# City, University of London
# Access and participation plan 2025-26 to 2029-30.

## Introduction and strategic aim

**City St George's, University of London**

On the 1st August 2024 City, University of London and St George's, University of London merged to form a new higher education provider, City St George's, University of London. The process of integrating these two higher education providers is complex and will take time to embed. To ensure clarity for students the content of this access and participation plan relates to students at the City St George's Clerkenwell and Moorgate campuses, (formerly City, University of London). Any students at City St George's Tooting campus (formally St George's, University of London) are covered by the St George's Access and Participation Plan.

In this plan City St George's Clerkenwell and Moorgate campuses will be referred to as City, the legacy institution under which the data, analysis and plan was drafted.

It has been agreed with the OfS that the newly merged City St George's will submit an Access and Participation plan covering all provision to start in 2026/27 academic year.

**City, University of London**

City is a leading global university located in the heart of London. Established in 1894, we have a long history of delivering quality career-focused education, underpinned by a dedication to social mobility, employment readiness, and social engagement. We offer a diverse range of undergraduate, postgraduate, and research degrees across various disciplines, including business, law, creative arts, social sciences, health sciences, mathematics, computer science, and engineering.

Our mission is to provide world-class education that prepares all our students for successful careers and leadership roles. We are committed to academic excellence, research-informed teaching, and innovation. We equip our students with the knowledge, skills, and experience they need to make a positive impact in their chosen fields and contribute to society.

**Key Strengths:**

- **Career-focused education** designed to meet the needs of industry and prepare students for successful careers.
- **Strong industry links** with extensive connections with businesses, organisations, and professional bodies, providing our students with valuable networking and internship opportunities.
- **Research excellence,** we are home to world-leading research centres and institutes, contributing to advancements in various fields.
- **Our Location** in the heart of London, offers students access to a vibrant cultural scene, diverse career opportunities, and a global network.
- **Entrepreneurship and innovation** are supported, nurtured and encouraged.

Our undergraduate courses are full-time, with our part time provision being made up of professional practice courses in subjects such as health. We currently deliver six Degree Apprenticeships combining on-the-job training with higher level study, supporting apprentices to progress their careers, and employers with a highly skilled, knowledgeable workforce.

**Staff:**

- 7.3% of City staff have a known disability
- 32% of City staff identify as BAME in 2022/23. The Professional Services staff group has a higher proportion of BAME staff, 38%, compared to 24% of academics
- 55% of City staff are female

Throughout this report BAME is used solely for reporting purposes as it remains the current legal definition required for data collection. Whilst the acronym is used in alignment with the Higher Education Statistics Agency, we acknowledge its limitations and the homogenous grouping that this term implies and its lack of wider considerations for the disparity between groups.

**Student Demographic and our London location:**

City has seen an increase in our student population of 6% between 21/22 and 22/23, we expect to see a continued steady increase in our student numbers for the duration of this plan. We have a very diverse student body, with over 20,000 students (HESA 2021/22 returns) from over 160 countries.

Our student cohort reflects the vibrant diversity of our London location, with students representing a wide range of cultural backgrounds and lived experiences. We are proud to welcome many first-generation students, as well as those who live in areas of high deprivation. Our student body is predominantly young, with many choosing to live at home while pursuing their studies. East London is our top area for applications with the only areas outside of Greater London to fall in our top 20 being Luton, Birmingham, and Chelmsford. London has both the highest levels of participation in higher education in the country and the largest growth in 18-year-olds.[1] The London student population is also moving towards "hyper-diversity" with those from "non-white ethnic backgrounds expected to make up 74% of those entering HE by 2030."[2] 25% of young people in state secondary schools in London are eligible for Free School Meals, compared to 14% across the rest of England.[3]

- **Ethnicity:** 75.8% of our undergraduate students are Black, Asian, or other Minority Ethnic background, while 22.2% identify as White.
- **IMD Q1&2:** 50% of our home student's population come from IMD Q1 & 2 neighbourhoods
- **Gender:** We have a higher number of students identifying as female (57.6%).
- **A High proportion of commuter students** at 63.9% (HEPI Homeward Bound report).[4]
- **Age:** 18 and 24 years old are our largest group reflecting the typical age range for undergraduate study, with only 4% of our UG students being over the age of 30.
- **International Students.** 72.6% are Home Students and 20.4% are international.[5]

[1] Hewitt, R. (2020), Demand for higher education to 2035, *Higher Education Policy Institute,* https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2020/10/22/demand-for-higher-education-to-2035/.

[2] Atherton, G., & Mazhari, T. (2018), Preparing for hyper-diversity: London's student population in 2030, *Access HE*. https://www.accesshe.ac.uk/yYdIx0u7/Preparing-for-hyper-diversity-Londons-student-population-in-2030.pdf.

[3] Department for Education (2019), Pupils Eligible for Free School Meals, Borough, https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/pupils-eligible-free-school-meals-borough.

[4] Maguire, D. J., & Morris, D. (2018), Homeward Bound: Defining, understanding and aiding commuter students. *Higher Education Policy Institute*, https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Demand-for-Higher-Education-to-2035_HEPI-Report-134_FINAL.pdf.

[5] For statistics at City, see City, University of London (2023), Student Statistics, https://www.city.ac.uk/about/vision-and-strategy/academic-excellence/student-statistics; City, University of London (2024), Rankings and Statistics, https://www.city.ac.uk/about/vision-and-strategy/academic-excellence/rankings.

## Risks to equality of opportunity

To identify risks to equality of opportunity for City students we have undertaken an assessment of performance using the OfS supplementary data alongside internal data sources and national evidence (see Annex A). We also undertook an extensive consultation with input from over 2,000 City students and we mapped our indicators of risk against the Office for Students' Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR). We have identified 11 risks impacting our students across the student lifecycle which are detailed below alongside the associated indicator of risk.

| Risk | Detail | Indicator of risk |
|---|---|---|
| 1. **Knowledge and Skills** Access | Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to be accepted onto HE courses that match their expectations and ambitions. | Local students face multiple intersecting indicators of disadvantage that have a direct impact on attainment outcomes. We are in a strong position to tackle this sector wide risk present in the OfS EORR through attainment raising programmes. |
| 2. **Information and Guidance** Access | Students may not have equal opportunity to receive the information and guidance that will enable them to develop ambition and expectations, or to make informed choices about their higher education options. | Students facing multiple intersectional indicators of disadvantage may not have access to sufficient information, advice, guidance or career education to inform their future decisions. We are in a strong position to tackle this sector wide risk present in the OfS EORR due to our Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) provision in local school and embedded across our outreach. |
| **3. Perception of HE** Access | Students may not feel able to apply to higher education, or certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified. | Lower % of students with disabilities accessing City and lower proportion of Black male student starting at City than other ethnicities, the reasons for this are complex but perception of higher education is believed to be a contributing factor. |
| 4. **Academic support, teaching, and assessment not fully inclusive** Completion & Attainment | Teaching, support, and assessment design may not be inclusive of diverse student needs, potentially leading to inequitable learning experiences and outcomes.<br>Differences in educational experiences prior to joining City have not been sufficiently addressed through academic support, policy and regulations. | Lower completion rates and attainment levels for students of colour and those from IMD 1 compared to IMD 5 identified<br>Lower than average NSS scores for teaching on my course, academic support, learning opportunities, assessment and feedback. |
| 5. **Mental Health** Whole lifecycle | Students may not experience an environment conducive to good mental health and wellbeing.<br>An environment that does not support students' mental health and wellbeing will reduce the student's ability to cope with daily life, learning and studying. | No indicators present in the City assessment of performance due to low number of students with a reported disability at City.<br>We are still considering this a key City risk as the sector evidence points to a |

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| | | mental health crisis for young people and students.[6] |
| 6. **Ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic** Completion & Attainment | Students may be affected by the ongoing consequences of the coronavirus pandemic.<br>Students' experiences during the pandemic varied widely and student behaviour has changed as a result of this worldwide event. | Attendance is low across some courses, there is a growth in the awarding gap and completion gap between a number or student groups.<br>Evidence of a lack of student engagement in the School Sector will continue to filter upwards to HE providers. Student feedback flagged this as their second highest risk. |
| 7. **Financial Hardship and Cost of Learning** Completion, Attainment & Progression from HE | Increases in cost pressures may affect a student's ability to complete their course, obtain a good grade, or gain experience to support progress from HE.<br>Students who have financial worries or constraints are not able to fully engage in their learning and higher education experience, such as the cost of travelling to campus or taking part in enrichment activities. | Lower levels of completion and attainment for students of colour and their white peers and those from IMD 1 compared to IMD 5.<br>Students identified this as the biggest risk to equality of opportunity in our student consultation.<br>City Student Union identified this as a key concern for students in their check-in calls and accessible bursaries research.<br>Evidence from the sector on the impact of the cost of learning. |
| 8. **Progression from HE** | Students may not have equal opportunity to progress to an outcome they consider to be a positive reflection of their higher education experience.<br>There are systemic barriers within industry such as classism and institutional racism that impact equality of opportunity to progress from higher education. | OfS data dashboard shows a gap in progression from Higher Education between students of colour and their white peers, IMD 1 and 5.<br>Students also identified this as the third highest risk to equality of opportunity in the APP student consultation. |
| 9 **Lack of opportunity to fully engage in HE**. Completion, Attainment and Progression from HE | Students may not have equal opportunity to engage with higher education, or extracurricular activities.<br>This can be due to commitments outside of studying, the impact of commuting, costs involved, a lack of belonging, or financial reasons. | Low attendance levels.<br>Low completion rates.<br>Low progression from HE.<br>Identified as a risk in our student consultation interviews.<br>Identified as a risk by the Student Union in their check in calls, and through the cost-of-living group (challenges traveling to uni). |

[6] Lewis, J. & Sonja, L. (2024), Student mental health in England: Statistics, policy, and guidance, *House of Commons Library*, https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8593/CBP-8593.pdf.

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| 10. **Lack sense of belonging** Whole lifecycle | Students may feel a sense of loneliness, isolation, and lack of belonging that impacts their ability and desire to engage fully in their studies. | High proportion of commuter students.<br>Student feedback during Covid where our students of colour shared the challenges they faced throughout their studies. |
| **11. Limited access to appropriate data** Completion & Attainment | Staff may encounter issues accessing comprehensive data or face challenges in locating relevant information. Additionally, they might lack the necessary data to proactively support students or consider equality of opportunity within planning cycles. | Identified through staff feedback as a key challenge. |

## Objectives

1. **Access, Outreach.** To support primary and secondary school pupils in Islington and the surrounding boroughs to gain the knowledge and skills they need to take positive next steps in their career and educational journey, including into higher education where appropriate. We will specifically focus on pupils who face intersecting barriers to higher education, such as students on free school meals and those living in areas of high deprivation and black male students who are currently underrepresented at City and within the sector.
2. **Access, Disability**. Our aim is to improve access rates to City for students with a declared disability and to ensure these students progress successfully through their course.
3. **Success, Completion and Attainment**. We will enable our students of colour and those living in the most deprived areas to succeed in their courses of study by improving rates of on-course completion and attainment.
4. **Progression from Higher Education.** To enable our students of colour and those living in the most deprived areas to progress to highly skilled employment or postgraduate study.
5. **Mental Health**. To create an environment that proactively and pre-emptively supports our students' mental health and well-being, with a particular focus on students experiencing mental ill health, living with lifelong health conditions, disabilities or personal circumstances that will make them more vulnerable to challenges with their mental health. Whilst support to study and student retention is a priority, a positive outcome for those experiencing complex circumstances may be to take a break from their studies or to withdraw.
6. **Multiple Barriers.** To enable students who face ongoing, persistent societal, cultural, educational, and personal barriers throughout their educational journey to succeed at City, complete their course, achieve good grades, and progress on to graduate-level employment or further study. We will specifically focus on:
    - Young people who have experienced local authority care.
    - Young people estranged from their families.
    - Those with caring responsibilities (including parents).
    - Refugees and asylum seekers.
    - LGBTQ+ students with a focus on the experience of trans students.
    - Students from the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller community.

# Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

## Intervention strategy 1: Access Outreach

**Objective**: To support primary and secondary school pupils in Islington and the surrounding areas to gain the knowledge and skills they need to take positive next steps in their career and educational journey, including into higher education where appropriate. We will specifically target pupils who face intersecting barriers to higher education, such as students on free school meals and those living in areas of high deprivation (IDACI Q1-2) and Black male students who are currently underrepresented at City. Target schools are geographically within the boroughs surrounding our Islington location with above the London average of students on free school meals and lower than average Attainment 8 score.

**Target**: There will be no numerical target attached to this objective due to the challenges capturing the impact of this work in visible publicly available data. Instead, we will:

- Assess our effectiveness by evaluating the impact of our initiatives and adapting our approach based on the evaluation outcomes.
- Monitor internal data on application to enrolment rates for Black male students.
- Share our insights and best practices to foster collective learning and improvement.

**Risks to equality of opportunity** Knowledge and Skills, Information and Guidance, Perception of Higher Education

| Activity & Description | Inputs | Outcomes | Cross intervention strategy? |
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| **Targeted Secondary School Outreach**<br>*Existing Activity*<br>Flexible multi-intervention programme for pre and post 16 provision. Varying in length and intensity these can be tailored to the needs of a wide range of Schools and Students:<br>• Tailored Campus Visits (Key Stage 3)<br>• Subject Taster Weeks (Key Stage 3 and 4)<br>• Uni-Focus Subject specific events (Key Stage 5) | Staff for delivery and admin<br>Student ambassador including training and DBS<br>Non staff programme costs such as marketing, equipment, catering | Understanding of Higher Education<br>Confidence in accessing Higher Education and application processes<br>Confident and well informed as to the University experience, with positive experience of Higher Education | |

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| **Targeted Primary Outreach**<br><br>*Existing Activity*<br>Widening Participation Outreach activities for Primary schools. Providing early experience and knowledge of higher education. Content is tailored to meet the needs of local schools. Includes: Campus Visit Days and in-school Subject Specific Workshops | | Students are introduced to Higher Education, and increase understanding and knowledge of Higher Education<br><br>Practice core skills, increasing self-efficacy, confidence and motivation to study<br><br>A positive experience of Higher Education | |
| **Careers IAG**<br><br>*Existing Activity*<br>**Careers Information, Advice and Guidance.** For pre and post 16 provision. Includes:<br>• 1:1 Careers guidance interviews and action plans<br>• Workshops on Career exploration, Student Finance, Course choice and Personal Statements<br>• Parent and Student Influencer Workshops | Widening Participation Careers adviser delivery<br><br>Student Ambassadors to support workshops and events | Make informed choices regarding HE decisions and future career options<br><br>Reflection and personal development skills<br><br>Understand and successfully navigate applying to HE<br><br>Parents and influencers increasingly able to support the process of applying to university | |
| **Tutoring**<br><br>*Existing Activity*<br>**Attainment raising activity** delivered by trained students tutors in small group sessions in Math's and English.<br>• **Primary** –Key Stage 2<br>• **Secondary** –Math's and English at GCSE.<br>• **Revision Days** – focused revision sessions<br>• **Academic Mentoring –** Bayes Business School students undertake a credit bearing model on mentoring, including an option to Mentor math's and English in local schools. | Widening Participation Staff time for coordination with Schools, recruiting, training and monitoring tutors.<br><br>Tutors time, training and DBS<br><br>Non staff costs training and tutoring resources, event costs and catering. | Increased attainment at Key Stage 2/4 compared to school derived grade predictions<br><br>Self-efficacy in Maths and English, motivation to study, increasing skill and capability<br><br>Knowledge, expectation and perception of Higher Education | |
| **Targeted Intersectional Programmes**<br><br>*Existing Activity* | Widening participation staff time for coordination, admin, planning and delivery | Explore how personal abilities, inclination and characteristics can influence career pathways and education options | |

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| Medium term programmes aimed at specific intersections of disadvantage that present heightened risks to equality of opportunity in access. Includes:<br>• **EmPOWHer.** Programme to boost self-image and confidence amounts primary aged girls experiencing intersectional disadvantage (Key Stage 2).<br>• **Ascend.** Attainment raising and careers programme for Black Caribbean students KS3-5<br>• **Unimentors.** Mentoring for Key Stage 4 and 5 students experiencing multiple indicators of deprivation. | Student mentors and ambassadors<br>Event and programme costs such as learning resources, educational visits, guest speakers, marketing and catering. | Improved confidence and self-belief<br>Positive interaction with HE<br>Understanding of relevance of Maths and English<br>Study skills through active learning, academic self-efficacy and motivation to study<br>Developing the skills and knowledge to successfully transition to university<br>Able to make well-informed decisions around HE | |
| **Strategic Partnership and collaborative activities**<br>*Existing Activity*<br>**Upward Bound.** Student Tutors for attainment raising element of Upward Bound programme delivered in collaboration with London Met University and Islington Council.<br>**Brilliant Club Scholars Programme.** Participation Brilliant Club programme for Key Stage 3-5.<br>**St Luke's Community Centre.** Collaboration with Islington based community centre. Partnership to provide career-events for KS2 and 4.<br>*New Activity*<br>**Future Professionals**. Collaboration with Lord Mayor, City of London Corporation and Livery Companies. A summer school to empower young people to explore emerging careers and prepare for future professions. | Widening Participation teams time for planning, coordination, delivery and administration.<br>Evaluation staff time for specialist evaluation support.<br>Student Ambassadors and Tutors<br>Temp Careers consultants<br>Event costs such as marketing, catering, space hire, learning resources, guest speaker and merchandise | Improved attainment in Maths and English<br>self-efficacy, motivation to study, subject knowledge and critical thinking skills<br>Increased applications to competitive university than comparator groups<br>Awareness of graduate outcomes, knowledge of careers skills and future careers pathways<br>Knowledge of world of work, with positive experiences of variety of workplaces<br>Increased critical thinking, metacognition and careers skills<br>Situate academic knowledge in framework of career skills and pathways | IS4 |
| **LAC/Virtual schools/Alternative Provision**<br>*New Activity*<br>Outreach activities for young people in **Local Authority** | Widening Participation Officer coordination and delivery time | See outcomes for Secondary Tutoring, Outreach and Targeted Intersectional programmes | IS6 |

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| **Care** to address gaps in expectations, confidence and knowledge and perception of Higher Education between care experienced young people and their peers. Includes: campus visit and activities for virtual schools | Costs for events or activities including catering, off site educational visits | | |

**Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy:** £800,000 annually

**Evidence base and Rationale: (see annex B)**

**Theoretical Framework** - City intervention strategy around Access is organised through the Network Evaluating and Researching University Participation Interventions (NERUPI) framework to support the design and evaluation of our programmes. The framework consists of a multi-stage model of intervention, from Level 0 (Primary) through to Level 6 (Transition to Graduate Employment) and targets key areas where WP students can explore their pathways towards Higher Education. These consist of Five aims:

- KNOW – Develop Student's knowledge of and awareness of the benefits of higher education and graduate employment.
- CHOOSE – develop capacity to navigate the HE and graduate employment, and to make informed choices.
- BECOME – develop confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenges of university life and graduate progression.
- PRACTICE – Develop study skills and capacity for Academic attainment and successful graduate progression.
- UNDERSTAND – develop understanding by contextualizing student knowledge and supporting attainment raising.

**Evaluation:** The five areas above underpin evaluation and impact assessment. Access interventions produce level 2 evidence through evaluation, comprising:

- Evaluation Plan and Schedule
- Pre and Post intervention Surveys
- School set attainment targets (before intervention, predicted without Intervention, aim post intervention) for attainment raising initiatives
- At least *an* element of Focus group research with students, student influencers, schools or City Students
- Use of appropriate tracking and data return through use of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) and Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) returns.

Programme evaluation across Access is compiled into an annual report, which will be published internally and summarised for publication externally on our website. Partnership programmes including Upward Bound, Brilliant Club and Future Professionals produce programme specific impact and evaluation plans which will be appended to Evaluation submissions. Evaluation outcomes will be shared with the sector through conference, sector networks and meetings. Evaluation is monitored on an annual basis for suitability, repeatability and relevance to project aims. We aim to move at least one programme from Level 2 evidence to Level 3, for submission to relevant evidence banks.

## Intervention strategy 2: Access, Disability

**Objective**: To improve access rates to City for students with reported disabilities whilst maintaining the current levels of continuation, attainment, and completion amongst these students.

**Target**: PTA_1 - We will increase the percentage of students accessing City with a reported disability from 7.3% to 16.8% by 2029.

We will also monitor the current positive levels of continuation, attainment, and completion to ensure gaps do not start to open.

**Risks to equality of opportunity**: Perception of HE, lack of appropriate academic support and approach to teaching and assessment, limited opportunity to fully engage with HE, sense of belonging, lack of access to appropriate data.

| Description | Inputs | Outcomes | Cross intervention strategy? |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Autism Transition Event and Support**<br>*Existing Activity*<br>Autism and Neurodiversity welcome. Small group pre-entry transition events designed with the needs of these students in mind. Autism & Uni Toolkit provides students with the tool they need to navigate their transition. | Staff time: Neurodiversity and disability advisers for coordination, delivery, and ongoing support. | Better prepared to start university with improved engagement with support services.<br>Embodies a safe environment for students to report and discuss their SpLDs.<br>Improved rates of continuation among students who attended. | IS3 |
| **Inclusive teaching, assessment and policy**<br>*Enhanced activity*<br>Supporting staff to deliver the City inclusive Curriculum and to design assessment that has inclusivity and choice embedded.<br>Monthly School drop-in clinics with the Disability and Neurodiversity Manager<br>Reviewing of reasonable adjustments policy. | Staff time from academic learning support tutor and Disability and Neurodiversity Advisers. | Staff across the university understand challenges faced by students.<br>Staff feel confident in supporting students in a timely manner.<br>Increased student completion.<br>Improved student degree attainment.<br>Increased student satisfaction. | IS3 |
| **Staff Training** Supporting staff to support students; *Existing and new training.* | Staff time for planning and delivery | Staff:<br>• understand when to make referrals to services. | IS2, IS3, IS4 & IS6 |

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| • Neurodiversity training<br>• Disability awareness training<br>• Academic induction & Personal Tutor module<br>• Policy implementation guidance<br>• Resources Development – toolkits<br><br>Committed to being a nurturing, inclusive and diverse environment that is free from discrimination and anti-racist. Staff are trained in cultural competencies. | Disability & Neurodiversity Advisers. | • understand relevant policy<br>• can advise students on available support services.<br>• feel confident in supporting students<br>• have an active and clear commitment to antiracism<br>• ensure their services meet the needs of the wide range of students who will access them<br><br>Students have an academic support network that is confident and competent. | |
| **Student routes to disclosure and data on reported disabilities**<br><br>*Existing Activity*<br>Students can disclose disabilities or health conditions before or during their course via a simple online form. The new Student Engagement team will better understand students using the service, identify barriers, and remove them. | Student Health and Wellbeing Engagement Team with Data Analyst support as required. | Developing a clearer understanding of the students who access the service and any barriers to sharing disabilities or long-term health condition.<br><br>More students report a disability early.<br><br>Clear data to support decisions and plans around disability disclosure and support. | |
| **Inclusive Campus**<br><br>*Enhanced Activity*<br>Activities, design measures and campaigns make visible our commitment on inclusivity:<br><br>• Student Support Hub – new accessible space<br>• Visible Voices Campaign<br>• City Sport programmes and referrals<br>• Awareness days and celebration events<br>• Student Workshops<br>• Sensory Room<br>• Student Wellbeing Reps<br>• Review of student communications | Cross team working and time to support implementation and training, including Student comm team, Senior Student EDI Officer, Disability and Neurodiversity team, Student Voice team and non-staff costs relating to marketing, events and resources. | A sense of belonging through engagement with community-building activities and resources.<br><br>Increased student satisfaction.<br><br>Full understanding of where to seek support and opportunities available. | |
| **Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy:** £300,000 annually | | | |

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| **Evidence base and Rationale:** City has a lower than expected % of students joining us with a reported disability, we need to develop a greater understanding of this to ensure a welcoming and accessible environment for students' disabilities so they can feel safe to access the full support available. We are working on the assumption that a significant contributor to the gap is lack of disclosure. This is based on the geographical location in which we recruit from (greater London) and the proportion of the population who have disabilities. A disclosure safe environment is important in making students feel comfortable and confident in sharing their disability. For further details, please see Annex B. |
| **Evaluation:** We intend to evaluate individual activities (Autism Transition Event, Sensory Room project, City Sport programme) to understand the correlation between engagement and students' access, continuation and success. This will include compiling Type 1 evidence to ensure each activity is based on robust evidence and has a documented Theory of Change. In addition, we will be using a mixture of participant surveys, usage tracking data, and smaller qualitative interviews and focus groups to generate Type 2 evidence. This will be supplemented by findings from the NSS and other internal surveys to triangulate evidence on student satisfaction. Interim reports on the progress of each intervention will be shared internally to support continuous improvement, and a cohesive report summarising all evidence relating to the overall intervention strategy will be published at the end of this plan. |

## Intervention strategy 3: Success – Attainment and Completion

**Objective**: We will enable our students of colour and those living in the most deprived areas to succeed in their courses of study by improving rates of on-course completion and attainment.

**Targets:**

- PTS_1 Remove the completion gap between our Black and white students by 2029.
- PTS_2 Reduce the awarding gap between our Black and White students from 13.8% to 8% by 2029.
- PTS_3 Remove the awarding gap between our white and Asian students by 2029.
- PTS_4 Reduce the gap in completion rates between IMD Q1 and Q5 students from 7% to 2% by 2029.
- PTS_5 Reduce the awarding gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 students from IMD Q1 and Q5 from 11.1% to 4% by 2029

**Risks to Equality of Opportunity:** Lack of appropriate academic support and approach to teaching/assessment, mental health, ongoing impact of coronavirus, cost pressures, lack of sense of belonging, limited opportunity to fully engage with Higher Education, lack of comprehensive access to data.

| Activity & Description | Inputs | Outcomes | Cross intervention strategy? |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Financial Support and Wellbeing**<br>*Updated Activity* | Student funding teams for processing applications, administration and supporting students. Student comms team | Financial support enables students to dedicate sufficient time to their studies rather than paid work, and to remain on course. | IS4, IS5 & IS6 |

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| **City Education Grant -** First year students who are ordinary residents of England are eligible for the following each year of their course, unless their household income goes above the thresholds stated.<br>A. £1000 per academic year to students with a SFE assessed household income of zero.<br>B. £500 per academic year for students with an assessed SFE household income of £10K or less (1000 awards available)<br>**Hardship Funding** targeted students from low-income backgrounds who face financial barriers to engaging with their education can apply to this fund.<br>**Blackbullion Financial Wellbeing** modules available to all students and mandatory to access the City Hardship Fund. | time to review and updating communication to students.<br>£2,000,000 financial support<br>Blackbullion annual subscription | Students develop their financial literacy skills to enable skilled money management. | |
| **Transition for Academic Success Programme**<br>*New Activity*<br>Academic transition programme to be integrated through all first-year programmes, covering a core range of skills and competencies providing a consistent base level foundation for success, bridging gaps in knowledge and skills between students from differing backgrounds. | Staff costs for design, planning, delivery and implementation of the programme. | A standard level of competency will be achieved by students in core academic skills. E.g.:<br>• Academic writing and research skills<br>• Critical thinking and reading<br>• Understanding assessment and feedback<br>• Team working and communication<br>• Planning, organisation, time management | IS4, IS5 & IS6 |
| **Policy and Regulation Review and Update**<br>*New Activity*<br>Ongoing review of policy and regulations to address systemic and structural barriers to equality of opportunity and equitable student outcomes. All accompanying guidance will equip staff to implement the policy consistently, language used with be clear, inclusive and plain English. Policy will be accessible. The following are to be prioritised: | Cross university staff including Student Inclusion and Engagement, Senior EDI Officer and Quality and Academic Services, Learning Enhancement and Development, and Associate Deans for Education to review, | Policy will be revised with equality of opportunity and EDI implications consistently considered and addressed as part of updates.<br>Students will understand how policy impacts them.<br>Staff will understand the role of policy implementation in reducing inequalities of opportunity. | |

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| • Academic Integrity and Misconduct<br>• Extenuating Circumstances<br>• Module Categorisation and Compensation<br>• Late submission<br>• Attendance and Engagement | update, publish and implement. | | |
| **Assessment for Learning Code of Practice**<br>*New Activity*<br>All programmes will be required to introduce variety of assessments to cater to our diverse student population.<br>• Providing students with a range of assessment designs that better accommodate diverse strengths and preferences, allowing flexibility in assessment topics or questions to foster student engagement and ownership.<br>• Ensuring assessments are inclusive, e.g. incorporating visual, or auditory elements.<br>• Provide clear instructions and support for students requiring adjustments, including differential assessments where appropriate in line with our obligations under equalities legislation.<br>• Multiple summative assessment components to support learning outcomes and broaden opportunities for developmental feedback. | Academic staff time for leadership, implementation and delivery of the code of practice. Training and support from Learning Enhancement and Development. | Authentic and inclusive assessment practices across City that cater to our diverse student needs.<br>Reduction in differential assessment outcomes for students of colour and those who live in areas of deprivation.<br>Fewer resits.<br>Improved NSS results in relation to assessment and feedback. | |
| **Inclusive Curriculum Design review and implementation**<br>*Enhanced activity*<br>Updating of our inclusive curriculum framework, supporting implementation through staff training and communities of practice to fully embed across teaching and learning. Including a live repository of best practice. | Staff from the Office for Institutional Equity, and relevant Associate Deans with Academic Schools and Learning Enhancement and Development. | Access to resources, training and support to deliver a diverse curriculum<br>Inclusivity becomes a standard and integrated part of developing curriculum consistently across all programmes. | IS4 & IS5 |

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| **Attendance, Engagement and Learner Analytics**<br><br>*Enhanced activity*<br>Identify indicator of learner disengagement early to implement proactive support. Enhance the use of learner analytics to assessment submission over the course of this plan. We will conduct demographic reporting on attendance linked to student outcomes. | Student Succes team and Learning Enhancement and Development staff. Student. Student Engagement officers and Student Experience Associate Deans to support implementation of actions. | Barriers to success are identified on an individual level as early as possible.<br><br>Personalised support targets barriers to success and improves feelings of belonging and connectedness.<br><br>Continuation and attainment rates improve. | IS4, IS5 & IS6 |
| **Progression Pathways**<br><br>*New Activity*<br>A new tailored programme of workshops, mentoring and engagement activities targeting 2nd and 3rd year students of colour living in areas of high deprivation. | Student Success officer and Digital inclusion Coordinator to plan, coordinate, recruit students and delivery the programme. | Able to interpret and apply the concept of resilience from their experiences.<br><br>Feelings of inclusion, greater sense of belonging, visibility and building a peer support network.<br><br>Positive self-identity, increased ability to navigate and manage issues that might impact success. | IS4, IS5 & IS6 |
| **Digital education and inclusion**<br><br>*Existing Activity*<br>Digital skills embedded throughout pre and post induction, including a self-assessment tool with tailor support recommendations, a digital skills community, one to one tutorial and access to LinkedIn learning. | Digital Inclusion team time, student digital inclusion ambassadors, LinkedIn learning licences, and JISC licences. | Digital skills will not be a barrier or limiting factor as student transition into higher education.<br><br>All students will have the digital skills need to successfully complete their course. | IS1 |
| **EDI Data**<br><br>*New activity* Embedding equality data into the planning and decision-making processes at City by making data on student outcomes by student characteristic available at a School and Programme level. Training and support will be provided to effectively utilise data. | Cross departmental resource from the Office for Institutional Equity, Student Records, Strategy and Planning, Student Success, Quality and Academic Development, and senior leadership and IT. | Data will be accessible to staff to inform planning and decision making.<br><br>Confidence in interpreting and utilising data.<br><br>Evidence based, data informed decisions re student support, interventions and teaching. | IS4 |
| **Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy:** £2,612,000 Annually | | | |
| **Evidence base and Rationale:** Our assessment of performance identified clear awarding and completion gaps for the student groups identified. There are varied and complex reasons for these gaps that necessitates targeted interventions to foster inclusivity and equity, addressing both individual and systemic challenges. | | | |

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| Focusing on a consistent baseline of inclusive teaching, fair assessment and consideration of EDI factors across all programmes, policies and regulations will ensure students who have been identified at greater risk of inequality are not negatively impacted by inconsistent or unconsidered approaches. Instead, all students are supported directly and indirectly to achieve their full potential and succeed. (see annex B) |
| **Evaluation:** Evaluation methods of our targeted programmes including Transition, Progression Pathways, Peer Support range depending on the scale and aims of the programme, each is underpinned by a Theory of Change and will generate type 2 evidence as a minimum, each programme will publish an impact report annually.<br><br>We will conduct an evaluation of whole provider activities that support this objective, such as our Inclusive curriculum project and Assessment for learning project, to develop an understanding as to how these projects shape outcomes for students of colour and IMD 1. Since the impact of these programmes will take time to assess, the publication of evaluation will be at the end of this plan's cycle.<br><br>We will evaluate the effectiveness of our approach to attendance and engagement annually and this will be evaluated through monitoring of students' who have been flagged and their subsequent attendance, engagement with academic and personal support, and through qualitative work with students who have been contacted through our attendance system workflows. We will report on any correlation linking attendance to outcomes, and any demographic variation of this across our students of colour and IMD1.<br><br>The impact of our financial support provision has on the students who received bursaries is evaluated bi-annually using the OfS financial support evaluation toolkit. |

## Intervention strategy 4: Progression from Higher Education

**Objective**: To enable our students of colour and those living in the most deprived areas to progress to highly skilled employment or postgraduate study

**Targets:**

- City will improve progression rates into highly skilled employment for our Asian students by removing the gap in progression rates between our Asian and White students by 2029.
- City will improve progression rates into highly skilled employment for our students with mixed ethnicity by removing the gap between Mixed and White students by 2029.
- City will reduce the gap between students from IMD Q1 and Q 5 progressing onto a graduate level employment or post graduate study from 12.4% to 6.2% by 2029.

**Risks to Equality of Opportunity:** Financial hardship and cost of learning pressures, progression from HE, lack of sense of belonging, limited opportunity to fully engage with higher education.

| Activity & Description | Inputs | Outcomes | Linked Intervention Strategy |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Careers Activation Programme**<br><br>*Ongoing activity*<br>All UG programmes include credit-bearing modules on professional experience and career development. Students take a core module in each of these areas | Careers Consultants time to plan, deliver, assess and evaluate the modules. | Supports outcomes linked to the key City Graduate Attributes of:<br>• Always learning<br>• Connected professionals<br>• Engaged in the world<br><br>All students will have professional experience that will support their employability. | IS6 |
| **Micro-Placements** (part of careers activation programme)<br><br>*Existing Activity*<br>Micro-Placements offer short, real-world work experiences to boost employability. This 15-credit module involves 140 hours over 4+ weeks, with prep sessions and resources provided. Means-tested hardship bursaries may be available. | Employer Engagement Team coordination and management of the programme, including recruiting employers and students. | Relevant industry experiences enabling students to achieve City's Graduate Attributes of being engaged in the world, developing technical and digital skill and being professionally connected.<br><br>All students get work experience and are not limited by financial constraints. | IS3 |
| **Financial Support**<br><br>*Existing Activity*<br>**Micro-placement Fund of** £500 for UG Home household income £25k or less who undertake micro placements organised through the City Employability team. 52 bursaries available.<br>**Global Opportunities Fund** cover costs and living expenses for UG Home students from low-income households to access opportunities to study abroad. Amount is varied depending on opportunity, cost and | Coordination and student recruitment, advertising and distribution of the funding by the Global Opportunities Manager and Micro-placement teams.<br><br>£26K Micro-placement Fund. | Students have an engaging and purposeful mobility experience.<br><br>Increased independence, confidence, and ability to adapt to new situations, including diverse teaching/learning styles and workplace environments.<br><br>Participants are confident in how to progress in/navigate their careers, with clear plans for post-university destinations.<br><br>Mobility students develop increased proficiency with a variety of soft and hard skills aligned with City's Graduate Attributes such as leadership, relationship building, technical expertise, work experience for CV enhancement, and languages. | IS3, IS5 & IS6 |

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| location. These will be advertised to target students annually. | £25K Global Opportunities Fund. | Participants are more likely to achieve positive graduate outcomes compared to those who did not participate in the programme. | |
| **IN-clusive Careers**<br>*Existing Activity*<br>A targeted program for students of colour and those with disabilities. Organisations share practices on inclusive workplaces that attract and retain diverse talent. Includes speed recruitment, networking, 1-on-1 sessions, and employer fairs. | Employability team to coordinate and manage events and recruit employers and students. | Connect with and learn from leaders and recruiters within the field of diversity and inclusion.<br>Understand how EDI is integrated into their hiring practices.<br>Receive application advice.<br>Empower our students to take inclusive leadership and recruitment practices into their future careers. | IS2, IS3, IS5 & IS6 |
| **Professional Mentoring**<br>*Existing Activity*<br>One to one 6 month mentoring partnership with professionals.<br>**Brightside online Law Mentoring**<br>*Existing Activity*, Collaborative.<br>Targeted at students of colour in LLB Law interested in working in the legal field.<br>**Career Mentors**<br>Targeted at UG students of colour in Sociology and LLB Law. Peer-mentoring to support success in a competitive application. | Student Development Team to recruit, coordinate, deliver and monitor the programmes.<br>Brightside annual subscription costs (£16,535+VAT for 2024).<br>Non-Staff costs for marketing, recruitment, events etc. | Gain first hand insights professions and expertise from the mentor.<br>Exposure to industry/job market and employability skills.<br>The establishing and building of positive professional relationship.<br>Clearer focus on appropriate career aspirations.<br>Increased self-efficacy, self-esteem, career confidence, commercial awareness.<br>Improved knowledge and understanding of how to successfully articulate skills and experience in a CV, application and interview for a particular profession.<br>Positive Graduate Outcomes results are higher for Professional Mentees than others who did not participate in the programme. | IS3 & IS6 |
| **Gradvantage**<br>*Existing Activity*, Collaborative<br>GradVantage Academy and mock assessment centre target students of colour and those from disadvantaged | Annual cost for delivery of assessment centre and internship wages; and careers team members to coordinate. | Develop a plan for their next career development steps.<br>Job search skills, and skills needed to navigate their career journey.<br>Clarity of career choices.<br>Experience of the graduate recruitment process and confidence in entering the graduate workplace. | IS3 & IS6 |

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| areas, offering career prep and exclusive paid internships. | | Participants are more likely to achieve positive graduate outcomes compared to those who did not participate in the programme. | |
| **Professional Clothing**<br><br>*New Activity*, Collaborative Partnership with the charities Smart Works and Suited & Booted to refer students for support accessing professional clothing. | No cost, staff time to coordinate. | Students have increased confidence when attending interviews/assessment centres.<br><br>Increased numbers of students with relevant work placements.<br><br>Reduced financial burden. | IS5 & IS6 |
| **Understanding Progression from Higher Education**<br><br>*New Activity*<br>Further interrogation of the data on the Asian student subgroups will be analysed to identify barriers and address any structural discrimination. | Data Analyst and Information manager | Support accurate targeting of programmes.<br><br>Improved employability outcomes.<br><br>Development of new activity to improve employment outcomes for specific groups identified through the analysis.<br><br>Sharing of data to ensure our embedded inclusive careers education curriculum is meeting the needs of all student groups. | IS3 & IS5 |

**Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy:** £539,000 annually

**Evidence base and Rationale:** There are clear differences in the progression onto highly skilled employment and higher study between those students from the most and least deprived areas, and some of students from minoritised ethnic backgrounds. We need a proactive approach to supporting these students at they move on to their next career steps.

Students of colour and those from areas of high deprivation face unique circumstances that impact their transition into the world of work or further study. Despite their academic achievements, they may encounter additional challenges due to stereotypes, unacknowledged bias or limited exposure to professional networks. Other factors may include financial limitation or lack of confidence that can impact their career journey negatively. (see annex B)

**Evaluation:** We plan to evaluate each activity to meet OfS Type 1 or Type 2 standards, assessing whether relevant APP Projects are achieving their intended outcomes for students and understanding student perceptions of these projects.

Our findings will be communicated through various formats, including reports, interim findings, and blog posts. These will highlight key statistics, insights, and potential case studies on student outcomes and the impact of our progression activities. Blog posts will provide concise summaries of these insights and will be promoted through our Careers Service communication channels.

All research materials, including reports, findings, and blog posts, will be readily accessible on our Careers Evaluation SharePoint. To enhance visibility and engagement, we will collaborate with the University's Evaluation Team to also share our reports on their SharePoint platform, ensuring accessibility for all stakeholders and individuals interested in the APP across the university.

In the future, we will also consider sharing these findings externally with the OfS, further extending the reach and impact of our evaluation work.

## Intervention strategy 5: Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

**Objective**: To create an environment that proactively and pre-emptively supports our students' mental health and well-being, with a particular focus on students experiencing mental ill health, living with lifelong health conditions, disabilities or personal circumstances that will make them more vulnerable to challenges with their mental health.

Whilst support to study and student retention is a priority, a positive outcome for those experiencing complex circumstances may be to take a break from their studies or to withdraw.

**Target**: PTS-5 Maintain our NSS scores for mental health, this is used as a proxy measure for a health environment for our student's mental health. Our aim is to maintain the current positivity score as a min.

**Risks to equality of opportunity:** Mental health, ongoing impact of coronavirus, financial hardship, and cost of learning pressures, lacking a sense of belonging, inconsistent and unreliable access to data /data collection, limited opportunity to fully engage with higher education.

| Activity & Description | Inputs | Outcomes | Cross intervention strategy? |
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| **UniWellbeing App**<br>*Existing Collaborative Activity*: City Wellbeing provides tools to start building healthy, positive habits to boost wellbeing. Weekly posts, wellbeing programme, advice and support, self-help catalogue, tools to help manage wellbeing positively and effectively and an online peer support community | Annual subscription costs, communicating with students and ensuring engagement | Students have an academic and social support network.<br>Students have coping strategies and increased ability to cope. | IS2, IS3, IS4 & IS6 |
| **Togetherall App**<br>*Existing Collaborative Activity:* Free to students, provide an online peer support community, tools and resources including self-help courses. Moderated 24/7 | Annual subscription costs, communicating with students and ensuring engagement. | Students have an academic and social support network.<br>Students have coping strategies and increased ability to cope. | IS2, IS3, IS4 & IS6 |

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| by mental health professionals ensuring the safety and anonymity of all members. | | | |
| **Clinical Support**<br>*Existing Support*, target students with Mental Health conditions.<br>• Specialised reasonable adjustments<br>• Support for DSA funding<br>• Student Support Plans<br>• City's Counselling Service - Student time-limited specialist counselling<br>• Mental Health Mentoring | Student Health and Wellbeing Team to deliver provision | Timely clinical support ensures students receive diagnoses, staff understand individual needs, and students feel empowered to share and manage their mental health, leading to improved academic motivation. | IS2, IS3, IS4 & IS6 |
| **Encouraging engagement with the mental health and wellbeing service**<br>We have applied to the Student Mental Health Charter which has involved cocreation with students and the development of new activity. Current activity to be expanded upon:<br>• Student Support Hub development (new physical space to engage with the service on campus)<br>• Insights Champions<br>• Wellbeing Cafes<br>• Resources development – Toolkits, Video, etc<br>• University Mental Health Day | Mental Health Advisors<br>Student Health & Wellbeing Engagement Advisors and Student Comms Officers<br>£5K non staff costs | Increased wellbeing e.g. sleep, quality of life and personal fulfilment.<br>Student sense of belonging strengthened, and impostor syndrome lessened through engagement with community-building activities and resources.<br>Early signposting of welfare, well-being and mental health resources provides support.<br>Events programme builds sense of community. | IS2, IS3, IS4 & IS6 |
| **Support and Wellbeing Services**<br>*Enhanced Existing activity*.<br>• Student Support Hub, a new welcoming and accessible space in the heart of the campus to access support<br>• Wellbeing advice & skills development<br>• Chaplaincy services accessible to all students | Mental Health Advisors<br>Student Health & Wellbeing Engagement Advisor<br>Student Welfare Officers<br>Report & Support | Students know where and how to seek timely support.<br>Students feel able to disclose information about their mental health.<br>Students have academic and social support network.<br>Students have increased wellbeing e.g. Sleep, quality of life, health & energy, and personal fulfilment. | IS2, IS3, IS4 & IS6 |

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| • City Sport: Be Active, Feel Well & accessible gym<br>• School-based Student Welfare Officers<br>• Report & Support tool<br>• Emotional & mental health guidance<br>• Follow-up Mental Health Advisor appointments | | Improved outcomes and progression.<br>Increased academic motivation.<br>Increased confidence. | |
| **Research & Evaluation**<br>*New activity.* Further evaluation and research are needed to:<br>• Evaluate student records data capture and reporting for improved insights.<br>• Analyse service access patterns and student demographics and identify barriers to disclosure.<br>• Assess student perception of support effectiveness.<br>• Gather empirical evidence on intervention outcomes. | Student Health & Wellbeing Engagement Advisor<br>Senior Evaluation Officer<br>Evaluation Officer<br>Data Analyst | Institution has data analysis and evaluation to support current interventions.<br>Enable development of tailored activity to support specific demographics/cohorts. | IS2, IS3, IS4 & IS6 |
| **Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy**: £907,000 annually | | | |
| **Evidence base and Rationale:** "Worsening mental health of students in higher education is a public policy concern and the impact of measures to reduce transmission of COVID-19 has heightened awareness of this issue. Preventing poor mental health and supporting positive mental wellbeing needs to be based on evidence informed understanding what factors influence the mental health of students."[7] (See Annex B) | | | |
| **Evaluation:** Phase one of this plan will initiate work to capture student usage and engagement across our current service provision and understand who is accessing these services via demographic reporting, how and when. Individual activities outlined in this intervention will be evaluated by participant surveys. We will produce an initial report and recommendations for tailored intervention in 2026, followed by yearly reporting on student engagement and satisfaction. We will then supplement this with in-depth qualitative data through student focus groups and surveys to understand both what is working well across the service, and where our gaps in provision or student uptake are. Using this report compiled of Type 1 and 2 evidence, we seek to build a service provision collaboratively with our students and will produce a final set of recommendations at the end of this plan. | | | |

[7] Campbell, F. et al (2023). Factors that influence mental health of university and college students in the UK: a systematic review, *BMC Public Health* 22(1788), https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-022-13943-x.

## Intervention strategy 6: Full Lifecycle Multiple Barriers

**Objective:** To enable students who face ongoing, persistent societal, cultural, educational, and personal barriers throughout their educational journey to succeed at City, complete their course, achieve good grades, and progress on to graduate-level employment or further study.

Students have intersecting identities and as such this objective will also contribute to objectives 2, 3, 4 and 5.

**Target:** There is not a numerical target, the ongoing progress of this intervention will be measured through evaluation and internal monitoring of outcomes of City Cares students

**Risks to equality of opportunity:** Perception of HE, lack of appropriate academic support and approach to teaching/assessment, mental health, ongoing impact of coronavirus, financial hardship and cost of learning pressures, progression from HE, limited opportunity to fully engage with higher education, sense of belonging

| Activity & Description | Inputs | Outcomes | Cross intervention strategy? |
|---|---|---|---|
| **City Cares Provision**<br>*Enhanced activity*<br>Targeted support for:<br>• Young people (under 25) with care experience, estrangement, or caring responsibilities<br>• Refugees and asylum seekers<br>• LGBTQ+ students, particularly trans students, who experience estrangement<br>• Students from the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveler community<br>Support includes:<br>• Designated support contact with priority access to mental health, counselling, and career services<br>• Priority for City initiatives (Buddies, Unitemps, Ambassador Scheme)<br>• 1:2:1 registration support for new students<br>• Regular contact throughout the year<br>• Extenuating Circumstances support letters<br>• Affordable/free social activities with peers | City Cares advisers plus funding for community networking, social events and engagement activities. | **Students will:**<br>• Feel supported in transitioning to higher education.<br>• Be more aware of available support and confident in accessing it.<br>• Enroll, engage with their course, and be less likely to withdraw.<br>• Have the financial means to participate fully in academic and extracurricular activities.<br>• Feel a sense of belonging, value, and support.<br>• Report positive experiences on the National Student Survey, especially regarding satisfaction and belonging.<br>• Achieve comparable degree outcomes as their peers. | IS3, IS4 & IS5 |

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| | | • View higher education as accessible and available to them. | |
| **Financial Support**<br>*Enhanced activity*<br>• **City Cares bursary** - £3,500 each academic year for UG student registered with City Cares who are under 25 and care leavers, estranged students, or young carers.<br>• **Hardship Fund** – Student registered with City Cares are eligible to apply for up to £2,500, as opposed to £1,500 for non-City Cares students.<br>• **Sanctuary Scholarships** (Asylum/Refugee Students) - 3 per year consisting of full tuition fee support and a grant equivalent to the full maintenance loan from Student Finance England plus the City Cares bursary to help with the costs of living.<br>• **Graduation packages -** £750 for graduating students to support transition to after-university life<br>Additional financial education and budgeting support<br>Accommodation priority and support including offer of year-round accommodations and hall allocations at discretionary rates.<br>Support with bursary application processes. | Bursaries and financial awards<br>£400,000<br>£28,000 Fee waiver for Sanctuary Scholarship | Financial pressure will not be an excessive cause of stress and pressure.<br>Ability to focus on studies and engage in academic and social life in HE.<br>Reduce academic disruptions and risk of safeguarding and financial emergencies such as homelessness, especially during transition or stressor points.<br>Students with minimal debt levels.<br>Reducing time spent earning money and covering travel costs to increase study and revision time.<br>Increased mental health and wellbeing, students are less overwhelmed, feel supported, feel less anxious and worried. | IS3, IS4 & IS5 |
| **Careers Ahead**<br>*Enhanced Activity*<br>A targeted program providing tailored career support to students with care experience, young carers, estranged students, disabled students, refugees, and sanctuary scholars. It offers a dedicated contact, longer appointments, personalised coaching, exclusive events, and comprehensive support. | Staff time provided through freelance careers consultants, staff training and learning and event resources. Support with targeting students and marketing/comms. | Students have a plan for post-graduation and feel confident in their next steps.<br>Increased Progression to further study/Employment.<br>Increase in students from targeted groups in graduate level employment.<br>Students report career satisfaction. | IS2, IS3, IS5 & IS6 |
| **Start@City** | Widening participation staff time for planning and delivery, targeting | Confidence to enter and succeed in Higher Education | IS1, IS2, IS3, IS4 & IS5 |

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| *Existing activity*<br>Pre-entry transition to university programme for students with multiple indicators of educational deprivation. Targeting BTEC pathway students with a reported disability, experience of local authority care or refugee or asylum status. | and evaluation.<br>Resources for events including catering. | Knowledge of student support services and relevance to their university experience<br>Ability to access personal development and progression opportunities in HE | |

**Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy:** £558,000 annually

**Evidence base and Rationale:**
Sector evidence highlights that some groups experience consistent and persistent educational disadvantage, financial hardship, challenging personal and family circumstance and structural barriers to achieving positive outcomes throughout their educational journey. (See Annex B)

**Evaluation:** We will employ mixed-methods research, including small-n studies, to evaluate each intervention across the student lifecycle, aiming to generate Type 1 and Type 2 OfS evidence on intervention effectiveness and student perceptions. Transition activities will be evaluated using the NERUPI framework to gauge student confidence, awareness of support, and access. For enrolled students, baseline data will be collected during City Cares registration, with ongoing monitoring of support, financial, and academic service engagement. Pulse surveys, post-event feedback, focus groups, 1:1s, and case management will provide ongoing insights. Graduation interviews and outductions will assess academic, retention, and satisfaction impact. Quantitative data analysis on continuation, progression, attainment, and academic engagement will be conducted. NSS and Graduate Outcome Surveys will be reviewed for long-term impact. Annual reviews and impact updates will be shared internally and on SharePoint. A comprehensive report will be published before year four, including detailed outcome analysis. Findings will be shared through relevant networks, TASO's repository, conferences, and publications.

## Whole provider approach

Our commitment to equality of opportunity is evidenced through our governance structure with clear accountability and responsibility at all levels

- **Cross-University Engagement and Collaboration:** The Access and Participation Committee (APC), a sub-committee of Education and Employability Board, is responsible for oversight of access and participation. This includes monitoring progress against objectives and evaluation review. The APC comprises of members from across all Academic Schools and key Professional Services.
- **Senior-Level Oversight:** Alongside direct reporting into the Education and Employability Board, the APC reports regularly to both Student Experience and EDI Boards. Transparency and accountability are maintained through regular reports to the Senior Leadership Team, Senate and Council.
- **Strategic Investment and Planning:** The Access and Participation Investment and Planning Committee, chaired by the University Deputy President, reports into Academic Planning Board, ensuring strategic alignment and resource allocation across the institution. This committee includes senior leader membership with representation across crucial areas, including strategy, student experience, education, finance, and student inclusion.
- **Data-Driven Improvement:** Schools receive annual Access and Participation data and are required to address any gaps and differential outcomes in their Student Experience Improvement Plans. A new cross-institutional EDI Data Group is developing data dashboards across the five student lifecycle stages that will enable integration of the data at a more granular level to support both City and School level planning.

**Strategic Focus:** Three of the seven workstreams in our 2030 university strategy are actively driving forward progress on Access and Participation. The Strategic Action Plan places strong emphasis on understanding and empowering students, delivering personalised educational experiences, and providing relevant skills for career success. The focus on student experience, well-being, and mental health creates an inclusive and supportive environment where all students can thrive. The aim is to raise the baseline, have a consistent high level of education and student experience across City that will reduce the gaps in equality, supported by a range of programmes and interventions providing targeted additional resources needed to reduce inequalities.

**Education Strategy** commits to elevating educational quality at City, ensuring consistent standards across all programmes, addressing systemic and structural barriers that impact our student experience.

**City's Teaching Quality Project** is a long-term commitment to providing the best institutional environment for teaching and learning, ensuring consistent standards across all delivery, developing support for all teaching staff and effective performance management, raising the baseline of standards across all provision and supporting an excellent educational experience for all students. To guarantee educational quality for all, we will review and align our governance mechanisms, ensuring clear oversight of teaching quality both in classrooms and online. We will also review the roles responsible for monitoring teaching quality and ensure our policy development process promotes consistent standards and effective implementation. Additionally, we will streamline the teaching evaluation process and ensure our peer review policy is both workable and effectively implemented. Underperformance will be identified and addressed through targeted support and interventions, and monitored through student outcomes, NSS data and other internal measures.

**Contextualised Admission** policy levels the playing field for applicants from diverse backgrounds by recognising the challenges they face. This approach will help widen access to the university for underrepresented groups, ensuring that admissions decisions are more equitable.

**Employability.** The City Graduate Attributes articulate the bespoke set of skills we are developing in our students to support all graduates from taught programmes to become leaders in the world of work and achieve fulfilling careers. These attributes are implemented across City supporting students and staff to tailor support and skills development for positive outcomes and impact.

Students are supported to achieve through inclusive careers education embedded into the curriculum, ensuring all students receive equal opportunities to engage and benefit. City Volunteering and Experience City, our tailored opportunity database, allow students to find opportunities that match their personal circumstances, skill sets, and development needs. Additionally, Unitemps, our on-campus employment agency, enables staff to hire students, helping them to find flexible on-campus jobs that fit around their studies.

**Student Experience** prioritises understanding the diverse needs of our students by putting them at the heart of our services and support. Using tools such as student journey mapping together with representative student personas, we are taking a student-centred approach to the development and review of processes and systems. Through this work we are considering the impact on equality of opportunity and student outcomes. We have redesigned our students' space with a new Student Support Hub that provides an accessible, inclusive one stop shop for student support and access to health and wellbeing services alongside careers and employability. The design has removed many of the physical barriers that existed previously

Community building is core to student experience, our CityBuddies scheme ensures all students have access to support, friendship and signposting through this peer mentoring scheme. Our welcome and community provision is designed with City students in mind, mixing the large-scale university wide with the small scale, quieter activities so students can develop networks and friendships that meets their needs and supports their sense of belonging.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**. We uphold The Equality Act 2010, actively working to end discrimination based on protected characteristics such as race, gender, disability, and sexual orientation. Our comprehensive EDI strategy includes proactive measures and targeted interventions. We review and improve our policies on an ongoing basis to ensure they are actively supportive and contributing to equality, diversity and inclusion for students and staff. We are committed to measuring our progress and ambitiously strengthening our inclusive culture.

City have also applied for a number of EDI Charter Marks, accreditations, and affiliations, these provide us with accountability, opportunity for self-reflection and clear action.

**Race Equality Charter (REC) Action Plan.** The Race Equality Charter provides a framework for identifying and addressing institutional and cultural barriers that hinder race equality. We acknowledge the diverse experiences and intersectionality of identities amongst our student body, and we recognise that racial inequalities are a systemic issue within higher education, as such we are aiming for long-term institutional change. To reduce race inequality, we have developed a REC Action Plan. The plan will support reducing gaps in access, continuation, completion, and attainment for university students in the following ways:

- **Targeted Support and Partnerships**: Working closely with the Students' Union to support campaigns related to race equity, and increased opportunities for meaningful partnerships with students. This collaborative approach will help create a more inclusive, supportive and student focused environment, leading to improved student retention and success.
- **Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching**: A focus on embedding inclusive practices in curriculum design and implementation, including decolonising the curriculum and providing resources and training for staff. This will ensure that the learning experience is culturally relevant and accessible to all students, promoting equitable outcomes.
- **Addressing the Attainment Gap**: Specific actions to address the attainment gap, particularly for Black students. This includes research into the factors driving the gap, implementing systemic

school-level structures to address local issues, and designing measures to eliminate the gap for all student groups.

- **Enhanced Support and Sense of Belonging:** Improved support for and the sense of belonging of students of colour and staff at the university. This includes initiatives such as creating targeted careers events, increasing the amount of real-world assessment, and providing training on EDI, well-being, and mental health.

**Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and City's Commitment to Inclusion.** Stonewall's recognition of City's dedication to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for its LGBTQ+ staff and students underscores the university's commitment to equality of opportunity and inclusion. The Silver award in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, and placement in the Top 100 list of inclusive employers highlight the significant strides City has made.[8]

We have implemented a range of initiatives to support our LGBTQ+ community, including internal EDI training for recruiting managers, the provision of all-gender facilities, the inclusion of EDI-related personal development objectives in staff appraisals, and regular events with the support of a formal senior ambassador.

**City's Policy on Trans, Intersex, and Gender Non-Conforming People.** Central to our commitment to inclusion is our comprehensive policy on trans, intersex, and gender non-conforming (TIGNC) individuals. This policy aims to cultivate a culture where discrimination, harassment, and victimisation based on gender identity or expression are not tolerated. Developed with the City community, the policy provides clear guidance on inclusive practices, definitions, and ensuring that TIGNC individuals are at the heart of any decisions that affect them. Initiatives such as gender-neutral restrooms, staff training, university-wide events, and pronoun badges all contribute to a visibly welcoming and inclusive environment. We are steadfast in our commitment to addressing any breaches of equality legislation or this policy.[9]

## Student consultation

**Embedded Student Engagement.** There is a strong working relationship between City and the City Students' Union with Access and Participation training forming a core part of sabbatical officer inductions. The Students' Union have been involved with the development of this plan at all stages through membership of our Access and Participation Committee, engagement in the Student Consultation and the Student Partner Boards to Education & Employability Board and Student Experience Board.

A Students' Union Sabbatical Officer and two Union staff are members of the Access and Participation Committee, which oversees the strategic and operational elements of the plan. The Union was actively involved in the development of our approach to the assessment of performance and student consultation. The Students' Union run a termly 'Student Check-In' calls programme, to gather feedback from students' directly and works with the University to act on this feedback. Feedback and insights from these Check ins have been incorporated into our risk identification and intervention strategies.

Student Voice is central to the development and delivery of our access and participation activity. Students have University-wide and School level opportunities to engage and feedback, through Student Staff Liaison Committees, Student Experience Committees, local surveys and focus groups and online module evaluations.

[8] Stonewall (2024), The UK Workplace Equality Index, https://www.stonewall.org.uk/build-workplace-works-lgbtq-people/uk-workplace-equality-index.

[9] City, University of London (2024), Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer plus, https://www.city.ac.uk/prospective-students/student-life/lgbtqplus.

Student Partner Boards were established for academic year 23/24 to allow student review and input into key items and topics considered by Education and Employability Board and Student Experience Board. Students are paid for their time. The Access and Participation Committee reports to Education and Employability Board and papers were shared with the Student Partner Board for review. The Student Partner Board will continue to have an active role in the evaluation and monitoring of this plan.

Part time student roles have been established in the Student Communications team to ensure that we are communicating with students in an appropriate, accessible and student friendly way. We also manage a Student Voice Ambassador Scheme to support the gathering of feedback, input into and co-creation of key elements of education and student experience. These students will review and support with the development of our executive APP summary and provision of information to students.

**Student Consultation in development of this plan**

**Phase one -** A non-targeted exercise to identify the risks to equality of opportunity present at City. With the aim of reaching a large cross section of our student population, a fun activity was designed to engage as many students as possible. The OfS risks to equality of opportunity were re-phrased into student-friendly language and students used coloured tokens to identify which of the risks they felt was the greatest. We received 1,949 student entries in total. Additionally, a poll was placed on the Student Union Instagram page asking questions related to mental health, cost of living, personal tutor experience, accommodation and pre-arrivals. This enabled us to identify the risks students felt most pressing.

**Phase two -** A targeted exercise with specific student groups to identify how these risks have manifested and proposed interventions. To understand the lived experience of our students in relation the risk we held a series of focus groups and interviews with students who were excluded from our outcomes analysis due to low population numbers. The student groups we targeted were vocational learners, care-experienced, care leavers, estranged, disability (specific), Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) and LGBTQ+.

**Phase three -** Working with the Students' Union to understand if students agree the plan accurately reflects the risks at City, and that our objectives and interventions outlined in the plan will effectively address these. Drafts of the plan have been shared with our SU, SU staff and a sabbatical officer were members of our APC (access and participation committee), as well as having membership on other key university boards.

**The results of the consultation were incorporated into our plan.** The top three risks to equality of opportunity identified by students during Phase one of the consultation were Cost Pressures, Progression from HE and Impact of the Pandemic, all three of these risks have been incorporated into our institutional risk register and associated intervention strategies. Qualitative feedback and suggestions from phase two have supported us in developing objectives and creating meaningful and impactful intervention strategies. As a result of the Student Consultation an Evaluation of City's Student Financial Support was undertaken, alongside a Student Union investigation due to the overwhelming indication of the risk of cost pressures, leading to a review of our Financial Support model.

## Evaluation of the plan

City have invested resource in a new Student Success Evaluation Team with a focus on access and participation. Evaluation methodology uses both TASO and NERUPI evaluation design and is supported by delivery best practice.

The Access and Participation Committee will have operational oversight of the Access and Participation plan, including monitoring progress against our objectives and targets and will review

each of the associated evaluations. The committee will meet termly, and this will ensure strategic oversight and provide clear ownership of resulting actions. This will foster a culture of continual improvement and development through our interventions. Annual summary reports will be presented to Education and Employability board and the Senior Leadership Team. Outcomes and best practice will be shared via the evaluation SharePoint page to support internal delivery teams.

The Student Success Evaluation Team will work through Theories of Change for all intervention strategies and deliver training and professional development to embed evaluation and empower staff to act on the outcomes of evaluation for positive impact, continuing what works, and improving or discontinuing what does not.

**Self-Assessment and Evaluation Plan –** We undertook an OfS Evaluation Self-Assessment, revealing areas for improvement and scored as "Emerging" in all five strands. By the end of this plan, we aim to achieve a "Good" rating overall. To achieve this, we are enhancing capacity across City through annual training on Theories of Change, Evaluation Indicators & Data. We have created a SharePoint site with TASO-based tools and templates. We will also develop theories of change and evaluation plans for all activities within our intervention strategies.

**Standards of Evidence -**where possible we will produce Type 2 "Empirical Enquiry" evidence, where outcomes for participants are compared to a relevant control group. Where activities are for small cohorts of students, we will use TASO recommended impact evaluation methods. For whole institution activities, such as our Assessment for Learning and Inclusive curriculum work, where it is not attributing change to one specific activity, we will focus on Type 1 'Narrative' evidence. At this stage we are not equipped to conduct experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation; however, City will continue to review upcoming TASO evaluation trials relating to specific interventions and apply to these where appropriate.

**Implementation of Evaluation Plan** - The privacy notice for enrolled students states that data may be used, 'to conduct research and to identify ways to enhance learning, teaching, assessment and the broader student experience'. Therefore, we have authorisation to use student data to evaluate the activities included in this plan. Collaborative evaluation opportunities will also be explored within the sector, as City is a member of a number of professional bodies and interest groups who have expressed a desire to engage in collaborative evaluation and sharing of best practice.

**Dissemination of Findings** - Each activity that makes up an intervention strategy will have a published evaluation cycle, and evaluations will be published annually on a dedicated website, and any OfS repository, to enable enhancement of sector wide knowledge. It is not expected that all activities will have annual evaluations, and a prioritisation cycle will be agreed as part of the APP implementation plan. City staff will also be supported to present their findings and share best practice within the sector through a range of professional bodies, including the FACE APP Special Interest Group, across the University of London APP network, NEON, Access HE and other professional conferences.

## Provision of information to students

Information and communication to students is an integral part of our plan and achieving our targets. Our Student Communications Team, including our Student Comms Assistants (current students) will regularly include highlights in our student newsletter to raise the profile, awareness and engagement in the programmes and activities our students can access included in this plan.

A phased review of student communications around core elements of our intervention strategies will be undertaken over the course of this plan, on a rolling ongoing basis to ensure it is accessible, clear and student focused.

- Tuition fee information is included alongside course information on our website for all courses. Please note that fees may increase as permitted by the government, which will typically be in line with inflation.
- Our Student Hub provides up-to-date information on financial support available to students, including eligibility criteria, application details, deadlines, and limits. Information on how eligible students can apply for tuition fee loans, maintenance loans, and additional support if they have a disability or dependents will also be included.
- Targeted information will be included in our welcome communication email series for new and returning students and on our Welcome Microsite. Updated information will also be available on our Cost-of-Living site.
- Continuing students eligible for the bursary are contacted annually with information to confirm the package they will receive, in line with the amount advertised at the time of application.
- Our Access and Participation Plan and an accessible summary are published on our website in a dedicated section. There will also be a link to information on our outreach offer, contextual admissions, and published evaluations of our Access and Participation activity.
- All information will be reviewed by our Student Communication Assistants to ensure it is accessible, clear, and student friendly.

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

**Methodology** City undertook a comprehensive assessment of performance to understand the greatest risks to equality of opportunity for our students, this comprised of data analysis, consultation with students, and consultation with staff. Unless otherwise stated, our assessment of performance included Home UG students.

**Data Analysis** City used internal and external data sources to understand the risks across the student lifecycle. Primarily using the Office for Students (OfS) Access and Participation Data Dashboard, OfS National Equality of Opportunity Risk Register, the OfS individualised data files alongside City's internal analysis from our student records system (SITS), our internal data dashboards and reporting. We supplemented our data analysis with National Student Survey results, Graduate Outcomes Survey results and UCAS data.

City undertook comparisons of student outcomes across the lifecycle stages institutionally and within our six schools compared with the sector. The sector comparison highlights City's position as a diverse institution and sought to understand how each Academic School contributes to this overall performance. This work will enable us to target intervention strategies to improve overall performance.

We completed an outcomes analysis for each student lifecycle stage for each Academic School, comparing this with the City average. The purpose of this is to identify students at greater risk of inequitable outcomes at City, to inform the development of targeted and nuanced action plans. Due to small population numbers across characteristics, we have not included our analysis across schools within this Annex.

**Population**: We created a 5-year student population matrix, to focus our outcomes analysis on the characteristics with the highest frequency within our student population. Each of the following characteristics were analysed across all lifecycle stages:

- **Area level:** IDACI, IMD (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index, Multiple Indices of Deprivation)
- **Household level:** NS-SEC, Household Income (<£25K), Free School Meals Eligibility
- **Individual level:** Ethnicity, Qualifications on Entry, Mature (21+), Faith, Disability
- **Intersectional:** ABCS (Association between characteristics of Students)

Percentages are reported only when there are enough students. Any data below threshold has been suppressed and marked as "- ".

We chose to include disability as part of outcome overviews because although this was a medium/low frequency as part of the population matrix, we know from contextual factors that disclosure is a challenge we face institutionally.

Before starting the analysis, the OfS tundra metric was discounted. City's recruitment is focused on London and the Southeast where there are very few low participation areas. City is not able to make a significant difference either locally or to the national picture in terms of access for this group. This will be kept under review.

There are some student groups where numbers are too small to see in our data, however they experience significant sector evidenced risks to inequality of opportunity, such as young people who have been in the care system, and Gypsy, Roma, Traveller students (see Annex B). We will still capture these students within our plan, using evidence from our Student Consultation, supported by sector evidence and research from across education.

**Outcomes reported:** Where a positive measure is shown in narrative it refers to a positive gap between the at-risk group compared to their comparator. Where a negative is shown, the at-risk group has a better outcome.

**Target and Comparator groups**

| Characteristic | Target | Comparator |
|---|---|---|
| **Age** | over 21 | under 21 |
| **Disability** | Student with a declared disability | No declared disability |
| **FSM** | Eligible for Free School Meals | Ineligible for Free School Meals |
| **IMD** | Quintile 1 | Quintile 5 |
| **Ethnicity** | Asian, Black, Mixed, Other Students (used individually) | White Students |

**Reporting years:** Two City-level measures are given, a most recent year percentage taken from the OfS dashboard and a 5-year average measure. The most recent year information helps us to understand if this is a persistent, narrowing or emerging gap. The 5-year average covering 2017/18-2021/22 is derived from the 10-year supplementary dataset provided by the OfS on City's performance. This includes Home students. We have included this measure to build a more accurate average picture over the course of the pandemic. Certain stages of the student lifecycle were impacted by interim measures put in place during the pandemic, impacting outcomes significantly for the years 19/20 and 20/21.

**Student Lifecycle Stages:** This analysis identifies key differences in City's performance in all lifecycle stages compared to the sector and within City's constituent schools. They cover five lifecycle stages: Access, Continuation, Completion, Attainment, Progression. The definitions, reporting years and population of each of the lifecycle stages are as follows:

| **Lifecycle Stage** | **Reporting Years** |
|---|---|
| **Access** – The profile of students entering higher education | Reporting 5-year average across the years 2017 to 2021. |
| **Continuation –** Students continuing their studies from year 1 to year 2. | Reporting 5-year Average across the years 2016 to 2020. |
| **Completion –** Tracking students through later stages of education to see whether they qualified or remained studying. | Reporting 5-year Average across the years 2016 to 2020. |
| **Attainment –** Graduates who achieve a first or upper class second degree. | Reporting 5-year average across the years 2017 to 2021. |
| **Progression to employment –** Students in highly skilled employment, further study or other positive outcomes 15 months after leaving higher education | Reporting 5-year average across 2016 to 2020.<br>The graduate outcome survey is completed 15 months after the students complete their degree, which means the graduate outcome survey 2021-22 should match source data year 2019. |

Potential risks to equality were identified by examining gaps in performance between specific student groups at City compared to both their sector counterparts and a similar group within City. These indicators of risk, highlighting areas where disparities in equality of opportunity may exist, are further detailed in Table 1.

*Table 1 Indicators of Risk found in City Data Analysis*

| Indicators of Risk | | Sector | | | | City | | | | Gaps | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Life Cycle | Indicator | Most recent year data | | 4-year average | | Most recent year Data | | 5-year average | | Sector Gap | | City Gap | | Difference from sector | Difference from Sector |
| | | At risk | Comparator | At risk | Comparator | At risk | Comparator | At Risk | Comparator | Recent year gap | 4-year average | Recent year gap | 5- year average | Recent year | 4-year average |
| **Access** | Disability | 17% | 83% | 17% | 83% | 7% | 93% | 9% | 91% | 66% | 67% | 86% | 83% | 20% | 16% |
| **Completion** | IMD | 69% | 86% | 82% | 92% | 79% | 90% | 76% | 82% | 17% | 10% | 11% | 6% | -6% | -4% |
| **Completion** | Ethnicity- Black | 81% | 89% | 81% | 89% | 85% | 90% | 74% | 79% | 8% | 8% | 5% | 5% | -3% | -3% |
| **Completion** | Ethnicity- Other | 84% | 89% | 84% | 89% | 85% | 90% | 76% | 79% | 5% | 4% | 5% | 3% | 1% | -1% |
| **Attainment** | IMD | 69% | 86% | 70% | 87% | 79% | 90% | 69% | 82% | 17% | 17% | 11% | 13% | -6% | -4% |
| **Attainment** | Ethnicity- Black | 63% | 83% | 64% | 84% | 74% | 88% | 62% | 82% | 20% | 20% | 14% | 20% | -6% | 0% |
| **Attainment** | Ethnicity- Mixed | 80% | 83% | 81% | 84% | 82% | 88% | 74% | 82% | 3% | 4% | 6% | 8% | 3% | 4% |
| **Attainment** | Ethnicity- Other | 73% | 83% | 76% | 84% | 80% | 88% | 74% | 82% | 10% | 9% | 8% | 8% | -2% | -1% |
| **Attainment** | Ethnicity- Asian | 75% | 83% | 83% | 84% | 84% | 88% | 76% | 82% | 8% | 1% | 4% | 6% | -4% | 5% |
| **Progression** | IMD | 68% | 79% | 65% | 75% | 73% | 86% | 70% | 82% | 11% | 10% | 13% | 12% | 2% | 2% |
| **Progression** | Ethnicity- Other | 71% | 75% | 69% | 72% | 77% | 82% | 66% | 80% | 4% | 3% | 5% | 14% | 1% | 11% |
| **Progression** | Ethnicity- Asian | 72% | 75% | 69% | 72% | 76% | 82% | 70% | 80% | 3% | 3% | 6% | 9% | 3% | 6% |

**Access to higher education.** We have a lower percentage of students joining us with a declared disability in comparison to the Sector

We have a lower number of mature students in comparison to the sector. On exploring the OfS data dashboard we can see the number of mature students, whilst low has remained stable for several years and it is the increase in UG numbers to full time courses that has increased the gap. The nature of our courses is that they are almost exclusively full time, and our cohort are predominantly young people, therefore unless we make a significant change to our delivery model, this is not an area we are realistically going to see change in the short to medium term. We have therefore not included this as a target group for our interventions. This will be kept under review as changes relating to the LLE (Lifelong Learning Entitlement) and our merger with St Georges progress and may be included in a future iteration of our APP (Access and Participation Plan).

**Continuation from year 1 to year 2.** There are no gaps that would indicate a risk to equality of opportunity in relation to continuation. All groups progress at a similar rate and at a higher rate than their peers across the sector.

OfS APP data dashboard only looks at year 1-2 continuation, however the difference between positive outcomes for continuation and the completion rates suggests there is a risk to equality of opportunity that some students are experiencing after year 1 (or because of year 1) in the later stages of their course. Further exploration of the relationships between year 1 re-takes, continuation between year 2 and 3, completion and attainment will be undertaken during the lifespan of this plan to information action to address any risks to equality identified.

**Completion.** Gaps in student outcomes start to open around completion. Whilst we perform in line with, or better than the sector across most of our target groups, our Black students and those who identify their ethnicity as Other, do not complete their courses at the same rate as their White peers at City. Also, students who are from the top 20% of areas for deprivation complete at a lower rate than those in the least deprived areas.

**Attainment of a first or 2:1.** At City those from the most deprived areas, those who identify their ethnicity as Other, Black students, Mixed students, and Asian students are awarded 1$^{st}$ and 2:1's at a lower rate than those living in the least deprived areas and White students, respectively. The gap is greatest for our Black students and those living in areas of high deprivation.

**Progression to graduate level employment or further study.** Again, those living in the most deprived areas are the least likely to progress onto graduate level employment, the same is true for our Asian students and those who classify their ethnicity as Other.

**Student Consultations**

City undertook an extensive consultation with students asking them what they considered to be the greatest barriers and challenges to their access and success at City and in higher education. We wanted to support our analysis with the direct experience of students which could help to explain the outcomes, but also target students from diverse backgrounds whose populations are too small to capture as part of our analysis.

Phase one consisted of a non-targeted exercise which aims to reach a high proportion of our student population, and included all year groups, levels (Foundation, UG and PG), and both home and international students.

**Phase One Findings:**

*Chart 1 Phase One Student consultation results*

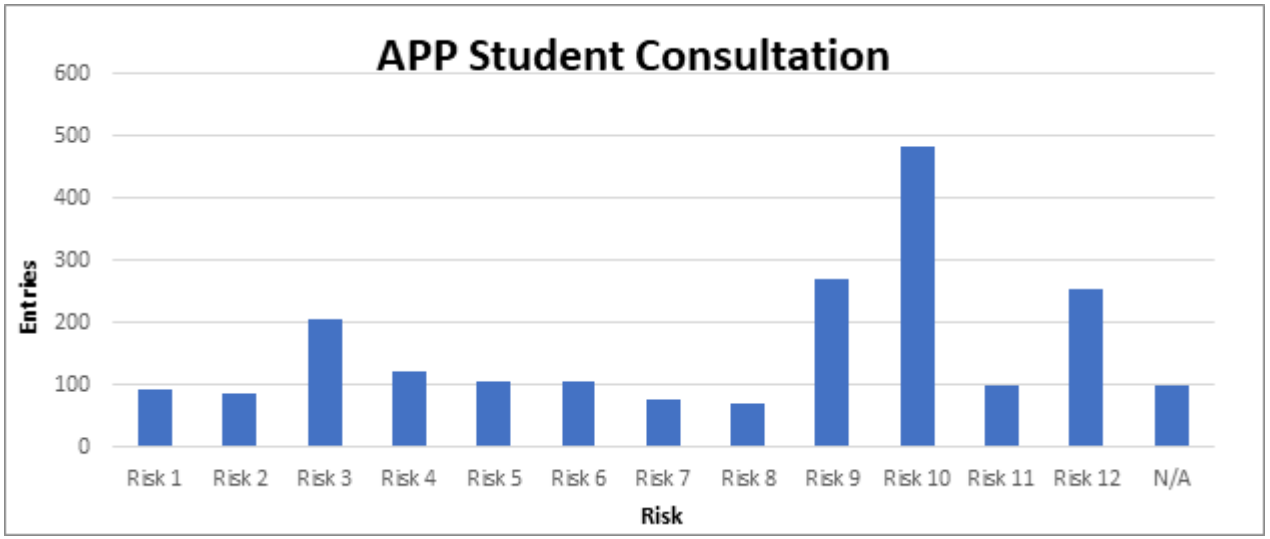
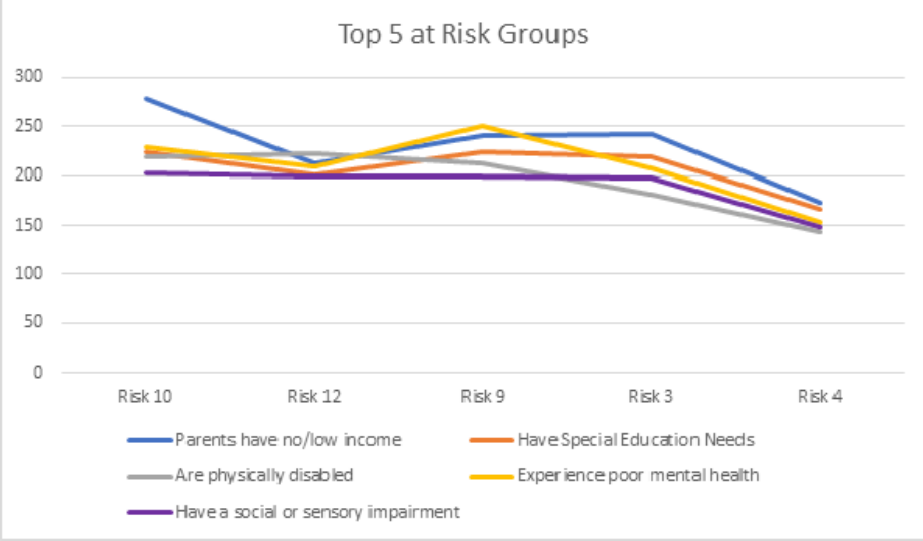


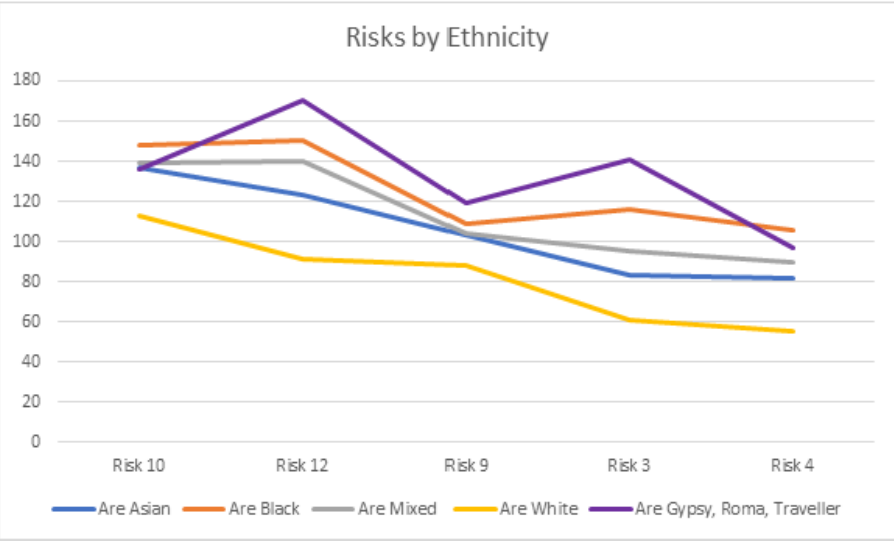

*Table 2 Student consultation risks to access and participation in HE identified by City Students*

| Risk | Risk | Details |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | Perception of higher education | Students may not feel able to apply to higher education, or certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified. |
| 9 | Ongoing impacts of coronavirus | Students may be affected by the ongoing consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. |
| 10 | Cost pressures | Increases in cost pressures may affect a student's ability to complete their course or obtain a good grade. |
| 12 | Progression to further study | Students may not have equal opportunity to progress to an outcome they consider to be a positive reflection of their higher education experience. |

**Findings Phase two:**

*Chart 2 Groups most at risk of experiencing inequality of opportunity, by risk, as identified by City students & Chart 3 Ethnic Groups most at risk of experiencing inequality of opportunity, by risk, as identified by City students*




**Identifying risks**

The indicators of risk in our data analysis were then considered next to the Student Consultation findings and other internal data and staff feedback from SPPU (Strategy and Planning Performance Unit), student voice, Careers and Employability, Student Health & Wellbeing, equality charters, sector insights and research. This information was mapped against the OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk register. This led to the indentation of the risks identified on page 4 of this plan.

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

| **Intervention Strategy 1 – Access Outreach** |
|---|
| **Tutoring** in a small group environment is proven to be highly effective when consistent, peer or near-peer, and monitored. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation has shown that small group tutoring is highly effective in improving outcomes for students with low prior attainment and in supporting efforts to close the "achievement gap" between advantaged and disadvantages students. Average "value added" for tutoring programmes results in four months additional learner progress over the course of a year-long tutoring programme (EEF 2021).<br><br>**Outreach** Our long-standing existing programmes have shown substantial positive effects on student attitudinal factors affecting access to Higher Education under the NERUPI Framework. Additional evidence from the TASO evidence toolkit shows small, but significant, impact from generalised Campus Visits and higher education outreach. As a result, our Access offer centres on the effectiveness of concrete skill outcomes and exposure to student role models (Baines et al 2022). Further evidence from the UniConnect evidence bank shows these effects are higher for specialist, targeted and subject specific outreach, positively impacting students' ability to access HE, make informed decisions, improving confidence, self-efficacy and motivation to study. Under this plan we will: contribute evidence to the TASO bank, explore the possibility of Level 3 evidence in at least one Secondary or Primary outreach programme, move towards 100% subject specific, specialist and highly targeted outreach<br><br>**Careers IAG** has a strong evidence base to support a positive improvement in outcomes for participating students, including the TASO evidence bank and substantial academic research on efficacy and the role of Careers IAG in the school-Higher Education- career pathway.<br><br>**Educational Disadvantage** Socio-economically deprived students in any school system have lower attainment outcomes throughout and are less likely to continue after they leave compulsory education. The longer disadvantage lasts, the greater the effect on attainment, post-school options and further life opportunities (Gorard, 2023).<br><br>Key Stage 3 and 4 attainment has a widely understood range of predicting factors which show clear relationships between disadvantage and lower attainment.<br><br>These indicators of disadvantage are strongly correlated with GCSE attainment, and additionally indicate lower progress through secondary school more generally. Other clear correlations between GCSE attainment and potential target criteria for WP tutoring include<br><br>• Black African Ethnicity<br>• Black Caribbean Ethnicity<br>• Parental Attitude to University<br>• Young person aims/aspirations to not continue education Post 16<br>• SEN status |

- Attendance of non-selective school

Where multiple indicators of educational disadvantage are present, effects are compounded, with substantial and long-lasting lower achievement (London Assembly 2020; Early, 2019).

**Early Intervention** Key Stage 2 attainment has a significant relationship to levels achieved at the end of Key Stage 4. Minor improvements in Key Stage 2 scores have a direct and substantial impact on Key Stage 4 attainment. Patterns of educational disadvantage are set in early education and persist throughout. Experience of poverty and intersectional area/ethnicity indicators affect achievement from entry into Primary school. By age 11, differential achievement negatively affects subject choice, engagement with secondary school and subsequent pathway options. Early intervention to support students to achieve national average levels in Maths and English is key to supporting early secondary success, particularly among pupils where progress over Key Stage 3 is negatively affected by educational disadvantage (Cook, 2020).

**London Context** London schools face highly varying levels of educational disadvantage and enrol a far higher proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds than the national average. 1/5th of pupils in London were eligible for free school meals in 2019 (London Datastore 2019), and this proportion has grown over the pandemic. London schools achieve higher KS4 attainment than in other regions. This attainment "boost" (13.1 points average) is insufficient to off-set the impact of other elements of disadvantage (e.g., Eligible for FSM -12.2, non-selective school -20.1, no biological parents in household -35.5) (Lessof & Ross, 2018). Students in London eligible for free school meals achieve an average of 10 points lower in Attainment 8 scores than non-eligible students (London Datastore, 2019). In effect, the "London boost" contributes to higher achievement among students where one or none of the indicators of educational deprivation exist. Targeting students where intersectional disadvantage exists will ensure tutoring has a significant impact.

**London Borough Context** Local boroughs face complex patterns of educational disadvantage within otherwise largely good school provision. City's focus areas of Islington (Hayes et al, 2022), Tower Hamlets (Borough Profile 2024), Camden (Camden Education Strategy, 2022) and Hackney (Hackney, 2022) all share similar patterns of intersectional educational disadvantage, with lower than average/expected attainment amongst:

- Students eligible for free school meals
- Certain ethnic groups (e.g. Islington - Black Caribbean, Turkish and Cypriot communities, White Working-Class Boys)
- Care experienced students, Care Leavers and Young Carers
- Students living in more deprived areas

As shown above, where students experience two or more indicators of educational disadvantage, school and London "boosts" provide insufficient mitigation.

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**Intervention Strategy 2 Access, Disability**

**Transition Activity** Transition to university can be particularly challenging for autistic students due to changes in environment, alteration to routines, and the pressures associated with greater independence (Davies & Bagnall, 2024; Nuske, Arillotta, Bellon, & Richdale, 2019). Lambe, et al (2019) research with autistic students revealed that these students welcome early tailored support during the transition period as this could help them navigate the complexities of university life. Others have shown that specifically designed early induction programmes can help students build confidence, reduce anxiety, and connect with peers and staff who understand their needs (Lei et al., 2020). Further to this, TASO (2023) also highlights the benefits of transition programmes in supporting students' move to university.

**Inclusive Teaching/Assessment** The Higher Education Commission's 'Arriving at Thriving' report identified access to teaching and learning resources as the second most significant barrier faced by disabled students in higher education (Policy Connect, 2020). Research into students' experiences has demonstrated that core parts of the academic journey, such as accessing information in lectures, participating in learning activities, and completing assessments, are more difficult for disabled students compared to their non-disabled peers (Witham & Brewer, 2024; Brewer, Urwin & Witham, 2023; Nieminen, 2023). For this reason, we will be working with our academic schools to make teaching, assessment, and policies more inclusive. One way of implementing this will be by having liaisons within departments who advocate for and help establish inclusive methods. This mirrors a piece of sector good practice highlighted within the HEC's report, where Faculty Disability Liaisons worked with academic departments to offer support and guidance on inclusive policies and design (Policy Connect, 2020).

**Staff Training** Research has consistently shown that there is a link between staff knowledge and their confidence in supporting students with complex needs and disabilities in higher education (Lister, Pearson, Collins & Davies, 2021). For example, Carballo, Morgado, and Cortés-Vega's (2019) evaluation of a disability training programme for academic staff reveals a positive impact on staff attitudes and their approach to inclusive educational practices. Parallel to this, Kendall's (2016) exploration of disabled students' experiences reveals the negative implications that lack of staff awareness and

knowledge about disabilities can have on students, highlighting the importance of training. Further to this, developing staff awareness and expertise through training is considered a crucial foundation for creating an inclusive environment for disabled students (Shaw, 2021).

**Inclusive Campus** The Higher Education Commission's report revealed that 26% of disabled students (N = 513) "always" or "often" feel excluded from social activities due to a lack of disability awareness (Policy Connect, 2020). To address this issue, we plan to implement a series of initiatives, including awareness days, celebration weeks/months, and the appointment of representatives and ambassadors. These efforts aim to raise disability awareness and amplify the voices of disabled individuals across all levels of our institution. This approach aligns with recommendations from TASO's 'What Works to Reduce Equality Gaps for Disabled Students' report (2023), which emphasises the importance of increasing disability representation within universities.

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**Intervention Strategy 3 Success, Completion and Attainment**

**Financial Support** - Through our student consultation for our new Access and Participation Plan, students identified the cost-of-living crisis as the number one risk to equality of opportunity whilst at university. Sector research suggests that some of the groups covered by our Access and Participation Plan have been disproportionately affected by the cost-of-living crisis, while the efficacy of financial support in enabling students from disadvantaged groups to continue their programmes and attain a degree has been identified by both TASO and the OfS. Our internal evaluation of financial support demonstrated statistically significant positive impact on Attainment and Completion for students who received this support.

**Transition for Academic Success Programme** – see above IS 2

**Inclusive Assessment**. Assessment for Learning project will benefit all students but will support the needs of our disadvantaged or minoritised students, with research showing that improving students' understanding of assessment processes is an effective tool in addressing awarding gaps. The QAA (2023) inclusive Higher Education Framework highlights the important of structures and systems in developing a university that considers the needs of students through all policy and regulations, embedding a broad definition of inclusion to reduce inequalities.

**Peer Support**. Academic research supports the value of peer mentoring schemes in supporting new students' socialisation and adaptation to university study

**Attendance and Engagement**. We have developed a comprehensive theory of change which supports our attendance interventions. Through internal evaluation of our Attendance monitoring process, interviews with students have shown that 69% of students completely understood why they were being contacted regarding their attendance, with 89% reporting positive feelings and experiences with the contact being made. 62% of students also confirmed the contact changed the way they thought about their engagement. This is supported by a national study that suggests that students are in favour of learner analytics for the purpose of student support (Solution Path & WonkHE, 2023). There is causal evidence to show that early identification of student barriers using learner analytics can improve outcomes (TASO, 2014).

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**Intervention Strategy 4 Progression from Higher Education**

**Global Opportunities** Additional funding to supplement the Turing Scheme would therefore ensure that the opportunities, and the benefits to graduate outcomes that they bring, are far more accessible to students from underrepresented groups.

**Professional Mentoring** Youth Employment UK (2022) conducted a census report of young people aged 11-30, revealing that only 36% of those currently in education have access to work experience. Professional mentoring supports in addressing this issue at a university level by providing exposure to various career paths and industry professionals. Career-focused mentoring has been shown to enhance self-efficacy, and decision-making maturity, leading to more strategic and confident career planning (Nabi et al, 2024). It also helps develop essential soft skills, such as networking (Nabi et al, 2024).

Additionally, the one-on-one nature of mentoring fosters a clearer sense of identity and offers numerous psychological benefits (Lyden, 2020). TASO (2014) recognises these psychological and emotional support benefits, noting that mentoring provides role models to students and fostering a sense of belonging in Higher Education.

**Volunteering** Student volunteering can be an important contributor to student engagement, benefiting both students and wider communities. By undertaking voluntary work, either within the university or in the local area, students contribute to their environments while gaining invaluable personal and professional development (Resch, Knapp & Schrittesser, 2021). Research within English Higher Education consistently highlights the role of

volunteering in enhancing employability. It challenges students to step outside of their comfort zones, fostering personal growth, developing interpersonal skills, and expanding their networks (Holdsworth, 2010). To maximise the benefits of volunteering, students should be encouraged to participate freely and knowledgeably. This approach ensures that students perceive volunteering as a rewarding activity while maintaining their agency and capacity to make a meaningful difference (Holdsworth & Brewis, 2013).

**Gradvantage** Gaining work experience and exposure to graduate-level jobs is crucial for students aiming to secure such positions after university. Many graduate recruitment processes place a strong emphasis on skills-based assessments, which significantly favour candidates who can draw on relevant work experiences to demonstrate the required skills (Humburg & van der Velden, 2015). According to High Fliers (2023), a quarter of graduates were recruited through employers' work experience programmes, with more than half having studied at Oxford, Cambridge, or other Russell Group universities.

The GradVantage programme offers internships that are exclusively available to first degree students and BAME backgrounds, providing them with an excellent opportunity to gain valuable experience. Research by the UK's Department for Education into graduate career planning highlighted that graduate outcomes are notably better for students who undertake paid work while at university or within six months after graduation, as well as for those who have a clear career plan upon leaving university (Department for Education, 2017). The GradVantage programme supports both aspects through one-to-one career support and internship opportunities.

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**Intervention Strategy 5 Mental Health and Wellbeing**

There has been a steep increase in disclosure of mental health conditions at the point of application to HE over the last ten years (UCAS, 2021). The proportion of HE students stating they had a mental health issue stood at 4.2% in 2020, but wider research suggests that the true rate of mental health issues in the student population is higher (Hubble & Bolton, 2021).

**Clinical Support** There is strong causal evidence that psychological interventions are linked to improved mental health outcomes for students. Interventions have been found to have a positive impact on depression, anxiety, eating disorders and emotional distress.

**Mental Health Awareness raising and service promotion** Internal research supporting our university mental health charter submission has highlighted the need facilitate a culture where individuals feel connected, supported and safe to disclose.

Throughout the year, campaigns and activities encourage healthy behaviours and disclosure to support services for those experiencing poor mental health. This includes opportunities for students to engage with their peers, campus, and local community through a diverse range of activities delivered in collaboration with City Students' Union, such as volunteering, faith communities and a host of sports and societies. It also includes timely communications, such as the Study Well campaign during exams. There is medium empirical evidence that settings-based interventions such as policies, inclusive practice and teaching lead to improved mental health outcomes. Studies by OfS have shown that students prefer to engage flexibly, the CityWellbeing and Togetherall Apps provide clear signposting for students and access to resources to support good mental health as well as an online peer support network and crisis management support. There is emerging sector evidence that students who receive support from peers, rather than professionals is an effective intervention.

**City Sport** There is strong evidence that taking part in physical activity can have a positive impact on mental wellbeing. Being physically active can improve mood and sleep, decrease the chance of depression and anxiety and increased self-esteem. Sport provides peer networks within a university which increases shared identity and sense of belonging.

**Student Welfare Officer support in Schools** Internal reporting has found that students feel a greater connection to their programme and are most likely to reach out to their academic School for help and support initially. Welfare officers can provide timely wellbeing advice and triage students appropriately to internal and external support service. Alignment of Reasonable Adjustments processes across schools helps to ensure academics are aware of student's individual needs and that adjustments can be put in place quickly.

**Report and Support Tool** According to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (2019), harassment can have a profound impact on an individual's mental health, educational outcomes, and career. Further to this, the EHRC found through their research that there is a low likelihood of members of university communities coming forward to report harassment and recommends putting in place mechanisms to enable reporting.

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**Intervention Strategy 6 Evidence City Cares**

Some students experience consistent and persistent educational disadvantage, financial hardship, challenging personal and family circumstances and structural barriers to achieving positive outcomes throughout their educational journey. These include:

- Young people who have experienced local authority care.
- Young people estranged from their families and young adults' carers
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- LGBTQ+ students with a particular focus on the experience of trans students.

- Students from the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller community.

The OfS has identified student groups who share these characteristics as underrepresented in higher education, with risks to equality of opportunity and support needs that can be addressed in access and participation plans. The best available sector-level evidence on these risks has been collected in the 1) OfS evidence base used to inform inclusion of student characteristics on the EORR, the 2) Resources pages of the OfS's Topic Briefings on effective practice, and 3) TASO's March 2023 Rapid Review supporting the development of the EORR Report. (OfS, 2023; TASO, 2023). These bodies of evidence highlight persistent challenges, including low levels of access, continuation, attainment, and progression rates, along with disparities in degree outcomes, for care-experienced and estranged students. Similar, though less conclusive, patterns are observed among the other underrepresented groups supported by this intervention

An overarching theme across this evidence is the intersectional and complex needs of these groups of learners and the nuanced, context-specific approaches that are required to support them (TASO, 2021). Common risks to equality of opportunity across these student groups are summarised below.

**Young People in Local Authority Care** These young people have significantly poorer educational and life outcomes than the general population and can encounter numerous barriers to higher education. They often face lower academic performance and continuation rates compared to their peers. Only 14% of these individuals access higher education, compared to 47% of all other pupils (Civitas, 2023). Key challenges include poorer school attainment, financial difficulties, difficulty securing accommodations, and insufficient information about higher education options. The lack of guidance and a stable support system can exacerbate these challenges, leading to reduced academic success and positive career outcomes.

**Young People Estranged from Their Families** These students face considerable challenges in higher education due to the absence of family support, which can occur before or during their studies. A 2015 survey found that 14% of estranged students had suspended or deferred their studies, and 27% had considered doing so, with financial stress as the main reason. Additionally, 33% had experienced issues of homelessness before starting their studies (Bland, 2015). The lack of designated support and funding in HE often forces estranged students to rely on more provisional measures such discretionary hardship funding (Unite Foundation, 2020). This can leave them vulnerable to financial instability, contributing to increased stress, mental health issues, academic disruptions, and a higher risk of housing insecurity.

**Young Adult Carers** juggle demanding caregiving responsibilities alongside their academic commitments. Key challenges can include financial strain, health issues, and difficulties balancing their dual roles. Carers often report high levels of stress and mental health problems, making it more difficult to manage both their studies and caregiving duties. The lack of recognition and tailored support for their unique situation can exacerbate these difficulties.

**Refugees and Asylum Seekers** face significant obstacles in accessing higher education. Key barriers include uncertainty over immigration status, challenges with language, and the recognition of previous qualifications. Financial constraints are also a major concern, as many are ineligible for student loans or scholarships, making it difficult to cover tuition and living costs. The limited availability of tailored support and resources further complicates their entry and success in higher education.

**LGBTQ+ students, particularly those identifying as transgender** face distinct challenges in higher education. Transgender students often experience lower academic attainment and higher rates of mental health issues, with 22% reporting mental health conditions. Additionally, 17% face negative school experiences due to bullying, affecting their overall satisfaction and support needs (UCAS, 2021). These students are also more reliant on maintenance loans or employment to cover tuition and living costs. Given these challenges, there is a need for tailored support services, including mental health care, personalized signposting, financial assistance, and support with accommodations.

**Students from the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT)** communities face notable barriers to higher education. These include lower attainment levels, higher rates of school exclusion, and a lack of effective support mechanisms. The educational attainment gap between GRT students and their peers remains wide, and many face difficulties in accessing higher education despite achieving the necessary qualifications. Limited support and resources further exacerbate these challenges.

City responded to these sector-level challenges by launching City Cares in 2018, a multi-intervention outreach programme designed to support care leavers and care-experienced students, estranged students, young adult carers, and students who are refugees or asylum seekers in receipt of the Article 26 Sanctuary Scholarship. As shown below, total City Cares student numbers have steadily increased year to year. In its first year (2018/19), the programme supported only care-experienced students but expanded the following year to include all currently eligible groups.

Academic Year Number of Students Supported

- 2018/19 37 students
- 2019/20 80 students
- 2020/21 114 students
- 2021/22 125 students
- 2023/2024 156 students

Student Finance England data shows a similar increase in numbers for estranged and care-experienced students accessing education at City. A breakdown of 2023/24 figures show City Cares supported 41 care-experienced students, 47 young adult estranged students, 58 young adult carer students, and 10 Sanctuary Scholars (4 current and 6 previous recipients). Initial data from the Undergraduate Admissions team post-Clearing for 2024/25 indicates that these numbers are expected to continue rise, especially with inclusion of additional eligibility starting in 2025/26 for LGBTQ+ students with a focus on trans students and students from the GRT community.

City's approach to support aligns with the OfS's effective practices for access and participation for these discrete student groups, as supported by academic research and third-sector grey literature cited below above. This is reflected in a multi-intervention approach with targeted intervention activities spanning the entire student lifecycle, offering designated financial support packages, pastoral care and case management from designated members of staff, on-course academic assistance, and peer engagement activities.

Whilst these common components of support have been widely recognized as beneficial to HE students, there remains limited casual evidence directly linking specific activities to improved outcomes, as most studies focus on broader student experiences rather than the impact evaluation of individual

interventions (TASO, 2021). City Cares internal evaluations have similarly found that students feel well-supported, particularly valuing assistance with finances, 1-1 pastoral support, process navigation, accommodation, and peer community engagement. Yet this positive feedback, along with the observed outcomes such as a high rate of continuation, can only be attributed to the combination of interventions offered by City Cares, as it is difficult to causally link these outcomes to any single activity. Planned evaluation activities for this intervention, along with a broader emphasis on evaluation across the sector, should help generate stronger evidence for supporting these student groups.

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# Annex C: Targets, investment and fees

Office for Students

## Fees, investments and targets

### 2025-26 to 2028-29

**Provider name: City, University of London**

**Provider UKPRN: 10001478**

### Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

**Inflation statement:**

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

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

| Full-time course type: | Additional information: | Sub-contractual UKPRN: | Course fee: |
|---|---|---|---|
| First degree | All home students (all Schools) | N/A | 9250 |
| First degree | Bayes Business School replacement term abroad | N/A | 6930 |
| Foundation degree | * | N/A | * |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | Bayes Business School | N/A | 8000 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | School of Health & Psychological Sciences | N/A | 9250 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | School of Science & Technology | N/A | 9250 |
| HNC/HND | * | N/A | * |
| CertHE/DipHE | School of Health & Psychological Sciences | N/A | 9250 |
| Postgraduate ITT | * | N/A | * |
| Accelerated degree | * | N/A | * |
| Sandwich year | School of Health & Psychological Sciences | N/A | 1200 |
| Sandwich year | School of Policy & Global Affairs | N/A | 1150 |
| Sandwich year | School of Science & Technology | N/A | 1850 |
| Sandwich year | School or Communication & Creativity | N/A | 1150 |
| Turing Scheme and overseas study years | City Law School Exchange Year | N/A | 1385 |
| Other | * | N/A | * |

**Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2025-26**

| Sub-contractual full-time course type: | Sub-contractual provider name and additional information: | Sub-contractual UKPRN: | Course fee: |
|---|---|---|---|
| First degree | * | * | * |
| Foundation degree | * | * | * |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | Capital City College Group - School of Science & Technology | 10007455 | 9250 |
| HNC/HND | * | * | * |
| CertHE/DipHE | * | * | * |
| Postgraduate ITT | * | * | * |
| Accelerated degree | * | * | * |
| Sandwich year | * | * | * |
| Turing Scheme and overseas study years | * | * | * |
| Other | * | * | * |

**Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants**

| Part-time course type: | Additional information: | Sub-contractual UKPRN: | Course fee: |
|---|---|---|---|
| First degree | Repeat year with partical attendance | N/A | 6935 |
| Foundation degree | * | N/A | * |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | * | N/A | * |
| HNC/HND | * | N/A | * |
| CertHE/DipHE | * | N/A | * |
| Postgraduate ITT | * | N/A | * |
| Accelerated degree | * | N/A | * |
| Sandwich year | * | N/A | * |
| Turing Scheme and overseas study years | * | N/A | * |
| Other | * | N/A | * |

**Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2025-26**

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

Office for Students

# Fees, investments and targets

## 2025-26 to 2028-29

### Provider name: City, University of London

### Provider UKPRN: 10001478

## Investment summary

A provider is expected to submit information about its forecasted investment to achieve the objectives of its access and participation plan in respect of the following areas: access, financial support and research and evaluation. Note that this does not necessarily represent the total amount spent by a provider in these areas. Table 6b provides a summary of the forecasted investment, across the four academic years covered by the plan, and Table 6d gives a more detailed breakdown.

**Notes about the data:**

The figures below are not comparable to previous access and participation plans or access agreements as data published in previous years does not reflect latest provider projections on student numbers.

Yellow shading indicates data that was calculated rather than input directly by the provider.

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

"Total access investment funded from HFI" refers to income from charging fees above the basic fee limit.

"Total access investment from other funding (as specified)" refers to other funding, including OfS funding (but excluding Uni Connect), other public funding and funding from other sources such as philanthropic giving and private sector sources and/or partners.

### Table 6b - Investment summary

| Access and participation plan investment summary (£) | Breakdown | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Access activity investment (£) | NA | £805,000 | £827,000 | £839,000 | £839,000 |
| Financial support (£) | NA | £2,380,000 | £2,454,000 | £2,487,000 | £2,497,000 |
| Research and evaluation (£) | NA | £377,000 | £390,000 | £395,000 | £395,000 |

### Table 6d - Investment estimates

| Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000) | Breakdown | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Access activity investment | Pre-16 access activities (£) | £378,000 | £389,000 | £395,000 | £395,000 |
| Access activity investment | Post-16 access activities (£) | £377,000 | £388,000 | £394,000 | £394,000 |
| Access activity investment | Other access activities (£) | £50,000 | £50,000 | £50,000 | £50,000 |
| **Access activity investment** | **Total access investment (£)** | **£805,000** | **£827,000** | **£839,000** | **£839,000** |
| **Access activity investment** | ***Total access investment (as % of HFI)*** | **2.2%** | **2.2%** | **2.2%** | **2.2%** |
| **Access activity investment** | ***Total access investment funded from HFI (£)*** | **£755,000** | **£777,000** | **£789,000** | **£789,000** |
| **Access activity investment** | ***Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)*** | **£50,000** | **£50,000** | **£50,000** | **£50,000** |
| Financial support investment | Bursaries and scholarships (£) | £2,230,000 | £2,294,000 | £2,317,000 | £2,317,000 |
| Financial support investment | Fee waivers (£) | £0 | £0 | £0 | £0 |
| Financial support investment | Hardship funds (£) | £150,000 | £160,000 | £170,000 | £180,000 |
| **Financial support investment** | **Total financial support investment (£)** | **£2,380,000** | **£2,454,000** | **£2,487,000** | **£2,497,000** |
| **Financial support investment** | ***Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)*** | **6.5%** | **6.5%** | **6.5%** | **6.5%** |
| Research and evaluation investment | Research and evaluation investment (£) | £377,000 | £390,000 | £395,000 | £395,000 |
| Research and evaluation investment | *Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)* | 1.0% | 1.0% | 1.0% | 1.0% |

Office for Students

# Fees, investments and targets

## 2025-26 to 2028-29

**Provider name: City, University of London**

**Provider UKPRN: 10001478**

### Targets

#### Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

| Aim [500 characters maximum] | Reference number | Lifecycle stage | Characteristic | Target group | Comparator group | Description and commentary [500 characters maximum] | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Units | Baseline data | 2025-26 milestone | 2026-27 milestone | 2027-28 milestone | 2028-29 milestone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City will increase the percentage of students accessing City with a reported disability. | PTA_1 | Access | Reported disability | Disability reported | | The target was calculation as the median average of reported disability % for the HE sectors (APP Data dashboard), working age adult % from UK, Greater London and Islington, in order to reflect both HE and our location, using our baseline year. We expect to see positive progress from year 1 of the plan due to the work already undertaken to achieve this target. | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2021-22 | Percentage | 7.3% | 10.3% | 12.5% | 15.7% | 16.8% |
| | PTA_2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

#### Table 5d: Success targets

| Aim (500 characters maximum) | Reference number | Lifecycle stage | Characteristic | Target group | Comparator group | Description and commentary [500 characters maximum] | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Units | Baseline data | 2025-26 milestone | 2026-27 milestone | 2027-28 milestone | 2028-29 milestone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Remove the completion gap between our Black and White students. | PTS_1 | Completion | Ethnicity | Black | White | The target is based on eliminating the gap in completion, as we have seen progress in this area. Further steady progress is expected therefore the milestones are evenly spaced over the years. | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2017-18 | Percentage points | 6.7 | 5 | 3.3 | 1.6 | 0 |
| Reduce the awarding gap between our Black and White students. | PTS_2 | Attainment | Ethnicity | Black | White | This persistent gap in 1st and 2:1 awards is expected to take some time to respond to the systemic change needed to see progress, therefore the aim for the duration of the plan is to reduce the gap, and we expect to see positive outcomes towards the latter half the plan | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2017-18 | Percentage points | 13.8 | 13 | 12.5 | 10 | 8 |
| Remove the awarding gap between our white and Asian students | PTS_3 | Attainment | Ethnicity | Asian | White | This is a persistent gap in 1st and 1:1 awards that may take some time to see progress. Asian as a broad category may be disguising larger gaps in subcategories of this ethnicity. Therefore, we will undertake work at a more granular level to understand gaps in attainment for subgroups. | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2020-21 | Percentage points | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Reduce the gap in completion rates between students from IMD Q1 and Q5 | PTS_4 | Completion | Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD]) | IMD quintile 1 | IMD quintile 5 | The gap has been growing over the last 2 years, our aim in the first year of the plan is to reverse this trajectory, with pace accelerating towards the latter half of the plan once the intervention strategy impact is evident. | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2017-18 | Percentage points | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 2 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reduce the awarding gap between students from IMD Q1 and Q5. | PTS_5 | Attainment | Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD]) | IMD quintile 1 | IMD quintile 5 | The gap in 1st and 2:1 awards grew after a dip during the pandemic. We therefore expect slow progress against the targets initially as interventions start to take effect, with faster reductions in the gap toward the end of the plan. | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2020-21 | Percentage points | 11.1 | 10 | 8 | 6 | 4 |
| Procatively monitor and maintain a positive environment for our students mental health and wellbeing by maintaining our NSS positivity score on mental health. | PTS_6 | Completion | Other | Other (please specify in description) | N/A | Maintain our NSS scores for mental health, this is used as a proxy measure for a positive environment environment for our student's mental health. Our aim is to maintain the current positivity score as a min. | No | Other data source (please include details in commentary) | 2022-23 | Percentage points | 80.1 | 80.1 | 80.1 | 80.1 | 80.1 |
| | PTS_7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Table 5e: Progression targets**

| Aim (500 characters maximum) | Reference number | Lifecycle stage | Characteristic | Target group | Comparator group | Description and commentary [500 characters maximum] | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Units | Baseline data | 2025-26 milestone | 2026-27 milestone | 2027-28 milestone | 2028-29 milestone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City will improve progression rates into highly skilled employment or higher study for our Asian students by removing the gap in progression rates between Asian and White students. | PTP_1 | Progression | Ethnicity | Asian | White | The aim is to remove the gap by improving progression rates for Asian students to align with outcomes for our White students. We will also undertake work to understand the experience of students in the subcategories of this ethnicity to further target our interventions. | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2020-21 | Percentage points | 6.1 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| CIty will improve progression rates into highly skilled employment for our students with mixed ethnicity by removing the gap in progression rates between students of Mixed ethnicity and White students. | PTP_2 | Progression | Ethnicity | Mixed | White | Although this is a small gap, it is consistent and has been growing, therefore, our aim is to halt the ongoing increase in the gap and reverse this trend. | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2020-21 | Percentage points | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| City will improve progression rates into highly skilled employment for our students from IMD Q1 by reducing the gap in progression rates between IMD Q1 and IMD Q 5 Students. | PTP_3 | Progression | Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD]) | IMD quintile 1 | IMD quintile 5 | This is a gap that has been consistently growing year on year, therefore we are aiming to halt this ongoing increase in the outcomes gap, but we recognise this lead to slower progress toward the target. | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2020-21 | Percentage points | 12.4 | 11 | 9.4 | 7.8 | 6.2 |
| | PTP_4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |