

Leeds Conservatoire

Access and Participation Headline Report

Academic Year – 2024-2025

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1. Progress Towards Targets

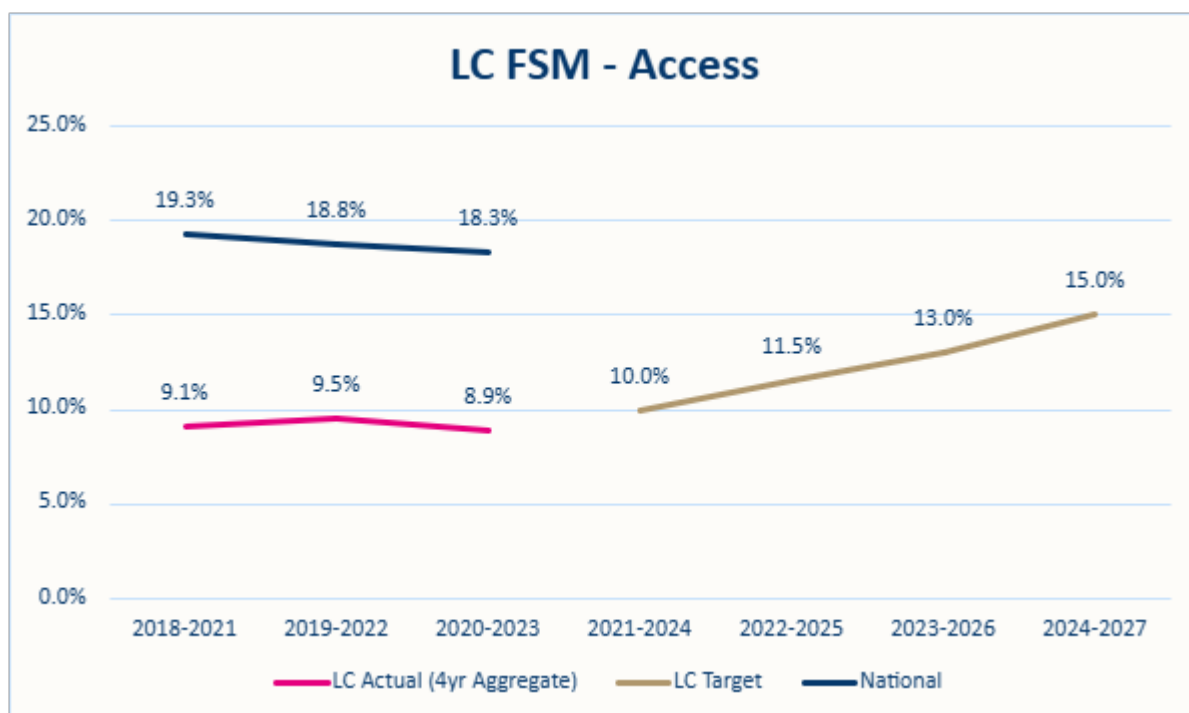
This section examines our progress to date against the targets set in the 25-29 Access and Participation Plan. The targets are based on four-year aggregates of our data to mitigate the volatility of our data sets.

There are three main target groups in our plan:

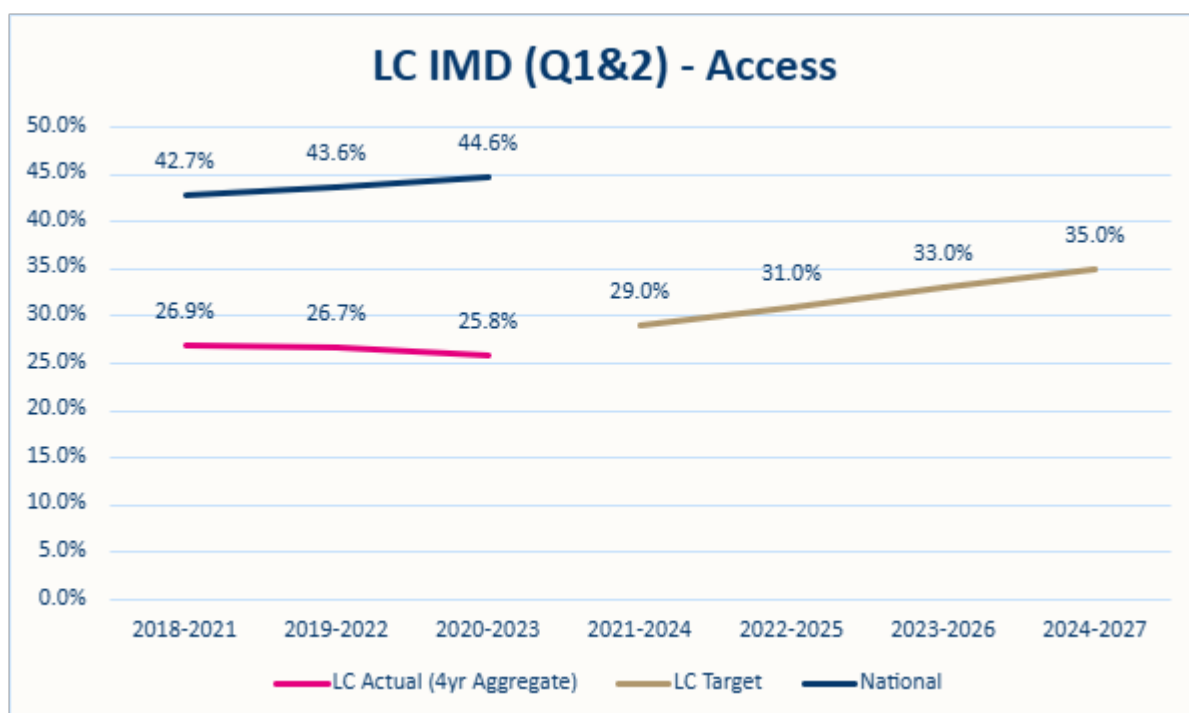
- Students who were eligible for Free School Meals
- Students from the lowest socio-economic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 & 2)
- Students from the Global Majority

Access

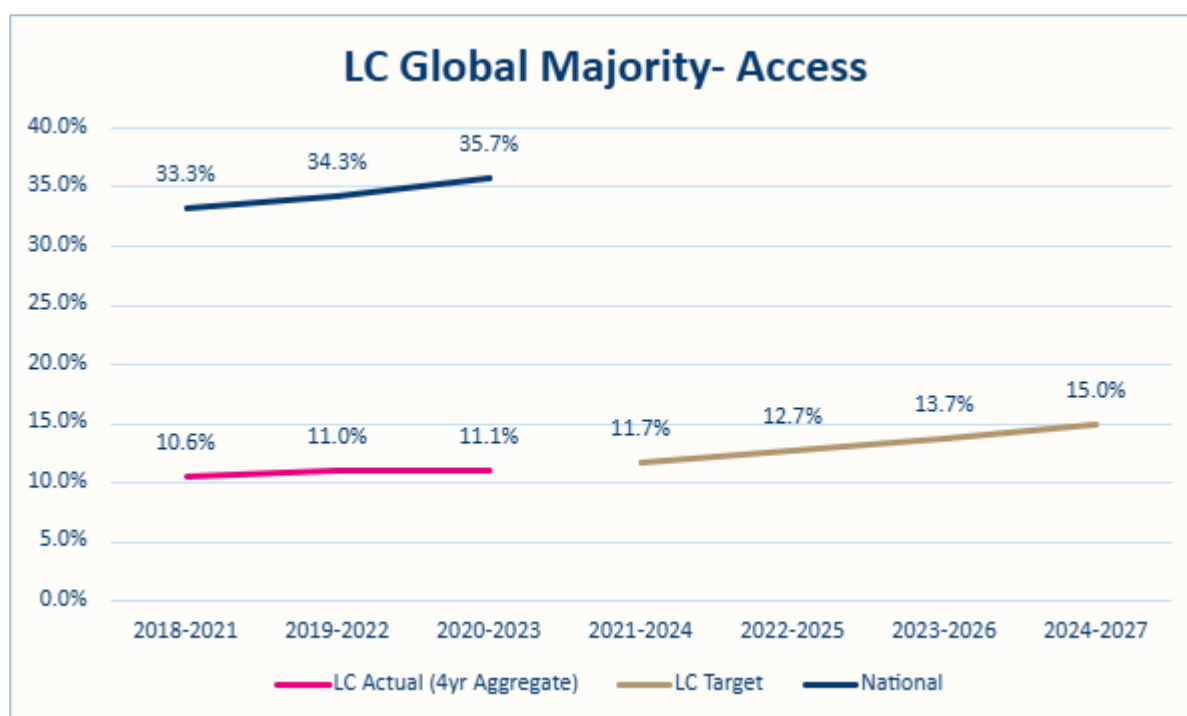
For this report, we have used the OfS Access and Participation Dashboard to assess our progress in the access phase. This is the 23/24 update last checked on 17/12/25. For all access targets, we are looking to increase the proportion of students with the target characteristics.



Looking at access for those previously eligible for free school meals, we have set a target to increase our average up to 15% by 2028. In the most recent data set, we are at 8.9% as an average of the last 4 years of data. This is a 0.6% decrease from our last aggregate and is 1.1% off our milestone target for 21-24.



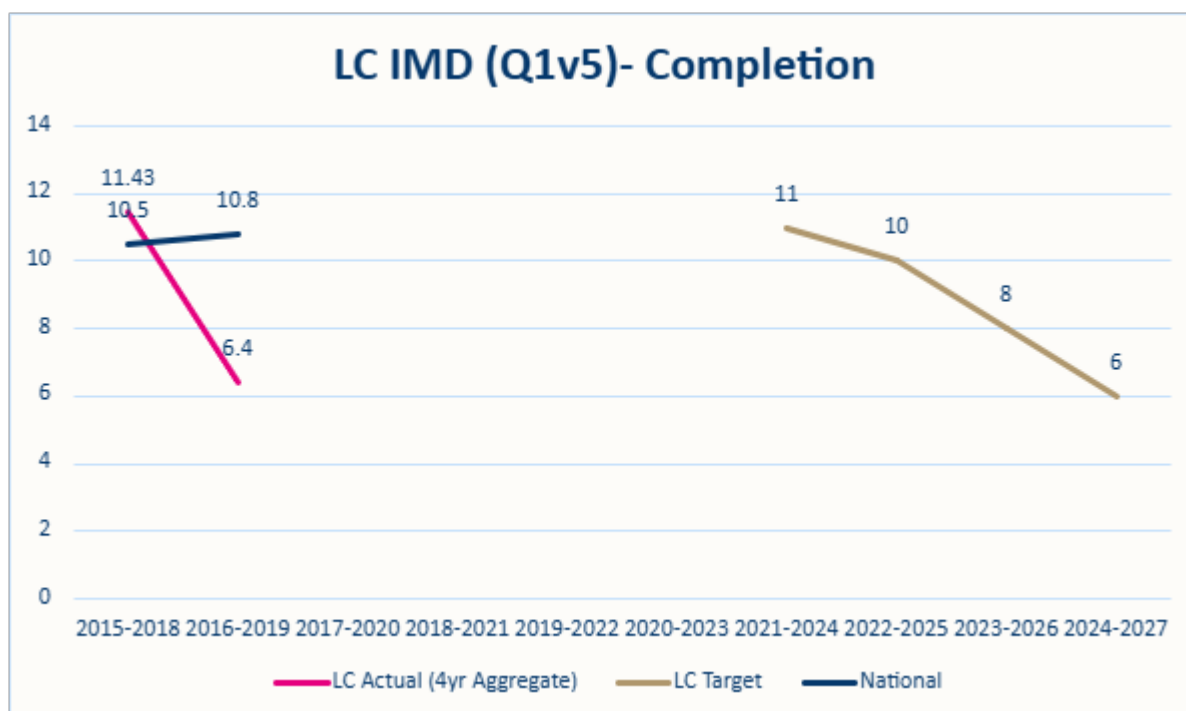
Our target by 2028 is to have an average of 35% of our student body coming from the lowest socio-economic groups. Over the last 3 years of aggregates, we have seen a steady decline in our quintile 1 and 2 students. Our latest figure is 25.8%, a decline of 1.1% from the last year and is 3.2% off our milestone target for 21-24. This could be attributed to the decline in music and drama provision in schools and the knock-on impact of fewer students in secondary and Further education taking these subjects, as well as the impact of the continued cost of living crisis and the value then placed on performing arts study at HE level.



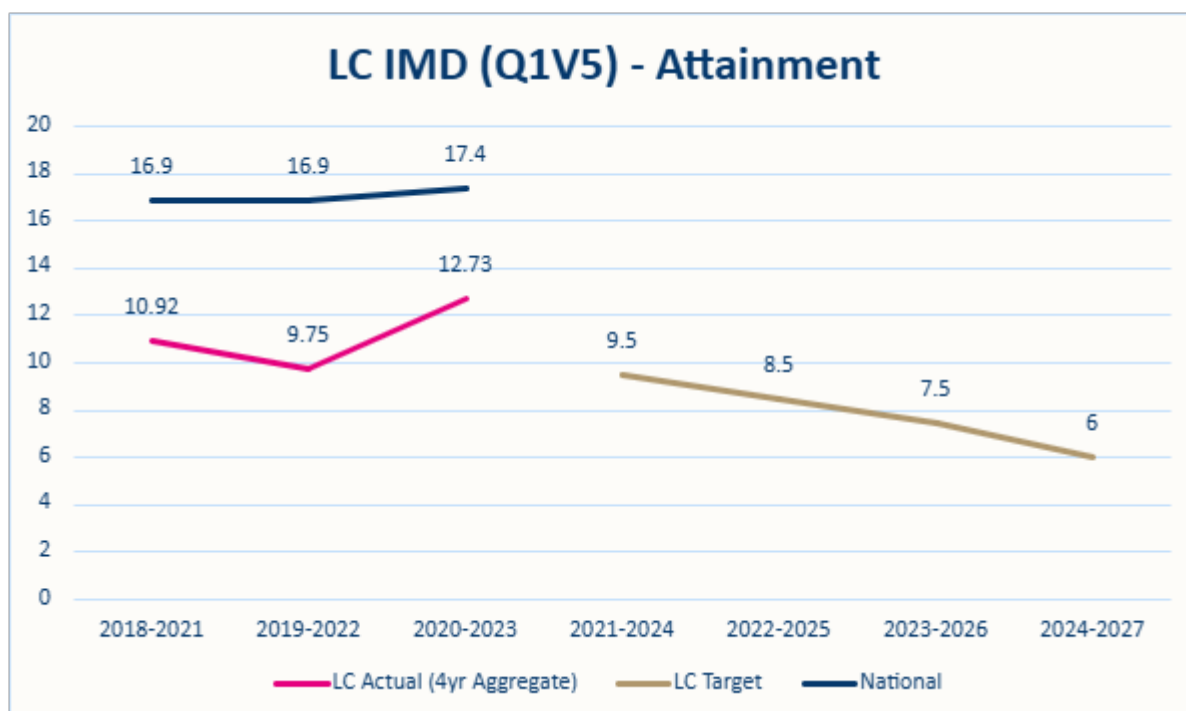
In terms of Global Majority access, we have seen a year-on-year growth towards our 2028 target of 15%. In the latest data, we have seen a slight increase of 0.1% from the previous aggregate and are now just 0.6% off our 21-24 milestone target.

Success

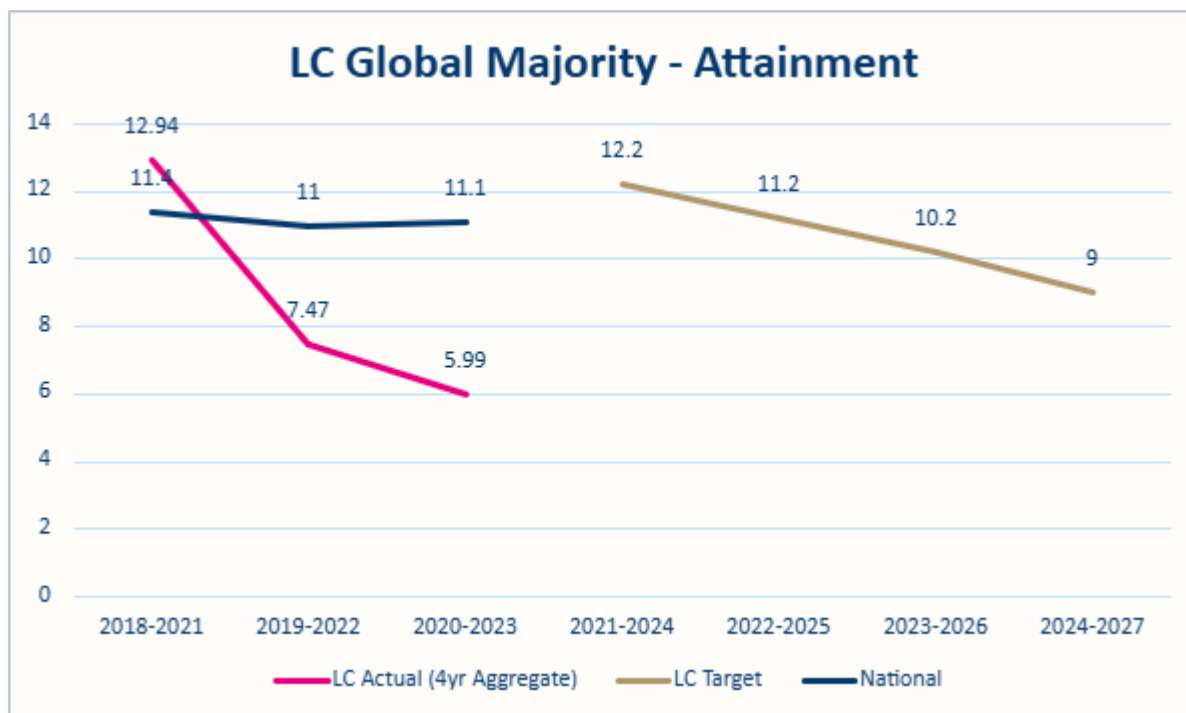
In the success phase, we are using internal data sources to review our progress due to the absence of data available from the OfS public dashboards, which is due to suppression and rounding rules. This is taken from the 23/24 update, last checked on 17/12/25. For all success targets, we are looking to reduce the gap between the target group and the majority group.



We are aiming to reduce the completion gap between those from the lowest and highest quintiles to a 6-percentage point gap by 2028. The latest aggregate we have data for is 2016-2019, and it is at 6.4pp. this is 4.1pp lower than the previous data set and just 0.4pp off our 24-27 target. Due to the lag in completion data, we will continue to monitor this target and if current trajectory continues, we will look to review either our milestones or our inclusion of the target.



We are also aiming to reduce the attainment gap for those from the lowest socio-economic group to 6pp. Our current standing is at 12.73pp, which is an increase from our previous aggregate of 9.75pp. it is also 3.23pp higher than our 21-24 milestone target. Though we are still significantly below the average for UK HE institutions.



In terms of attainment for Global Majority students, we have targeted a 9pp gap by 2024. We have already surpassed this –3.01pp. We currently have an aggregate of 5.99pp attainment gap for Global Majority students, which is also lower than the gap across the sector. We will be monitoring future progress on this target and may pursue a variation request with the OfS to reset our targeting.

2. Evaluation Reports

A. Impact of Financial Support for Students

A triangulated evaluation activity was conducted to assess the impact of the financial support on offer to students at Leeds Conservatoire. The methods consisted of a statistical analysis of student data from the last three years of those who received the Leeds Conservatoire Bursary and those who applied for financial hardship funding, a survey administered to all current bursary recipients with follow up interviews with a smaller cohort of these students, and finally a focus group held with the Leeds Conservatoire Diversity Representatives, to explore potential intersectional gaps and issues.

1,347 unique students were included in the statistical analysis, which was conducted using an adapted model of the OfS toolkit for auditing financial support. This analysis included a mixed-effects model and two variants of regression analysis.

44 students participated in the survey, 7 were interviewed, and 11 participated in the focus group. These tools allowed us to explore the lived impact that finances have on students' ability to succeed in their studies.

An executive summary and full reports of both the quantitative and qualitative evaluations were shared with EDIAPC in Autumn 2025.

B. Monologue Bootcamp

Monologue Bootcamp is our annual drama summer school, delivered in collaboration with Guildhall School of Music and Drama. This programme is delivered with two cohorts, one in Leeds and one in London. The programme is evaluated using pre- and post-activity surveys to examine the learning gains of participants.

36 individuals participated in the programme in summer 2025, and all participants completed the evaluation. Participants particularly noted increased confidence in their skills and the likelihood of succeeding in Higher Education and future performing arts careers, as well as an increased sense of belonging at Leeds Conservatoire.

The full evaluation report was shared with EDIAPC in Autumn 2025

C. Summer Academy

Summer Academy is delivered by Leeds Junior Conservatoire and the Student Recruitment Team. Access and Participation provide funding for scholarships that allow participants who match our Access and Participation criteria to access the programme at no personal cost.

39 individuals participated in Summer Academy 2025, with seven receiving a scholarship to cover either all or part of the cost associated. 37 completed the evaluation.

A full evaluation report was shared with EDIAPC in Autumn 2025.

3. Support for Other Activities

A. Orchestras Live 'New Horizons'

The Access and Participation Team contributed funding to the New Horizons collaborative project led by the Strategic Partnerships team. We provided funding to support activity in two schools for 60 learners as well as funding to train Leeds Conservatoire students from A&P backgrounds to gain

valuable skills as music leaders in education settings. A report on the impact of this project is available from the Strategic Partnerships team.

B. Theatre in Education Tour

Continuing from previous years' collaboration with the School of Drama, the A&P team provided funding to enable the School of Drama to take two of its Autumn productions out to two school settings. This year, a new relationship was established with the Outwood Grange Academy Trust to tour the shows to two of their schools based in areas with higher deprivation. Outwood academies in the regional clusters were invited to bring their students to the host academies, allowing a large number of young people to access performances of texts that are often used in the National Curriculum and in GCSE Curricula.

Feedback from the Director of Drama for Outwood Trust was positive, and they are keen to continue the relationship to develop their drama provision across the trust. We have also worked with the Primary Academies' music lead, and a number of their primary settings are interested in developing relationships with Leeds Junior Conservatoire.