is now a top international social media influencer and heavily sponsored by international brands from the golf industry. A former part-time online graduate of BSc (hons) Sportsturf is head Greenkeeper at Leyland Golf Club and Chairman of The British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA). Our subject disciplines are all aligned with science, technology engineering and maths (STEM), and all degree programmes are aligned to current and anticipated industry workforce requirements offering a multi-disciplinary context to students, UCM successfully secured STEM assured status in November 2021, through the STEM Foundation and the status is supported by their Institute of Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (IKE Institute). A valuable strategic relationship is well established between UCM and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), our partner university who validate all our degrees. UCM has been an Associate School since 2013 and the partnership means both institutions remain wholly independent. UCM is represented at a range of committees at UCLan to enable improved joint planning and the delivery of shared objectives and opportunities. Furthermore, the two institutions build on their existing strengths, common goals and focus on employability to establish an enhanced student experience and world leading education. The curricula across all subject disciplines at UCM have been developed in collaboration with external industry specialists through Technical Advisory Boards (TAB), to guarantee that all undergraduates are exposed to and conduct relevant research and innovation throughout their academic journey. We are unwaveringly committed to the Higher Education sector, with curricula across the entire provision at UCM that undergo a rigorous revalidation every four years with UCLan. This ensures that our provision is responsive to industry demands and remains contemporary. We are one of the UK's most ambitious land based CBHE providers. The curricula at UCM has already

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responded to the government's levelling up agenda and was recognised by panel members as 'world leading' and 'fulfilling key market gaps'. UCM also has successfully secured delivery of the Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQ) in Sports Coaching and Performance.

University Centre Myerscough promotes equality of opportunity. This is a strategically supported monitored and on the weekly agenda, with middle and senior management who monitor every student enrolled at UCM.

As part of our recruitment research, we are well recognised as a 'land based' college. Whilst our curriculum practices such as teaching, learning and assessment practices are highly effective and tailored to supporting students, we recognise that the STEM aspect of our curriculum is the very fabric of our curriculum needs maximising. This is important because we recognise that although our curriculum is tailored, the STEM aspect of curriculum is important and appreciated by students we are reaching to as part of widening participation of our offer. We intend to open the avenues of our curriculum to all students, other than the traditional students who are from an agricultural backgrounds.

We actively reach out to all students from all backgrounds through all our recruitment and marketing activities. Once enrolled at UCM, all facilities, access to the lecturing team, support systems within the UCM are available to all students to stretch students to develop their knowledge, skills, succeed and progress in higher education.

At University Centre Myerscough, our overarching strategic aims with respect of equality of opportunity, with future priorities are:

- Empowering research and academic for lecturers and future graduates
- Using policy development, science and sustainability to underpin degrees, higher technical qualifications, higher and degree level apprenticeships.
- Develop critically minded and authentic graduates that challenge their subject realm
- Dedication genuinely to social mobility and widening participation agenda to provide education that benefits all parts of society.

Risks to equality of opportunity identified:

Risk 1: There are lower proportions of students eligible for free school meals accessing higher education at Myerscough College and University Centre. Evidence suggests this is a function of knowledge and skills, access to information and guidance, perceptions of higher education and the course type and delivery mode available.

Risk 2: There are lower proportions of BAME students accessing higher education at Myerscough College. Evidence suggests this is a function of access to information and guidance, perceptions of higher education and the course type and delivery mode available.

Risk 3: There is a lower percentage of students who were eligible for free school meals at KS4 continuing in their studies than students who were not eligible for free school meals. Evidence suggests this is a function of access to academic and personal support, alongside the cost pressures associated with accessing higher education.

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Risk 4: A lower percentage of students from IMD (2019) Q1 attain a 2:1 or above in comparison to students from IMD (2019) Q5. Evidence suggests this is a function of access to academic and personal support, alongside the cost pressures associated with accessing higher education.

Risk 5: A lower percentage of students with a reported disability attain degree outcome of 2:1 or above than students with no reported disability. Evidence suggests this is a function of access to academic and personal support, alongside the financial pressures associated with accessing higher education.

Objectives

Objective 1: University Centre Myerscough will **increase the proportion of students eligible for free school meals accessing higher education at UCM to 15% by 2028**. Achieved through increased marketing activity, pre-entry aspiration raising and IAG sessions. Study and soft skill support by working with schools, local community groups and the UniConnect partnerships, including widening programme choice and mode of study availability (Linked to PTA_1).

Objective 2: University Centre Myerscough will **increase the proportion of non-white students accessing higher education at UCM to 8% by 2028**. Achieved through increased marketing activity, pre-entry aspiration raising and IAG sessions, and study and soft skill support by working with schools, local community groups and UniConnect partnerships and through widening programme choice and mode of study availability (Linked to PTA_2).

Objective 3: University Centre Myerscough will **increase the continuation rates for students eligible for free school meals to 83% by 2028** through enhanced personal, academic and financial support (Linked to PTS_1).

Objective 4: University Centre Myerscough will **increase the proportion of IMD (2019) Q1 students attaining a 2:1 or above to 70% by 2028** through career aspiration raising activity and enhanced academic and financial support (Linked to PTS_2).

Objective 5: University Centre Myerscough will **increase the proportion of students with a reported disability attaining a 2:1 or above to 75% 2028** through further strengthening the dedicated support team infrastructure and aspiration and attainment raising activity (Linked to PTS_3).

Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Intervention strategy 1: University Centre Myerscough will increase the proportion of students eligible for free school meals accessing higher education at UCM to 15% by 2028 (Objective 1)

This section includes activity related to school and community group interaction. Activities will be aimed at increasing both skills and knowledge and providing information and guidance that will impact on perceptions of higher education. UCM already undertakes general activity in this area through school visits, open events and taster sessions, however this will include impact targeted invitation and content.

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Degree programme development and revalidation activity will directly impact on Objective 2 also, this is not targeted and is not outlined in Intervention Strategy 2 to avoid replication.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Consultation with staff and students and consideration of current practice against the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register identified knowledge and skills (Risk 1), access to information and guidance (Risk 2), perceptions of higher education (Risk 3) and course options and mode of study (Risk 5) as potential risks. Cost pressures (Risk 10) were also considered.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>Marketing activity and IAG tailored to students from low-income families likely to have been eligible for free school meals (FSM). To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of targeted marketing materials and open events • Targeted Open Events – 1 per year • Advertising campaign • Career Advisor Event – twice yearly • 25 free family tickets for annual Country Fair Day <p>EORR Risk 2 and Risk 3.</p>	<p>Marketing Officer hours New HE Marketing Officer in 2025 Proportion of marketing budget Careers Advisor event 25 free family tickets to Open Day and Country Fair</p>	<p>Increased enquiries from potential applicants eligible for FSM. Increased HE applications from applicants eligible for FSM. Attendance at targeted Open Events and Country Fair Day.</p>	
<p>Aspiration raising activity targeted at schools with high proportions of FSM students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 minute bespoke aspiration raising sessions, twice per year, working with up to 8 primary and high schools • Continued activity with UniConnect partners – to include 1 activity per 	<p>Marketing Officer hours HE Teaching Team support</p>	<p>Increased intention to progress to higher education. Longer term impact on applications and enquires to study higher education.</p>	

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>year targeted at aspiration raising for FSM students</p> <p>EORR Risk 2 and 3.</p>			
<p>Bespoke knowledge and skills development activity – targeted towards schools and community groups with high proportions of FSM students and linked to the curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 minute knowledge and skills sessions linked to the curriculum, twice per year, working with up to 8 schools • 60 minute soft skills sessions linked to the curriculum, twice per year, working with up to 8 ranging between primary and secondary schools • Targeted invite for annual event delivered in partnership with Royal Society of Biology which includes sessions linked to the STEM curriculum • Continued activity with UniConnect partners – to include 1 activity per 	<p>Marketing Officer</p> <p>HE academic team</p>	<p>Student and staff event satisfaction rates and feedback either at ‘good’ or ‘excellent’</p> <p>Increased knowledge and skills to support application to higher education and raise aspiration.</p> <p>Longer term impact on applications for higher education.</p>	

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>year targeted at knowledge and skills raising for FSM students</p> <p>EORR Risk 1, 2 and 3</p>			
<p>Financial support for students eligible for FSM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further promote low household income bursary <p>EORR Risk 3, Risk 10</p>	<p>Bursary administration</p> <p>Bursary</p>	<p>Increased enquiries from potential applicants eligible for FSM.</p> <p>Increased application from applicants eligible for FSM.</p>	
<p>Programme development and revalidation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the development and implementation of new HTQ in Horticulture and Arboriculture • New HNC and HND development in Equine Management at the Croxteth Campus • New HNC and HND development in Agriculture at the Preston Campus • Revalidation of all programmes to include FT, PT and hybrid options. <p>EORR Risk 5</p>	<p>HE Staff Team – development</p> <p>Validation and revalidation costs</p>	<p>Increased enquiries from potential applicants eligible for FSM.</p> <p>Increased application from applicants eligible for FSM.</p>	<p>Objective 2</p>

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Evidence based rationale: The TASO Toolkit (TASO, 2023) and research around access to higher education for students eligible for free school meals were explored to assess current practice and identify further or enhanced activity. Ainscow (2016), considers equity to be concerned with inclusion and fairness. According to him, it is a concept that can be used to guide the process of strengthening the capacity of an education system to reach out to all learners in the community. This means that it must be seen as an overall principle that guides all educational policies and practices, starting from the belief that education is a fundamental human right and the foundation for a more just society.

Pre-entry IAG, aspiration raising and study and soft skill support are common activities to increase access, although it is noted that these are more effective when targeted, delivered early and linked to other activity (TASO, 2023). Financial support is also common but can contain stigma when purely means-tested (Baars, Mulcahy & Bernardes, 2016), resulting in enhancing the current progression bursary rather than introducing new bursary options. In addition, changes to the mode of delivery and programme options will increase flexibility and choice, this will include full and part time options available for all programmes and introduce blended learning to increase accessibility further and build on post-Covid good practice as encouraged by Imran et al. (2023). This intervention strategy is based on Type 2 and Type 1 evidence.

For further detail please see **Annex B**.

Evaluation

The intervention strategy will be evaluated as a whole based on monitoring enquiry and application numbers for students eligible for free school meals, attendance at targeted events and stakeholder satisfaction related to events. This is predominantly Type 2 evidence, linking activity with improved outcomes as causal relationships are difficult to evidence in this area, as shown in the TASO Toolkit, and the activity mainly relates to targeting or enhancing current practice. Impact will be reported annually through the Access and Participation Working Group, exploring impact as a whole, and for individual activities and this will be published on the UCM Access and Participation Working Group.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Include type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. Type 2.	Summary of publication plan When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take
Marketing activity and IAG	Increased enquiry and application from applicants eligible for FSM.	Type 2 - Monitoring of enquiry and application rates from those eligible for FSM Type 1 – attendance figures for events	Internal reporting through Access and Participation Working Group Published on Access and Participation webpage
Aspiration raising activity	Increased intention to progress to higher education.	Type 1 – narrative supported by research	
Knowledge and skills development activity	'Good' or 'excellent' student and staff event satisfaction rates. Increased knowledge and skills to support application to higher education and raise aspiration.	Type 2 – staff and student surveys measuring satisfaction and self-reported impact	
Financial support	Increased enquiry and application from applicants eligible for FSM.	Type 2 - Monitoring of enquiry and application rates from those eligible for FSM	
Programme development	Increased enquiry and application from applicants eligible for FSM.	Type 2 - Monitoring of enquiry and application rates from those eligible for FSM	

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Intervention strategy 2: University Centre Myerscough will increase the proportion of non-white students accessing higher education at UCM to 8% by 2028.

Some of the activity below is similar to that outlined in Intervention Strategy 1, however where a targeted approach is taken this is noted as separate activity. The programme development activity outlined in Intervention Strategy 1 is aimed at this objective also, this has not been outlined below to avoid replication, however it is included in the evaluation activity separately.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Consultation with staff and students and consideration of current practice against the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register identified knowledge and skills (Risk 1), access to information and guidance (Risk 2), perceptions of higher education (Risk 3) and course options and mode of study (Risk 5) as potential risks. Cost pressures (Risk 10) were also considered. UCM have been building good links with the BAME community through previous access and participation activity, this will be enhanced further through a close working relationship with a BAME community group as outlined below.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>Marketing activity tailored to BAME students. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of targeted marketing materials • Targeted Open Events – 1 per year • Advertising campaign • Career Advisor Event <p>EORR Risk 2 and Risk 3.</p>	<p>Marketing Officer hours</p> <p>New HE Marketing Officer in 2025</p> <p>Proportion of marketing budget</p> <p>Career Advisor event</p>	<p>Increased enquiries from potential BAME applicants.</p> <p>Increased application from BAME applicants.</p>	
<p>Aspiration raising activity targeted at the BAME community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of STEM sessions for a local BAME community group consisting of children aged 5-16 in the local area • Continued activity with UniConnect partners – to include 1 aspiration raising activity per year <p>EORR Risk 2 and 3.</p>	<p>Marketing Officer hours</p> <p>HE Teaching Team support</p>	<p>Increased intention to progress to higher education.</p> <p>Longer term impact on applications and enquires for higher education.</p>	

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>Knowledge and skills development activity – targeted towards schools and community groups with high proportions of BAME students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted invite for annual event delivered in partnership with Royal Society of Biology which includes sessions linked to the STEM curriculum • Continued activity with UniConnect partners – to include 1 activity per year targeted at knowledge and skills raising for BAME students <p>EORR Risk 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>Marketing Officer hours</p> <p>HE Teaching Team support</p>	<p>Good stakeholder event satisfaction rates.</p> <p>Increased knowledge and skills to support application to higher education and raise aspiration.</p> <p>Longer term impact on applications for higher education.</p>	

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Evidence base and rationale: Pre-entry IAG, aspiration raising and study and soft skill support are common activities to increase access, although it is noted that these are more effective when targeted, delivered early and linked to other activity (TASO, 2023). Much of the rationale for activity related to this objective is outlined in Intervention Strategy 1, with the aim to target this towards the BAME community. The introduction of flexible modes of study is aimed to increase BAME access as research suggests that the BAME community are more likely to want to study close to home (McCabe, Keast and Kaya, 2022) and require choice and flexibility in order to do so. As noted by Arday, Branchu and Boliver (2021) progress towards race equality in access to higher education is hampered by white-centric discourses. The targeted marketing materials are aimed to remove this discourse and provide information relevant to the unique barriers faced by these under-represented students. This intervention strategy is based on predominantly Type 1 evidence.

For further detail please see **Annex B**.

Evaluation

The intervention strategy will be evaluated as a whole based on monitoring enquiry and application numbers for BAME students, attendance at targeted events and stakeholder satisfaction related to events. This is predominantly Type 2 evidence, linking activity with improved outcomes as causal relationships are difficult to evidence in this area, as shown in the TASO Toolkit, and the activity mainly relates to targeting or enhancing current practice. Impact will be reported annually through the Access and Participation Working Group, exploring impact as a whole, and for individual activities and this will be published on the UCM Access and Participation Working Group.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Include type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. Type 2.	Summary of publication plan When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take
Marketing activity and IAG	Increased enquiry and application from BAME applicants.	Type 2 - Monitoring of enquiry and application rates for BAME students Type 1 – attendance figures for events	Internal reporting through Access and Participation Working Group Published on Access and Participation webpage
Aspiration raising activity	Increased intention to progress to higher education.	Type 1 – narrative supported by research	
Knowledge and skills development activity	Good student and staff event satisfaction rates. Increased knowledge and skills to support application to higher education and raise aspiration.	Type 2 – stakeholder surveys measuring satisfaction and self-reported impact	
Financial support	Increased enquiry and application from BAME applicants.	Type 2 - Monitoring of enquiry and application rates from BAME students	
Programme development	Increased enquiry and application from BAME applicants.	Type 2 - Monitoring of enquiry and application rates from BAME students	

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Intervention strategy 3: University Centre Myerscough will increase the continuation rates for students eligible for free school meals to 83% by 2028

The activity in this intervention strategy includes financial, academic and personal support for students that are considered 'at risk', this will include a high proportion of POLAR 4 students, and also IMD Q5 students and will therefore also support Objective 4 related to attainment for deprived students and will potentially aid recruitment for lower income student groups, supporting Objective 1.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Consultation with staff and students and consideration of current practice against the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register identified academic and personal support (Risk 6 and 7) and cost pressures (Risk 10) as potential impacts on continuation for students eligible for free school meals. Whilst mental health (Risk 8) was also considered, it is noted that the high levels of support provided in this area already reduces the potential impact significantly. Capacity issues were also considered in relation to accommodation costs however accommodation remains low as a sector comparison and includes elements not provided elsewhere such as a free gym membership and book vouchers.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>Financial support for low income students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Bursary – low household income bursary • Hardship Fund <p>EORR Risk 7 and Risk 10</p>	<p>HE Bursary</p> <p>Hardship Fund</p> <p>Administration</p>	<p>Reduced non-continuation as a result of financial pressures.</p>	<p>Objective 1</p> <p>Objective 4</p>
<p>Academic Skills development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Study Skills drop-in sessions - 15 per year <p>EORR Risk 6</p>	<p>HE Staff Team</p> <p>Resource Development</p>	<p>Reduced non-continuation as a result of confidence over grades.</p>	
<p>Enhanced personal and pastoral support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional personal tutor sessions for at risk students – half termly • Development of the HE Student Hub <p>EORR Risk 7</p>	<p>HE Staff Team</p> <p>Development of reception area</p> <p>HE Student Hub reception staffing</p> <p>Evaluation research project</p>	<p>Reduced non-continuation as a result of personal issues.</p>	<p>Objective 4</p>

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Evidence base and rationale: Anecdotally student non-continuation is often related to financial pressures, confidence in academic ability and personal circumstances. There is emerging evidence that post-entry financial support have a positive impact on both retention and completion in higher education according to the TASO Toolkit (2023). In addition, whilst there is limited evidence of a causal relationship between packages of personal and academic support and continuation, there is evidence to suggest that a personalised approach helps build feelings of community and belonging which impact positively on retention (O’Keeffe, 2013; Pedler, Willis and Nieuwoudt, 2022), and anecdotally students confirm that sustained and immediate access to both academic and personal support can increase confidence and reduce consideration of non-continuation. This intervention strategy is based on Type 2 and Type 1 evidence.

For further detail please see **Annex B**.

Evaluation

This intervention strategy will be evaluated as a whole through monitoring of non-continuation and the reasons provided for this. Currently information related to continuation is type 1 evaluation however the intention is to move towards type 2 evidence, collecting information in relation to reasons for non-continuation and evaluating these. UCM will support a staff research project exploring the reasons for non-continuation at UCM and the impact of current activity with the intention of external publication with the aim of producing Type 2 evidence.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Include type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. Type 2.	Summary of publication plan When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take
Financial support	Reduced non-continuation as a result of financial pressures.	Type 2 – Monitoring non-continuation rates and reasons for non-continuation.	Internal reporting through Access and Participation Working Group
Enhanced academic skills support	Reduced non-continuation as a result of confidence over grades.	Type 2 – internally supported staff research paper on reasons for non-continuation	Published on Access and Participation webpage
Enhanced personal and pastoral support	Reduced non-continuation as a result of personal issues.		External dissemination through research paper and conference attendance

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Intervention strategy 4: University Centre Myerscough will increase the proportion of IMD (2019) Q1 students attaining a 2:1 or above to 70% by 2028

Deprived students will also benefit from financial support activity and enhanced personal support outlined in Objective 3 so this is not replicated below. Activity within this objective is likely to also contribute to increased continuation for students eligible for free school meals (Objective 3) and attainment for students with a reported disability where characteristics overlap (Objective 5). A potential indication of risk was identified in relation to mature student attainment. It is intended that activity in this intervention strategy will also have a positive impact on mature student attainment, which will be monitored as the underlying risks to equality of opportunity are similar as they relate to academic and personal support and cost pressures.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Similarly to continuation, consultation with staff and students and consideration of current practice against the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register identified academic and personal support (Risk 6 and 7) and cost pressures (Risk 10) as potential impacts on attainment for deprived students. In addition to the personal support outlined in Objective 3 it was felt that students would benefit from aspiration raising as part of the personal support provided to motivate higher attainment and inspire a feeling of capacity to achieve.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>Targeted career aspiration raising activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers drop-in sessions - 15 per year • Targeted Day in the Life activity - 3 per year <p>EORR Risk 7</p>	<p>Careers team</p>	<p>Increased aspiration to attain a 2:1 or above.</p> <p>Increased attainment for targeted students.</p>	<p>Objective 3</p>
<p>Enhanced academic support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attainment sessions - 8 per year • HE Student Hub development • Resource development (to also include resources targeted towards mature students from a deprived background) <p>EORR Risk 6</p>	<p>HE Staff Team</p> <p>Development of reception area</p> <p>HE Student Hub reception staffing</p>	<p>Increased attainment for targeted students.</p>	<p>Objective 3</p> <p>Objective 5</p>

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Evidence base and rationale: Academic self-efficacy plays an important part in learning. Research generally shows a link between self-efficacy, achievement and openness to learning from feedback (Adams et al., 2019). Furthermore, goal setting and motivation play a role in self-efficacy (Schunk, 1995) and therefore targeted career advice is intended to impact on student goals, motivations and ultimate outcomes. This intervention strategy is predominantly based on Type 1 evidence.

For further detail please see **Annex B**.

Evaluation

The intervention strategy will be evaluated as a whole based on monitoring attainment rates for students accessing the additional support provided and consideration of self-report survey data, creating Type 2 evidence that will be published on the UCM Access and Participation webpage.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Include type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. Type 2.	Summary of publication plan When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take
Career aspiration raising activity	Increased aspiration to attain a 2:1 or above. Increased attainment for targeted students.	Type 2 – self-report survey before and after session attendance. Type 2 – Monitoring attainment rates for students accessing sessions.	Internal reporting through Access and Participation Working Group Published on Access and Participation webpage
Enhanced academic support	Increased attainment for targeted students. Increased aspiration to attain a 2:1 or above.	Type 2 – Monitoring attainment rates for students accessing support, split for age. Type 2 – self-report survey before and after session attendance.	

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Intervention strategy 5: University Centre Myerscough will increase the proportion of students with a reported disability attaining a 2:1 or above to 75% 2028

Activity within this objective is likely to also contribute to contribute to increased continuation for students eligible for free school meals and attainment for deprived students where characteristics overlap. The attainment sessions and HE Hub support noted in Objective 4 will also be available to students with a reported disability.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Consultation with staff and students and consideration of current practice against the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register identified academic and personal support (Risk 6 and 7) and cost pressures (Risk 10) as potential impacts on continuation for students with a reported disability. The cost pressures for students with a reported disability are impacted by bursaries available in relation to Objective 3 and through enhanced support for claiming DSA as outlined here.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>Enhanced support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable Adjustment Plans • Pre-DSA support sessions – 6 sessions per student <p>EORR Risk 6 and 7</p>	<p>Professional Support Staff</p> <p>Evaluation research project</p>	<p>Faster access to financial support for students with a reported disability – reduction of cost pressures</p> <p>Increased aspiration to attain a 2:1 or above.</p> <p>Increased attainment for targeted students.</p>	
<p>Attainment, career and employability activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of targeted resources for employability with a reported disability • Targeted career drop-in sessions - 5 per year <p>EORR Risk 6 and 7</p>	<p>Resource development</p> <p>Professional Support Staff</p>	<p>Increased aspiration to attain a 2:1 or above.</p> <p>Increased attainment for targeted students.</p>	

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Evidence base and rationale: UCM already provide a supportive environment for students and identify additional needs swiftly. With a growth in students with reported disabilities it is essential to further strengthen the team, ensuring quick access to DSA support and providing resource to undertake in-depth reasonable adjustment plans for all relevant students. As noted above, self-efficacy plays an important part in shaping student goals and motivations (Schunk, 1995) and research suggests that higher education providers need to do more to support students with a reported disability into employment (Vincent and Ralston, 2023; Kelly et al., 2023). The aim of the career raising aspiration activity is to build self-efficacy and further motivate students to attain a 2:1 or above, whilst supporting through additional academic skill activity. This intervention strategy is based on predominantly Type 1 evidence with the intention of completing a research project to add to Type 2 evidence.

For further detail please see **Annex B**.

Evaluation

The intervention strategy will be evaluated as a whole based on monitoring attainment rates for students accessing the additional support provided and consideration of self-report survey data, creating Type 2 evidence, that will be published on the UCM Access and Participation webpage. UCM will also support a staff research project exploring the impact of enhanced disability related support at UCM with the intention of external publication and production of Type 2 evidence to support future activity.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Include type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. Type 2.	Summary of publication plan When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take
Enhanced support	Increased attainment for targeted students. Increased aspiration to attain a 2:1 or above.	Type 2 – Monitoring attainment rates for students accessing support. Type 2 – internally supported staff research paper on the impact of enhanced support.	Internal reporting through Access and Participation Working Group Published on Access and Participation webpage External dissemination through research paper and conference attendance
Career and employability activity	Increased attainment for targeted students. Increased aspiration to attain a 2:1 or above.	Type 2 – Monitoring attainment rates for students accessing support. Type 2 – self-report survey before and after session attendance.	Internal reporting through Access and Participation Working Group Published on Access and Participation webpage

Whole provider approach

The Access and Participation Plan is supported by the Myerscough College and University Centre Governors.

Myerscough College and University Centre Myerscough is committed to our overarching FREDIE principles and these are advancing Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement in all our actions, decisions, manners and outcomes. These principles are strategically embodied recognised and acted upon as an organisation and strategic FREDIE objectives demonstrate the College commitment to advancing FREDIE by:

- Developing an organisation wide culture which actively promotes equality, diversion and inclusion
- Ensuring a positive inclusive learning and social experience through equality of opportunity and the celebration of diversity
- Ensuring an inclusive approach to the staff experience which promotes equality and diversity and provide a positive working environment

Our practices are streamlined and thorough, the access and participation strategy align directly with the FREDIE strategy. To achieve published equality objectives, we intend to implement the A&PP newly developed targets, directly within the FREDIE strategy group. From a practice perspective, the FREDIE strategic group meets termly. The group is comprised of senior and middle managers and curriculum representatives, crucially, the group has the appropriate representation and influence to collaborate on and influence college practices. The group works proactively to analyse data and identify any gaps, for example, reviewing achievement, retention and achievement gaps and the experience of students in the identified A&PP groups. Reviewing and updating relevant policies and practices to implement best practice to advance FREDIE. The group continues to embed a dynamic approach to the advancement of FREDIE across the organisation. The group has wide and appropriate representation and leadership to influence cross college provision and practices.

The College actively fulfils its legal position in relation to current and future equality legislation, and has successfully secured the Leaders in Diversity recognition, which can be achieved by going beyond compliance. The College FREDIE policy sets out the College's approach to equality and diversity and provides guidance to staff, students and partners on issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. FREDIE is embedded across all college practices, services and behaviours and is interwoven into the College strategic values.

As a College Based Higher Education provider we have a unique position in the sector with reaching into communities and widening our reach at a localised level. As an organisation we are committed to being inclusive, promoting equality and diversity in a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from all backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights into and enhance our Myerscough community.

The College and University Centre FREDIE policy commits to the promotion of equality of opportunity or all and ensure that no members or partners of the College community are subject to victimisation, discrimination, harassment or any forms of unfavourable or detrimental treatment resulting from a protected characteristic. The College does not tolerate any forms of prejudice, discrimination or inequality and will aim to proactively tackle and eliminate discrimination. This Policy applies to all current employees, governors, volunteers, students, partners, suppliers and visitors (including those using College facilities) across all Centres and areas of college activity.

Below we share our College Strategic Goals which are underpinned by our FREDIE principles:

Learning	People	Sustainability
Our delivery will be high quality and innovative with students at the heart of decision making.	We will enable staff and students to fulfil their potential whilst promoting resilience, leadership, accountability and teamwork.	We will provide a happy, healthy, safe, supportive and sustainable environment in which to live, work and study.
We will advance FREDIE : Fairness, respect, equality, diversity, inclusion, engagement in all we do		

The following achievements encapsulate our commitment:

- The College is committed to advancing equality through the FREDIE Principles and being Leaders in Diversity.
- The National Centre for Diversity placed Myerscough College and University Centre in 8th place in the top 100 most inclusive workplaces. This demonstrates the commitment to *‘champion and celebrate individuals and organisations who are going above and beyond in their commitment to FREDIE’*.
- The College has a Health and Wellbeing strategy which has adopted and adapted the Association of College self-assessment tool further advance health and wellbeing including mental health provision using the Thrive model.
- We have achieved Disability Confident and are a Mindful employer.
- Staff training and awareness around FREDIE starts from recruitment, embedded throughout induction, staff CPD throughout their employment with Myerscough, and robust policies and procedures are in place to ensure FREDIE principles are well embedded

Due regard to obligations under the Equality Act 2010

The College strives to develop an inclusive community culture in which value, fair and equal treatment is the basis, regardless of their background. To comply with the specific duties requested upon colleges by the Equalities Act 2010 Myerscough College will:

- Publish information (primarily on its website) to demonstrate the College’s compliance with the general equality duty.
- Prepare and publish equality objectives.
- Give due regard to the specific duties when developing, evaluating and reviewing policies.
- Give due regard to the specific duties when designing, delivering and evaluating services, including co-educational provision.

The college has a set of strategic FREDIE objectives further demonstrating the College commitment to advancing FREDIE:

1. Develop a College-wide culture which actively promotes equality, diversion and inclusion
2. Ensure a positive inclusive learning and social experience through equality of opportunity and the celebration of diversity
3. Ensure an inclusive approach to the staff experience which promotes equality and diversity and provide a positive working environment

The Equality Objectives and FREDIE principles framework provides a clear strategic direction and focus to ensure a whole organisational approach to embed FREDIE across all areas of provision,

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having a clear and SMART action plan, encompasses targets for the College, monitored and reviewed by the FREDIE strategic group, SLT and Governors. The FREDIE Annual report identifies annual objectives and SMART actions based on College data for both staff and students.

Financial support available with eligibility criteria

We want to ensure that all students have the opportunity to study for a degree qualification, regardless of background or financial circumstances. The College is committed to providing support to students from lower income households.

A limited number of Myerscough College Bursaries and Scholarships are available, to provide discretionary financial assistance for students to access and remain in Higher Education, particularly those students who need financial help to meet extra costs that cannot be met from other sources of support. Priority groups include students with children, lone parents, mature students with existing financial commitments, students from low income backgrounds and students in unexpected hardship. Funds are limited and therefore initial allocations will be a maximum of £1000 (pro-rata for part-time students.) This is reviewed later in the academic year, subject to take-up and availability of funds.

Myerscough provides relevant bursaries and scholarships and these include:

- **Higher Education Hardship Fund**

Myerscough students who are experiencing financial hardship may be eligible for support from the Higher Education Hardship Fund up to £1000. The Hardship Fund is open to full time students and part time students studying an undergraduate qualification on campus. UK residents studying an online undergraduate qualification may also be eligible to apply. Students are asked to provide evidence of financial hardship through the application.

- **Low household income bursary**

All full time higher education students from low-income households (<£25K household income) may apply for a bursary for each year of their course of up to £1000.

- **Carers bursary**

All full time higher education students who have full time care responsibilities may apply for a £1000 bursary for each year of their course.

- **Care leavers bursary**

All full time higher education students who have been in local authority care for 13 weeks or more, may apply for a £1,000 bursary for each year of their course.

- **Local region bursary**

All new full time higher education students whose home address is within Lancashire, South Lakeland & Furness or Merseyside may apply for a £1000 bursary for the first year of their course. Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

This grant provides extra financial help if you have a disability, mental health condition or a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia. It is paid on top of the standard student finance package and is not dependent on income, nor does it have to be repaid.

- **Myerscough College Scholarships**

Myerscough applicants who demonstrate or promote excellence in their subject may be eligible for financial support from one of the College scholarships. The scholarships are open to students applying to study on any Myerscough full time foundation degree or honours degree programme. Successful applicants will receive a £1000 cash payment to support their study at Myerscough.

In return, students in receipt of a scholarship will be expected to act as a Student Ambassador for their subject and the College by representing the College in their chosen subject, helping at College recruitment activities such as Course Advice events and Applicant Days or promoting access and support for under-represented groups where the opportunity arises.

20 scholarships are available for first year students in the following subject areas:

- Applicants from targeted under-represented groups (Students eligible for free school meals at KS4, BME groups, student from IMD Q1 and students with a learning difficulty or disability)

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- Applicants who promote excellence in Agriculture and Horticulture (to support development of the talent pool in our most traditional land-based subjects)
- Applicants who promote excellence in STEM subjects (animal or plant sciences, agricultural engineering or motorsports engineering)
- Applicants who promote excellence in Sport (this may be sports, golf, equine or motorsports)
- Applicants who promote excellence in Creative Design (specifically Floral Design).
- Applications for scholarships can be made using this Scholarship Application Form.

Payment will be made in 2 instalments (before Christmas and at the end of successful completion of the first year) ensuring the student has not withdrawn or been suspended from study and has over 90% attendance, passed all modules sat at June assessment boards AND have supported Myerscough College & University Centre in their role as a Student Ambassador on at least one or more occasions in every term. Instalments will be used to clear any outstanding fees on account.

The following are available through government schemes:

- **Childcare Grant**

The Childcare Grant helps full-time students with the cost of childcare during term times and holidays. The amount you receive will be dependent upon your household income and is based on 85% of your actual childcare costs.

Further information available: [Childcare Grant: What you'll get - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

- **Parents' Learning Allowance**

This can help pay for course-related costs such as books, materials and travel if you have dependent children. The amount you receive will be dependent upon your household income.

Further information available: [Parents' Learning Allowance: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

- **Adult Dependants' Grant**

Under the current funding guidelines, students with a husband, wife, partner or another adult family member who is financially dependent on them may be eligible for a non-repayable grant.

Further information available: [Adult Dependants' Grant: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Student consultation

Student consultation took place at two stages before submission. Firstly, a student online meeting which included discussion related to:

- OfS expectations for the New Access and Participation Plans
- Data exploration and resulting suggested targets
- Equality of Opportunity Risk Register
- Potential intervention strategy activity.

Students commented on the targets, confirming they agreed there was an appropriate rationale for choice of objectives and that objectives were appropriate and aspirational. Students identified the likely risks on the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register related to each of the targets and provided suggestions on additional interventions. It was noted by the students that it would be beneficial for bursaries to be spread throughout the year resulting in planned changes to bursary administration and the value of outreach activity such as the annual Country Fair were discussed, resulting in the introduction of a number of free family tickets targeted at low-income families. In addition, it was

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noted by students that discounted student accommodation would be beneficial however the accommodation at UCM is already low in comparison to the sector and includes additions such as free gym membership. Once the plan had been drafted this was then shared with students for written feedback, with a particular focus on the finalised intervention strategies and the planned evaluation methods, no additional suggestions were provided.

Students will continue to be engaged in the monitoring and evaluation of the Access and Participation Plan through membership on the Access and Participation Working Group. The student member will contribute to monitoring and reporting in relation to the individual intervention strategies, alongside the monitoring and reporting in relation to the overall plan. In addition, students will be engaged in some of the activity outlined, for example engagement at Open Events and will feed into the research projects outlined in the evaluation plan.

Evaluation of the plan

The overall plan and associated activity will be monitored by the Access and Participation Working Group, which will include membership from key stakeholders, including students. The working group will meet termly to report on activity and will produce an annual report against targets which will feed into the governance structure through the FREDIE Strategic Group, which feeds into SLT and Governors. All reports and an overview of the plan and activity will be provided on the Access and Participation webpage which will be ready by spring 2024.

The intervention strategies outlined in this plan are predominantly based on Type 1 evidence and Type 2 evidence where available. Collecting additional Type 2 evidence is intended to support future access and participation planning and enable more robust strategies going forward.

We are committed to improving our data access and use, and supporting staff knowledge and understanding in relation to access and participation. As noted in Annex A, some of the data available is limited which reduces the ability to monitor and evaluate effectively, we are therefore working on our internal data and reporting to aid this in future iterations.

Provision of information to students

We are compliant with the requirements of consumer protection legislation and the Competition and Markets Authority. We will also provide the transparency information for admissions and enrolments on our website in line with OfS requirements. We provide information for current and prospective students on the fees for the duration of their course and any additional details of financial support available (including eligibility criteria and processes for applying) on the College website. We also ensure that our fees information is provided to UCAS and other key organisations in a timely manner to populate their applicant-facing web services. Details of the specific bursaries for under-represented groups are outlined under the whole provider response section of this Access and Participation Plan. Our student enquiries, student finance, student services, admissions, course tutors and marketing teams provide information, advice and guidance (IAG) on tuition fees and financial support for higher education students through series of course advice events and open days for prospective students. All full-time applicants with offers are offered opportunity to attend applicant events, where information regarding the fees and the financial support available through the College can be discussed further. Where applicants have declared a learning difficulty or

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disability, the applicant events are attended by a member of our inclusive learning team to discuss the support available.

We have also set up an online facility to provide clear and easy access for applicants to information such as interview arrangements, course details, travel, finance, enrolment and joining instructions. At the point of offer, applicants are provided with specific information in a durable format (usually in the form of a PDF document) relating to their chosen course, including the following:

- Tuition Fees
- Course Dates
- Course Leader
- Mandatory and optional fees associated with the course
- Course Handbook
- Programme Specification, Course Structure and Module Descriptors
- Advice on the 14 Day Right to Cancel

Our Inclusive Learning team provides specialist advice for students with additional learning needs and those in receipt of DSA. Our central student support services centre, 'The Core', provides a student finance advisor and other sources of support on academic, personal and career development for current students. These teams continue to provide advice and support for students throughout their programme to ensure that appropriate IAG is provided through all stages of the student life-cycle. Upon enrolment, students are provided with a hard copy contract (Learning Agreement) which reinforces their right to a cooling off period, states the financial responsibilities associated with their studies once they enter into the contract and confirms the terms and conditions relevant to their studies. We provide access to all our student-facing policies for applicants and students on the College Website, including the tuition fees policy.

We also provide a link to our students, to our partner University's website, where applicants are able to access the respective policies, rules and regulations of the University. We ensure that terms and conditions are fair, clear and understandable to students by continual review of our approach to consumer protection requirements. We also work closely with our partner University to ensure our terms and conditions reflect those of the University and meet their expectations. This is checked by the University through course approval and re-approval processes. The most recent re-approval process took place during academic year 2022- 2023

Commendations included:

- Staff research is exemplary
- Excellent physical facilities
- Demonstrable student progress, particular in relation to our 'materially above benchmark' rates for continuation and completion.
- A highly engaged academic team
- The range of global employers
- Thoughtful response to recruitment
- Interdisciplinary teaching is good practice and exceptional

Further commendations from the panel included:

- The culture and the feeling of us as a provision, particularly that we are 'very HE' which the panel recognised is difficult to do in a college-based environment

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- Leadership of HE in a positive way, as a result of which is a progressive institute with excellent practice, and very much 'on it' and keeping all matters in the spotlight
- Good understanding of students needs and a holistic approach to students and care (academically and pastorally)

Finally, the partner university report included the following, in their report:

Myerscough College and University Centre are the model that other colleges should aspire to be. Our role [at UCLan] is made much easier by the clarity of documentation and the thoroughness of staff to meet the minimum expectations of documentation provided in a timely manner. I have no concerns at all about the provision at Myerscough. In fact, I would like to commend all staff from the Assistant Principal (HE) to the teaching staff on the quality of provision and hope to build further collaboration across all aspects of core business.

Our most recent re-accreditation with the MATRIX quality standard for information advice and guidance services (2022) confirmed that our arrangements for provision of information to students are robust. The MATRIX report identified 8 key areas of strength with no criteria that were not met. The MATRIX report noted: 'Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion continue to be a strength, in addition to holding the Leaders in Diversity kitemark and signing up to be a Disability Confident Employer with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Myerscough has decided to underpin its three central values 'learning, people and sustainability' with 'FREDIE' (fairness, respect, equality, diversity, inclusion, and engagement).

Annex A: Assessment of performance

Data exploration resulted in the identification of a number of potential risks to equality of opportunity. The initial risks identified are outlined below, with a rationale for final target group choice.

Access

Identified area	Explanation	Rationale
Eligibility for free school meals	Limited numbers available. For FT students the data dashboard identifies a small decrease in numbers in the 2 year aggregate.	Comparison identifies UCM has a 2-year aggregate of 11.4% in comparison to 18.9% for all HE providers. With 9.5% for 21/22 entrants compared to 18.4% leading to an objective to increase this to 15% by 29/30.
Ethnicity	Limited numbers with only figures for 'white' students. There has been a recent increase in line with previous targets related to this group.	Although there has been a recent increase due to previous targeted activity the number of 'non white' students remains low in comparison to all HE providers resulting in a target to further increase this to 8%.
POLAR 4	Difference noted between Q1 and Q4. Reduction shown in aggregates.	Recent reductions are seen as a positive and the target for FSM is also likely to impact on POLAR 4, TUNDRA and IMD gaps shown so no dedicated target here, however when monitoring for FSM, impact on POLAR 4, TUNDRA and deprivation will also be noted and further activity considered.
TUNDRA	Difference noted between Q1 and Q4, although there has been a recent reduction from 21.5ppt in 20/21 to 16.8ppt in 21/22 and Q1 access has increased across the 6 years.	
Deprivation	Variation across the 6 years shown. 21/22 IMD 2019 is close to 20% and IMD 2015 is 15.8% but the higher numbers are in Q3.	

Exploration of potential risks to equality of opportunity resulted in two objectives related to access, targeting students eligible for free school meals and increasing BAME student access. Activity in these areas is also expected to positively impact on other indicators in this section.

- Objectives

Objective 1: University Centre Myerscough will increase the proportion of students eligible for free school meals accessing higher education at UCM to 15% by 2028

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Objective 2: University Centre Myerscough will increase the proportion of non-white students accessing higher education at UCM to 8% by 2028

- EORR

Consultation with staff and students and consideration of current practice against the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register identified knowledge and skills (Risk 1), access to information and guidance (Risk 2), perceptions of higher education (Risk 3) and course options and mode of study (Risk 5) as potential risks. Cost pressures (Risk 10) were also considered as this can be a reason to not access higher education for certain student groups. Risk 4 (application success rates) was agreed to not impact on current student numbers as all students who meet the entry criteria are offered a place on our higher education programmes.

Continuation

Identified area	Explanation	Rationale
Eligibility for free school meals	A difference in continuation for FSM and non FSM is noted with a 10ppt difference in the 2-year aggregate.	Whilst POLAR 4 presents a higher ppt difference the underlying risks do not relate to postcode and therefore a target for student eligible for free school meals is more appropriate.
Ethnicity	Limited data due to small numbers however national data trends would suggest this may be an area for consideration.	Small numbers in this category, need to increase access before targeting this group while there are other indicators where activity would be more beneficial.
Disability	4-year aggregate shows no difference, increased to 2.7ppt in 2-year aggregate.	An area to continue to monitor rather than target at this point.
TUNDRA	Difference noted between Q1 and Q4. 8.5ppt difference shown in the 2-year aggregate.	FSM eligibility presents a higher ppt. difference and a target in this area is expected to impact on TUNDRA differences.
POLAR 4	Difference noted between Q1 and Q4. 10.3ppt difference shown in the 2-year aggregate.	Whilst POLAR4 presents a higher ppt difference to FSM the underlying risks do not relate to postcode and therefore a target for student eligible for free school meals is more appropriate.
POLAR 4 and Sex	Sex as an intersection indicates a widening gap between Q1-2 males and other groups with a 3ppt	Expected to be impacted by a target for FSM eligibility.

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	difference between them and their Q3-5 counterparts.	
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All areas identified are above the B3 baseline expectations and during the TEF data dashboard confirms that UCM has excellent continuation for both full and part time students that is materially above benchmark. The data exploration identified a number of potential risks to equality of opportunity, however it was felt that an objective related to eligibility for free school meals, would have a potential impact on the other areas outlined above as underlying risks are related to individual circumstances rather than postcode. Continuation in relation to both students with a reported disability and BAME students will also be monitored.

- Objective

Objective 3: University Centre Myerscough will increase the continuation rates for students eligible for free school meals to 83% by 2028

- EORR

Consultation with staff and students and consideration of current practice against the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register identified academic and personal support (Risk 6 and 7) and cost pressures (Risk 10) as potential impacts on continuation for FSM students. Whilst mental health (Risk 8) was also considered, it is noted that the high levels of support provided in this area already reduces the potential impact significantly. Capacity issues (Risk 11) were also considered in relation to accommodation costs however accommodation remains low as a sector comparison and includes elements not provided elsewhere. The ongoing impacts of coronavirus (Risk 11) were discussed, this generally related to increased need for personal or financial support, which are considered already in this section.

Completion

Identified area	Explanation	Rationale
Eligibility for free school meals	Limited data. Aggregates do not a gap, however this is closing.	Whilst some gaps in completion rates are noted, these remain high in comparison to sector benchmark as shown in the TEF and it is felt that objectives in other areas would be more beneficial.
Ethnicity	Limited data due to small numbers but national data suggests may be an area for consideration.	
Sex	Limited data, aggregates do show a widening gap with females performing better.	
Sex and deprivation	Females perform better as outlined above, this is further impacted by deprivation with Q1-2 males performing lower in both aggregates. Q1-2 males -7ppt in comparison to Q3-5 males.	

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As outlined in the TEF data, UCM has excellent completion rates, performing materially above benchmark for both full and part time students. Whilst some potential indicators of risks were identified, all groups perform well and it is felt that it would be more beneficial to focus on objectives in other areas.

Attainment

Identified area	Explanation	Rationale
Deprivation	Limited data however the aggregates do suggest Q5 outperforms all others and that the gaps have widened.	Noted a 30ppt difference resulting in an intention to reduce this to 15ppt by 2028.
Disability	Limited data however aggregates do state a gap of 5.8ppt, which has only reduced slightly from 6ppt for the 4-year aggregate.	A maintained gap in this area will be targeted with the intention of eliminating this gap by 2028.
Age	20/21 indicates a 10.4ppt difference however 20/21 noted a 3.7 ppt. difference and the 2 year aggregate represents an improvement on the 4 year aggregate. Attainment by age has been variable across the previous 6 years, with mature students performing higher in 17/18 and gaps ranging from -3.7 ppt to -13ppt.	Attainment by age will be monitored and consideration in any future variations however it is expected that a focus on deprivation will also impact on the indication of risk in this area.
Eligibility for free school meals	Limited data due to small numbers but national data suggests may be an area for consideration.	A focus on deprivation is expected to also impact on indication of risk in this area.
Ethnicity	Limited data due to small numbers but national data suggests may be an area for consideration	Small numbers in this category, need to increase access before targeting this group while there are other indicators where activity would be more beneficial.
POLAR 4	Limited data however aggregates do show Q5 performing highest.	A focus on deprivation is expected to also impact on indication of risk in this area.
TUNDRA	Limited data due to small numbers but national data and other performance indicators	A focus on deprivation is expected to also impact on indication of risk in this area.

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	suggests may be an area for consideration.	
Sex	Females outperform males with 21/22 showing a 10.8ppt difference. On aggregate this is 4.5ppt.	As deprived males impact on this, as outlined below, a focus on deprivation would reduce differences related to sex.
Deprivation and Sex	Limited data. The aggregates do show a gap between Q1-2 males and females, however the biggest gap remains in Q1-2 and Q3-5 overall.	A focus on deprivation would reduce differences related to sex.

Small numbers impact on data exploration in this area. There are a number of potential indicators of risks to equality of opportunity, or areas where the national data may suggest consideration would be beneficial, resulting in two objectives, with the expectation that activity related to these will also impact on other indications. Disability is included due to the persistence of the gap and deprivation is noted as essential for activity.

Age was considered as a potential target area however the ppt. difference has been variable across the previous 5 years as shown below and there has been a reduction in the ppt. difference in the 2 year aggregate. In addition it is noted that a proportion of these students will already be supported through activity targeted towards deprivation. As a result it is intended that mature student attainment will be monitored and considered in future variation requests.

	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	4 year	2 year
Ppt. diff	8.9	-8.5	-13	-3.7	-10.4	-9.1	-7.6

- Objectives

Objective 4: University Centre Myerscough will increase the proportion of IMD (2019) Q1 students attaining a 2:1 or above to 70% by 2028

Objective 5: University Centre Myerscough will increase the proportion of students with a reported disability attaining a 2:1 or above to 75% 2028

- EORR

Similarly to continuation, consultation with staff and students and consideration of current practice against the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register identified academic and personal support (Risk 6 and 7) and cost pressures (Risk 10) as potential impacts on attainment for deprived students and students with a reported disability. It was felt that students would benefit from aspiration raising as part of the personal support provided to motivate higher attainment and inspire a feeling of capacity to achieve.

Progression

The data available in relation to progression is incredibly limited and does not reflect the outcomes of UCM graduates. As outlined in the TEF submission, UCM students progress to highly sought after,

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aspirational careers in their preferred sector, however the low participation rates in the Graduate Outcome Survey and the way students answer the questions within the survey do not reflect this effectively. At UCM we have action in place to increase both participation rates and accuracy that will make future reflection in this area more valuable.

As the data is limited we explored areas where the HE sector might generally see a risk to equality of opportunity including disability, sex and deprivation, however as shown in the graphs below, this did not identify particular groups for targeted activity.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2 year
Disability reported	[low]	[low]	72.9%	63.9%
No disability reported	53.2%	53.7%	53.5%	53.6%

Students with a disability outperform those with no disability reported.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2 year
Quintile 1 (most deprived)	[low]	[low]	[low]	70.3%
Quintile 2	[low]	[low]	[low]	54.7%
Quintile 3	[low]	30.6%	[low]	44.2%
Quintile 4	[low]	59.9%	52.3%	56.6%
Quintile 5 (least deprived)	[low]	[low]	[low]	54.9%

When considering deprivation students from Q1 (most deprived) outperform all other student groups significantly.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2 year
Female	53.6%	61.3%	64.7%	62.8%
Male	50.0%	42.3%	51.2%	46.7%

Regardless of the gender pay gap, female students at Myerscough College are more likely than their males counterparts to progress to positive outcomes.

As a result, UCM will focus on increasing data availability and accuracy and continue to support employability generally, rather than presenting a targeted approach.

Annex B: Evidence base and rationale for intervention strategies (further detail)

Intervention Strategy 1

Includes:

- Pre-entry aspiration raising activity and IAG
- Pre-entry financial support
- Pre-entry study and soft skill support
- Changes to mode of delivery and course type

Student eligible for free school meals are less likely to access higher education. As noted in the EORR there are a number of potential reasons for this, including access to information and perceptions of higher education. In relation to IAG, the TASO Toolkit notes that evidence suggests a mixed impact on aspiration and behaviour for students from disadvantaged and under-represented groups and notes this is more effective when it is tailored, starts early and is linked to other forms of support. Taster days and open events for targeted schools, alongside the provision of free tickets to low-income families for the Country Fair Day, provides an opportunity to deliver targeted information and guidance early, whilst also building aspiration.

Some research would suggest higher education aspirations are lower for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, using eligibility for free school meals are a proxy for socio-economic status (Rothon et al., 2011), whilst others would argue that students within this group have aspiration, but lack the information and understanding required to mobilise that (Fisher, 2017). Whilst the TASO Toolkit suggests there is currently no evidence for a causal link between pre-entry aspiration raising activity and outcomes, it does note that pupils who attend relevant programmes tend to have better outcomes, increasing awareness of the accessibility and benefits of higher education therefore remains essential, resulting in targeted aspiration raising activity within this intervention strategy. UCM already work closely with a number of schools and within the UniConnect partnerships, providing general higher education information, this will now included a targeted approach with schools and community groups with high levels of children eligible for free school meals, alongside those with high proportions of BAME students, building on previous activity and relationships.

The TASO Toolkit suggests there is emerging evidence of a positive impact of pre-entry financial support on both aspirations/attitudes and behaviour/outcomes when financial support is provided through grants, bursaries, scholarships and fee-waivers. AT UCM we already offer a number of bursaries and hardship financial support to encourage progression from further education into higher education. As shown by Baars, Mulcahy and Bernardes (2016) when considering low-income males, uptake for financial support can reduced due to stigma, therefore building on existing progression bursaries is intended to reduce this stigma.

Pre-entry study and soft skill support can aid attainment levels as noted in the TASO Toolkit, this has been built into activity that is also linked to the school curriculum in our annual event delivered in partnership with Royal Society of Biology and taster sessions delivered both on and off site by the HE staff team. The annual event is by invite for local schools, these will be targeted towards schools with high proportions of students eligible for free school meals and those with high proportions of BAME students.

Increased flexibility is welcomed by all students, but particularly impacts on students from lower socio-economic backgrounds as they are more likely to have caring or employment commitments. This has resulted in a commitment to offer all programmes as both full and part-time options. We are also committing to offering hybrid learning. A plethora of research indicates that the lessons learnt

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through the recent Covid pandemic in relation to online learning should be used to design future programmes. As noted by Imran et al. (2023) in their systematic review around emerging trends in teaching and learning delivery modes, a blended or hybrid approach promotes better learning outcomes and combines the advantages of both traditional and online modes of delivery. Providing a level of flexibility, whilst maintaining student contact and support fits well with the ethos at UCM and is expected to impact on application rates.

Based on Type 1 and Type 2 evidence.

Intervention Strategy 2

Includes:

- Pre-entry aspiration raising activity and IAG
- Pre-entry study and soft skill support
- Changes to mode of delivery and course type

The activity type is similar to that outlined above in relation to students eligible for free school meals, however it is targeted towards the BAME community to allow an understanding of the differing barriers to be addressed in the information provided and session content. UCM have been working to build good relationships with the BAME community as part of previous access and participation activity and this has resulted in a good relationship with a local BAME community project working with children aged 5-16. The intention is to provide aspiration raising activity sessions during the group's end of year celebration event that ties in with the educational aims of the community group. As noted by Arday, Branchu and Boliver (2021) progress towards race equality in access to higher education is hampered by white-centric discourses. The targeted marketing materials are aimed to remove this discourse and provide information relevant to the unique barriers faced by these under-represented students.

In relation to changes to mode of delivery and course type, research suggests that the BAME community are more likely to want to study close to home (McCabe, Keast and Kaya, 2022) and require programme choice and flexibility in order to do so.

Predominantly based on Type 1 evidence.

Intervention Strategy 3

Includes:

- Financial support
- Academic skills support
- Personal and pastoral support package

UCM data suggests a difference between continuation for students eligible for free school meals and for those not eligible for free school meals. There is emerging evidence that post-entry financial support have a positive impact on both retention and completion in higher education according to the TASO Toolkit (2023), although it is noted that most of the existing research comes from the USA. It is noted that needs-based financial support can have a positive impact on continuation, with the link to attainment being less clear. In addition to bursaries UCM offer hardship support for those students who are in financial stress with the aim to boost retention for disadvantaged students as shown by non-casual studies from other HE providers such as Ilie et al. (2019) and Hoare and Lightfoot (2015). Some studies conclude financial support has a positive impact on anxiety and impacts on the students need to combine both work and study (Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2015). Whilst the evidence is not clear that post entry financial support aids attainment, there are studies

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suggesting this may have a positive impact, for example Murphy and Wyness (2016), and therefore it is also expected to impact on Objective 4.

Study skills support is built into all programmes however it is noted in research that students who were eligible for free school meals at KS4 may require additional support in relation to general academic skills. There is currently a limited evidence base related to post-entry programmes of academic support and causal outcomes according to the TASO Toolkit, however anecdotally students who do not continue appear to be due to personal circumstances (considered under personal and pastoral support) or due to low achievement impacting on confidence and belief in capacity to continue. If students who are struggling to achieve are signposted to relevant academic skills sessions it is hoped that this will increase confidence and therefore retention.

All students at UCM already have a personalised tutorial system with weekly tutorial meetings that aim to support students both academically and personally. In order to enhance this support UCM intend to provide an additional hour each half term for those students considered 'at risk' to discuss personal and pastoral support and signpost to services and resources that can aid in this. There are limited studies around programmes designed to improve well-being and the impact on retention, however the personalised approach helps build feelings of community and belonging which impact positively on retention (O'Keeffe, 2013; Pedler, Willis and Nieuwoudt, 2022).

Students in crisis or students in need of additional support note that immediate access to this is beneficial and waiting for this can create a barrier. The development of the HE Student Hub and reception where students will always have access to a member of the student support team will ensure students can have immediate access to a level of additional support and also aid in the feelings of a sense of belonging and increase accessibility of support.

Based on Type 1 and Type 2 evidence.

Intervention Strategy 4

Included:

- Enhanced academic support, to include attainment raising sessions and wider support access
- Career aspiration raising activity

Academic self-efficacy plays an important part in learning research generally shows a link between self-efficacy, achievement and openness to learning from feedback (Adams et al., 2019). Students need to feel they are capable of attaining the higher grades which prompted the academic support sessions and attainment raising sessions to explore what a 2:1 or 1st looks like in order to increase students knowledge and skills, alongside their confidence to achieve.

There is limited research available related to improving attainment and the impact of careers advice in relation to this directly, however as noted above self-efficacy plays a part in educational achievement, and goal setting plays a part in self-efficacy (Schunk, 1995). Targeted career advice is intended to impact on student goals and motivations, therefore impacting on attainment. Sessions will include exploration of potential careers, including the positive impact of gaining a 2:1 and above. Sessions will be targeted rather than general, exploring the barriers for students from lower-socioeconomic backgrounds within relevant careers.

Additional personal and pastoral support outlined in Intervention Strategy 3 is aimed to also impact on attainment, supported by the study undertaken by Summers, Higson and Moores (2021) showing increased measures of engagement early in a programme correlate with higher achievement.

Based predominantly on Type 1 evidence.

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Intervention Strategy 5

Included:

- Enhanced support for DSA related activity
- Attainment, career and employability activity

UCM already provide a supportive environment for students and identify additional needs swiftly and previously there has been no difference in attainment between students with a reported disability and those without, the recent introduction of a small gap is noted to potentially be as a result of increased numbers and therefore it is necessary to enhance the current team activity to provide further support for administrative tasks, ensuring quick access to resources. In addition, in-depth reasonable adjustment plans will be in place for all relevant students. As the team grows there will also be more capacity to provide attainment raising sessions targeted at students with a reported disability, alongside more general attainment and academic skills support sessions for all at risk students.

As noted above, self-efficacy plays an important part in shaping student goals and motivations (Schunk, 1995). Vincent and Ralston (2023) argue that higher education institutions must focus more attention on developing robust and effective employment transition support for autistic students and Kelly et al. (2023) note that students with 'invisible disabilities' such as mental health conditions, neurodivergences and energy-limiting conditions face challenges including access to support and services. The aim of the career raising aspiration activity is to build self-efficacy and motivate students with a reported disability, who may be less likely to believe in their ability to access sought after careers in their chosen sector, to attain a 2:1 or above.

Based on predominantly Type 1 evidence with the intention of completing a research project to add to Type 2 evidence.

Fees, investments and targets 2024-25 to 2027-28

Provider name: Myerscough College

Provider UKPRN: 10004478

Summary of 2024-25 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 2024-25 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	9250
Foundation degree		N/A	9250
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND		N/A	7500
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT		N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year		N/A	1500
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2024-25

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

Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2024-25 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	4500
Foundation degree		N/A	4500
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE		N/A	4500
Postgraduate ITT		N/A	2925
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year		N/A	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2024-25

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

Fees, investments and targets

2024-25 to 2027-28

Provider name: Myerscough College

Provider UKPRN: 10004478

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 OIS 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	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£126,000	£113,000	£113,000	£113,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£95,000	£86,000	£86,000	£86,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£6,000	£6,000	£6,000	£6,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£26,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£92,000	£83,000	£83,000	£83,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£8,000	£6,000	£6,000	£6,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (£)	£126,000	£113,000	£113,000	£113,000
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment (as % of HFI)</i>	12.8%	12.7%	12.7%	12.7%
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment funded from HFI (£)</i>	£100,000	£90,000	£90,000	£90,000
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)</i>	£26,000	£23,000	£23,000	£23,000
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£85,000	£76,000	£76,000	£76,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (£)	£95,000	£86,000	£86,000	£86,000
Financial support investment	<i>Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)</i>	9.6%	9.6%	9.6%	9.6%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£6,000	£6,000	£6,000	£6,000
Research and evaluation investment	<i>Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)</i>	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%

