

Newman University

Access and Participation Plan 2019/20



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1. Introduction

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 the protected characteristics at all stages from pre-application to progression, including completion and achievement.

This agreement has been developed in consultation with members of academic and support staff and with the Students' Union and covers all courses offered by Newman University including initial teacher education and part-time courses.

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.

2. Assessment of current performance

Newman recognises that the definition and categorisation of widening participation is, in itself, complex and in a relatively small cohort it is not always possible to accurately reflect performance by intersections of characteristics where they may apply to only a very small number of students.

Access

Previous School Type

Over the past five years Newman University has continually received a higher proportion of entrants from state schools than the sector as a whole. The table below shows that at least 98.8% of entrants to Newman University came from state schools or colleges each year between 2012/13 and 2016/17. Location-adjusted benchmarks (LABs) provide a better measure as they take account of where Newman University's students come from, in addition to their subject and entry qualifications. Newman University's difference from the LAB has been stable since 2012/13 and has been between 2.5% and 2.8%.

Entry Year	Percentage from state schools or colleges	Benchmark	Location-adjusted benchmark (LAB)	Difference from LAB
2012/13	98.9%	95.7%	96.1%	2.8%
2013/14	98.8%	96.1%	96.1%	2.7%
2014/15	99.6%	96.5%	96.8%	2.8%
2015/16	99.6%	96.4%	97.0%	2.6%
2016/17	99.4%	96.7%	96.9%	2.5%

Source: www.hesa.ac.uk

NS-SEC Classes 4-7

We have consistently performed better than both the sector average and the location-adjusted benchmarks for the recruitment of students from National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) classes 4, 5, 6 and 7. In 2014/15 56.4% of students were from NS-SEC classes 4, 5, 6 and 7. This compares to a UK average of 33.4% and is the second highest figure for any institution; the institution above Newman is also located in the West Midlands. Although this data is no longer used by HESA in performance indicators, internal data shows that 56.0% of students in 2015/16 and 54.9% of students in 2016/17 were from these socio-economic groups.

Mature Students

The Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) contextual data also show that 48% of students are disadvantaged, but we note that this data excludes the 40% of our students who are older than 21. The percentage of mature full-time undergraduate students in 2016/17 with no previous HE and from low participation neighbourhoods was 18.6% against a benchmark of 15%.

Disabled Students

At the end of 2015/16 Newman had approximately 550 students declaring a disability, including dyslexia; this represents around 20% of the current total student number. Of these students there are approximately 275 students accessing DSA. In 2016/17 there were 180 students accessing DSA, which at 10.1% is significantly higher than the benchmark of 7.7%.

Commuter Students

The majority of our students are local, drawn from the southwest margins of Birmingham. While TEF contextual data shows 62% of our students as being local, this does not accurately reflect the overwhelmingly local characteristics of our student body. The TEF contextual data figure is affected by our position at the edge of the Birmingham Travel to Work Area (TTWA). Many of our students commute from the adjacent TTWAs of Dudley and Sandwell and slightly further afield from Walsall and Wolverhampton (both 15 miles distant). These densely populated regions are geographically close, and our own data shows that 91% of our students are 'commuter students' (Newman's definition of a 'commuter student' is someone who has the same term-time address as their permanent address).

Intersections of characteristics

The University intends to undertake intersections of characteristics analysis during 2018/19. This analysis will inform our future ambitions and strategy relating to improving the outcomes of particular groups of students.

Success

Comparison of Under-Represented Groups

This summary compares the performance of full-time first degree students between the under-represented young students from low HE participation areas with the remainder of cohorts for the 2016/17 academic year. Young participation cohorts include students aged 18 or 19 years on entry. Students in the lowest 20% of participation areas appear in quintile 1.

- Year 1 retention rate was slightly lower for quintile 1 (76%) compared to 79% for the other students combined.
- Year 2 retention rate was slightly higher for quintile 1 (90%) compared to 85% for the other students combined.
- Year 3 success rate was slightly higher for quintile 1 (85%) compared to 79% for the other students combined.
- 74% in quintile 1 achieved a high degree classification (i.e. either 1st or 2:1) compared to 69% for the other year 3 students combined.

The results indicate that students in the lowest 20% of participation areas perform at a similar level to students from areas with higher levels of participation in higher education.

Performance of Mature Students

The performance of our mature students continues to improve relative to that of young students, as shown in Figure 1. In previous years mature students have scored more highly in the National Student Survey (NSS) on teaching and assessment & feedback, but in 2017 the scores for these metrics were very close to those reported by young students. The score for academic support from mature students has now risen to be very close to that reported by young students. Continuation rates for mature students remain lower than those for young students and have shown a slight decrease in 2017. External responsibilities have a disproportional effect on continuation in this group of students.

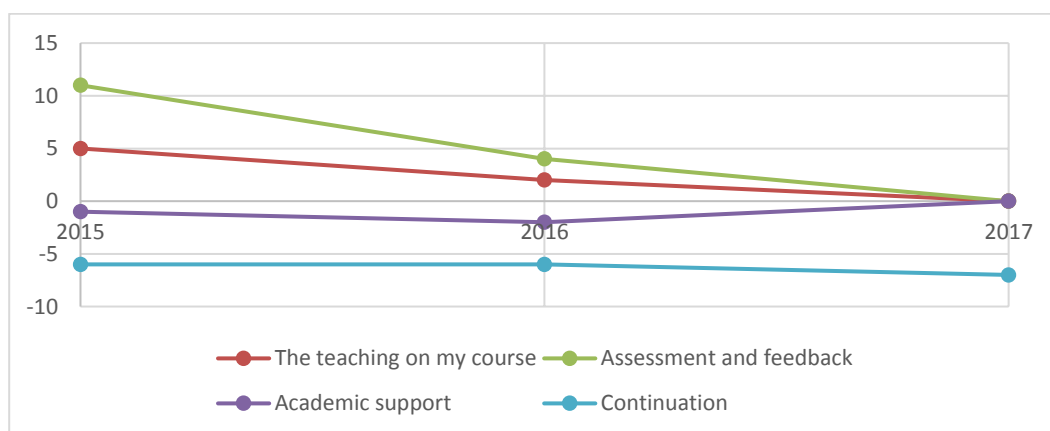
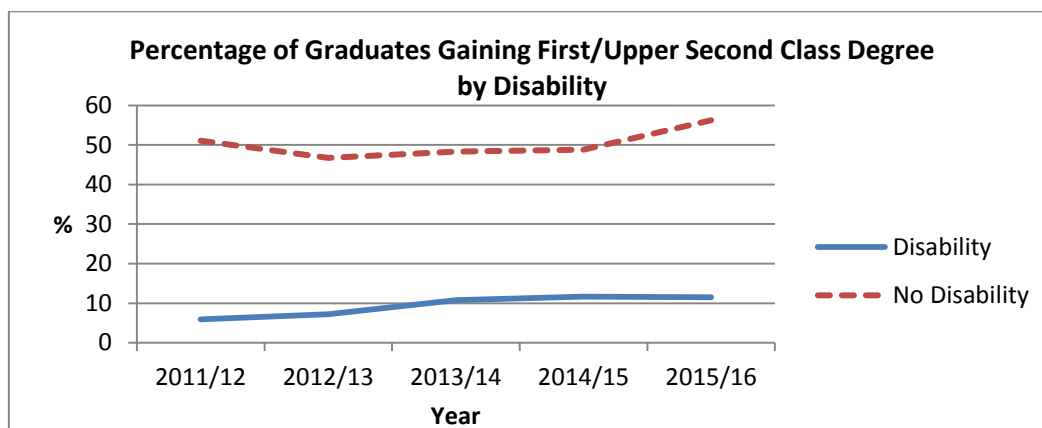


Figure 1. Performance of mature relative to young students from 2015 to 2017.

Performance of Disabled Students

The continuation rate of students who have declared Specific Learning Difficulties recovered in 2017 to near to its 2015 value above 80%. This followed a dramatic fall in 2016 which we are now able to view as an anomaly. The scores for teaching, assessment & feedback and academic support all continue to be below those from students without a disability. The last two have also seen relative falls since 2016. We have therefore prioritised supporting these students through ambition 3 (page 7).

In 2015/16 the proportion of graduates with a disability gaining either a first class or upper second class degree decreased to 11% from 12% in the previous year. The overall trend is a slightly improving performance year on year. There remains a significant difference between the proportion of graduates with a disability gaining either a first class or upper second class degree and graduates without a disability.



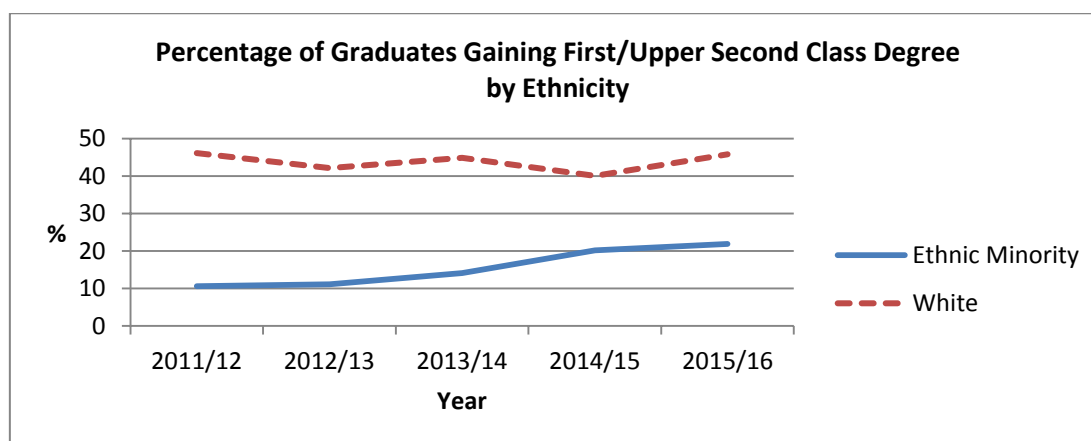
Performance of Students of Different Ethnicity

There are some encouraging trends in the relative performance of our students with a black and minority ethnic background. The continuation rate and the NSS score for assessment and feedback for black students has continued to increase relative to white students, while there are also modest increases in these measures as well as in academic support relative to white students for those declaring their ethnicity as 'other'. There are also absolute increases in the continuation rate for these groups of students (Table 1), and the extent to which the continuation rate of black students lags behind that of white students is now similar to the national average¹. We do, however, note that there have been decreases elsewhere and there is still work to be done in this area.

	White	Asian	Black	Other
2015	88	88	68	83
2016	84	85	74	67
2017	84	83	80	71

Table 1. Continuation rates of students grouped by ethnicity.

In 2015/16 the proportion of ethnic minority graduates gaining either a first class or upper second class degree increased to 22% compared to 20% in the previous year. There remains a significant difference between the proportion of ethnic minority graduates gaining either a first class or upper second class degree and white graduates.



¹ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/analysis/HEinEngland/students/>, accessed on 1st May 2018.

Care Leavers

The number of care leavers at the University has been an average of 4 a year over the last 5 years. Due to this low number it is not possible to provide statistically robust annual performance data. Over the last 5 years the overall retention rate has been lower than the general student population, and degree classifications similar to the general student population

Positive Outcomes for All

Many of our students have complex life circumstances which can impinge on their capacity to study, either in the shorter or longer term. The University develops Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) to support students facing shorter-term difficulties and Reasonable Adjustment Plans (RAPs) for those with longer term needs. In 2015/16, 129 students (approximately 5% of the total student body) had ILPs while 120 students (likewise, approximately 5% of the student body) had RAPs.

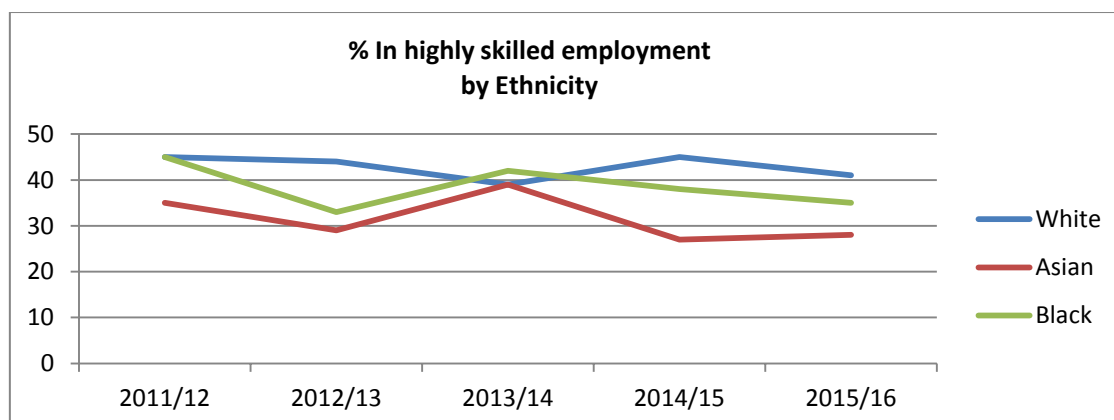
The University consistently outperforms its benchmark for widening participation. In particular, the University has large numbers of students who are first generation in HE and significant numbers from the two lowest Participation of Local Areas (POLAR) quintiles. The participation of local areas (POLAR) classification groups areas across the UK based on the proportion of the young population that participates in higher education (HE). Internal analysis of student outcomes shows that in ITE there were higher retention rates for students with parents in the lower NS-SEC groups 4-7 than those in the higher NS-SEC groups 1-3. For other degrees there is no significant difference in student retention relative to these socio-economic groupings.

Progression

In 2015/16 the percentage of all Newman students who were in employment or further study, having obtained a first degree from full-time study, was 91.3% against a benchmark of 93.5%. The following analysis details the outcomes of some specific widening participation groups with focus on highly skilled employment.

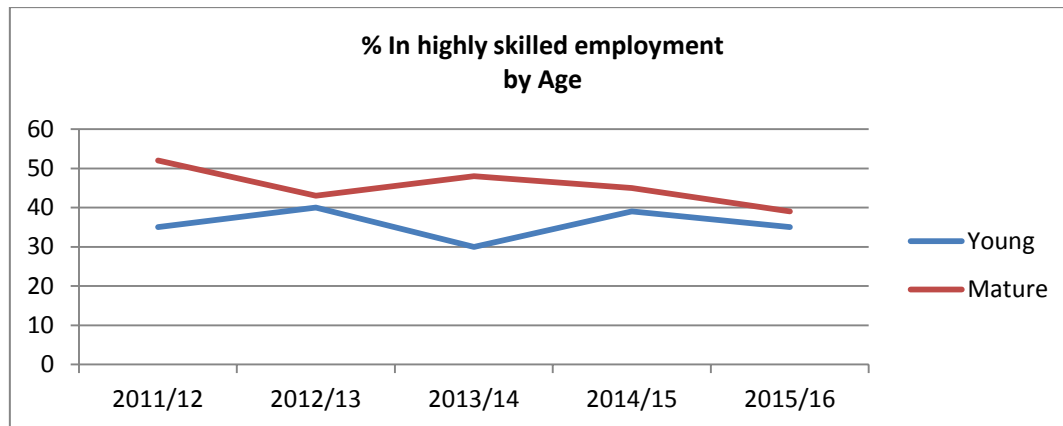
Performance of Students of Different Ethnicity

The relatively small proportion of Black and Asian mean that the figures are disproportionately affected by cohort differences. In 2013/14 Black and Asian students performed as well or better than White students in gaining highly skilled employment. This was not repeated the following year when the gap between White and Asian students was at its greatest. The trend since then shows the gap narrowing between the three groups.



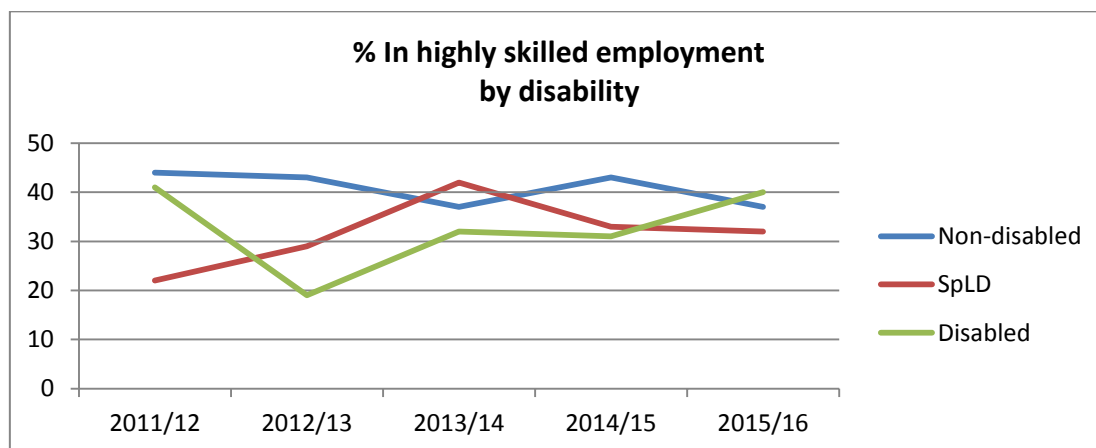
Performance of Mature Students

The data shows that Mature students out-perform young students in gaining highly skilled employment post-study, however the trend for Mature students has fallen over the last 5 years where that for Young students has remained fairly steady.



Performance of Disabled Students

The relatively small proportion of Disabled students means that the figures are disproportionately affected by cohort differences. The data indicated that following a sharp fall in the percentage of Disabled students in highly skilled employment the figure has been rising significantly in subsequent years, and Disabled students out-performed Non-disabled students in the most recent data. Students with a specific learning difficulty outperformed all other students in 2013/14 and following a fall in the following year their performance has levelled out.



3. Ambition and Strategy

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 processes and systems at the University. We undertake measures to improve the attainment rates and outcomes for all our students. As detailed elsewhere in this Agreement, 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.

As part of our Access and Participation Plan we will specifically aim 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. Support disabled and black and minority ethnic students to achieve a successful outcome.

Access for Students from Low Participation Groups

We will continue to target students living in areas of low participation, low household income or lower socio-economic status to ensure that we support access to higher education from those sections of the community where this is not considered the norm. We believe that by carefully focusing our outreach work it will be possible to engage both pupils and parents from an early age and normalise the concept of university to non-typical potential applicants. By offering support to pupils in secondary schools we help give them the confidence to apply to university. We have a history of supporting these students and in the past have exceeded benchmarks for access; however, we believe that if this is to continue we must further refine our strategies and work closely with schools in low participation areas both to raise attainment and to encourage in students an aspirational approach to taking forward their learning. To support their transition to higher education, we will offer a pre-enrolment programme.

Support for Students from Low Participation Groups

Newman University is committed to providing opportunities for flexible learning in ways which support our values and vision of formative education. We will develop flexible pedagogies and will seek to encourage flexible learning for our students to support them to learn in ways which build together with their other life experiences. We will therefore provide flexible learning opportunities which are designed to enable students to have greater control to allow them to manage their learning around other commitments (such as employment and family), encourage them to blend formal and informal learning experiences and allow them access to learning opportunities on and off site.

Disabled Students

We provide support from pre-application to employment for disabled students and will ensure that provision is in place for these students, particularly those with specific learning difficulties and with mental health issues. This support would usually be embedded within the curriculum and the University will consider the needs of disabled students when validating any programmes or reviewing policies.

BAME Students

In recent years the percentage of BAME students gaining a First or Upper Second Class Degree has doubled, and the University anticipates that continued focus on this group will ensure this trend continues. Recent activities have included a target to reduce the number of BAME male students proceeding to final stage appeal and withdrawing, and highlighting the information on support available to students, including around the mitigating circumstances process and providing additional support where required. The University will consider dedicated resource to support further improving the achievement of this student group, and undertake additional analysis in order to further develop our plans to support BAME students.

Collaborative Working

We have, and are further developing, links with a network of schools and FE partners. Newman shares best practice in relation to outreach and other matters with other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) including through formal links including HELOA, the professional association for access, recruitment and outreach staff working in Higher Education in the UK.

Newman works with the AimHigher West Midlands collaborative partnership, working with various HEIs, schools, academies and colleges. Together, the partnership aims to ensure that 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. This collaboration is enabling Newman University to expand its existing outreach activities and services within schools and colleges across the West Midlands.

National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP)

Newman University is one of five universities in the AimHigher Plus partnership which works as part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme, designed by the government to encourage progression to Higher Education. AimHigher Plus works within targeted wards across the Midlands providing information, advice and guidance to students within the 13-19 age range who live in specific targeted postcodes in order to meet government targets of increasing participation in HE from wards where GCSE attainment suggests participation in HE should be higher.

Each HEI acts as a spoke as part of the wider programme which results in us working more intensively with five schools and one college. Each school and college has an AimHigher Progression Ambassador (APA) based with them two days a week, who is employed by Newman. The APAs work on engagements with NCOP-targeted students on a one-to-one mentoring basis, provide workshops and assemblies, assist with organisation for the wider wrap-around events and provide a middle contact between spokes and schools.

The 'Reach Out' project delivered by Newman has been introduced to support socially excluded young people age 13-19 by making them aware of HE opportunities. The programme is delivered outside of a school setting by youth and community work students and practitioners, encouraging participation in NCOP events and activities.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

We monitor and evaluate student performance relating to protected characteristics at a number of committees including the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee and the Equality and Diversity Committee, as well as at Senate. The Students' Union has sabbatical officer membership of all of these committees. Evaluation enables the University to build on measures where progress is being made whilst reviewing and amending any interventions where less progress has been shown. This will include reviewing previous years' data so that trends can be identified. In addition we will continue to evaluate internal and external student feedback as these may provide an early indication of issues of concern to students and enable the University to act upon the results if required. Recent evaluations have included the HEADstart programmes and Academic Support Advisors.

We are part of the Aimhigher West Midlands NCOP network and group undertakes comprehensive evaluation of the impact of its interventions, with reference to control and experimental groups.

During 2017/18 the University has been piloting new methods of enhancing student engagement through peer mentoring in order to improve retention. An evaluation of the three pilots is being undertaken and preliminary outcomes have been disseminated internally to influence practice, and final evaluations will be shared internally and externally, and wider implementation will be undertaken during 2018/19. A student attendance tracking system is being piloted in 2018/19, and following evaluation it is intended to roll this out to undergraduate students in 2019/20.

The University will be evaluating its financial support offering to ensure that resources are directed to support student success. Sector wide research indicates that bursary support has limited impact in relation to student recruitment and retention. The University intends to further review available sector research during 2018 with a view to repurposing resources to other activities that promote student success, including those outlined about relating to peer mentoring and attendance engagement.

4. Access, Student Success and Progression Measures

Newman is proudly a widening participation institution with a large proportion of students from underrepresented groups and our practice is to make services available to all students. This is on the basis all students, including those who would be classified as underrepresented, are likely to benefit from additional services and facilities, much of which is embedded within the curriculum.

Pre-application Outreach

Information, advice and guidance to students across years 9-13 continue to receive significant investment from Newman through targeting our outreach work by working in close partnership with selected schools and colleges. This work is supported by the use of a database of schools and colleges which identifies areas of low engagement with HEIs.

Our outreach work also includes a range of diverse activities, including raising awareness of university education amongst younger pupils and interactive sessions to facilitate students' exploration of post-16 and post-18 options including university. We provide information and guidance (IAG) to students and their parents on the student finance regime, particularly focusing on the repayment structure and the fact that no fees have to be paid up front and offer advice regarding the changes to student finance and the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). Support is also provided for students researching university options, including information regarding the current changes within the UCAS tariff system, the UCAS applicant process, writing effective personal statements and interview technique. In addition, targeted outreach activities focus on links with further education colleges and schools, both locally and nationally, whose students have a particular need for support and IAG. In 2016/17 the team worked with 103 schools and hosted 172 events on campus.

The Education Liaison team is making every effort to provide positive outreach to Teachers and Advisers through CPD, especially in those schools and colleges where transition to HE is lower. This includes on-campus visits such as the HE Advisers' Conference, where practitioners can access a wide range of internal and external expertise within the changing environment of education.

Taster sessions remain an important part of our outreach work, enabling disadvantaged pupils to visit the University, meet staff and students and understand the differences between school or sixth form and university-level learning. In 2016/17 we held 36 taster day events and 208 additional bespoke events with 115 schools.

Support for Specific Student Groups

Care leavers receive targeted support from pre-application and whilst studying. Care leavers have the opportunity to attend pre-induction events to assist with the smooth transition into university life, such as meeting key Newman staff and familiarising themselves with the campus. Care leavers have priority acceptance on Newman's pre-entry course for undergraduates. Care leavers also have guaranteed access to year-round accommodation as well as specialist student support to enable them to reach their academic potential.

As noted earlier, a large proportion of students declare a disability, including dyslexia. Reasonable adjustments will continue at an individual level, as well as measures to embed inclusive practice for all students in teaching and learning. We recognise that there may always be a small number of disabled students for whom anticipatory reasonable adjustments and inclusive practice is insufficient to enable them to fully participate. To help to address this we have made financial provision for a small number of students to whom this applies and intend to continue to make similar provision in future. We will continue to develop our access, student success, and progression activities and, to formalise this, the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee approved an Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy this year.

Incoming students who disclose a disability through UCAS are sent a questionnaire about any reasonable adjustments or arrangements they may need, prior to entry, and invited to meet with the Inclusion Coordinator to discuss any requirements.

Raising Attainment in Schools

The core mission of the University is to create newly qualified teachers in order to improve school performance and student outcomes.

By raising the attainment levels of pupils it is anticipated that more students will be enabled to undertake higher education. The Newman Institute of Leadership in Education (NILE) is a University research centre dedicated to work in educational leadership across all phases of education and multi-professional practice. This, along with the educational Continuing Professional Development courses offered at Newman, enables the University to provide bespoke CPD and consultancy within a range of educational themes and offers the opportunity to enhance teachers' professional practice. We offer reduced fees for teachers at partner schools to encourage them to participate in CPD. In addition, we provide support networks for both primary and secondary schools so that they can share best practice and disseminate information. We believe that the support offered has a direct effect on pupils by providing an opportunity to influence key practitioners to provide aspirational guidance and pastoral care at the heart of their teaching community in order to improve student attainment.

Academic Development Activities

We offer a series of events detailed below that are designed to support student transition into, and through their time at, the University. Student participants comment that such events, which provide the opportunity to build relationships with peers, were 'what they needed in anticipation of the next level of study', and 'reassured them about the support available' to them should they need it.

HEADstart is a two-week pre-entry blended learning course delivered prior to September enrolment which is open to all confirmed undergraduate applicants. The course promotes academic and social integration through on-campus and online activities to foster a sense of belonging that contributes to a positive experience of HE.

HEADonline is a scaled down version of HEADstart delivered mainly online, with some twilight sessions. Aimed at students who have employment or significant caring or parenting responsibilities, this course gives new students a route into Newman and strategies to help them manage their studies alongside their other responsibilities.

HEADspace is a two-day student conference in September to support student transition from level four to level five. This provides an opportunity for students to discuss any fears and dispel myths with peers and students who have successfully completed their own level five studies.

HEADlight is a one-day student conference in May to support student transition from level five to level six. This enables students to reflect on the achievements of their second year and to plan ahead for the challenges of their final year, including their dissertation.

HEADsup+ is a three-week preparatory course for students entering straight into level 6 having completed relevant work experience or level five qualifications elsewhere. It is delivered mainly online, with some on-campus activities.

Foundation Year

The University has introduced a foundation year programme aimed at supporting students who, after interview, are assessed as having the potential to succeed on a degree programme but who need the foundation year to develop their academic skills.

On-course Support

Newman continues to invest in Academic Support Advisers (ASAs). They are available to assist students with pastoral or personal concerns that are affecting their studies. They can also help with non-subject specific academic support such as time management planning, drafting a study action plan or making sense of feedback. Students frequently agree that ASAs were supportive in dealing with their queries and helped them feel more confident in tackling problems and/or concerns (ASA/SAST survey 2016/17).

We have further expanded our programme of peer mentors, including buddies for first year students, writing mentors and IT mentors, with their services being offered throughout the year. The mentoring programmes allow second and third year students to support all students in their academic writing, including guidance on appropriate referencing and essay structure. This less formal support complements the University's Academic Support Advisers' service. Evaluation of the programme indicates that this service builds the confidence of students who want to achieve high grades, particularly mature students. The peer mentoring service enables first year students to address queries they may not feel comfortable raising with a member of staff, and are often reassured by the experiences of second and third year students.

We recognise that non-academic factors contribute to non-completion of degree courses and, as a fundamental part of Newman's ethos is developing the whole person, we invest resources in providing an enhanced welfare provision. This investment develops additional partnerships with outside agencies, and facilitates greater pastoral care. A Welfare Advisor is employed specifically to support students who face multiple barriers to staying on course and completing. Our Newman University Support Fund provides emergency hardship support for home and EU students who are at risk of withdrawing from Newman University due to unforeseen financial pressures. The numbers of students disclosing mental health issues have been increasing year on year over the past four years and, in response, we have doubled the resource to support student with mental health issues.

In addition to the activities supporting retention previously outlined, our 20-credit modular structure offers a framework where transition activity is embedded within the curriculum. A recent progression analysis suggests a correlation between improvements in student progression across the institution and the implementation of the 20-credit modular structure; this will continue to be monitored and assessed. The structure includes two level four fundamental modules that act as an introduction to higher education study from a subject-specific perspective. At level five a third fundamental module running across the year exists, and is designed to prepare students for their capstone module (dissertation or extended project) at level six. Academic regulations are constantly under review to ensure they support retention and success whilst upholding standards.

Newman was involved in phase two of the *What Works? Student Retention and Success Change Programme (2012-2016)* and developed strategies to support student progression. An example of this work is using student engagement data to inform

teaching practice and support students. Following previous investigations into correlations between student activity on virtual systems and progression, activity gathered from various data points across the institution indicated a group of inactive students after four weeks of programme registration. Students listed were contacted to offer support and help with any concerns or challenges. Progression across the year is subsequently monitored and reported back to the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee. Newman is also working with JISC, the provider of digital services to HE, to implement their learning analytics architecture to enable staff to offer proactive support, and is piloting pedagogic interventions informed by student engagement data as part of the Higher Education Funding Council's Catalyst fund to drive innovation.

Developing Employable Graduates

Newman University issues a Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) to all graduating students across all programmes and is currently developing an interim HEAR to be used at the end of each level of study. This provides a basis for reviewing academic progress and planning future activities, whether individually or with support from a tutor, supporting student engagement in opportunities beyond the curriculum, and the recording of appropriate achievements in relation to these. It additionally acts as an *aide memoire* for students in making applications which may be needed before the final award is made, e.g. for internships, permanent employment, further study or training opportunities. A voluntary accredited awards scheme which enhances employability is in place.

The Careers Service aims to enhance the employability of all students and support them in developing careers management skills. There are a variety of flexible services provided including one-to-one support, workshops, integrated sessions in the curriculum and careers events and fairs.

All undergraduate degree programmes at Newman have a work placement module, and an important focus for the curriculum is developing and embedding transferable skills useful for further study or employment after graduation. This is particularly important for disadvantaged students as it gives them direct experience of graduate level work, which can then lead to enhanced mobility through enabling opportunities to network, an increased awareness of career and work opportunities, and allowing for reflection of aspirations as well as an awareness of legal rights and responsibilities at work. Students are required to initiate and manage their own placements, increasing their research skills and strategies as well as gaining knowledge of employment markets.

Newman University Volunteering Programme supports students to successfully manage volunteering independently, to develop their knowledge, skills and experiences which will contribute to their future employability and success upon graduation.

We have improved the data available across protected characteristics so that we have a clear picture of how all students progress. Retention levels are monitored by the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee, and performance in relation to recruitment and retention of under-represented groups is evaluated by the Equality and Diversity Committee.

There are a number of other small-scale research projects across the institution which inform effective practice and contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the Access

Agreement. Newman is, for example, in the process of reviewing the impact of its financial support to students in consultation with staff and students with a view to informing its ongoing institutional policy in this area.

Working with Students

As part of our collaboration with the Newman Students' Union the University considers, and, where appropriate, implements recommendations which arise from feedback received from students. The recommendations are often targeted at improving the student experience for those who would fall in the widening participation categories relating to mature students, students with caring responsibilities, part-time students and commuter students. As well as improving the student experience it is anticipated that this will then improve student success by better meeting the practical and academic needs of all students, particularly those that find their time at university to be more challenging.

Regular 'Closing the Loop' meetings are held with the Students' Union to ensure that the actions agreed with the University are being progressed and progress is reported back to the person raising the issue within a set time frame through the use of Course Reps.

The University proactively seeks to involve the Students' Union in policy reviews, particularly within Student Services where policies are adapted to suit specific groups of students. It is proposed that a system of regular one-to-one meetings between the SU President and the Vice-Chancellor will be held before major Committee meetings so that the President is able to prepare and therefore participate fully at the meeting. These are in addition to the regular meetings already held with the Vice-Chancellor. Lecture capture is widely used which benefits all students but particularly those with disabilities or caring responsibilities.

We are also investing heavily in partnership working with students both to integrate students into our learning community and to enhance it. We are developing our pedagogy of partnership; valuing the lived experiences of our students, the contributions they make to our learning, and the sense of affiliation and belonging this engenders. Funded student partnership projects provide students with a greater sense of belonging to, and even ownership of, the University. Students also have the chance to target developments they want to see, earn as they learn and contribute to University research and publication. Projects have engaged many students from disadvantaged and under-represented groups and have addressed issues of direct relevance to them including themes of inclusion, internationalisation, decolonising the curriculum, community engagement and reading, assessment, and communication strategies in the digital age. Newman is a member of the collaborative Realising Engagement through Active Culture Transformation (REACT) project, which is managed and organised by a partnership of students and staff. The project seeks to increase student engagement, particularly for hard to reach students, and supports their retention and progression.

Equality and Diversity

Newman is committed to comply with its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Act 2010. The University has already made significant progress in driving forward the equality agenda through its disability, gender and race equality schemes, action plan, guidelines relating to the other equality protected characteristics, equality impact

assessments processes, and diversity planning. Newman’s equality and diversity and access and participation plans are framed within Catholic social teaching and have been approved through committees and Senate together with approval, as appropriate, by the University Council. Newman intends to further review and develop its support for particular ethnicities.

We ensure that Equality Impact Assessments are part of any programme validation or re-approval process so that consideration is given to the needs of all students. Staff are encouraged to become Fellows of the Higher Education Academy which gives them an opportunity to map their teaching practice against the UK Professional Standards Framework and to undertake CPD modules to develop inclusive curricula.

5. Investment

As part of its Mission of Service, Newman continues to invest significantly in its widening participation activities. As Newman has approximately half of its students classified as under-represented or disadvantaged, we have included proportional costs for key members of staff involved in retention and student support on a pro-rata basis. Newman intends to spend £591,000 on additional countable access measures in 2019/20, some 10% of additional income. An analysis of this investment is provided below.

Access and Participation plan investment summary	£	% of additional income
Access	50,000	0.9
Success	340,000	5.8
Progression	30,000	0.5
Financial Support	171,000	2.9
Total Investment	591,000	10.1

In addition to the expenditure identified above Newman will invest additional funds in supporting underrepresented groups. These activities will be funded from initiatives or sources including NCOP and the Office for Students.

6. Provision of information to students

Prospective students

Information is made readily available across a number of online platforms, on the Newman website, UCAS and Student Loans Company websites, AimHigher and HELOA, alongside social media platforms and Newman’s Facebook page, Twitter and Instagram. Our prospectuses contain information on course costs, student loans, bursaries and additional costs. This information is also available on Newman’s website where there are also links to the government’s Student Finance website. In addition, at institutional open days, there are specialist staff available to provide advice and support to applicants and their families on issues such as disability and finance. In addition there are student ambassadors available to speak with prospective students and their families about specific courses and university life in general.

The student liaison team are heavily involved with leading sessions within schools and colleges that break down barriers around Higher Education. Sessions allow prospective students to investigate the opportunities available to them and how they can access a university education. Sessions are created around a wide range of topics including, but not limited to, an introduction to higher education, personal statements, UCAS application process, student finance, interview preparation, student life and preparing for university. These sessions are developed to meet the requirements and needs of the school and learners and to support the pre-entry transition stage.

Current Students

Student Support Services provide a wide range of accessible, professional and developmental services to help students make the most of their time at Newman University and to assist them in succeeding in their studies. Services include:

- Learning Development: offering tutorials and workshops in all aspects of study skills development, plus a peer mentoring scheme
- Academic Support Advisers: providing one-to-one guidance and support for study progression issues
- Careers: helping students find part-time work, plan their careers and enhance their employability skills
- Counselling: therapeutic one-to-one counselling for students experiencing emotional, relationship and self-identity difficulties and concerns
- Disability and mental health support: advice and practical support for students with sensory loss, mobility difficulties, long-term health conditions, autism, and mental health difficulties
- Dyslexia support: advice, screening and diagnosis for students with dyslexia, plus ongoing support from specialist tutors
- Welfare advice: advice about money matters, benefits, housing, childcare, domestic violence, sexual harassment, forced marriage concerns, sexual health, and pregnancy
- Study opportunities and work exchanges overseas, including Erasmus exchanges
- Transition programmes: helping ease new students into university life or assisting them to transition between study levels.

These services are communicated at every stage of the student lifecycle, including:

- Pre-admission: Student Support Services attend all open days and applicant visit days and feature in the Prospectus and web pages. Prospective and current applicants are invited to have contact with our advisers in order to help with planning their support or development in advance of joining the University, with disabled applicants being encouraged to complete a support questionnaire in order to determine any individual support requirements over and above our inclusive teaching approaches. Advisers are also on hand during Clearing to help with funding and benefits queries, housing issues or other personal welfare concerns.
- Enrolment and Induction: Student Support Services give a presentation to all new students as part of their induction, explaining how to access our services and what they do.

- During studies: Student Support Services use a wide variety of communication platforms to remind all students about our services and to advertise events. These include social media, leaflets, intranet resources, web pages, electronic screens, emails, regular awareness raising, events such as Careers Fairs, Student Money Advice Week, World Mental Health Day, workshops and embedded skills sessions within the curriculum.
- In order to pre-empt difficulties, students are reminded in any letter from Registry about the support the University offers and who to contact.
- Student Support Services train each newly elected Students' Union executive, Security staff members and Halls Tutor about the range of services on offer in order to embed knowledge and promote confident signposting. We also raise awareness amongst staff by presenting at all corporate staff inductions, offering bespoke workshops and training in aspects of student support.

Publication of Access and Participation Plan

The approved Plan will be uploaded on the University website; Access Agreements for the previous four years are currently available on the website as these would apply to current students depending on their year of application. The Students' Union will be encouraged to share the approved Plan on their website and to advise students of its availability.

7. Student Consultation

There is a long-established course representative system, which attracts a wide range of students, operated in partnership with the Students' Union. A recent enhancement to this has been the introduction of Student Academic Representatives (StARs). StARs are experienced course representatives who provide support to newer course reps and attend a range of Student Staff Consultative Committees to help increase the communication between students and the University. This is particularly important for widening participation students who often face more issues and need a greater level of support. In addition, an Equality & Campaigns Officer has been appointed to the Newman Students' Union Executive to take a proactive role in support for under-represented groups.

The Students' Union Vice-President and General Manager are active members of the Group formulating the Access and Participation Plan and are involved in the drafting and review of the Plan. They liaise with the Students' Union Executive and members of the student body in order to ensure that as many student views and opinions are sought and, where appropriate, taken forward to the Group. The APP is a document that reflects the work of the University as approved by its committees and Senate and reflects the work and plans of the Students' Union.

8. Summary

The main concerns of the Access and Participation Plan, i.e. widening participation and student success and progression, are of strategic importance to Newman University. As a Catholic institution, we have full regard for Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* ('from the heart of the Church') 1990 and we are particularly passionate about the constitution's mission of service: "34 ... [the

university] will be capable of searching for ways to make university education accessible to all those who are able to benefit from it, especially... members of minority groups who customarily have been deprived of it."

This mission is at the heart of what we are and what we do and we will continue to strive to improve outcomes for disadvantaged and under-represented students from pre-application stage through to degree completion and employment. It is our aim to provide a formative student experience which instills a sense of vocation and increases motivation, thus impacting positively on retention and success.

* course type not listed.

Full-time and part-time course fee levels for 2019-20 entrants.

Please enter inflationary statement in the free text box below.

The University will review tuition fees and increase fees in line with any inflationary uplift as determined by the UK Government, if permitted by law or government policy, in subsequent years of a course. It is anticipated that such increases would be linked to RPI (the Retail Price Index excluding mortgage interest payments).

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree		£9,250
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		£9,250
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Franchise full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		*
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£6,935
Foundation degree		£6,935
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*

Table 8a - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body

Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu)	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu)	Baseline year (drop-down menu)	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16a_01	Access	Other (please give details in Description column)	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	Although no longer collected nationally, the NS-SEC data continues to be replicated internally.	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	50.8	50.8%	50.8%	50.8%	50.8%	50.8	Baseline - 3 year average. Although no longer collected nationally, the NS-SEC data continues to be replicated internally. We aspire to maintain Newman's excellent record in recruiting students from under-represented groups. Newman remains committed to supporting access to higher education for all students with the academic ability to benefit from university level study. We expect to continue to recruit above or at our benchmark and to significantly outperform the sector mean in recruitment of under-represented groups.
T16a_02	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	HESA T1a - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	.	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	23.1%	23.1%	23.1%	23.1%	23.1%	23.1	Baseline - 3 year average. We aspire to maintain Newman's excellent record in recruiting students from under-represented groups. Newman remains committed to supporting access to higher education for all students with the academic ability to benefit from university level study. We expect to continue to recruit above or at our benchmark and to significantly outperform the sector mean in recruitment of under-represented groups.

T16a_03	Student success	Multiple	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	.	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	9.8	8%	8%	8%	8%	8	Baseline - 3 year average. To improve trend towards benchmark
T16a_04	Student success	Multiple	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (Mature, full-time, first degree entrants)	.	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	11.9%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8	Baseline - 3 year average. To achieve benchmark and maintain position
T16a_05	Student success	Disabled	Other statistic - Disabled (please give details in the next column)	Aim to retain students with Dyslexia who regularly engage with support sessions	No	2016-17	70%	74%	75%	75%	75%	75	We aspire to increase the percentage of students with dyslexia who complete their course.
T16a_06	Progression	Ethnicity	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	Aim to reduce the % between black and white students in highly skilled employment	No	2014-15	7%	6	6	5	5	4	

Table 8b - Other milestones and targets.

Reference Number	Select stage of the lifecycle	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16b_01	Access	Multiple	Contextual data	Points offer reduced by 40 UCAS points for applicants who have attended low performing schools but achieved above average results. Ongoing.	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	n/a	1	1	1	1	1	The setting of targets relating to this policy cannot be undertaken until sufficient base data is available
T16b_02	Access	Multiple	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	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.	Yes	2012-13	100	100	100	100	100	100	Newman will work in sustained partnership with identified schools and colleges to promote progression to HE.
T16b_03	Student success	Attainment raising	Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Number of teachers receiving CPD to raise attainment of their pupils	No	2016-17	80	90	95	100	105	105	
T16b_04	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Increase of 2% per year growth in progression rates into HE from Y13 pupils	Yes	2016-17	variable dependent on ward	2%	4%	6%			The Aimhigher programme seeks to increase the number of applicants to HE from areas of lower participation than expected given GCSE results. The target is a 2% rise each year of the programme.

APPROVED

By Marnie Davis Wood at 9:41 am, Oct 19, 2018