

Royal Agricultural University: Access and Participation Plan 2019-20

1. Assessment of Current Performance

a) Context

The Royal Agricultural University, located in Cirencester, Gloucestershire, has evolved from being an agricultural college established 173 years ago to gaining university status in 2013. Until 2001, the RAU had been a private college enrolling students from family backgrounds with an interest in farming and the various uses of rural and agricultural land. This long history and association with a relatively narrow social stratum of British society is directly relevant to the challenges that the RAU faces today – essentially there is not a tradition of wide access to the institution and the social profile of enrolled undergraduate students is not socially representative of the wider society.

Today, the RAU is a small and specialised University concerned primarily (but not exclusively) with land-based disciplines and, although university status was conferred in 2013, the institution has been offering degree courses since 1984 through validation arrangements with the Universities of Reading and Bath. Nineteen undergraduate courses are currently offered by RAU: 10 BSc (Hons) courses, 4 Foundation Degrees (FDs), 5 one-year 'top ups' which mainly enrol students from FD courses. This is a small and specialised portfolio and RAU is one of only three specialist providers of land-based degree courses in England.

The RAU is an acknowledged leader in education, applied research and knowledge exchange relevant to the land-based industries and has well established links with employers, Government and a range of Non-Governmental Organisations. As a specialist University, partnership working is a key strategic priority which is evidenced by the recently successful Catalyst submission involving the University of Gloucestershire and a range of industry partners including Waitrose, Barclays and The National Trust. This initiative addresses building a sustainable future for land management and food production post-Brexit.

The RAU's course portfolio covers the following subjects:

- Agriculture
- Business and Enterprise [concentrating on food, rural and land-based businesses]
- Environment [concentrating on agroecosystems and environmental management]
- Equine Science and Management
- Food Supply and Management
- Real Estate
- Rural Land Management

The small and specialised character of the course portfolio at RAU enables a coherent and well-focused student experience to be delivered.

Collaborative arrangements are in place with eight Colleges of Further Education to teach a number of RAU degree courses (BSc or FD) and it is planned to grow this area of activity as one means of extending participation on RAU courses to a wider and more diverse student cohort. Discussions have taken place with new prospective Further Education partners and new collaborative courses are actively under development.

As a small learning community, with just over a thousand full-time undergraduate students annually, RAU has been able to provide excellent standards of pastoral care and academic support to its students. Staff and students know each other very well and teaching groups are relatively small which encourages strong relationships and positive associations. RAU has a strong Alumni association which is evidence of the strong ties that develop between students and the institution. Indeed, some students subsequently get married at the RAU!

The size of the RAU positively supports a close learning community with excellent relationships between staff and students. Pastoral and academic support is able to cater for the individual's needs in ways that larger institutions would find it difficult to achieve. Knowing our students and their personal and academic circumstances enables us to care for them effectively and to provide the right kind and levels of support during their time studying with us. We have plans to grow and diversify the undergraduate population and we will ensure that the community 'feel' and ethos of the University is sustained and that the current standards of care and support are maintained going forward.

Over the last eighteen months there has been a significant amount of change to the leadership of the RAU. A new Vice-Chancellor was appointed in the autumn of 2016 (Professor Joanna Price) who has assembled a strong leadership team to take on the challenges of diversifying the University's student profile whilst maintaining and building upon the institution's core strengths which include developing highly employable and entrepreneurial students who succeed in their undergraduate programmes and progress onto successful careers or postgraduate education.

The quality of teaching and the whole student experience remains central to the values of the RAU which received a 'silver' category in the 2017 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submission. Institutional strategies are required to place considerations of the student experience at centre stage, whether this is in relation to the development of enhanced physical learning and social spaces or enhanced academic pedagogy. Students are our partners in operating a successful learning environment and we have ensured that they are involved in every aspect of the life of the institution including its governance.

b) Performance Profile (Undergraduate Students)

All statistics relate to 2016-17 except where stated. Disaggregated data refers to students from OfS target underrepresented groups. It should be noted that because of the small full-time undergraduate cohort, a small change in performance within a category can produce a relatively high percentage effect, for example the number of students from BAME backgrounds is numerically very small annually (less than 5 or 6 students a year). Currently, one third of BAME students are employed at the RAU as a Student Ambassador, but, numerically, this comprises one student.

Access

- Students enrolled from state sector schools is low at 52.5%, compared to the university sector as a whole at 90.0%
- Students enrolled from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR quintiles 1 and 2) is low at 7.3% (compared with 11% for the sector)
- Mature student numbers are relatively low at 16.01% (compared to 27.8% for the sector)
- Care leaver numbers are low at 1 enrolment
- Students from BAME backgrounds enrolled/studying on full-time honours degree programmes at RAU: 1.56% (compared to 21.6% for the sector)
- Disabled student numbers are relatively high at 23.58%

Success

Completion

Disaggregated student data for 2014/15 student cohort: state school completion 81.15%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 completion 75%; BME completion 50%; male completion 80.43%; female completion 87.29%; students with disabilities completion 86.27%

Students from state schools do not complete their studies on a par with other (non-state school) students and the situation for students from POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 is less progressive than this. Care needs to be taken with BME completions because of the extremely low actual number of this category of student. In this instance, the completion rate relates to four students who began their studies in 2014/15 from a BAME background of whom two completed in 2017 and one is planning to complete at a later date. The data set for this analysis is therefore only four students and hence the reason that percentages in relation to student data can be volatile. There is a disparity in male and female completion with the latter achieving a higher level of completion.

Continuation

- Overall student continuation rates are very good at 98.2% (above the sector rate of 92.5%);
- Disaggregated **2014/15** student continuation data 96.3%; state school continuation 93.5%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 continuation 85%; BME continuation 75%; male continuation 97.8%; female continuation 92.4%; students with disabilities continuation 98.4%
- Disaggregated **2015/16** student continuation data 94.8%; state school continuation 93.1%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 continuation 84.2%; BME continuation 100%; male continuation 96.5%; female continuation 93.4%; students with disabilities continuation 94.5%
- Disaggregated **2016/17** student continuation 95%; state school continuation 95.8%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 continuation 93.75%; BME continuation 75%; male continuation 100%; female continuation 96.4%; students with disabilities continuation 97.8%

Continuation rates for students from state schools, POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 and BME backgrounds are behind those for other students. However, the last three years has seen a small increase in continuation for students from state schools (cf. 93.5% for 2014/15 students with 95.8% for students enrolled in 2016/17. We plan to seek continuing increases in this metric going forwards. Students with disabilities are very near to the overall student continuation figure and we will seek to enhance this further through the provision of the support services described within this Access and Participation Plan.

Future disaggregated trajectories for student continuation **2018/19**: state school continuation 96%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 continuation 94%; BME continuation 80%; male continuation 97%; female continuation 97%; students with disabilities continuation 98%.

Future disaggregated trajectories for student continuation **2019/20**: state school continuation 96%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 continuation 94%; BME continuation 80%; male continuation 97%; female continuation 97%; students with disabilities continuation 98%.

Continuation rates overall are very good at the RAU and we shall seek to ensure that students from underrepresented groups also continue at a very good rate. The trajectories indicated for 2018/19 and 2019/20 do not represent a large increase in percentage levels of continuation because they represent 'gains at the margins' i.e. an enhancement of an already very good level of performance. Sustaining very good rates of student continuation within this context is an important aim for the institution. We plan to sustain these rates as the profile of the undergraduate student population changes as a result of the impact of our strategies to improve access. This is a sensible aim at this stage in the institutions growth and plans for development.

Achievement

- Student achievement of 'good honours' degrees is 65.8% overall; state school 72.73%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2, 73.33%; BME 100%; males 59.46; females 82.52; students with disabilities 59.09%
- Student achievements during **2014/15 57.05% score overall**: state school 56.56%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 54.78%; BME 47.31%; males 55.25%; females 58.52%; students with disabilities 59.09%
- Student achievements during **2015/16 57.08% score overall**: state school 57.56%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 54.08%; BME 50.75%; males 55.6%; females 58.74%; students with disabilities 54.58%
- Student achievements during **2016/17 56.41 score overall**: state school 58.14%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 56.17%; BME 58.96%; males 55.15%; females 58.12%; students with disabilities 56.32%
- Students achieving a First Class (Hons) has increased over the past two years to 18% (2016) with no third class degrees awarded.

Students from state schools and from POLAR 3 quintile 1 and 2 backgrounds performed more strongly in achieving a 'good' honours degree than students overall. Female students were the most successful in this aspect of student performance with over 82% achieving a 'good' honours degree. Students with disabilities achieved fewer 'good' honours degrees than their non-disabled counterparts. Students from state schools and BME backgrounds fared better than other students in this endeavour, but caution must be exercised in interpreting the achievements for BME students because of the low actual number of students involved.

Students from state schools performed slightly less well in their academic assessments in 2014/15 and 2015/16 than students from private schools. However, in 2016/17 state school students performed more strongly than their student peers overall. Males have tended to perform less strongly in academic assessments than their female peers.

Future disaggregated trajectories for student achievement **2018/19**: state school 58%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 57%; BME 58%; male 56%; females 58%; students with disabilities 57%.

Future disaggregated trajectories for student **2019/20**: state school 58%; POLAR 3 quintiles 1 and 2 continuation 58%; BME continuation 80%; males 56.5%; females 58.5%; students with disabilities continuation 58%.

Progression

- Student progression to employment and further study is 91% (2015-16)
- Student progression to professional/managerial careers (graduate level employability) is 69% 2015-16 (compared to 77% nationally)
- Graduates in employment or further study six months after graduation was 97% in 2015/16

c) Mature Students' Performance (Undergraduate Level)

Nationally, mature students' participation in HE has declined and was at its lowest level in 2014/15 (Equality Challenge Unit, 2016). Mature students' preferred mode of study can be differentiated from that of younger students insofar as they participate proportionally at a higher rate on part-time courses. Nationally, mature students have: i) a higher rate of leaving without qualifying ii) a higher rate of not achieving a 'good' honours degree outcome iii) a lower rate of progressing onto further study.

There are indications that RAU's policy of developing provision in conjunction with colleges of further education is having a positive impact on access to RAU courses. For example, in 2016-17 academic year, there was an increase in mature students from low participation areas on 'other' undergraduate provision which includes Capel Manor and other franchising arrangements. Currently, RAU supports very few part-time pathways and it is planned that this issue will be explored further as part of the imminent curriculum review.

It is important to analyse the information presented below with some care, especially where percentages are used in relation to small population sizes; for example, the 100% continuation rate for mature students from BAME backgrounds on first degree courses during the 2014/15 academic year involves a mature BAME student population of 2 students. It will be seen that there is a difference in performance of mature students enrolled on first year degree courses compared with mature students on 'other' undergraduate provision. This performance gap will be investigated further.

Access

- In **2014/15 academic year**, 23 mature students were enrolled onto full-time first degree courses and 9 mature students were enrolled onto 'other' undergraduate provision. 78% of mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses were from state schools; 13% of mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses were from low participation areas (POLAR 3 Quintiles 1 and 2); 9% of mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses were from BAME backgrounds; 35% of mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses had declared a disability. 66.6% of mature students enrolled onto full-time 'other' undergraduate courses were from state schools; no mature students enrolled onto 'other' undergraduate courses were from low participation areas (POLAR 3 Quintiles 1 and 2); no mature students enrolled onto 'other' undergraduate provision were from BAME backgrounds; 11% of mature students enrolled onto full-time 'other' undergraduate courses had declared a disability.

- In **2015/16 academic year**, 14 mature students were enrolled onto full-time first degree courses and 14 mature students were enrolled onto 'other' undergraduate provision. 78% of mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses were from state schools; 7% of mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses were from low participation areas (POLAR 3 Quintiles 1 and 2); no mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses were from BAME backgrounds; 14% of mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses had declared a disability. 93% of mature students enrolled onto full-time 'other' undergraduate courses were from state schools; no mature students enrolled onto 'other' undergraduate courses were from low participation areas (POLAR 3 Quintiles 1 and 2); no mature students enrolled onto 'other' undergraduate provision were from BAME backgrounds; 28% of mature students enrolled onto full-time 'other' undergraduate courses had declared a disability.
- In **2016/17 academic year**, 21 mature students were enrolled onto full-time first degree courses and 26 mature students were enrolled onto 'other' undergraduate provision. 57% of mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses were from state schools; 14% of mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses were from low participation areas (POLAR 3 Quintiles 1 and 2); no mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses were from BAME backgrounds; 19% of mature students enrolled onto full-time first degree courses had declared a disability. 92% of mature students enrolled onto full-time 'other' undergraduate courses were from state schools; 27% of mature students enrolled onto 'other' undergraduate courses were from low participation areas (POLAR 3 Quintiles 1 and 2); 8% of mature students enrolled onto 'other' undergraduate provision were from BAME backgrounds; 27% of mature students enrolled onto full-time 'other' undergraduate courses had declared a disability.

Success and Progression

Continuation

In **2014/15 academic year**, the overall student continuation rate for mature students on first degree courses was 95.65% and the overall student continuation rate for mature students enrolled on 'other' undergraduate courses was 88.89%. The continuation rate for mature students from state schools on first degree courses was 94.44%; the continuation rate for mature students from low participation backgrounds on first degree courses was 100%; the continuation rate for mature students from BAME backgrounds on first degree courses was 100%; the continuation rate for mature students with a declared disability on first degree courses was 100%. The continuation rate for mature students from state schools on 'other' undergraduate provision was 88.89%; the continuation rate for mature students from low participation areas on 'other' undergraduate provision is not applicable this year; the continuation rate for mature students from BAME backgrounds on 'other' undergraduate provision is not applicable this year; the continuation rate for mature students with a declared disability was 100%.

In **2015/16 academic year**, the overall student continuation rate for mature students on first degree courses was 85.71% and the overall student continuation rate for mature students enrolled on 'other' undergraduate courses was also 85.71%. The continuation rate for mature students from state schools on first degree courses was 90.91%; the continuation rate for mature students from low participation backgrounds on first degree courses was 100%; the continuation rate for mature students from BAME backgrounds on first degree courses was not applicable for this year; the continuation rate for mature

students with a declared disability on first degree courses was 100%.The continuation rate for mature students from state schools on 'other' undergraduate provision was 84.62%; the continuation rate for mature students from low participation areas on 'other' undergraduate provision was not applicable for this year; the continuation rate for mature students from BAME backgrounds on 'other' undergraduate provision was not applicable for this year; the continuation rate for mature students with a declared disability was 75%.

In **2016/17 academic year**, the overall student continuation rate for mature students on first degree courses was 100% and the overall student continuation rate for mature students enrolled on 'other' undergraduate courses was 72.73%. The continuation rate for mature students from state schools on first degree courses was 100%; the continuation rate for mature students from low participation backgrounds on first degree courses was 100%; the continuation rate for mature students from BAME backgrounds on first degree courses was not applicable for this year; the continuation rate for mature students with a declared disability on first degree courses was 100%.The continuation rate for mature students from state schools on 'other' undergraduate provision was 75%; the continuation rate for mature students from low participation areas on 'other' undergraduate provision was 71%; the continuation rate for mature students from BAME backgrounds on 'other' undergraduate provision was 50% (1 of 2 students); the continuation rate for mature students with a declared disability was 71.43%.

Achievement

In **2014/15 academic year**, the overall student achievement of 'good honours' for mature students on first degree courses was 68.42% and the overall student achievement score for mature students enrolled on 'other' undergraduate courses was 60.46%. The achievement of 'good honours' for mature students from state schools on first degree courses was 68.75%; the achievement of 'good honours' for mature students from low participation backgrounds on first degree courses was 50%; the achievement of 'good honours' for mature students from BAME backgrounds on first degree courses was 50%; the achievement of 'good honours' for mature students with a declared disability on first degree courses was 85.71%.The achievement score for mature students from state schools on 'other' undergraduate provision was 62.51%; the achievement score for mature students from low participation areas on 'other' undergraduate provision is not applicable for this year; the achievement score for mature students from BAME backgrounds on 'other' undergraduate provision is not applicable this year; the achievement score for mature students with a declared disability was 60.38%.

In **2015/16 academic year**, the overall student achievement of 'good honours' for mature students on first degree courses was 77.78% and the overall student achievement score for mature students enrolled on 'other' undergraduate courses was 63.84%. The achievement of 'good honours' for mature students from state schools on first degree courses was 71.43%; the achievement of 'good honours' for mature students from low participation backgrounds on first degree courses was 100%; the achievement of 'good honours' for mature students from BAME backgrounds on first degree courses is not applicable for this year; the achievement of 'good honours' for mature students with a declared disability on first degree courses was 100%.The achievement score for mature students from state schools on 'other' undergraduate provision was 64.53%; the achievement score for mature students from low participation areas on 'other' undergraduate provision is not applicable for this year; the achievement score for mature students from BAME backgrounds on 'other' undergraduate provision is not applicable this year; the achievement score for mature students with a declared disability was 54.04%.

Results for mature students enrolled on RAU courses in the **2016/17 academic year** are not yet known as students will be graduating in summer 2019.

Completion

In **2014/15 academic year**, the overall student completion rate for mature students enrolled on first degree courses was 82.61% and the overall student completion for mature students enrolled on 'other' undergraduate provision was 77.78%. The completion rate for mature students from state schools enrolled on first degree courses was 88.89%; the completion rate for mature students from low participation areas enrolled on 'other' undergraduate courses was 66.67%; the completion rate for mature students from BAME backgrounds enrolled on first degree courses was 100%; the completion rate of mature students with a declared disability enrolled on first degree courses was 87.5%. The completion rate for mature students from state schools enrolled on 'other' undergraduate provision was 83.33%; the completion rate for mature students from low participation areas enrolled on 'other' undergraduate provision is not applicable for this year; the completion rate for mature students from BAME backgrounds enrolled on 'other' provision is not applicable for this year; the completion rate of mature students with a declared disability enrolled on 'other' undergraduate provision was 100%.

In **2015/16 academic year**, the overall student completion rate for mature students enrolled on first degree courses was 64.29% and the overall student completion for mature students enrolled on 'other' undergraduate provision was 78.57%. The completion rate for mature students from state schools enrolled on first degree courses was 63.64%; the completion rate for mature students from low participation areas enrolled on first degree courses was 100%; the completion rate for mature students from BAME backgrounds enrolled on first degree courses is not applicable for this year; the completion rate of mature students with a declared disability enrolled on first degree courses was 100%. The completion rate for mature students from state schools enrolled on 'other' undergraduate provision was 84.62%; the completion rate for mature students from low participation areas enrolled on 'other' undergraduate provision is not applicable for this year; the completion rate for mature students from BAME backgrounds enrolled on 'other' undergraduate provision is not applicable for this year; the completion rate of mature students with a declared disability enrolled on 'other' undergraduate provision was 75%.

Completion rates for the 2016/17 cohort of mature student entrants is not yet available.

d) Intersection of student characteristics

Black and Minority Ethnic students are more likely to come from a lower socio-economic background with 75 per cent of Britain's minority communities living in 88 of Britain's poorest wards (Reay, D. (2015) 'Time to change: bringing Oxbridge into the 21st century' p.20 in C. Alexander and J. Arday (eds), *Aiming Higher: Race, Inequality and Diversity in Higher Education*, London: Runnymede, pp 19-21 - quoted in *White Privilege*, Kalwant Bhopal (Policy Press, Bristol, 2018).

A student from a BAME background is therefore more likely also to experience material disadvantage and belong to a working class, lower socio-economic family grouping. Belonging to a lower social class and being from a minority ethnicity background are intersecting student characteristics which can combine to create a number of barriers to both participation in higher education and to subsequent success and progression. There is evidence that relative poverty and lack of income is a factor affecting educational performance (Cooper, K. and Stewart, K (2013) *Does money affect children's outcomes?*

Summary. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation quoted in: *How inequality runs in families*, Gideon Calder (2016, Policy Press, University of Bristol). When this is combined with membership of a BAME group the barriers associated with material disadvantage are exacerbated by those which can arise from students' BAME status: "Eurocentric curriculum, which black students felt they could not relate to, biased marking, hate crime on campus and the lack of black academics as role models" *White Privilege, ibid, p.93*).

As RAU increases the numbers of enrolled underrepresented students it will take into account the compounded disadvantages that such students experience and ensure that the current whole student success and progression levels are maintained. RAU believes that one appropriate way of doing this is to have an *inclusive* approach to student support and engagement strategies. In this way *all* students are enabled to benefit from the academic and pastoral support mechanisms and, in practice, those students who have the greatest need of these services will be facilitated to do so.

e) Background to widening participation at RAU

Over the last two and a half years, a significant level of responsibility for delivering programmes to widen participation was given to an external agency with a background in this area. This arrangement had been established for a three year period which expires at the end of September 2018. During this period, groundwork has taken place to establish a platform for developing deeper relationships with state schools locally and on a national level through the School Farms Network Education Alliance (SFNEA).

A review of these arrangements was undertaken in the summer of 2017 and, following this, a new strategy for widening access to RAU was approved by Governing Council and Academic Board at the beginning of 2018. This new strategy was also discussed with the former Director of the Office for Fair Access and is currently being implemented. It is described further in the next section. This strategy brings responsibility for planning and implementing programmes of widening participation back to the RAU with an appropriate capacity to deliver. This is congruent with a whole institution approach to widening access. RAU will consolidate and build upon the state school partnerships that have been established to date and robust plans have been approved to make a step change in our efforts to reach students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The key challenge for RAU is to diversify its undergraduate student population. The history and traditions of the RAU have contributed to the current social profile, and the new leadership team and the Governing Council are committed to continuing work in train to increase the participation of groups that are generally underrepresented in higher education at RAU.

In our effort to widen participation to the institution, RAU will target students who are: from low participation areas and attend state schools; from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds; mature; disabled (including having mental health needs); from a care background.

In addition, we will develop plans to reach out to carers, students who are estranged from their families, children from military families and other underrepresented groups.

It can be seen from the foregoing self-assessment that transforming the undergraduate student profile i.e. widening access to the institution, is our major challenge and we will need to target our planning and relationship building with school and college partners to rise to meet it. There is widespread support for our strategy for widening access and for RAU to make a contribution to social mobility and enable a wider and more diverse group of students to benefit from the excellent learning, student

success and progression that currently takes place at this vibrant and supportive community learning environment.

2. Ambitions and Strategy

- a) **Building on Success:** A new strategy has been recently drafted which sets out our ambitions for a successful and thriving higher education institution which puts students at the heart of all that we do. This strategy been widely consulted on with staff and the involvement of student representatives.

Our vision is to become:

The leading specialist University providing a fresh perspective for the land agri-food and rural enterprise sectors

The cornerstones of our strategy (strategic goals) are:

- **To grow our student community by providing an outstanding student experience and excellent employment outcomes.** Our innovative programmes will be informed by the evolving needs of industry and designed for learners at all stages of life, delivered via traditional and distance learning platforms.
- **Strategic and sustainable partnership working** - partnerships with land-based colleges and schools will diversify our student community and extend the reach of the learning opportunities we offer. Developing more sustainable partnerships with industry will provide a wider perspective, ensure that what we teach is relevant, improve student employment outcomes and enable sustainability-oriented innovation.
- **To establish a Knowledge Hub** that will help industry navigate change and uncertainty making it possible to tackle big challenges more effectively delivering societal benefit and impact. The hub will provide a focus to pioneer farmer-led innovation, act as an accelerator of rural enterprise and become a centre for thought leadership for the informed development of evidence-based policy and strategic thinking.
- **To become a sustainable, efficient, organisation** that can fund a continuing investment in our physical, digital and human infrastructure ensuring a continually improving and excellent experience for both our students and our staff

RAU listens carefully to feedback from students and we have acted in response to the NSS and other surveys as well as via other feedback mechanisms. We have supported threshold standards for module information, teaching delivery, and assessment and feedback. This action was also supported by appropriately targeted staff development. As a consequence of these measures, NSS participation has increased significantly to more than 80% in 2015 and 2016 (which is at the upper end of national participation rate). More importantly, these interventions had the desired effect of delivering NSS scores that start to build towards realisation of the University's strategic ambitions.

The University, under new leadership, has now embarked on a systematic review of its whole undergraduate portfolio, placing the student experience at the heart of the University's mission. Evidence to support this plan can be drawn from the establishment of the new Governors' Quality and Standards Committee and recent academic appointments focused on improving the student experience.

Evidence of our commitment to the student experience is indicated by the following:

- Investment in refurbishment of teaching laboratories and establishment of a single academic administration centre (one-stop-shop) for students.
- Establishment of an independent Students' Union as a separate company operating in partnership with the University recognising the need for close co-operation to further students' interests.
- Increased investment in the University's extra-curricular Enterprise programme which fosters business development by students: success can be judged from companies being founded by students, and the achievement of notable national awards.
- Rationalisation of the academic committee structure to improve the way teaching and learning is managed, including a Governors' Academic Quality and Standards Committee and an Education Committee reporting to the Academic Board (equivalent to Senate).
- Unified academic structure across 7 Academic Centres that is consistent with the small size and cognate subject focus of the University.
- Appointment of a Deputy Vice Chancellor
- Appointment of a Director of Operations and a new Academic Registrar, both with significant backgrounds in supporting and enhancing the student experience, and a new Head of Education Enhancement leading on teaching innovation and learning.
- Introduction of Teaching Awards using the recommendations of students.
- An ongoing programme to upgrade teaching and training facilities, including the acquisition of a new farm (Harnhill Manor Farm) which is the University's main venue for practical education
- The upgrading of the University Fossehill Equine Unit to enhance teaching and learning
- Refurbishment of teaching space (the Emrys Jones Centre), the opening of the Food Centre with facilities for food science and technology and a commercial kitchen
- The establishment of a new practical training facility (the Rural Innovation Centre) which offers extra-curricular practical training to enhance graduate employability.

The overall position is that the RAU is on a strongly upward trajectory to realise its ambitions for providing a rich and stimulating learning environment for students in which they thrive, succeed and progress. An increasingly important aspect of the students' learning environment is the utilisation of digital technology. RAU has an ambitious plan to secure excellence in the use of digital technologies in support of the student experience. The last few years have seen a fundamental shift in the way that education can be made available to learners. The widespread availability of mobile and desk-based devices offers not only new opportunities for student interaction with learning content but also flexibility in learning design and delivery. While RAU has a reputation for high calibre teaching and there are existing pockets of excellent digital practice, there is a need for cultural change in which learning pedagogy is challenged and enhanced.

To support this improvement RAU will:

- Define a set of activities and processes that directly encourage and support the building of staff digital capabilities.
- Embed the use of e-learning and multi-media technology and resources in our curriculum.
- Develop our digital delivery with a view to offering courses online.
- Define a set of activities and processes that develop digitally literate students.
- Include the student voice in digital decision making.
- Advance the capability for online assessment, personalisation of learning resources and use of learner data.

RAU has an excellent record in supporting students with disabilities and forms of specific learning difficulties. Designing for inclusion through utilisation of digital technologies represents an important progression of these efforts that recognises user diversity and needs. It will allow us to solve problems for some using digital means and extend the benefits to all with a particular focus on our growing group of diverse learners: part-time students, those studying at partner institutions, those entering higher education from non-traditional backgrounds and pathways, international students and distance learners.

RAU has ambitious plans to:

- Provide equal access and services to **all** RAU students.
- Advance our support for students and staff who are digitally disadvantaged.
- Pilot inclusive approaches such as Electronic Management of Assessment (EMA) and online/distance learning.
- Ensure that technology procurement and deployment proactively considers the needs of disabled learners.

Student success and progression at RAU are important strengths, but we urgently need to widen the participation of students from diverse backgrounds at the University and this is key to ensuring that we can contribute to social mobility and ensure that all individuals who have the ability to benefit from an HE experience are able to do so. Just as we have set ourselves robust strategic ambitions for building on our successes we have also developed significant plans for addressing our biggest challenge: creating a diverse and representative student undergraduate body.

b) Widening Access to RAU

Students at RAU succeed in their studies and are highly employable with good rates of progression into professional/managerial and graduate level careers as indicated in the earlier table on current performance. We are proud to have established an effective learning community involving academics, professional staff and students all working together to contribute to the conditions of success for all to realise their potential. We recognise that the undergraduate student body is not representative of the diverse communities within society as a whole and that we need to make significant progress to reach out to students from different backgrounds in order to inform them about opportunities at RAU, encourage them to experience our learning environment and join us for their studies.

Over the last three years, a network of local school partnerships has been established and RAU supports the national School Farms Network Education Alliance (SFNEA). These two partnership networks will enable us to establish robust aspiration-raising and progression arrangements for students on the basis of clear annual delivery plans of activities agreed by senior staff in schools.

Working with Colleges of Further Education is also an important area of development for RAU. Taking forward further collaborative delivery of RAU awards is an important feature of the schools and colleges widening participation strategy. A number of target colleges, in diverse geographical locations, have been approached to become partners of RAU in order to deliver 'franchised' or 'validated' RAU courses. This strategy is focussed on areas with high numbers of students from disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds. This will provide wider access to RAU courses and ensure that students can also benefit from access to the activity 'offer menu' of aspiration-raising and attainment-raising activity.

RAU is part of two National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) Consortia, 'Study Higher' and 'GROWS', and increasing levels of engagement will take place to ensure that widening participation aims are furthered through active involvement in these programmes. RAU will work with both

targeted local and national school and college partners as well as the NCOPs to establish strong working relationships with annually planned schedules of activity being delivered to optimise both the progression of disadvantaged students to higher education and the number of students choosing to study at RAU.

RAU works in collaboration with nineteen other universities to fund, maintain, develop and promote the free to use, careers and progression planning websites managed by the Western Vocational Progression Consortium (WVPC) based at the University of Bath:

- Lifepilot is engaging and supporting mature and part-time students in progressing to higher level study (www.life-pilot.co.uk).
- Careerpilot is an award winning website providing one-stop inspirational, impartial pathway and progression information to 13-19 year olds, parents and advisers in the South of England region. The site was used by and used by 420,000+ users in 2017-18. (www.careerpilot.org.uk). Careerpilot supports schools in meeting the 2018 Careers Statutory Guidance and 8 Gatsby Benchmarks and is integrated into the work of six NCOP projects.

RAU's work with schools and colleges will be evaluated to ascertain the **impact** of the activities delivered to students. The key area of evaluation concerns whether, and to what extent, RAU activities have positively affected student and family decision-making about higher education and changed subsequent behaviours as a consequence. Evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of new General Data Protection Regulations (May 2018).

RAU is committed to helping students from disadvantaged backgrounds to think positively about higher education and to have the confidence and self-belief to choose the option of going to university. For students to be confident about making the choice to go to university, they need to be well informed about what it will involve. It is also important for their parents to understand the implications of a higher education choice and to be in a position to offer the right kind of support and advice to their children.

The decision to go to university is not made only when students are in the sixth form. Students' understanding and desire to progress to university level study often starts much earlier in their school life and individuals from less advantaged backgrounds are more likely to choose **not** to aspire to higher education earlier in their secondary education than their more advantaged peers. Therefore, RAU will work with students in target schools from early on in their secondary education experience and engage with learners in primary education.

RAU is committed to two principal areas of activity: targeted aspiration raising within defined schools and colleges, including those that are key 'feeders' of students to RAU, and widening participation through targeted activities with specific year groups.

As a specialist institution with a niche undergraduate offer, RAU needs to increase public awareness about its offer. There is also a need to increase the RAU's **presence** in state secondary schools in order to promote awareness of the institution and the opportunities that it provides. Therefore, the **scale** of activity delivered to schools and colleges is an important consideration along with the task of welcoming students and their families onto the RAU's campus to see and experience for themselves first-hand what is available to them.

A report was submitted to RAU at the end of 2016 which identified key marketing and student recruitment issues (The 'Shift Learning' report). This report demonstrated the relatively low level of

state school pupils' awareness about RAU as an institution – both its existence and the subjects that are taught:

“Only 35% of respondents in our eSurvey had heard of RAU prior to receiving our email. This is far lower than competing institutions and suggests that more work needs to be done in this area. Interestingly, RAU did not even achieve the highest awareness scores in its nearest postcodes. For example, those in Gloucester postcodes were just as likely to be aware of Oxford Brookes, Nottingham or Reading. In the counties surrounding Gloucester, twice as many respondents were aware of Oxford Brookes and the University of Reading than were aware of RAU” (Helene Moran, Shift Learning, ‘Royal Agricultural University’, p.49)

A significant task for RAU is therefore to increase its presence in state schools in order to increase awareness of the institution and its undergraduate offer. This will also involve a parental engagement strategy.

Schools and colleges will be targeted on the basis of the potential for students to progress onto higher education taking into account student socio-economic profiles including residence in low participation neighbourhoods identified using POLAR data. A ranking of schools/colleges will be undertaken based on the potential level of student progression and/or widening participation need. Planned and agreed activities to be delivered to individual schools/colleges will be described in an annual engagement plan which will be subject to review with partners towards the end of the year and as part of the annual planning activity for the forthcoming academic year.

From the beginning of the next academic year (2018-19) RAU will exercise full and independent responsibility for relationship management and activity delivery for local schools/colleges and national SFNEA schools and colleges.

Collaborative delivery of RAU awards, student recruitment and widening participation are being aligned into a coherent overarching strategy. Relationship-building is taking place with senior staff in schools and colleges and annually agreed programmes of activity will be delivered that are chosen from an activity ‘offer menu’. We have designed the outreach offer to include aspiration-raising and attainment raising activities in recognition that higher education needs to do more to support the achievement of the necessary qualifications for progression by disadvantaged students, for example the achievement of 5 good grades at GCSE is a pre-requisite for continuing to successfully undertake ‘A’ levels and other level 3 qualifications. Therefore, HE has a vested interest, as well as a moral responsibility, to provide support for target students to achieve national awards enabling their progression to further study. RAU will actively support the attainment-raising of target students in schools and colleges through its partnership working in both local and national school/college partnership networks.

c) Targeting Underrepresented Groups

The stage of the student lifecycle that is most critical for RAU is: Access. The undergraduate student profile is not representative of the wider society and we want to ensure that the learning opportunities at RAU are made available to specific groups that have not historically participated in our provision. These are:

- Students from state schools
- Students from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR quintiles 1 and 2) and white working class boys
- Students from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds

- Mature students
- Looked After Children
- Students with disabilities

Students from State Schools

RAU has much lower representation of students from state schools than is the case at most other universities. In part, this can be attributed to historical patterns of student recruitment and the nature of our niche and specialist provision. A further factor is connected to the social profile of the farming communities which have most interest in the subjects and courses provided at RAU. It is by no means clear that these communities are representative of society as a whole and this therefore 'builds in' a naturally unrepresentative profile of students potentially interested in RAU courses. However, we believe that there is also a lower level of awareness of RAU provision amongst state schools (evidenced by the 'Shift Report' previously cited) and therefore an important part of our ambition is to ensure that RAU has significantly greater direct contact with state school pupils than has previously been the case. This will entail visits into state schools and plentiful opportunities for state school pupils to visit RAU for campus days that involve subject taster sessions.

Students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (POLAR quintiles 1 and 2) and white working class boys

We will target local and national school/college partnerships (described above) where there are significant numbers of pupils residing in postcodes that are in low participation neighbourhoods. A significant number of white working class boys reside in low participation neighbourhoods and will therefore be targeted through our access and outreach activities. A combination of postcodes to identify POLAR quintiles 1 and 2 male students and entitlement to free school meals (FSM) will be used to identify/target white working class boys. A compact-type scheme will be developed for these pupils which will guarantee an annual programme of attainment and aspiration-raising activities, opportunities for campus experiences (including summer schools) and a contextualised offer to applicants from these schools, recognising their school examination performance, and strong association with the RAU for a range of events and activities (aspiration and attainment raising).

RAU will increase its involvement with the two local NCOP consortia (GROWS and Study Higher) which have been established to target pupils in schools who possess the ability to progress onto higher education but do not do so in the numbers that would be predicted by their achievements at level 2. There remains a degree of doubt about the funding for NCOPs beyond July 2019, so we will establish a plan to bring a number of these schools into our partnership framework and ensure their pupils continue to benefit from a range of activities should NCOPs be discontinued.

Students from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds

We will target local state schools (within a radius of 35 to 40 miles of the RAU campus) in areas with significant populations of students from BAME backgrounds. A compact-type scheme will guarantee an annual programme of attainment and aspiration-raising activities, opportunities for campus experiences (including summer schools) and a contextualised offer to applicants from these schools recognising their school context and association with the RAU for a range of events and activities (aspiration and attainment raising).

Mature students

Colleges of Further Education enrol many mature students onto different courses including Access to HE Diplomas. RAU is developing a strategy for increasing its collaborative delivery arrangements with colleges and this is intended to:

- Increase the number of mature students enrolled onto RAU courses
- Increase the presence of RAU with target colleges and mature level 3 learners

Generic outreach work will target specific Colleges of Further Education to deliver activities from the 'menu offer' including student finance and support for the UCAS process (including personal statements). These sessions will be supplemented by specific subject-based presentations/activities which relate to RAU courses. The plan is to generally promote interest amongst mature students for RAU course provision and to specifically promote awareness of 'top up' opportunities to those students who are enrolled on RAU collaborative provision.

Looked After Children (LAC)

The University will develop an incremental, progressive awareness raising programme with the aim of increasing the number of LAC achieving successful outcomes pre- and post-16 and consequently entering higher education. Currently, only 6% of care leavers enter higher education and care leavers have a greater chance of going to prison than engaging with higher level study. Links have been established with Gloucestershire County Council and virtual schools serving this area and we believe that an incremental and 'progressive' approach is consistent with student life cycle i.e. engaging with young people, pre-, during and post-HE study. Using a 'progressive programme' approach is also in line with current thinking around the most effective widening participation interventions. It is planned that upon completion of the progressive programme of activities, LAC students will receive a reduced tariff offer of an undergraduate place on a suitable course.

Students with disabilities

RAU each year enrolls a significant number of students with disabilities (over 23%) and we will actively promote further awareness about the various forms of actively provided to support our students through our work in schools and colleges. We are a highly inclusive learning environment and provide effective support to students with disabilities. Increasing prospective students' awareness and understanding of the RAU inclusive learning environment and the ways in which students are provided with effective support to enable them to succeed in their studies and progress to employment or further study will be prominent in our interactions with student groups in schools and colleges.

Monitoring Progress

Monitoring the degree of success in implementing the Access and Participation Plan involves reporting against the RAU's *operational plan*. This is key to enabling progress to be made in improving higher levels of access to RAU for targeted cohorts of students. The area that the RAU is committed to prioritising is access to the institution for groups of learners that are underrepresented both at the RAU and in HE generally. These are as follows:

- Students from state schools
- Students from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR quintiles 1 and 2) and white working class boys
- Students from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds
- Mature students
- Looked After Children

- Students with disabilities

Significant monitoring information will include data on positive changes to the percentages of students from these groups of students who are enrolled onto undergraduate courses and who successfully progress in their studies each year through to the achievement of a 'good' honours degree and then their subsequent transition to a career or enrolment on postgraduate study. Therefore, statistical monitoring will include data on these areas disaggregated for different student background characteristics.

RAU is committed to diversifying the undergraduate student profile through widening access to the University. We understand that increasing levels of participation by underrepresented groups is an important stage in the student journey and that their subsequent successful academic and social participation is equally important along with progression onto successful careers at graduate level. Part of our monitoring will involve data on changes to access to RAU for the target groups identified. In addition, we will need to monitor their positive participation in the academic and social life of the institution measured through surveys, personal tutor feedback and other mechanisms. Successful participation should entail good levels of academic achievement for these students and we will monitor this carefully. In particular, we will monitor assessment grades (as formative assessment of their progress) and degree classifications (summative). This will enable us to monitor any gaps in performance for students from diverse backgrounds and to take positive steps to address the same should they be in evidence. In a similar way, we will monitor the destinations of different categories of student (by background and characteristics) in order to identify gaps defined in terms of successful progression upon graduation.

The overall purpose of monitoring will be to enable RAU to:

- Understand how the aims and objectives of the APP are being met and specifically: how successful we are in widening access to the institution for different categories of students; the extent to which the experience of students from underrepresented groups is positive both academically and socially – 'fitting in' and having a sense of 'belonging' will be important considerations in this context; positive destinations of students upon graduation for differentiated cohorts of graduates.
- Careful in-year and annual monitoring of disaggregated student data in relation to access, success and progression will enable us to provide evidence of our effectiveness in each of these stages of the student journey. Where any gaps in performance are identified, they will be addressed promptly.
- The collation and analysis of student lifecycle data will be used in a range of reporting within the institution including the Academic Board, Vice Chancellor's Executive Group and governing Council.
- Establish the 'value for money' effectiveness of the financial commitment made to support the achievement of the APP's aims.
- Integrate monitoring information with the APP's evaluation and impact assessment.

APP monitoring will involve:

- In-year progress updates - to include information on financial and staff deployment and data and evaluation findings re: progress against aims, objectives and milestones.
- End of year updates – a full review of the operating plan including evaluation findings and assessment of impact; quantitative measures of activity e.g. numbers of white working class males engaged in outreach activity; resources successfully utilised to deliver the APP.

Inclusivity, Equality and Diversity

The Royal Agricultural University takes into account the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) in designing and implementing its policies and services.

The RAU has adopted strategies to support inclusivity, equality and diversity which have been developed to promote our commitment to *providing an environment where all people are respected and treated fairly* regardless of characteristics or distinctions such as: gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, age, disability, socio-economic group / background, religious belief / faith, political belief or affiliation, marital status, family responsibilities and sexual orientation (protected characteristics). The Access and Participation Plan interacts with the Inclusivity, Equality and Diversity Policy by providing initiatives which will positively increase the participation of underrepresented groups in higher education at the RAU. There is an association between belonging to an underrepresented group and possessing protected characteristics, for example a significant proportion of individuals from BAME backgrounds reside in low participation neighbourhoods which are socio-economically disadvantaged. The targeted approach used to widen access to RAU is planned so as to ensure that both underrepresented students and those with protected characteristics are informed and encouraged to participate in HE and at the RAU. Our plans for evaluation and assessment of the impact of this work will provide data which will indicate the extent to which we are successful in this endeavour over time.

The Royal Agricultural University recognises the value and dignity of each individual and will treat them with fairness and respect. The University acknowledges the adverse effect any form of discrimination will have on individuals, as regards their personal life, their career or academic progress. The University uses its best endeavours to:

- Create an inclusive community, which promotes diversity and equality of opportunity for all;
- Provide its students, staff and visitors with a welcoming, secure and supportive environment in which all members are free to achieve their full potential;
- Implement strategies aimed at promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination;
- Take the appropriate steps to ensure that all forms of discrimination are addressed positively and constructively, and in a way which will help to build an equality-driven, inclusive RAU community.

We have identified specific groups of students who are underrepresented at RAU and the Access and Participation Plan has been designed to address this issue. The Access and Participation Plan interacts with a widening participation strategy and operational plan detailing specific initiatives and actions to engage underrepresented students and support their participation in HE. The importance of students 'fitting in' and feeling comfortable in their environment is recognised as important for ensuring that they become appropriately integrated into their study environment. RAU has taken an *inclusive* approach in providing the range of academic and pastoral support it offers to students. In practice, this means that *all* students are targeted and informed about the ways in which different RAU services can help them to thrive and succeed. An inclusive approach helps to ensure that students who have hidden disadvantages can be informed of the different forms of support that will help them. For example, students who suffer from episodes of poor mental health will be informed about the kind of support that they can benefit from along with other students who may not suffer from this at that particular time. Induction arrangements ensure that *all* students are informed about pastoral, academic and careers support and the student portal also communicates these key messages to all enrolled students.

The Access and Participation Plan has been designed specifically to have impact on the recruitment of students from underrepresented groups in higher education, including those with protected characteristics, for example disabled students, older learners and those from BAME communities.

Diversifying the undergraduate student profile at the RAU is a transformational initiative and supports the drive for wider equality and the promotion of social mobility. As part of this equality impact assessment, we understand that it is important to consider the whole student journey. Therefore, our analysis and plans include positive actions and targeting of access and outreach activity to reach out and engage specific cohorts of potential HE students who are currently underrepresented in HE and at RAU including those possessing protected characteristics as described. Further, we recognise that our *inclusive* approach to all forms of student support will ensure that students are appropriately informed about their entitlement to benefit from a range of services which will enable them to optimise their chances of being successful within the student environment of the RAU. As part of our equality impact assessment we will continue to monitor the performance of students with differentiated (and combined) characteristics in order to ensure that student success and progression is positive for all categories of student groups and that there is greater overall access to the RAU from underrepresented groups.

Evaluation

Evaluation strategies for success and progression are well established and involve objective metrics such as continuation rates, students' achievement of degree classifications, NSS and internal quality survey outcomes, DLHE information. The successful methods for evaluating student success and progression will therefore continue to be used in the future. For 2019-20 RAU will emphasise the evaluation of access and outreach activity and its endeavours to widen participation. The approach draws upon the methods proposed by CFE Research for HEFCE in their report 'Student Opportunity Outcomes Framework Research: in-depth study' (2015). This comprises a series of logical chains between a number of elements and a series of metrics for each evaluation area and questions or indicators to guide the evaluation process. In addition, our approach to evaluation is guided by Kirkpatrick principles (Reaction, Learning, Behaviour, Results) which ultimately aim to measure the extent to which our aims for widening access have been achieved. This approach is described below.

Financial support has been evaluated using the methodological approach adopted in a similar nationwide study; 'Closing the gap: understanding the impact of institutional financial support on student success' (OFFA, 2016) and from the key recommendations that the survey be run in November/December to allow students to fully reflect in the impact of the funding from the previous year. Student demographic data was linked to survey responses. This meant students were not asked for demographic and course specific information furthermore by offering them a unique URL linked to their student data they could respond immediately without having to log in. All students in receipt of financial support from the RAU in 2016/17 (n=195) were asked to complete the survey. 63 students responded (32.3%) giving a 10.18% margin of error at a confidence interval of 95%. The findings are described in the section Access, Student Success and Progression Measures. Rau will utilise the full analytical toolkit to evaluate the success of its student financial support arrangements.

The key questions for evaluation purposes are: what impact does access and outreach activity have on those who participate? In particular, does participation create an increased predisposition amongst individuals to join higher education courses? Further, as a consequence of participation in access and outreach events, are students *actually* progressing onto higher education?

There are three important elements that need to be explored as part of a comprehensive approach to evaluation:

i) The motivational dimension – how are students' thoughts about themselves as learners changed and is their desire for further learning increased.

ii) The behavioural dimension – do students act differently at school and at home because of their experiences e.g. work harder on their course, participate more (and more effectively), read more and organise strategies for study better.

iii) Whether students **act** on plans to progress onto further and higher education and increase their performance in school and college assessments as a consequence of the changes in motivation and behaviour that are brought about. This latter element is identified most effectively through use of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) which is described below.

Effective evaluation requires a significant level of research input which carefully captures the nature of the effect of outreach on participants in the short and long term and examines changes in motivation and behaviour. Ideally, such research will also include the testimony of other stakeholders such as teachers and family members. It is planned to evaluate using representative categories of intervention rather than attempting to evaluate every incidence of an activity to the same level. This approach has been taken in consideration of resource implications for conducting evaluative research.

RAU plans to deliver a range of targeted access and outreach activity and a number of areas suggest themselves as benefiting from an intensive focus for evaluative purposes:

- a) Post-16 activity with students studying level 3 qualifications.
- b) Pre-16 activity which is not part of a ‘progressive framework’ approach compared with pre-16 activity that **is** part of a ‘progressive framework’ approach.
- c) Relatively intensive programmes with specific targeted groups e.g. compact schemes, summer schools and work with Looked After Children.
- d) The consequences of participation in each category defined in terms of propensity to progress onto a course in higher education.

There are a number of stakeholders who have a view on the impact and effectiveness of outreach activity and RAU plans to use both qualitative and quantitative information to evaluate the effectiveness of our widening access strategy through the examination of intervention categories previously mentioned. The following describes the approach to evaluation that will be used to assess the impact of our activities and to provide evidence of what is working most effectively.

Key stakeholders for evaluation purposes are:

- The students who have participated in aspiration-raising and attainment-raising activities
- Teaching staff of the schools / colleges participating in the events
- Staff and university ambassadors who delivered the activities
- Parents/Carers of participating pupils

Each activity may have *generic* aims (i.e. common to all outreach activities) and *specific* aims (i.e. unique to that particular event). RAU will use a monitoring system capable of evaluating whether the programme has met both types of aims. The system evaluation elements we will utilise are outlined briefly below:

Evaluative Mechanisms

Mechanism	Descriptor
Paper form delivered at (beginning and) end of outreach activity	Immediate response by participants attending activities; questions can be explained.

Paper form delivered after end of the activity (e.g. in school / college)	Activity is relatively fresh in the mind; indicates change in learning
On-line evaluation form for completion after outreach activity	Suitable for those who are uncomfortable with writing but are IT literate; a means of accessing target groups difficult to reach by paper-based evaluations
Feedback survey and/or meeting with relevant teaching staff	Useful for monitoring perceptions/evaluations of key stakeholders
Verbal debriefing session/focus group at end of outreach activity	Suitable for participants and those who delivered the activity; relatively easy to deliver Immediate response; activity is still fresh in the mind
Parental survey (online or paper-based)	Involves parents/carers in their children's participation in outreach activity; promotes understanding about HE and progression opportunities for their children
Parental focus groups	Engages parents/carers with access and outreach initiatives; promotes appreciation of aims of aspiration and attainment-raising activity; provides an 'open forum' in which deeper meanings and responses can be explored

We plan to utilise a range of feedback systems (as above) for all activities. We will devise standard sets of questions for each monitored group, leaving room for additional questions relevant to the specific aims of an activity. We will also develop paper-based questionnaires and computer-based evaluation forms. In addition to collecting feedback/observations from key stakeholders to outreach, RAU subscribes to the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) which enables us to monitor the behaviour and actions of outreach participants in terms of their progression to higher education. In brief, HEAT is an online tool designed to:

- Record: Outreach and recruitment activities; Students' details.
- Monitor and Track: Activities students have attended; Applications to Higher Education (HE).
- Plan and Target: Postcode profiler of participating/target institutions; Comparison groups in support of research.

The combination of stakeholder surveys/focus groups described above and use of the HEAT online tool will enable us to make informed judgements about the effectiveness of access and outreach activities in relation to the key evaluation elements described previously: **a)** the motivational dimension **b)** the behavioural dimension **c)** whether students **act** on plans to progress onto further and higher education. We are interested in Randomised Control Trials (RCT), and will explore the feasibility of adopting this approach to evaluation as part of our methodology, but do not envisage this being implemented in 2019-20.

We are members of HELOA, two NCOP consortia and support the National Educational Opportunities Network (NEON) and Action on Access. We will use these forums to disseminate at a national level the findings and outcomes from our evaluation of widening participation strategies and activities. At an internal level, we will submit appropriate evaluation research papers to Academic Board and provide reports on key performance indicators (including Access) to Governing Council. The Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group will receive periodic reports on the outcomes of evaluation and we will also ensure that the Students Union is regularly informed about these matters. In addition to these formal mechanisms for reporting the outcome of evaluation, we also plan to promote awareness to students directly through poster campaigns across campus which provide case studies and further information on the evaluation of the impact of our activities.

d) Student Consultation on Access and Participation Plan

University strategies for student support, academic development and widening participation have progressed through the various planning and approval committees which have involved student representation, for example Governing Council and Academic Board. In addition, specific consultations have taken place with RAU students concerning this Access and Participation Plan. The assessment of RAU's current performance in relation to access, success and progression has been shared with students at these events and feedback has been obtained. The Students' Union was involved in helping set up the consultation and the large cohort of RAU student ambassadors were also invited to hear about the plan and our targets moving forward.

We plan to involve students in the implementation and monitoring of this plan in various ways including monitoring progress through the RAU committee structure, student ambassador involvement with evaluation of widening access measures and consultative updates with students to discuss progress and share perceptions and experiences of the implementation process.

We will ensure that representative groups of students are informed and involved in the delivery of the Access and Participation Plan. We have a large proportion of undergraduate students on our Student Ambassador programme for which we prioritise students from a range of backgrounds. Student Ambassadors will be significantly involved in delivering widening participation projects and initiatives to targeted groups of learners in schools/colleges as part of our APP. As part of the evaluation process we will fully involve Student Ambassadors in providing feedback on the responses of different student groups to the activities and programmes in which they are participating. In this way RAU students from a range of backgrounds will be involved in helping to evaluate the success of the APP's delivery and will be provided with opportunities to enhance our planning and practice. Student Ambassadors are partners in our endeavour to widen access and ensure that students from underrepresented groups participate effectively in the University. We plan to continue to encourage students from underrepresented groups to become Student Ambassadors and to support the evaluation of our plans to widen access and provide academic and pastoral support.

The consultation events that have taken place on the Access and Participation Plan were successful and we plan to ensure that we continue a direct consultative approach with the student body to ensure that *all* students are involved in consideration of the APP and the progress made with its delivery. Therefore, the cohort of Student Ambassadors will comprise one consultative group and this body is involved with evaluation of programmes and initiatives delivered. The Students' Union will also be involved in consultation and deliberation of our success in delivery of the APP. The Students' Union is an important partner of the RAU and we will work closely with them to monitor the success of the implementation of our Access and Participation Plan. This will include sharing monitoring data with the Students' Union on progress made in year and end of year and enabling joint projects to be taken forward. The Students' Union is keen to encourage students from underrepresented groups to take on roles and responsibilities with societies and task groups that have been established to represent students' interests. Working closely with the Students' Union will enable us to communicate effectively with students and to engage them in consultation on the APP. This will specifically include targeting students from the full range of backgrounds at the RAU. Therefore, Students' Union and Student Ambassador consultative fora will ensure that students from all backgrounds are involved in monitoring the delivery arrangements for the APP and evaluation of its success.

3. Access, Student Success and Progression Measures
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1. Access

<p>Targeted outreach activity to specific groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State schools/colleges • Local and national school/college partnerships • BAME students • Students from low participation neighbourhoods • White working-class boys • Students receiving Free School Meals (FSM) 	<p>One-off interventions to raise aspiration and achievement or enhance student recruitment are less likely to have as much impact as carefully planned sequences of activity which address different student needs at different phases in the school/college curriculum.</p> <p>RAU's access and outreach activities will be structured to address the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' and parental awareness of HE opportunities and understanding of HE and its significance • Experiences of an HE environment and contact with HE staff and students • Recognising links between the school curriculum and study at HE level • Understanding the different types of institutions and courses • Making informed decisions and recognising that choices may influence career aspirations and options • An understanding of different learning styles • Demonstrating and applying the skills required for study at HE level: critical thinking, independent learning, demonstrating that they can organise their own work. <p>Progression framework 'sequenced learning experiences' appropriate to the different needs of learners on the programme which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus visits • Compact-type programme for targeted pupils • Subject enrichment, master classes or revision sessions • HEI student ambassadors in school and college sessions and Information, Advice and Guidance events • Summer Schools and HE-related residential experiences
<p>Looked After Children</p>	<p>RAU is committed to supporting Looked After Children on their journey through school and towards the goal of progressing into further or higher education. It is recognised that the nature of this work is not 'quick fix' but requires a coherent strategy with a range of partners developed and sustained over a significant period of time. A compact-type programme of activities will be developed for looked after children.</p> <p>A number of discussions have taken place with Gloucestershire County Council staff teams and a widening access programme will be implemented with relevant Council and Virtual School staff for delivery in 2019-20.</p>
<p>Mature Learners and Collaborative Delivery of RAU Awards</p>	<p>Stronger links with Colleges of Further Education, Access to HE courses and mature students.</p> <p>RAU is increasing its collaborative delivery arrangements with colleges in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of mature students enrolled onto RAU awards. • Increase the presence of RAU with target colleges.

	<p>Outreach work will target specific Colleges of Further Education to deliver activities from the 'menu offer' including student finance and support for the UCAS process (including personal statements).</p> <p>These sessions will be supplemented by specific subject-based presentations/activities. The plan is to generally promote interest amongst mature students for HE courses and also to promote awareness of 'top up' opportunities to those students who are enrolled onto RAU collaborative provision.</p>
Young Children (Primary)	<p>The national Children's University provides a helpful platform for universities to offer diverse events and activities to primary age children. 'Graduation' events at different levels (e.g. Gold, Silver and Bronze) are held for children who have achieved a number of hours of learning on approved events. RAU will offer events through the Gloucestershire Children's University scheme and host graduations for primary school children. These 'graduations' will include participation by teachers and pupils' families at the RAU campus.</p> <p>This approach will enable RAU to take into account the significant roles of parents and families in influencing decision-making and in shaping the young person's awareness and understanding of higher education.</p>
National Collaborative Outreach Programme and Wider University Collaboration	<p>RAU will support two NCOP Consortia ('GROWS' and 'Study Higher') in order to increase rates of progression of pupils living within designated low progression wards.</p> <p>RAU will contribute funding to maintain, develop and promote the free to use, careers and progression planning websites managed by the Western Vocational Progression Consortium (WVPC) based at the University of Bath: Careerpilot and Lifepilot.</p> <p>RAU is committed to increasing the participation of students from the state school sector on its courses and to working with other institutions to raise awareness and understanding about HE. The NCOP initiative targets pupils in Year 9 and above and is a strategy with which we will fully engage.</p>

2. Student Success

Teaching and Learning	<p>The University's excellent retention and completion rates are attributed to an extent by the student experience being tailored to the individual student's needs. Teaching is evaluated by ensuring that every new member of the academic staff, irrespective of experience elsewhere, is assigned a mentor. A system of peer observation of teaching is in place and the annual staff appraisal system (undertaken by line managers) addresses teaching delivery, teaching workloads and staff development needs. These systems serve to help self-appraisal of teaching, identify development needs and, if necessary, address under performance.</p>
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Personal Tutor Support	<p>Personal Tutors are trained members of academic and professional staff who are allocated individually to provide an ongoing personalized point of contact while studying with us. Key features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support with adjusting to University life. • Personal and general academic advice, guidance and development. • Encouragement and help for students to look after their own interests. • Personal development in academic and professional skills via Student Training Sessions at least once per semester. • Signposting for students to appropriate sources of help and support. • Monitoring student progress.
Study Skills Workshops and Personal Timetables	<p>The University provides students with a personal timetable containing details of lectures and other teaching events. There is a link to students' personal timetables on the Gateway home page and it is included in the University Microsoft Outlook calendar. Workshops are organised covering: Academic writing skills; referencing; time management.</p>
Student Induction	<p>New students receive a comprehensive Handbook as part of the induction process. This covers issues such as personal tutor system, attendance requirements, health and well-being, disability support, safety matters, careers services, key contacts, accommodation matters, student finance. A two week induction at the beginning of term includes a range of freshers' events with appropriate input from University service areas.</p>
Health and Well-Being	<p>A range of services are provided to students through the Student Support Hub. There is effective liaison between the Hub and the personal tutor system. The Hub provides a range of services including confidential advice and support at times to suit the needs of students. If an issue requires specialist expertise, then students are referred appropriately. A well-being 'walk in' service is provided involving face to face and telephone appointments. A Student Counsellor is able to provide 1-1 counselling to students booked through Student Support Services. An NHS mental health nurse visits the campus and a Doctor's Surgery provides a 'walk-in' service three days' a week and a Sexual Health Clinic is held weekly.</p>
Disability Support	<p>Confidential information and advice is available for students with disabilities and SpLD. A Senior Disability Officer provides leadership and direction to our support for disabled students. Advice is provided on applying for DSA and provision is made for exam adjustments following assessments of need. A dyslexia tutor offers specialist support to students and, when required, acts as an advocate with students' tutors.</p>
Support Team Advisory Representatives (STARS)	<p>Second and third year students are selected and trained to provide peer to peer support to residential students. They manage a portfolio of students to engage through different events and activities and provide support when required. STARS play a valuable role in signposting students to wider support services available to them.</p>
Financial Support	<p>RAU provides a number of bursaries, scholarships and a hardship fund to support student participation. A new Widening Access Bursary has been introduced (2018-19) targeting students from households with an income below £42,620 and residing in POLAR 3 quintile 1 and 2 areas. This is being piloted and will be evaluated prior to further implementation. Evaluation of RAU financial support replicates the methodology used in the nationwide study; 'Closing the Gap: Understanding the Impact of Institutional Financial Support on Student Success' (OFFA, 2016) and used</p>

	<p>in the 2016-17 Monitoring Return. The key recommendation that surveys be run in November/December allowing students to fully reflect on the impact of the funding from the previous year. We found more students had undertaken paid work during the previous academic year (16/17) - proportionally higher than in the nationwide study but, compared to the nationwide study, respondents were working fewer hours during term time.</p> <p>Only 25% of respondents reported that they knew they were eligible for financial support prior to the start of their course which compares with 53% in the nationwide study: 54% were not aware and a further 16% were unsure. We will review how students are informed about financial support to improve their awareness.</p> <p>Examples of financial support benefits included: 'Receiving financial support helps me to afford to participate along with my fellow students' and 'Receiving financial support helps me to be able to concentrate on my studies without worrying about finances' which reflects findings of the nationwide study.</p>
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Apart from the Widening Access Bursary, a number of scholarships and bursaries are available to students and these will be reviewed and evaluated (using OFFA recommended methodologies) to identify those which are making the desired level of impact on student access, success and progression. A number of the scholarships briefly described below are specifically aimed to encourage applicants from students from disadvantaged backgrounds i.e. with modest annual household incomes (Core, Support and Equine bursaries). Other scholarships are available to students from less advantaged backgrounds, but not specifically targeted. They are intended to: encourage local participation (Cirencester award); support students facing difficulties (Emmott Foundation); reward endeavour and excellence (FE Turner Award, Sports Scholarship, Outstanding Achievers, Overseas Excellence, Walter Smith). Details of these are published on our website.

Core Bursary	Family income under £25,000 £3000 max
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RAU Support Bursary	Family income under £42,620 £3000 max
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Equine Travel : x10	Family income less than £42,620: UK student and entering the first year BSc (Hons) International Equine and Agricultural Business Management degree. Priority given to low participation neighbourhood (both urban and rural) First generation in higher education Participation in RAU aspiration raising activity (i.e. summer school or enrichment day). £9000 max
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Emmott Foundation	RAU- Decide before 31st August: Student faced an unexpected family, a medical or economic crisis
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3. Student Progression

Work Placements	The work placement is designed to provide students with a thorough insight into agricultural, business or management practice. Students are able to
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	<p>apply the skills and knowledge learned from their studies and learn new practical skills. The placement is a compulsory part of most courses and forms a significant part of student career pathway planning.</p> <p>Students are required to complete a minimum of 20 weeks within their work placement as a 2nd year student, or a minimum of 10 weeks as a Foundation student.</p>
Employer Liaison	<p>Employers are encouraged to advertise vacancies for graduates, placements, part time or casual jobs, vacation work and volunteering opportunities;</p> <p>Opportunities are made available for employers to make presentations to students and courses and also to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend one of the RAU's three annual Graduate Careers Fair. • Involve students in project work or to research an issue which may benefit the employer and student.
Jobs Portal	Hundreds of jobs are advertised annually on the jobs portal and are accessed by RAU students and graduates alike.
Careers Fairs	A number of Careers Fairs are held each term in which employers are able to meet students face to face. Students are able to network with professional bodies and prospective employers as part of their career planning.
Career Planning Information, Advice and Guidance	Individual career consultations are available to students on a one-to-one basis whereby impartial and confidential help is provided to students with any aspect of their preparation for employment e.g. interview practice, letter and CV writing. Support is also provided for identifying suitable further study opportunities at postgraduate levels.
RAU Approach to Career and Further Study Support	<p>Careers support involves the wider RAU academic community as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work placements • Enterprise activities • Students' Union involvement and opportunities for volunteering • Student Ambassador opportunities • Rural Innovation Centre professional skills training.
Professionals' Lecture Programme	Academics organise lectures which are delivered by leading professionals and Careers organise lunchtime sessions. This ensures that our students receive up-to-date knowledge whilst making valuable contacts with industry and employers.

4. Investment

Given the current student profile, RAU plans to invest thirty percent of its higher fee income in support of enhancing the student lifecycle: access, success, progression. This is in keeping with the commitment that we have made in OFFA Access Agreements.

The allocation of higher fee income in 2019-20 will be as follows:

- £387,800 Investment in access provision which is 15.5% of higher fee income
- £75,058 Investment in student success measures which is 3% of higher fee income
- £37,529 Investment in support of student progression which is 1.5% of higher fee income
- £250,194 Investment in student financial support which is 10% of higher fee income

Therefore, total higher fee income expenditure in 2019-20 will be £750,581 which is 30% of higher fee income.

As set out, the RAU is committed to being an inclusive institution that welcomes and supports all students. In addition to our specified expenditure, we also fund a range of resources including provision of fee waivers/bursaries of £104k, staff costs for careers officers of £41k; staff costs for student welfare of £69k; a range of other student support costs are embedded across the University in relation to academic staff time, academic cost centres, library, finance, registry and other institutional service delivery/ support functions.

5. Provision of Information to Students

A team of access and outreach staff visit local and national schools and colleges to deliver aspiration-raising and attainment-raising activities to targeted students and attend schools/college HE Fairs. This team provides detailed information face to face to prospective students and also to members of staff in schools and colleges.

RAU has introduced (in 2018) an Annual Teachers and Advisers Conference: this disseminates information about HE finance and RAU tuition fees, scholarships and bursaries.

RAU's website has a dedicated area for student finance which includes scholarships, bursaries and hardship fund. Support for student finance is clearly stated on the opening page of the RAU website along with information on tuition fees, student loans and grants. A Student Finance England (SFE) video is hosted on the website for students to hear about financial arrangements for the forthcoming academic year.

Information on tuition fees, scholarships, bursaries and hardship fund can be found in the undergraduate prospectus.

Information is provided directly to students through Open Days, school/college visits, applicant days and students who enrol at RAU receive a Student Handbook which has a section dealing with student finance and hardship. RAU's website provides direct links for students to research HE student finance.

All students have access to our student Gateway intranet site which provides a full range of information for study and support purposes, in addition to the Student Handbook.

This Access and Participation Plan will be published on our website at <https://www.rau.ac.uk/royal-agricultural-university-access-agreements-and-access-and-participation-plans>

* 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.

Tuition fees may be liable to an inflationary increase each year i.e. an annual increase in tuition fees aligned with inflation. The measure of inflation used will be the Retail Prices Index (RPI) adjusted to exclude mortgage interest payments as published by the Office for National Statistics (where it is described as RPI-X).

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		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Franchise full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
Foundation degree	Capel Manor College - 10001148	£6,000
First 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		£4,625
Foundation degree		£4,625
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	State school	HESA T1a - State School (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Increase percentage of enrolments from state schools.	No	2013-14	47.6%	55%	57%	59%	60%	62%	Updated milestones according to latest data and statistical modelling undertaken for institution. New targets still represent challenging target in order to progress towards HESA benchmark
T16a_02	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	HESA T1a - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Increase percentage of enrolments from areas where participation in HE is low i.e. POLAR 3 Quintiles 1 and 2.	No	2014-15	2.5%	8%	10%	10%	10%	10%	Maintain progression to HESA benchmark (at 10% in 2015-16).
T16a_03	Access	Socio-economic	HESA T1a - NS-SEC classes 4-7 (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Increase percentage of enrolments from all low-income backgrounds, i.e. students in receipt of non-repayable support	No	2013-14	35%	42%	43%	n/a	n/a		Milestone discontinued in 2016-17 on OFFA advice.
T16a_04	Access	Mature	HESA T2a - (Mature, full-time, all undergraduate entrants)	Percentage with no previous HE & from low participation neighbourhood (POLAR3 Quintiles 1 and 2)	No	2014-15	3.4%	4.5%	4.5%	5%	5%	5%	Updated data to HESA record in 2014-15 for baseline data; and adjusted annual milestone targets accordingly. These represent stretching targets in excess of HESA benchmark (at 2.6% in 2015-16)
T16a_05	Access	Other (please give details in Description column)	Other statistic - Location (please give details in the next column)	Increase percentage of enrolments from local target areas, approx. 25mile radius	No	2014-15	11.6%	18%	20%	20%	20%	20%	Updated milestones according to latest and revised baseline and trend data.

T16a_06	Access	Care-leavers	Other statistic - Care-leavers (please give details in the next column)	Increase number of enrolments from students who are leaving care / in care. Reflects OFFA target priorities, working towards new partnership with local county council and Virtual Schools Network, which may lead to collaborative target in future years.	No	2014-15	0	2	3	3	3	4	Number not percentage. Updated milestones based on more realistic projections, following work with Glos. CC and VSN and deeper understanding of target group/ capacity and lead times for enrolments
T16a_07	Student success	Other (please give details in Description column)	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Ensure low level of non-continuation/ completion is maintained, with the increasing number and widening of enrolments anticipated in our targets.	No	2014-15	5.1%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	
T16a_08	Access	Disabled	HESA T7 - Students in receipt of DSA (full-time, first degree entrants)	Maintain above benchmark position in % of full-time, first degree entrants in receipt of DSA	No	2014-15	11.4%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	
T16a_09	Progression	Other (please give details in Description column)	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	Of those respondents employed in the UK who studied full time at the University, % in Professional/Managerial roles or engaged in further study, training or research as defined by the Standard Occupational Classification code (DLHE)	No	2014-15	80.2%	81.5%	81.5%	81.5%	82%	82%	
T16a_10	Access	Attainment raising	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	Support target schools by providing tutoring and/or mentoring activities that expressly seek to raise attainment amongst target pupils. Milestones relate to the min. number of learners tutored/mentored per year on a tutor-mentor programme.	No	2015-16	0	50	80	100	100	100	New Target

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	Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Partner in collaborative outreach activity, e.g. NNCO, NNOP, other networks specifically with University of Gloucestershire and others	Yes	2015-16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 partnerships	2 partnerships	The RAU has maintained partnerships and relationships, contributed to the partnerships, provided required IAG and/or activities to support School engagement and other activities of the networks
T16b_02	Access	State school	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Partnerships with target state schools and colleges, with Partnership Frameworks and Activity Plans in place	No	2015-16	0	30	33	33	33	33	Number of schools/ colleges with partnerships
T16b_03	Access	State school	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Relationships with national target state schools and colleges, with min. 2 visits p/a	No	2011-12	5	30	35	35	35	35	Number of schools/ colleges with some relationship
T16b_04	Other/Multiple stages	Multiple	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Relationships with other relevant organisations, e.g. employers, councils, youth services, trusts, community learning programmes/ centres, etc.	No	2015-16	n/a	8	10	15	15	15	Number of organisations with relationship

T16b_05	Access	Multiple	Outreach / WP activity (summer schools)	Establishment and delivery of extended on-campus activities with overnight accommodation at halls of residence to increase awareness and aspiration to higher education	No	2011-12	2	100	120	150	180	180	Number of participants
T16b_06	Access	State school	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Delivery of a range of targeted outreach activities that apply the 5A framework and are scaffolded across school Years 7 to 13, and for mature learners	No	2014-15	n/a	10000	12000	12000	12000	1200	Number of meaningful participant engagements
T16b_07	Access	Multiple	Contextual data	Review and formalise contextual admissions process to ensure access and recognition of education disadvantage at the application/ offer stage	No	2015-16	n/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Review	Implement	Review is complete. Process is formalised and provides equity of access for students who have disrupted or disadvantaged educational backgrounds
T16b_08	Student success	Multiple	Student support services	Redevelopment of support service structures and programmes; implementation of strategy for Student Transition, Retention and Experience, embedding targeted support in the curriculum and paying particular attention to teaching and learning.	No	2013-14	91.8%	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%	HESA Table 3a data "% who continue or qualify at same HEI" column
T16b_09	Other/Multiple stages	Multiple	Operational targets	Review and implement data capture and monitoring system for more robust datasets and to build understanding and an evidence base for future practice.	No	2014-15	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Data capture and monitoring system is effective and efficient, and relevant for reporting and programme evaluation and design needs
T16b_10	Other/Multiple stages	Other (please give details in Description column)	Operational targets	Increase consultations and engagement with students; promotion of student voice in relation to evaluating and designing widening participation practices. Implement mechanisms for this to happen.	No	2014-15	not available	100	120	150	150	150	Number of RAU students inputting on WP and Access Agreement measures/ programmes

T16b_11	Access	Other (please give details in Description column)	Operational targets	Increase consultations and engagement with external stakeholders (pupils, teachers, schools, parents, community, etc) in relation to evaluating and designing widening participation practices. Implement mechanisms for this to happen.	No	2014-15	not available	6	8	8	8	8	Number of external stakeholder consultation forums for inputting on WP and Access Agreement measures/ programmes
T16b_12	Other/Multiple stages	Other (please give details in Description column)	Management targets	Scope, identify and conduct research to inform practice and contribute to institutional and sector knowledge in the widening participation space	No	2014-15	0	3	3	3	3	3	Number of research projects /studies completed
T16b_13	Other/Multiple stages	Other (please give details in Description column)	Management targets	Embed widening participation across the institution, including framework agreements; activity planning and acquittal mechanisms; and, embedded metrics	No	2014-15	0	8	8	8	8	8	Number of academic Schools and administrative Departments with activity plans and metrics
T16b_14	Other/Multiple stages	Other (please give details in Description column)	Management targets	Ensure effective coordination and management of the widening participation programme at the strategic level. Includes reporting structures to the highest level; effective deployment of funds; monitoring and achievement of targets and milestones; embedding across the institution and across the student lifecycle in a coherent way; and, ensuring human and system capacities are effective and efficient for purpose.	No	2014-15	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	The institution is making "faster progress" towards targets and milestones and the widening participation programme is strategically aligned and contributing to institutional goals and drivers
T16b_15	Access	Attainment raising	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	to raise the GCSE attainment of a targeted group of students in Local Partnership Schools in maths and English by a single grade achieved through the delivery of maths and English revision sessions and student mentoring in study skills.	No	2018-19	GCSE grades for defined cohort	Student cohort grades	Increase GCSE attainment by one grade	Increase GCSE attainment by one grade	Increase GCSE attainment by one grade	Increase GCSE attainment by one grade	To raise the GCSE grades in maths and English of a target cohort of a defined group of local partnership school pupils by one grade through a combination of Easter revision sessions and mentoring.