

AECC University College

Access and participation plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

1. Assessment of performance

Executive Summary

AECC University College is a specialist health sciences provider, internationally recognised for providing undergraduate and postgraduate education and training in the niche area of musculoskeletal health. Over some fifty years, AECC University College has built a reputation locally, nationally and internationally for the excellence and quality of teaching in its specialist areas, most notably chiropractic. Our student body comprises 57% UK students, 38% from EU and EEA areas and 5% international students from outside the EU.

The University has a total of 745 students, 548 studying undergraduate courses. Of these, the majority are studying undergraduate chiropractic courses with 10 registered on the BSc (Hons) Clinical Exercise and Rehabilitation Science which started in September 2018. We have 156 staff and have recently employed a Full Time Access and Participation Manager from January 2019.

As with many vocational degrees, for example medicine, widening access to chiropractic is particularly challenging given the high academic standards required to gain entry, the academic rigour and extensive academic and practical skills needed to successfully complete the course, the extended length and that chiropractic is a relatively small profession in the UK (just over 3000 registered practitioners), with almost all chiropractors working in private practice. As such, chiropractic remains relatively unknown to a high proportion of the population, in particular those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The University College admitted the first cohort of students on our degree awarding title in September 2017, and in line with AECC University College's strategic plan, are expanding the courses on offer. As detailed above, the first cohort of Sports and Exercise Sciences students commenced study in September 2018 and further new undergraduate courses have been developed to commence in September 2019. This new course provision is anticipated to recruit largely from the UK market. Whilst this may assist us in improving our access and participation record going forward, we do not take this for granted and our access and participation strategy will monitor progress closely at all stages of the student life cycle.

In summary, AECC University College's aim is to widen access to underrepresented groups as we grow, at the same time supporting the retention, attainment and progression into employment or further study of all our students. The University College has evaluated our current metrics and set strategies and targets for future access, success and progression activities based on findings.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access

The number of students accessing AECC University College from POLAR4 Quintile 1 Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPN's) is 6.9% of new entrants, recognised to be almost half the national average. Our gap between the average proportion of quintile one students and quintile five is 28%. As our historic data is limited for POLAR analysis, we have also looked at data for similar specialist institutions, with the same or similar niche subject offers. This would appear to be a consistent pattern and challenge faced across such specialist universities, see figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – Comparison of POLAR4 Q1 students accessing AECC University College compared to similar specialist institutions offering health science based subjects

	Area of analysis	Our figures	National	Loughborough University	St George's Hospital Medical School	University College of Osteopathy	The Royal Veterinary College
POLAR4	Access for Q1	6.9%	12.0%	7.4%	5.0%	0.0%	8.0%

Source: OfS data dashboard

We note there is also a gap between Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) quintile 1 and 5 in the OfS dataset. Undergraduate entrants from state schools and NS-SEC classes 4-7 were addressed in our previous Access and Participation plans. Whilst in this plan we have focussing upon POLAR4 in line with Office for Students guidance, we recognise these as additional areas to consider alongside POLAR4, and that targeted interventions for POLAR4 may also help to reduce these gaps. We will continue to monitor these wider statistics alongside our proportion of students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods. Whilst these will no longer be specific targets, we will use the data available to inform our progress.

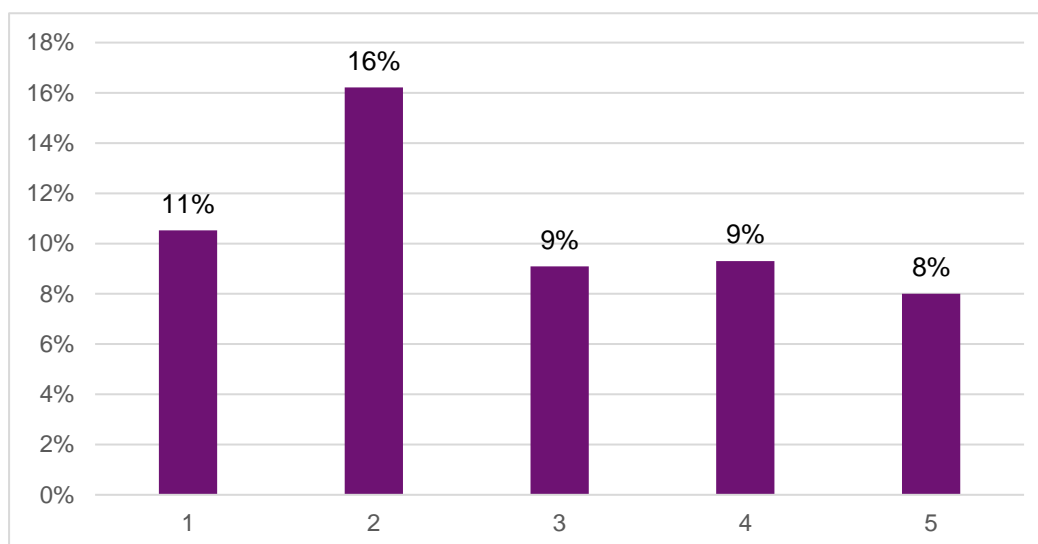
Almost 45% of our UK students come from Dorset and the neighbouring counties. Working with local schools is therefore a priority for us, acknowledging the high levels of deprivation in our immediate neighbourhood of West Boscombe. Recent research from the End Child Poverty Coalition showed that more than a quarter of children in Bournemouth are living in poverty, rising to 43% in parts of Boscombe, the geographical area AECC University College is situated in.

Success

Non-continuation

From students who withdrew in the academic year 2017-18, whilst we are looking at small numbers, 3% more students from Quintile 1 (Low Participation Neighbourhoods) discontinued their studies than those from Quintiles 5, as can be seen in figure 2.

Figure 2 - % of students from each POLAR4 Quintile discontinuing studies at AECC during 2017/18



Attainment

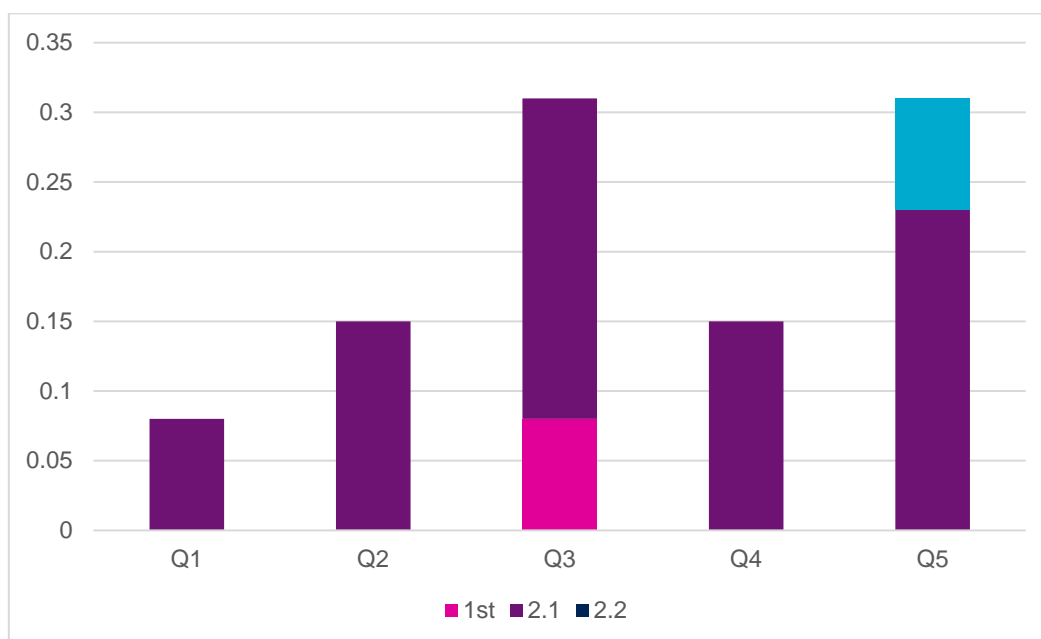


Figure 3 – Student outcomes by POLAR4 quintile

As seen within figure 3 above, the national trend of students from lower quintiles achieving lower grades is not reflected at AECC University College. Students achieving below a 2:1 are rare at AECC University College, and in this cohort these students were from POLAR4 Q5 backgrounds.

Progression to employment or further study

We have limited disaggregated data on progression, which we understand will be the case for many universities due to changes in how graduates are surveyed. The employment of leavers UK Performance Indicators using DLHE data was published in 2018. The first Graduate Outcomes data is due in spring 2020. We have therefore used the latest data available from the 2016/17 DLHE survey.

In this cohort 90.6% found employment or were enrolled in future study when surveyed. Due to the vocational nature of chiropractic studies, employment rates have historically been high.

Any progression statistics are based purely upon our chiropractic courses as no students have graduated from the new courses to date (the first graduation from any new course will be in 2021). From the data available to us there would not appear to be any impact on progression for students from LPN backgrounds, in fact in 2016-17 they appeared more likely to progress on to professional employment or further study, with a higher salary (see Figure 4). However, it must be noted that we would be talking about very small numbers of students due to the number of LPN students currently accessing our courses.

Figure 4 – Student progression for students graduating 2016-17 by LPN marker (DHLE results)

Programme	LPN	%in Emp or study	% Professional	Salary
MCHIRO (HONS) MASTER OF CHIROPRACTIC	Y	100.00%	100.00%	£46,800.00
	N	90.32%	87.10%	£25,000.00

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

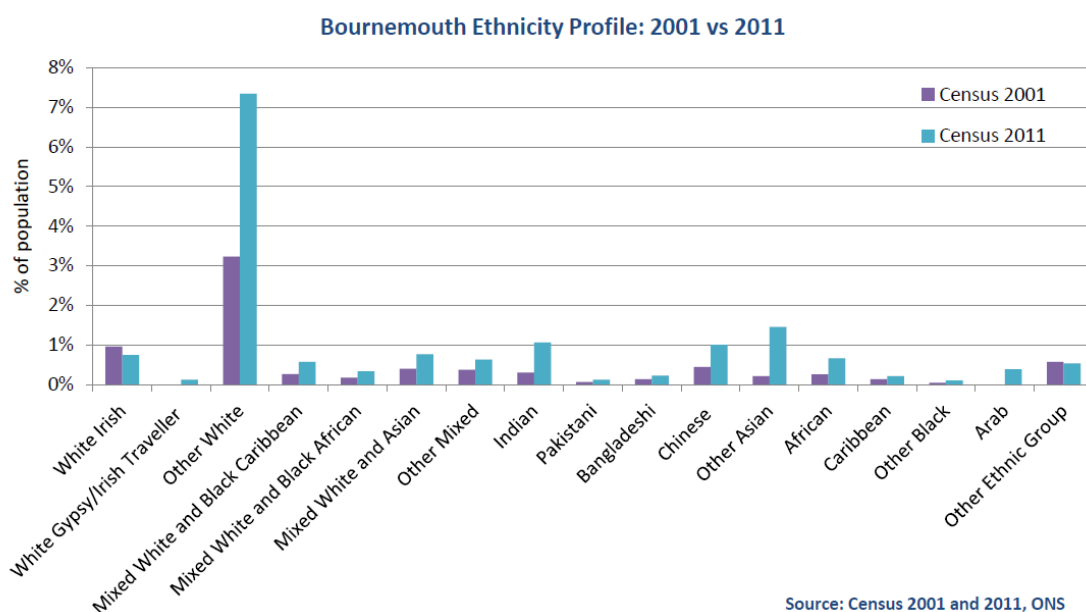
With chiropractic courses in the past primarily attracting students from white middle class backgrounds, the proportion of the student population at the University College who are white is significantly higher than the national average (90% compared to the national average for all universities of 69% on the OfS dashboard). Whilst we have seen an increase in students from

different ethnic backgrounds in our latest intake, numbers are still small (disaggregated data is not published for this reason). Only 5% of entrants come from an Asian background compared to the national 14% average and the number of black students is less.

As we are unable to publish the disaggregated numbers for our student body, we have looked at local data to inform our approach. Bournemouth historically has a high proportion of residents from a White British background. This has changed recently; in 2011, 29,739 residents in Bournemouth were from a Black and Minority Ethnic group (BME), representing 16% of the total population (2011 Census, ONS). These were double the BME population seen in Bournemouth in 2001. However, it should be noted “BME” in this context represents all groups other than “White British”, including: “Gypsy or Irish Traveller” and “Arab” which have been included as BME groups below. Breakdown of the changes in Bournemouth between 2001 and 2011 can be seen in Figure 5 below.

Numbers of Black, Asian and young people from a mixed background are still minimal within the local population; a significant proportion being students in higher education settings or studying at the many language schools locally. This can be seen in in Figure 5 below, whilst the percentage of the population from ‘Other white’ backgrounds has significantly increased, population growth from black and Asian groups are increasing much more slowly. In wider Dorset, almost 92 % of residents are from a White British background, with only 8% from a BME background.

Figure 5 – Bournemouth Ethnicity Profile changes between the 2001 and 2011 census



Whilst increasing the proportion of our student population from BAME backgrounds will be a priority for us, this data will mean we need to work out of our local area, in larger cities. This was echoed with suggestion from a student from an inner city area in our recent student focus group.

Success

Non-continuation

Just 4% of students withdrawing from courses at AECC University College in the academic year 2017-18 describe their ethnicity as other than White British. It is not possible to disaggregate this further without identifying individual students. When looking at the proportion of groups discontinuing studies, the percentage of white students not continuing was actually higher. However, we recognise this may be due to the fact until recently the majority of our students have been from White British backgrounds. As numbers of students from other ethnic backgrounds are still small, we will continue to monitor this as we work to widen the demographics of the student population over the five years of the plan.

Attainment

Within the 2017-2018 cohort there were extremely small numbers of students identifying from a Black or Ethnic Minority background. All these students achieved a 2:1 or above, as has historically been the case for the majority of students studying at the institution.

Progression to employment or further study

For progression, the only data we have been able to obtain by demographics is from 2016/17 graduates in the DLHE survey (see figure 6)

Figure 6 - Student progression for students graduating 2016-17 by Ethnicity group (DHLE results)

Programme	BME Flag	%in Emp or study	% Professional	Salary
MCHIRO (HONS) MASTER OF CHIROPRACTIC	Yes	83.33%	66.67%	£21,000.00
	No	92.31%	92.31%	£27,000.00

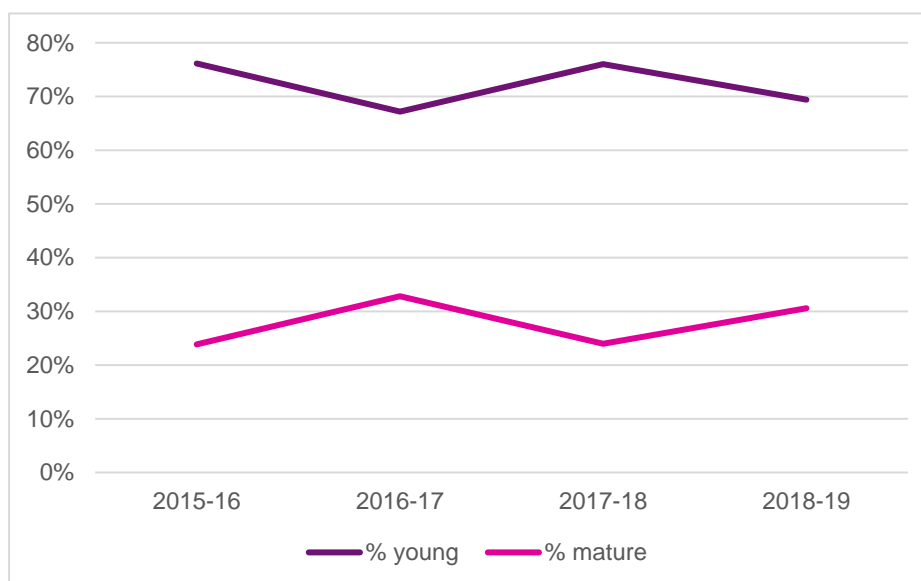
This data does indicate a potential employment gap for BME students, however, it should be noted this will relate to a very small number of students so drawing conclusions from this data may be premature. As this is the first time we have had this disaggregated data we will investigate this further during the five years of the plan, monitoring for gaps over time and designing interventions to address gaps.

1.3 Mature students

Access

The nature of chiropractic as a vocational career choice means AECC University College has historically a higher number of mature students than the national average. This remains high with 41% of our entrants over 21 compared to the national average of 28%, in contrast to the national decline in mature students entering Higher Education. We will continue to monitor this as we would look to maintain this high level of access for mature students; but this will not be prioritised as a target area due to the other gaps highlighted.

Figure 7 - % of young vs. mature applicants accessing undergraduate courses between 2015 - 2019



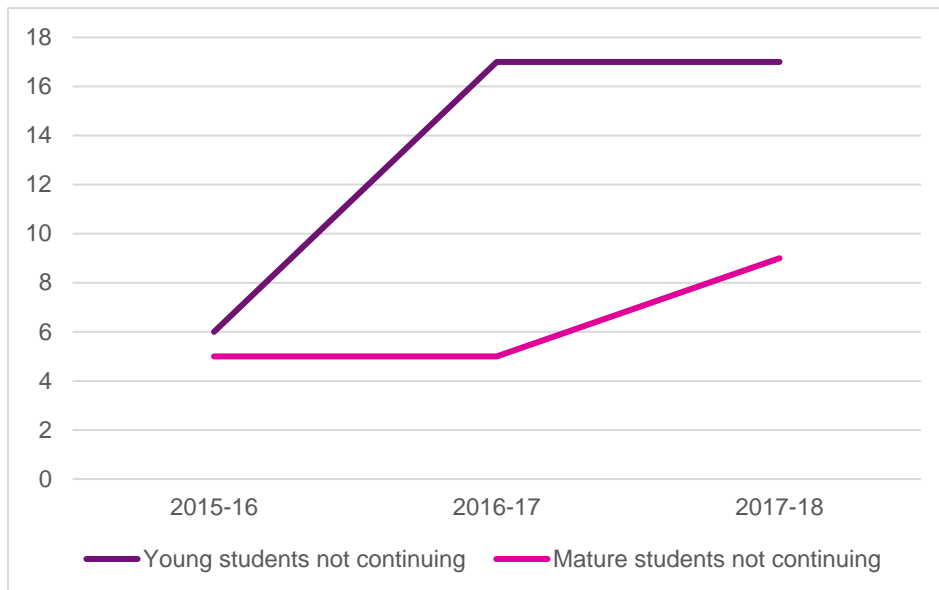
Success

Non-continuation

Disproportionate numbers of mature students withdrawing from courses does not appear an issue at the University College, young students consistently withdraw in greater numbers than mature students

(see figure 8). We aim to minimise non-continuation generally, but will look to maintain this record of continuation for mature students.

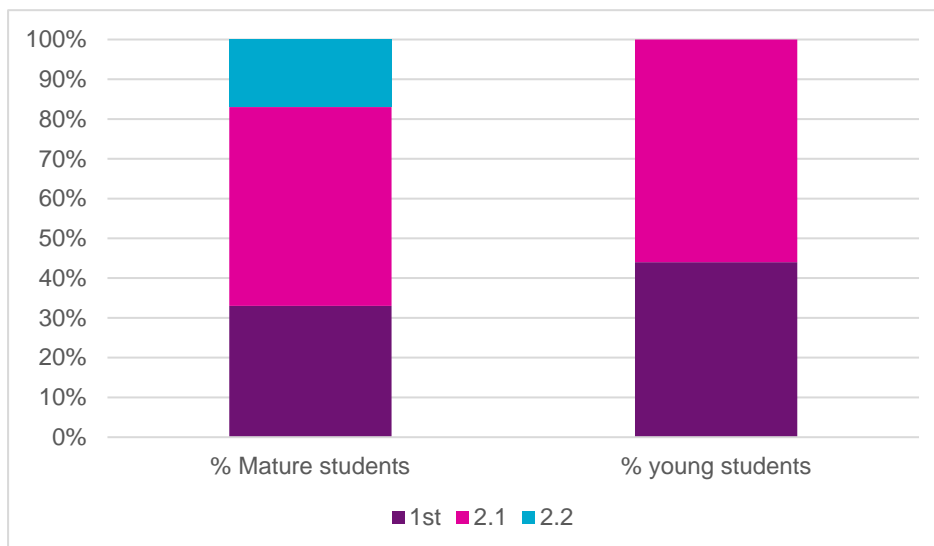
Figure 8 – Non-continuation rates for young and mature students between 2015 and 2018



Attainment

There is not an issue for student outcomes by age. When looking at the 2017-18 data (see figure 9 below), mature students get more 1st class honours degrees than young students. Numbers of anything below 2:1 are very small and therefore not of concern.

Figure 9 - % of student degree classifications at AECC University College in 2017-18 by age



Progression to employment or further study

Looking at the 2016-17 DLHE survey, there is no difference for mature students in progression to employment or further study – 90 % for mature students compared to 90% for young students.

1.4 Disabled students

Access

The percentage of students declaring a disability at the University College is 10%, slightly below the national average. As a chiropractic education provider, the physical nature of chiropractic should be considered. Whilst we can, and do, make reasonable adjustments for students, for example, those who

need intermittent walking aids, some learning outcomes, such as delivering physical therapeutic interventions, students with certain disabilities may find difficult to achieve. Evidence about the criteria students must meet can be found within the General Chiropractic Council Education Standards: <https://www.gcc-uk.org/UserFiles/Docs/Education/Education%20Standards%206.8.18.pdf> It should be noted students self-select for the course and the data shared is reflective of this. This appears similar for institutions such as the University College of Osteopathy (see figure 10 below).

Figure 10 – Disaggregation of types of disability, compared to similar specialist institutions

Disaggregation	Our figures	National	Loughborough University	St George's Hospital Medical School	University College of Osteopathy	The Royal Veterinary College
Total students with a stated disability	10.0%	14.6%	15.7%	13.0%	20.0%	15.0%
-Cognitive or learning	8.0%	5.5%	7.9%	8.0%	15.0%	8.0%
-Sensory, medical or physical	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	2.0%	0.0%	2.0%
-Mental Health condition	0.0%	3.5%	2.1%	2.0%	0.0%	3.0%
-Social and communication	0.0%	0.8%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
-Multiple impairments	0.0%	2.3%	1.8%	1.0%	0.0%	1.0%

Source: OfS data dashboard

We have disaggregated the data further into types of disability but are unable to share this data here due to extremely small numbers.

Success

Non-continuation

12.5% of students with a disability discontinued their studies, compared to 7% of students without a stated disability. This does indicate a potential non-continuation gap for disabled students, however, it should be noted this will relate to a very small number of students so drawing conclusions from this data may be premature. As this is the first time we have had this disaggregated data we will investigate this difference further during the five years of the plan and look to monitor and address any gaps.

Attainment

Very small numbers of the 2017-18 cohort declared a disability, and of those declaring a disability and graduating during the 2017-18 academic year all achieved a 2:1 or above.

Progression to employment or further study

For progression, the only data we have been able to obtain by demographics is from 2016/17 graduates in the DLHE survey (see figure 11)

Figure 11 - Student progression for students graduating 2016-17 by Disability status (DHLE results)

Programme	Disability Flag	%in Emp or study	% Professional	Salary
MCHIRO (HONS) MASTER OF CHIROPRACTIC	Yes	100.00%	100.00%	£21,250.00
	No	89.66%	86.21%	£27,000.00

In progression to further study, students who declared a disability actually did better, on average, within this cohort than students without a declared disability. 100% of those students who declared a disability were in employment or further study compared to 90% of students without a stated disability. However, there were differences in salary which we will look into during the five years of the plan to understand the reasons for these and any emerging patterns.

1.5 Care leavers

AECC University College currently has few care leavers within the student body and cannot include data without identifying these students. We have identified this as an area for development. In addition, we have added questions to our Student Records System to build further data alongside the existing UCAS information. We hope this will provide additional understanding to inform targets for future plans. Over the five years of the plan we will work with the Local Authority (BCP) to build awareness of the institution and how we can support Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

We have looked at various intersections, however, because the different disadvantaged groups are so small within the institution, it is hard to see any effects at present. We will continue to monitor different intersections as our work to widen access to the institution comes to fruition.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

AECC University College does not currently have students who have declared being from any of the additional backgrounds stated to experience barriers in Higher Education. However, we are investigating opportunities locally to work with Young Carers, Refugee Children, Children from Military families and those from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. Whilst we are keen to widen the populations we work with and offer opportunities to them, due to us being such a small institution our focus will need to be upon widening access from the groups discussed above; Low Participation neighbourhoods, students from BAME backgrounds, care leavers and students with a disability.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

Due to the gaps in access in all categories except mature students, we will be targeting the majority of our work on ensuring wider access for all disadvantaged groups; from a LPN background, BAME students, students with a declared disability and care leavers. We have, therefore, refocused some of our aims and objectives in our previous plan around state school entrance and low income backgrounds to the OfS recommended POLAR4 target – we feel our work with Low Participation Neighbourhoods will also increase numbers of students entering university from these groups. As we are developing our Access and Participation practice, we have worked to develop relationships with schools locally to widen the groups of students we offer opportunities to, and will be extending this to some inner city areas to reach a wider group of students.

More specifically we will aim to target access for the different groups in the following ways;

- POLAR 4 – We have identified local schools which fall into Quintiles 1 and 2 of the POLAR4 spectrum and are targeting interventions at students from these schools. We also look at the number of NCOP learners in each school. Opportunities which students self-select and apply for, such as summer school, are via application form which ask about various criteria above to ensure we are targeting interventions at the right students.
- BAME – we will seek to work with local groups where possible, but considering the demographic profile of Dorset, will also look to work with students from inner city areas, particularly those identified as ‘cold spots’.

- Disabled students – we will look to work with students in our local area. We are currently have a working group on mental health, and so will look to expand this work to younger students in our local area.
- Care Leavers – we are working with BCP, our local council to offer opportunities to looked after children across the County.

As we grow and widen access, we may become aware of emerging gaps at later stages of the student lifecycle; in student continuation, success and progress. Therefore the University College will carefully monitor students on new courses as they progress to understand where interventions may be needed to ensure success and progression for all student groups.

For non-continuation, we have noted some small gaps for young people from POLAR Q1 and 2 backgrounds and those with disabilities. We will therefore work with student services, the student union and teaching teams to identify any concerns faced by these groups and put in place interventions to support them throughout their degree. We will aim to have interventions in place for these groups by the end of the 2020-21 academic year and will monitor the effectiveness of these throughout the five years of the plan.

Whilst student numbers have historically been very small, we have noticed a difference in progression for students from BAME backgrounds which we will be focussing on as a target during this plan. This is to ensure we fully understand the nature of this issue over time as we increase the number of students from different backgrounds starting courses at AECC University College. We hope to work with the graduate steering groups from industry partners, as well as the wider chiropractic community to identify and overcome any barriers for BAME students.

2.2 Aims and objectives

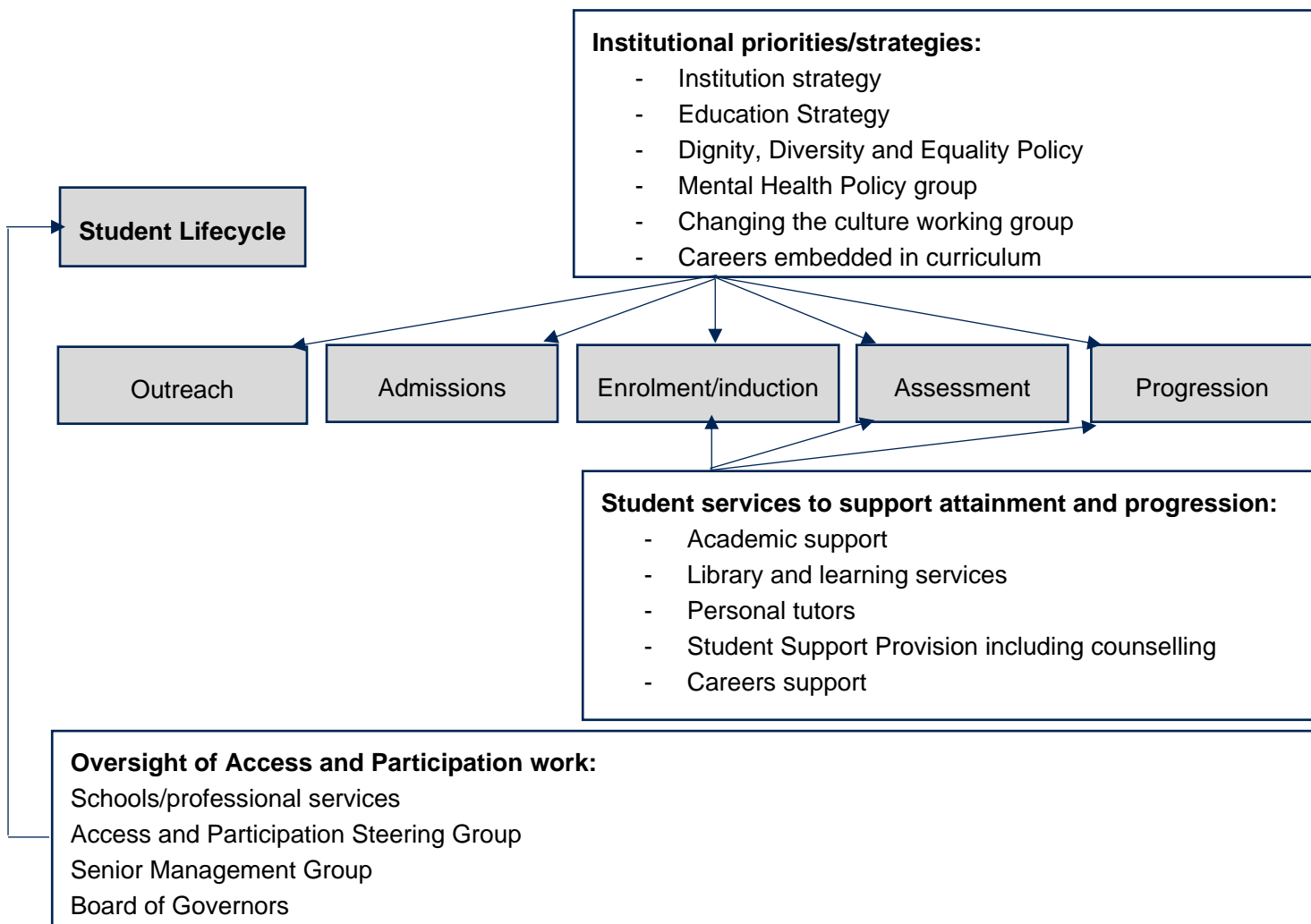
Aim	Objective	Baseline	Target by 2025
ACCESS - To reduce the gap between the number of entrants from Quintile 1 and the number of entrants from Quintile 5 (POLAR4)	Through interventions with local LPN schools, to increase the number of students from LPN areas applying to and accessing universities, and to diversify our student body	28% point gap (2017-18 intake)	To reduce gap to at least 18% with a plan to further reduce this by at least 2% per year thereafter
ACCESS - To increase the proportion of students entering the student body from underrepresented groups, in particular BAME backgrounds	To work with BAME Groups, both in and out of the local area, to increase the number of BAME entrants, with a focus on the number of students accessing the University College from Black and Asian backgrounds.	10% of intake from ethnic backgrounds other than white British (2017-18 intake)	15% of our intake to be from Backgrounds other than White British
ACCESS - To increase the proportion of students entering the student body from underrepresented groups, in particular those with a declared disability.	To increase the number of students with health conditions accessing the University College. As from our data it appears careers from our course offer may not appeal to those with physical difficulties, we will focus on working with students with mental health difficulties,	10% of intake declare a disability (2017-18 intake)	15% of our intake to be students with a disability

	learning disabilities and social and communication difficulties.		
SUCCESS - To reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	To investigate and reduce the gap in continuation between students from Q1 backgrounds and students from Q5 backgrounds.	3% points more students from POLAR4 Quintile 1 withdrawing from studies than Quintiles 5	No more than 0% gap
SUCCESS - To reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	To investigate and close the gap in continuation between students with a declared disability and students without a declared disability	5.5% more students with a declared disability withdraw from studies than those without a declared disability	No more than 0% gap
PROGRESSION - To reduce the gap between white/BAME students in finding work or further study following graduation	To understand any barriers students from BAME backgrounds experience in seeking employment/further study after leaving university and to close the gap between white and BAME students	83.33% compared to 92.31% for white students (2016-18 DLHE survey)	No more than 0% point gap

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Figure 12 demonstrates our whole provider strategic approach and how this interplays with the different stages of the student lifecycle:



Our theory of change

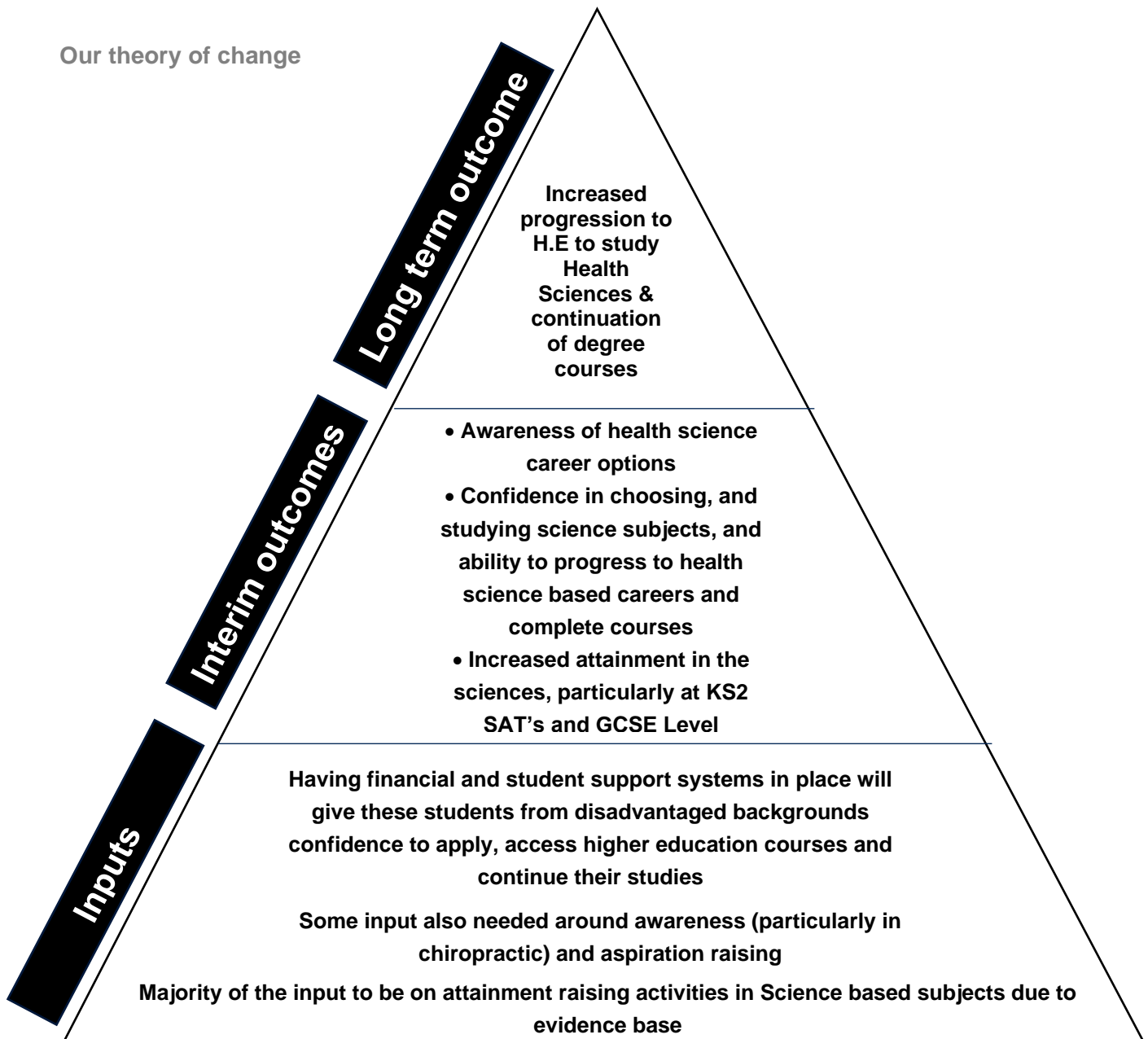


Figure 13 – AECC University College theory of change

Our summary theory of change in Figure 13 above reflects the inputs we plan to deliver to widen access to the University College, the interim outcomes we expect to see in terms of changes in knowledge and skills and behavioural change, and the long term goal that students apply to, access and study successfully at the university college.

This theory of change has been delivered in line with the strong evidence base for interventions to raise attainment which is why this is the widest part of our theory diagram. The diagram also acknowledges that currently the majority of students at AECC University College are chiropractic students and therefore, more awareness of the profession is needed with students from disadvantaged backgrounds alongside aspiration raising work around this as a career choice. We acknowledge this will change during the five years of the plan as we further develop our new courses and students' progress through them. We will continue to monitor this, and aim to gather evidence for this approach as there is little in current literature, adapting our approach as necessary to ensure interventions meet all student's needs. The need for financial support to ensure students feel able to access and study is also acknowledged as an important input. As indicated by research, whilst students may not always have a good understanding or awareness of bursaries prior to applying to university, for some students they can make a real difference and have been linked to student performance and retention (Hatt et al, 2015).

We will ensure these are promoted clearly and we make information available to all prospective students from target groups.

AECC University College is developing an inclusive approach to access and participation work throughout the student lifecycle, with a newly formed Steering Group with a diverse membership including student representatives. The steering group is chaired by the Vice Principal and reports to the Senior Management Group. The institution's access and participation strategy and this plan, have been developed in line with our Organisational strategy (which has an objective on widening participation), Education Strategy and Dignity, Equality and Diversity Policy.

AECC University College Education Strategy details our commitment to being an institution where all students can flourish through an inclusive approach to course design, learning and teaching. To ensure this, relevant aims from the Strategy are led by the Head of Library and Learning Services and Access and Participation Manager to ensure all students are given equal opportunities to reach their potential, able to access support where necessary and are engaged as partners in their learning. The broader strategy for education and teaching is closely linked to the Access and Participation plan and its measures.

In particular, the Access and Participation Manager has joint responsibility for two linked aims from this:

- To offer a high-quality student experience that supports all our students to achieve their academic, personal and professional potential
- Through active engagement and targeted support, including a focus on physical and mental health needs, to enable students from underrepresented groups to achieve their educational and professional goals

Heads of academic schools are leading on separate pieces of work to ensure the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all students. The implementation plan for the Education Strategy is monitored at each meeting of the Learning and Teaching Sub-committee.

In terms of employability and skills development, these are embedded in the curriculum and work to ensure equal opportunities for progression is led by Head of Academic Schools. Interventions tend to be course-specific, for example chiropractic run a 'speed meet' to introduce final year students to future employers, and it is likely such interventions will be developed for the new courses as the first cohorts reach their final year of study.

The University College has focussed on equality and diversity matters in recent years and the increased concentration on access and participation through the Steering Group, will further benefit this work. As examples of our commitment to this area, we have a Dignity, Diversity and Equality Policy, and have achieved Two Ticks employer status, have been recognised as a Disability Confident Employer and most recently, a Mindful Employer. These important benchmarks indirectly impact students, evidencing the cultural importance equality and diversity matters have at the University College. Equality considerations are embedded in our decision making processes and equality is considered when developing key University College policies and making key decision in support of our public sector equality duty.

Updates on all aspects of student Access, Success and Progression are monitored and discussed at quarterly Access and Participation steering group meetings

Strategic measures

The above stated Access aims and objectives will be delivered through a programme of primary and secondary school interventions; to raise aspirations but primarily support attainment in disadvantaged groups. As stated above, in order to reach gaps in POLAR4, we will work with local schools in the lower quintiles to deliver interventions, however for BAME, we will look to work with students from inner city areas. Due to the levels of deprivation in our local area, we will also work with families and our local community.

As we have recently become aware of the apparent gaps in Success and Progression we will be working with teaching teams and student services to develop and target interventions to address possible non-continuation. We expect these to be in place by the end of the 2020-21 academic year. We will also be working with the chiropractic course team, our alumni and the wider chiropractic community to look at any possible issues around BAME graduates obtaining professional employment and developing interventions, again to be in place by the end of the 2020-21 academic year. We expect any gap in progression between white students and those from BAME backgrounds to have decreased by the end of this five year plan.

We will collaborate with other institutions where opportunities arise, both locally and nationally. We already work closely with local BCP Council forums and the Southern Universities Network regionally, and fellow specialist institutions on a national level through GUILDHE. We are also developing several local school partnerships and working closely with the Connie Rothman Learning Trust to deliver some of our Primary interventions, as well as supporting Children's University through Bournemouth University who run the franchise.

The University College is committed to supporting students from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups through our Financial Support package. Our view is that financial support should be in place throughout the period of study. All bursaries will be awarded on a year by year basis throughout the student's course. The extended length of the chiropractic course may be a deterrent to some groups, therefore this ongoing financial support is essential.

As such, the AECC University College will offer 5 students a bursary for up to five years of study (the maximum length of undergraduate courses offered at the University College). We award these by ranking household income for entrants from lowest to highest and award to the five students with the lowest household income. Students with a household income \leq £16,000 will receive a bursary of £2,000 for each year of study. Students with a household income between £16,001 and £25,000 will receive a bursary of £1,800 for each year of study. This applies to UK students studying full-time on any undergraduate course and will be given as a cash bursary. In addition to this the AECC University College Diagnostic Instruments Bursary is awarded to all UK* students enrolled on the undergraduate chiropractic course who meet the eligibility criteria of a household income of less than £25,000. The purpose of the Bursary is to support the acquisition of necessary clinical diagnostic instruments for study on the undergraduate chiropractic course.

Finally, we will look to investigate any progression gaps for BAME students. This is likely to be a wider sector issue rather than an issue with processes within the University College. We will therefore be engaging the wider sector in helping us to take this forward which may take several years. We will be looking to have conversations with regulatory partners, alumni and other partners over the coming two years to understand any issues and will look to have interventions in place by the end of the 2020-21 academic year. This will allow us to monitor progress over the five years of the plan.

3.2 Student consultation

Our students are active partners in University College developments. They are represented on all of the University College's academic committees including Academic Board. A student representative is also a full member of the AECC University College Board of Governors. All student fees, and any annual increases in line with government policy, are approved by the Board of Governors. The University College has an established Students' Union, and a full-time manager employed by the University College. Students' Union Officers act on behalf of the student body, and student representatives act in the students interests. Our students are strong supporters of the University College and act as excellent ambassadors in promoting the chiropractic course in outreach activities and in the wider community. We will replicate this model for new courses as they are developed.

Students have been involved throughout the development of this plan. We met with Students' Union representatives and champions for particular demographic groups to discuss the data and what they would focus on if it was their decision. Their feedback is very much reflected in the aims

and objectives stated above; they overwhelmingly said they would focus on access, and in particular for students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods and Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds. Suggestions were given for how they would achieve this which are built into our implementation plan. This feedback was used to develop the plan and the next iteration was presented at the Student and Staff Liaison committee (SSLC) and feedback was sought via email from the original focus group. Their submission to accompany this plan can be found in Annex A.

The final approved plan will be taken back to the SSLC September meeting to discuss how the student body would like to be involved in implementing the five year plan and monitoring progress. In addition two student representatives sit on the Access and Participation Steering Group to provide ongoing monitoring and feedback.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

We completed the OfS Self Evaluation Assessment tool. A summary of learning from this; what is in place and how we can further improve Access and Participation evaluation practice can be found below, along with our evaluation framework for the proposed activities for this plan in Annex B.

Strategic Context for evaluation at AECC University College

Monitoring and evaluation form part of the agenda for quarterly Access and Participation Steering Group meetings. The Access and Participation Manager reports on programme evaluations to this group including reflections and areas for improvement. There is budget within the Access and Participation budget dedicated to engagement including training and development costs. In 2019/20 AECC University College will sign up to the NERUPI Framework to ensure evaluation best practice is embedded in all Access and Participation activities. This will also provide the opportunity for further evidence-based training opportunities to enhance evaluation skills. In addition at least one day per week (0.2 FTE) of the Access and Participation Manager's time will be spent on evaluation activities.

How evaluation and evidence shape programme design

All programmes are underpinned by clear aims and objectives. We will be revising these in line with the NERUPI framework in the near future. Through a literature search, we have used evidence where it exists to inform design and development of our programmes and activities, however, as a small specialist health sciences provider, we recognise we may need to gather our own evidence for some specialist interventions and will look to do this during the five years of this plan. We have clear outcome measures in place for all programmes and activities and will gather evidence of these to include in evaluation reporting.

How evaluations are designed at AECC University College

Evaluation of all programmes at AECC University College will be underpinned by our theory of change and evaluation framework. A mixed methods approach will be used wherever possible and information gathered pre and post intervention. This includes standardised information we request from schools such as postcode, pupil premium and free school meals data, as well as attainment data for attainment raising interventions.

We are joining the NERUPI Network to provide us with networking and criteria to benchmark against.

How evaluation is implemented at AECC University College

Evaluation activity is primarily carried out by the Access and Participation Manager with support from the internal 'Health Education Research Centre' where necessary.

All our processes for gathering data are compliant with GDPR and the Data Protection Act. Ethical approval and consents are sought where necessary. Risk analysis is always completed ahead of any activity. In line with developing Access and Participation practices over the coming five years, we will investigate and implement ways of tracking participants over time where possible.

The OfS financial support evaluation Toolkit will be used to implement procedures for evaluating financial support from November 2019.

How learning from evidence and insight from evaluation shapes improvements

AECC University College will use an action research model approach to activities, using learning to inform design and development of future interventions. Extent of causality and limitations are included in evaluation. Findings including the above will be shared internally and all evaluation reports made available on our shared drive so colleagues designing outreach activities can incorporate these within their planning. AECC University College are at the early stages of developing Access and Participation programmes and will look to develop our evidence base and share where appropriate over time.

In addition all evaluations are reviewed at the quarterly access and participation steering group meeting, in order to inform monitoring and decision making.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

As detailed in Figure 12 above demonstrating our whole provider strategic approach to Access and Participation, AECC University College has a monitoring and reporting structure in place to oversee the Access and Participation Plan. The Access and Participation Manager has responsibility for delivery of the plan and reports to the Academic Registrar. Progress is reported to the Access and Participation Steering Group on a quarterly basis and highlight reports and areas for discussion are sent on to Senior Management Group and the Board of Governors as necessary.

Evaluation of financial support will form a part of monitoring and evaluation. We will evaluate continuation, success and progression for different groups of students, both those who do and do not qualify for financial support to understand the impact this may have. We will use the OfS Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit for evaluation. Due to the size of the organisation we will use primarily the survey and interview tools for this purpose. We will conduct the evaluation during the months of November and December as this was found to be most effective during the OfS pilot and will conduct our first evaluation in 2019, and annually thereafter.

4. Provision of information to students

The University College provides clear and accessible information to prospective students (and parents) at regular open days, student recruitment events, online and through our admissions service. Our Access and Participation Plan will be published in full on our website. The University College interacts with different audiences in a range of ways including prospectuses, website, social media and presentations. We also provide timely information to UCAS and SLC. Unistats data on our courses is published on our website.

Specific information, advice and guidance for prospective students will include:

- Provision of financial information including fees, planning advice on how to finance their period of study, extra costs, for example purchase of diagnostic kits, and bursaries and other forms of financial assistance for eligible students in each year of their study.
- The admissions process ('how to apply') and entry requirements.
- Course information, academic support services, and Student Union facilities.
- Unistats and current student feedback data (NSS).

As well as published information, the University College offers advice and guidance on a one to one basis with prospective students, including financial and academic information. Moreover, the

Student Union is always willing to put a prospective student in contact with a current student for advice and guidance.

All public information for prospective students is regularly monitored and is the responsibility of the Senior Management Group and there are clear lines of responsibility for approving the accuracy of the information, and for making it available in the public domain

5. Appendix

The OfS will append the following items from the fees and targets and investment documents when an access and participation plan is published:

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)
2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)
3. Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

Annex 1 - Access and Participation Consultation with Students

AECC Students' Union (ASU) were invited to attend a focus group on access and participation in order to offer input on the University College's Access and Participation Plan. ASU were shown the national statistics and how AECC University College was benchmarked against these. It was very obvious that there were particular demographics that we were currently not recruiting from and ASU had a conversation as to how these areas could be targeted. It was agreed that people from BAME backgrounds should form part of a focussed recruitment drive. ASU felt that we needed to utilise our BAME champion, and other students from this background, by sending them to schools in areas with a higher BAME population than Bournemouth has. It was felt pupils might be more inclined to engage if they saw people who were 'like them'. If links were made with primary schools these relationships could be developed early on in the education journey.

Further discussion was held at the recent Student Staff Liaison Committee with students from each school and year group. It was suggested that concerns regarding the cost of attending University, and for this institution the cost of living in Bournemouth, may seem prohibitive for those from lower income backgrounds. Being able to promote the likely outcomes in terms of job prospects and salaries might help overcome some of these concerns and make Higher Education seem more accessible.

From discussion that members of ASU have had at various sector conferences it is evident that one of the barriers for students considering applying to a particular institution is whether they will feel included within the student body. Consideration needs to be given to what services and support is currently on offer for underrepresented groups and how this can be promoted to these potential students during the application stage. It was felt that working with the various champions, including BAME, would be useful in achieving this. ASU were keen to encourage more students to stand for champion roles in target areas as needed.

It was recognised that recruitment of mature students at AECC University College was above the national average, however institutionally numbers had dropped over the years. Concerns that the lack of funding for those who already had a degree was likely to put off some candidates. The students were informed that discussions over fee levels for some applicants were being had.

There were concerns about the accessibility of the current campus – for example for students with mobility difficulties. The University College recognises and are discussing it as part of the campus development programme.

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Annex 2 - AECC University College Evaluation Framework

The purpose of this framework is to provide information on how AECC University College evaluates its activities, uses this evaluation to plan future activities and shares findings with the local schools, colleges and partners it is working with. This is our initial framework and have clear expectations this will develop during the years of the plan, as we enhance our evaluation skills through being members of the NERUPI framework.

Stage	Age group	Activity	Objectives	Measurement and evidence to gather
Pre-16	KS2	Science Roadshows	Developed knowledge of particular science topics	Questions before and after each session. Observation
	KS2	Children's University	Developed knowledge of particular science topics	Questions before and after each session. Observation
	Y3/4	British Science Week	Developed knowledge of particular science topics	Pre-elicitation questions and knowledge testing at end of each session
	Y5/6	Primary health club	Improved awareness and interest of different health science careers	Discussions and questions before and after each session
	Y5/6	Primary Science Club	Improved performance at KS2 Science	Questions before and after session. Observation. Follow up with teachers
	Across Primary age range to Y7	Straighten up UK	Increased awareness of chiropractic as a career choice and how to stay healthy	Comparison of grades as progress through from Y6 – Y11. Onward destination. Teacher and student feedback
	Multiple interventions between Y8 and Y11	Longitudinal programme Q1 schools	To improve attainment, particularly in science based subjects.	Evaluation of individual projects and activities
	Y11	Revision bootcamps	Improved attainment of local students	Difference between predicted and actual grades Teacher and pupil feedback surveys Surveys – comparison between baseline and follow up survey responses Testing knowledge before and after session

	Y9-12	Subject specific taster sessions	in science, P.E and Psychology Increase in learners ambition to progress onto HE.	Teacher and pupil feedback Testing knowledge before and after session Teacher and pupil feedback
	Y9/10	British Science Week workshops		Before and after surveys Presentations Observations
	Y11	Subject specific support - guest lectures and development days	To improve attainment, particularly in science based subjects.	Before and after surveys In session questioning Poster presentations
	Y9-13	Youth involvement in activities, forums and takeover challenges	To improve attainment, particularly in science based subjects.	
	Y10-13	Development of research skills	To improve self-confidence and soft skills Mini research conference including poster competition	
Post-16	Y12	Residential Summer School	To increase awareness of health science careers in young people from disadvantaged areas and from outside of the local area	Before and after surveys Questioning to ascertain subject knowledge developed
	Y12	Teen summit	Improved coping skills for stressful periods such as exams	Before and after surveys Feedback from schools/teachers
	Y13	Study skills days	Improved study skills such as speed reading, note-taking, revision etc.	Before and after surveys Feedback from schools/teachers
	Y12	Soft skills for careers in health	Increase in learners ambition to progress onto a health career	Surveys – comparison between baseline and follow up survey responses Surveys – comparison between baseline and

	Y13	Revision bootcamps	Increase in achievement at A Level	follow up survey responses Difference between predicted and actual A level grades
	Y11-Y13	Clinic outreach programme	Increase in learners ambition to progress onto a career in chiropractic	Surveys – comparison between baseline and follow up survey responses Follow up at 6/12 months
Community & families	Families	Health, Science and wellbeing festival	Increase in awareness of careers in the health sciences Improved science knowledge	Feedback questionnaires
	Schools	Careers in health sciences event	Improved awareness of careers in the health sciences and possible routes for students	Evaluation from different sessions/activities Feedback questionnaires

Annex 3 – summary of variation to plan

What we are aiming to achieve

Our aim is to widen access to AECC University College. As we do this we will foster an environment where all current students can reach their potential and succeed in their studies. We are committed to supporting our students in seeking employment or progressing to further study.

Based on our assessment of performance, we have chosen to focus on the following areas:

Supporting attainment at school and access to Higher Education

We work with schools to support attainment in health, social and sport sciences and will look to extend this within the core science subjects.

Diversifying our provision

We are investigating ways to diversify our offer within the health sciences, including foundation degrees and apprenticeships, allowing us to meet a gap in provision of apprenticeships in allied health professions. This is subject to gaining entry onto the apprenticeship register.

To achieve our aims and the new priorities for Access and Participation, we will be focussing on the following areas of activity:

- We have an established programme of activities with local schools and partners, which we will extend to support **attainment in science**
- We are developing our partnership working with local primary schools, including development of a **forest school** onsite
- We are extending our support for students transitioning into higher education, and will be piloting **peer assisted learning**
- Following the implementation of contextual admissions, we will monitor progress of **students with a contextual offer**, ensuring we support all students to reach their potential
- In our review of digital teaching and learning we will focus on accessibility for all students
- We are implementing procedures to check our **curriculum is inclusive** for all students
- We will review our **financial support offer** and determine if this is still meeting students' needs

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

We do not intend to raise fees annually

Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	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	*	*
Other	*	*

Table 4c - Part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	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	*	*
Other	*	*

Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Additional information:	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	*	*
Other	*	*

Targets and investment plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: AECC University College

Provider UKPRN: 10000163

Investment summary

The OfS requires providers to report on their planned investment in access, financial support and research and evaluation in their access and participation plan. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in student success and progression in the access and participation plans and therefore investment in these areas is not recorded here.

Note about the data:

The investment forecasts below in access, financial support and research and evaluation does not represent not the total amount spent by providers in these areas. It is the additional amount that providers have committed following the introduction of variable fees in 2006-07. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

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.

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£96,846.92	£96,846.92	£96,846.92	£96,846.92	£96,846.92
Access (pre-16)	£44,184.00	£44,184.00	£44,184.00	£44,184.00	£44,184.00
Access (post-16)	£19,747.92	£19,747.92	£19,747.92	£19,747.92	£19,747.92
Access (adults and the community)	£915.00	£915.00	£915.00	£915.00	£915.00
Access (other)	£32,000.00	£32,000.00	£32,000.00	£32,000.00	£32,000.00
Financial support (£)	£43,500.00	£63,500.00	£55,500.00	£53,500.00	£53,500.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£7,000.00	£7,000.00	£7,000.00	£7,000.00	£7,000.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£1,431,440.00	£1,437,610.00	£1,440,695.00	£1,422,185.00	£1,419,100.00
Access investment	6.8%	6.7%	6.7%	6.8%	6.8%
Financial support	3.0%	4.4%	3.9%	3.8%	3.8%
Research and evaluation	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Total investment (as %HFI)	10.3%	11.6%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%

