

## 2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

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5. Work collaboratively with AimHigher West Midlands and a network of schools and FE partners to expand outreach activity and ensure young people from less advantaged backgrounds have access to high quality, exciting and challenging experiences that enhance their careers education, motivate, inspire and provide accurate and impartial information, advice and guidance about Higher Education.
6. Work as part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme to encourage progression to University from low participation neighbourhoods through the employment of AimHigher Progression Ambassadors to work intensively with our specific partner schools and college and their 13-19 age group pupils.
7. Deliver the 'Reach Out' project outside school settings through youth and community work, to support socially excluded young people age 13-19 by making them aware of HE opportunities.
8. Engage in evaluation and continuous improvement through piloting, monitoring and evaluating innovative practice in areas such as outreach, transition support, mentoring, attendance tracking and student financial support.

To underpin and drive these commitments we set ourselves highly ambitious targets for our outreach, continuation, and success in our 2019-2020 Access and Participation Plan. Activities to deliver these included:

1. Pre-application outreach to raise awareness and encourage pupils to explore their post 18 options, including University. Providing CPD to teachers and advisors and taster sessions for school and college pupils.
2. Helping to raise attainment in schools through CPD work with teachers.
3. Support for specific student groups such as care leavers and disabled students both pre-application and during their studies.
4. Academic development activities to support student transition into and through their time at University through our HEADs suite of programmes.
5. Development and growth of a Foundation Year to support students who have the potential to benefit from HE but who need the year to develop their academic skills.
6. On-course support through investment in Academic Advisors, provision of a range of peer mentoring support, welfare support, embedding of transition activity within the curriculum, and the developing use of student engagement data to drive pedagogic interventions.
7. Developing employable graduates through skills development and the provision of a work placement module on all undergraduate degree programmes. This is particularly important for disadvantaged students as it gives them direct experience of graduate level work which can lead to enhanced mobility through enabling opportunities to network, develop their career management skills and enhance their awareness of opportunities in the employment market.
8. Working with students through collaboration with the Students' Union to consider and implement recommendations to improve the student experience and through student partnership projects and our pedagogy of partnership.
9. Driving the equality and diversity agenda framed within Catholic social teaching, including the use of equality impact assessments as part of every programme validation.

## 2. Self-assessment of targets

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

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-

**Other milestones and targets**

Reference  
Number

### **3. Investment commitments**

#### **3.1. Access and**

T16a\_04

We will continue to build our response to the recommendations of our mature student panel, including the enhancements made to transition and induction through online provision and student peer mentoring. We will expand our support for students undertaking resits, provide long-term loanable laptops for students, and establish provision for low-income students facing issues of digital access. We will set retention targets for individual academic subject areas and encourage the sharing of effective practice from student partnership projects and the mature student panel. We will continue our streamlined mitigating circumstances process, and develop support for students who are also carers.

T16a\_06

We have made the success and progression of Black students a key focus in our 2020-25 Access and Participation Plan. We are putting in place ambitious development programmes both in relation to our direct support of Black student success and our wider University culture. We held a University-wide 'Big conversation' about race and racism in June 2020 and have developed a resulting race action plan to be overseen by Equality and Diversity. We have also developed a resulting race action plan to be overseen by Equality and Diversity.

## 5. Confirmation

Newman University confirms that:

Student engagement

## Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

Newman commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

**Target reference number: T16a\_02**

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

Yes, we have actioned the activities outlined in the 2019-20 Plan in relation to this target. These include pre-application outreach with partner schools and colleges, working with 234 institutions in total in 2019-20; providing staff CPD to 176 teachers and advisors to raise pupil attainment; participating in the AimHigher NCOP project and delivering the Reach Out project. Newman University continues to recruit above benchmark [17.6%] with regards to young, full-time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods.

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

Yes, additional outreach activity has been undertaken. We have greatly exceeded our targets for

**Target reference number: T16a\_04**

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

Yes, we have actioned the activities outlined in the 2019-20 Plan in relation to this target. Mature students are a particular focus of our HEADstart and HEADonline programmes to support transition into Higher Education and help them develop their academic practice. There has been an improving trend in mature student retention since the 2015-16 figure of 22% non-continuation.

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

Yes, we worked with the Students' Union on student voice and the establishment of a mature student panel and put in place actions developed from its recommendations. These recommendations and actions have been taken up by the recently established Retention and Success Task Group. Extensive work has been undertaken in relation to this target in the face of the detrimental impact of COVID-19, including the intersectional disadvantage faced by many of our mature students as they sought to provide home schooling while studying. This includes the implementation of no-detriment policies, enhancement of on-line support through induction, and student financial and well-being support; provision of remote student peer mentoring; and monitoring of blended learning engagement. We also reviewed and streamlined our mitigating circumstances process to ease the burden on students who are parents.

**Target reference number: T16a\_06**

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

Yes, we have actioned the activities outlined in the 2019-20 Plan in relation to this target. This includes the provision of HEAR records to all graduating students, that capture a wide range of academic and extra-curricular activity while at University. One-to-one careers support and the expectation of engagement in a work placement module help develop employability. No recent data is available on this metric, due to changes in the way the data is gathered and the very small sample size. However our internal figure for 2016/17 shows a significant improvement on our five year aggregate rate for 2012-17, with a drop from a 16% gap for the five year aggregate to a 10.6% gap for the latest available internal figures.

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

Yes, we have developed an explicit employability strategy and engaged in an OfS

## Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

Newman commentary on any of the targets listed in [Section 2](#).

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	Newman University continues to recruit well from lower socio-economic groups. 54% of our 2019-20 entrants were from the lowest Index of Multiple Deprivation quintile.
	There is no straightforward comparison of target and outcome figures here

T16a\_02

T16b\_01

This target was intended primarily as a narrative target to introduce and operate contextual admissions. We have embedded contextual admissions in our admissions policy and we did operate a successful contextual admissions policy in 2019-20 as we know that a record 22 students from our target partner NCOP schools enrolled with us, many more than the one person target set here for this particular contextual admissions metric. The expansion of our Foundation Year programme will also help to support access to HE for students from low performing schools.