



## 2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

### Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by Newman University against targets, objectives and written commitments set out in its 2019-20 access and participation plan. This document is a summary of information submitted by the provider to the OfS. This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

#### 1. Ambition and strategy

Newman University's ambition and strategy as detailed in the 2019-20 access and participation plan:

Newman University is proud of its successes in providing access to university education to students from a diverse range of backgrounds. It consistently exceeds sector averages and location-adjusted benchmarks for recruiting students from under-represented groups including mature students, disabled students, students from low participation areas and students from families with no previous HE experience. It is a fundamental part of Newman's Catholic mission and ethos to offer a high quality, supportive yet challenging formative education to all sections of society and Newman is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive community. Due consideration is given with regard to protected characteristics at all stages from pre-application to progression, including completion and achievement. We developed this strategy in partnership with members of academic and support staff and with the Students' Union, and it covers all courses offered by Newman University. The University strives to improve success and progression for all students and feels that the measures it undertakes will particularly benefit students from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds.

The University is developing an infrastructure to more effectively embed inclusive practice within the curriculum and assessment, and the physical estate. Support for under-represented and disadvantaged students is embedded within core processes and systems at the University. We undertake measures to improve the attainment rates and outcomes for all our students. As detailed in the Plan, we work with students before the start of their time at Newman, with pre-entry transition programmes, using appropriate academic and non-academic processes through their time as a student, including extra-curricular activities, and ending with a supportive careers and alumni service. The University aspires to provide a holistic learning environment for all its students in which each individual can fulfil their potential. This begins with providing a welcoming and supportive attitude to prospective students and ensuring that the needs of the individual are met throughout their time at University and into employment. We aim to develop employable graduates through skills development and the provision of a work placement module on all undergraduate degree programmes.

As part of our 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan we specifically aimed to:

1. Support students from areas of low participation to access higher education.
2. Ensure that students from low participation groups are supported to better equip them to continue in higher education and succeed.
3. Provide support from pre-application to employment for disabled students.
4. Improve the achievement of Black, Asian and Mixed Ethnicity students.

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

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

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

## 2. Self-assessment of targets

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

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-20 access and participation plans. Full information can be found in **Table 8a – statistical targets and milestones** and **Table 8b – Other milestones and targets** of Newman University's 2019-20 [access and participation plan](#).

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in [Annex B](#).

### Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	Although no longer collected nationally, the NS-SEC data continues to be replicated internally.	Other (please give details in Description column)	50.8	50.8%	50.8%	Percentage	2019-20	52.5	Expected progress
T16a_02 (Access)		Other (please give details in Description column)	23.1%	23.1%	23.1%	Percentage	2019-20	18.4	Limited progress
T16a_03 (Student success)		Other (please give details in Description column)	9.8	8%	8%	Percentage	2018-19	11	Limited progress
T16a_04 (Student success)		Other (please give details in Description column)	11.9%	8%	8%	Percentage	2018-19	16	Limited progress
T16a_05 (Student success)	Aim to retain students with Dyslexia who regularly engage with support sessions	2016-17	70%	74%	75%	Percentage	2019-20	77.8	Expected progress
T16a_06 (Progression)	Aim to reduce the % between black and white students in highly skilled employment	2014-15	7%	6	6	Percentage	2016-17	10.6	Limited progress

Other milestones and targets

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16b_01 (Access)	Points offer reduced by 40 UCAS points for applicants who have attended low performing schools but achieved above average results. Ongoing.	Other (please give details in Description column)	n/a	1	1	Headcount	2019-20	22	Expected progress
T16b_02 (Access)	To have over 100 activities including presentations in schools and colleges, taster sessions and IAG support. This will include provision of information to potential students and their parents on student finance, researching university choices and preparing an effective personal statement. We will also include outreach work with younger students at years 8,9 and 10 on the benefits of university through working with current students acting as role models. Regularly engaging through social media with potential applicants.	2012-13	100	100	100	Other	2019-20	462	Expected progress
T16b_03 (Student success)	Number of teachers receiving CPD to raise attainment of their pupils	2016-17	80	90	95	Headcount	2019-20	176	Expected progress
T16b_04 (Access)	Increase of 2% per year growth in progression rates into HE from Y13 pupils	2016-17	variable dependent on ward	2%	4%	Percentage	2019-20	175	Expected progress

### 3. Investment commitments

#### 3.1. Access and participation investment for the last audited year

Please note that some differences in predicted vs actual spend may be due to reporting differences between academic and financial years.

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£50,000.00	£319,000.00	538%
Financial Support	£171,000.00	£143,000.00	-16%

### 4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected Newman University has made the following commitments to increase the rate of progress against their targets.

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16a_02	We will continue our expanded access and outreach activity with partner schools, colleges and their staff. We will engage in the Aim Higher West Midlands Uni Connect Programme [formerly NCOP] to work with our specific partner schools and colleges through provision of a Newman employed progression Ambassador. We will also extend the life of the Reach Out project into 2020-21 to provide mentoring to a further 50 students in NCOP 'gap' wards of Barley Green, Longbridge and King's Norton.
T16a_03	We will continue and expand the enhancements made to induction and student peer mentoring in 2019-20 to ensure the availability of student peer mentors across all of level 4. We will expand our support for students undertaking resits to ensure there is encouragement and timely advice in place to support their progress. We will provide funding for low-income students who are struggling with digital access to provide funds for laptops and wifi connectivity. We will also introduce an expanded long-term loanable laptop scheme for students otherwise in need. We will set robust retention targets for individual academic subject areas and facilitate the sharing of good practice from those subjects with high continuation rates.

T16a_04	<p>We will continue to build our response to the recommendations of our mature student panel, including the enhancements made to transition and induction through online provision and student peer mentoring. We will expand our support for students undertaking resits, provide long-term loanable laptops for students, and establish provision for low-income students facing issues of digital access. We will set retention targets for individual academic subject areas and encourage the sharing of effective practice from student partnership projects and the mature student panel. We will continue our streamlined mitigating circumstances process, and develop support for students who are also carers.</p>
T16a_06	<p>We have made the success and progression of Black students a key focus in our 2020-25 Access and Participation Plan. We are putting in place ambitious development programmes both in relation to our direct support of Black student success and our wider University culture. We held a University-wide 'Big conversation' about race and racism in June 2020 and have developed a resulting race action plan to be overseen by Equality and Diversity Committee. We are introducing an anti-racism seminar series, a review of assessment practices, a requirement to address decolonisation of the curriculum at validation events, and an emphasis on valuing our diverse student body in our pedagogic practices. We are enhancing our staff development on decolonisation and will invite students to train us in anti-racism and to work with us on student-staff partnership projects addressing BAME continuation, success and progression. We will develop our BAME mentoring provision and engage with the fast developing best practice in the sector.</p>

## 5. Confirmation

Newman University confirms that:

Student engagement	
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?	
Yes	
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?	
Yes	
Verification and sign off	
Newman University has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.	
Yes	
Accountable officer sign off	
Name	Professor J Dunne
Position	Vice Chancellor



## Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

Newman University's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

<b>Target reference number: T16a_02</b>
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes, we have actioned the activities outlined in the 2019-20 Plan in relation to this target. These include pre-application outreach with partner schools and colleges, working with 234 institutions in total in 2019-20; providing staff CPD to 176 teachers and advisors to raise pupil attainment; participating in the AimHigher NCOP project and delivering the Reach Out project. Newman University continues to recruit above benchmark [17.6%] with regards to young, full-time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
Yes, additional outreach activity has been undertaken. We have greatly exceeded our targets for outreach event engagements [target 100, 2019-20 actual 462] and CPD activity to support teachers in raising attainment [target 105, 2019-20 actual 176] .

<b>Target reference number: T16a_03</b>
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes, we have actioned the activities outlined in the 2019-20 Plan in relation to this target. This included the provision of induction and transition activities such as our range of Higher Education Academic Development [HEADs] programmes for new starters and to support transition from level 4 to 5, 5-6 and direct entry to level 6. We continue to invest in our Academic Support Advisers to provide non-subject specific pastoral and general academic support. We developed our provision of student peer mentors, both generic and for specific purposes such as writing mentors. We provided a welfare advisor and student hardship funds, recognising that our students can often face multiple barriers to staying on their course. We also signed a student charter to ensure provision of personal tutoring to all students within their subjects. The retention rate for young students improved by one percentage point from 2017-18 to 2018-19.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
Yes, we have established a Retention and Success Task Group and appointed a permanent full-time Senior Lecturer in Student Engagement to drive develop work in this area. A key priority is the redevelopment of our welcome and induction process to embed learning from our HEADs programmes across all student induction work. Extensive work has been undertaken in relation to this target in the face of the anticipated detrimental impact of COVID-19. This includes the implementation of no-detriment policies, enhancement of on-line support through induction, academic support adviser work and tutoring, and student financial and well-being support; provision of remote student peer mentoring; and monitoring of blended learning engagement.



<b>Target reference number: T16a_04</b>
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes, we have actioned the activities outlined in the 2019-20 Plan in relation to this target. Mature students are a particular focus of our HEADstart and HEADonline programmes to support transition into Higher Education and help them develop their academic practice. There has been an improving trend in mature student retention since the 2015-16 figure of 22% non-continuation.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
Yes, we worked with the Students' Union on student voice and the establishment of a mature student panel and put in place actions developed from its recommendations. These recommendations and actions have been taken up by the recently established Retention and Success Task Group. Extensive work has been undertaken in relation to this target in the face of the detrimental impact of COVID-19, including the intersectional disadvantage faced by many of our mature students as they sought to provide home schooling while studying. This includes the implementation of no-detriment policies, enhancement of on-line support through induction, and student financial and well-being support; provision of remote student peer mentoring; and monitoring of blended learning engagement. We also reviewed and streamlined our mitigating circumstances process to ease the burden on students who are parents.

<b>Target reference number: T16a_06</b>
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes, we have actioned the activities outlined in the 2019-20 Plan in relation to this target. This includes the provision of HEAR records to all graduating students, that capture a wide range of academic and extra-curricular activity while at University. One-to-one careers support and the expectation of engagement in a work placement module help develop employability. No recent data is available on this metric, due to changes in the way the data is gathered and the very small sample size. However our internal figure for 2016/17 shows a significant improvement on our five year aggregate rate for 2012-17, with a drop from a 16% gap for the five year aggregate to a 10.6% gap for the latest available internal figures.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
Yes, we have developed an explicit employability strategy and engaged in an OfS funded project of reverse mentoring with employers to encourage their recruitment of students from under-represented groups. This both helps educate employers and provides important skills development for students from under-represented groups. Working with the Students' Union we put in place a Black student panel to make recommendations on the development of our practices. A BAME mentoring scheme was piloted in 2019-20 and we will seek to develop our mentoring provision for BAME students. In June 2020 we held a whole University 'Big conversation' about race and we have developed an action plan based on the issues raised.

## Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

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

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	Newman University continues to recruit well from lower socio-economic groups. 54% of our 2019-20 entrants were from the lowest Index of Multiple Deprivation quintile.
T16a_02	There is no straightforward comparison of target and outcome figures here because the target was for POLAR3 and the actual performance figure is for POLAR4. However, 54% of our 2019-20 entrants were from the lowest IMD quintile and Newman University continues to recruit above benchmark [17.6%] with regards to young, full-time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods.
T16a_03	Newman University has undertaken extensive work to support student engagement and continuation. That the 2018-19 retention rate for young students improves on 2017-18 by one percent demonstrates the beginnings of impact from this long term work. We are by no means content with this outcome, however, and though we are concerned at the possible impact of COVID on figures covering the period of the pandemic, we expect to see an improving trend in these figures once normality returns.
T16a_04	Despite missing our ambitious target, there has been an improving trend in mature student retention since the 2015-16 figure of 22% non-continuation, to 16% in 2017-18 and 2018-19. This demonstrates limited progress and suggests a general improving trend in mature student retention. This is not grounds for complacency and we will continue to develop our APP actions in this area as we seek to close the gap for mature student continuation in the face of the anticipated negative impacts of the COVID crisis.
T16a_05	
T16a_06	No recent public data is available on this metric, partly due to a change in the metric and partly due to very small sample size. However we have reduced our gap to 10.6% for the latest internal figures we have on this metric, from our 5 year aggregate figure of a 16% gap and a three year aggregate gap of 15%. This demonstrates progress towards our target. The Graduate Outcomes Survey has changed the definition of graduate employment and so direct comparison with DLHE data contained in the original target will not be possible in future. So we require sector clarification and reset of these targets. However we are clearly committed to improving black student progression into highly skilled employment.

T16b_01	This target was intended primarily as a narrative target to introduce and operate contextual admissions. We have embedded contextual admissions in our admissions policy and we did operate a successful contextual admissions policy in 2019-20 as we know that a record 22 students from our target partner NCOP schools enrolled with us, many more than the one person target set here for this particular contextual admissions metric. The expansion of our Foundation Year programme will also help to support access to HE for students from low performing schools.
T16b_02	The second half of the 2019-20 academic year saw many activities being cancelled and from March onwards only virtual activities taking place, yet the target of 100 such events has been greatly exceeded as we seek to continue to exceed benchmark for access of students from under-represented groups at Newman.
T16b_03	We engaged with 176 such external colleagues over 10 events as we seek to continue to exceed benchmark for access of students from under-represented groups.
T16b_04	Our enrolment from target schools rose from 8 in our baseline year to 22 in 2019-20, far exceeding the 4% growth target.