

# Leeds Conservatoire

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## Access and Participation Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

### Introduction and Strategic Aim

Leeds Conservatoire was established in 1965 as Leeds Music Centre, providing a Light Music course with a significant focus on Jazz. We became Leeds College of Music in 1993 and launched the first Jazz degree in Europe, and in 2004, we became the first UK conservatoire to offer Popular Music and Music Production. Our portfolio has continued to broaden ever since, and in 2020 we became Leeds Conservatoire – reflecting our expertise and specialist approach to music and performing arts training.

We are the largest UK conservatoire in terms of student numbers, with approximately 1,400 undergraduates, 50 postgraduates and 100 young people in our Junior Conservatoire (2021/22 figures), and we offer the broadest range of genres of any conservatoire in Europe. Nonetheless, we are small enough to form a close-knit and welcoming community.

Our strategic aims are centred around the themes of Equity, Academic Community and Sustainability. These combine to create an inclusive learning and working environment with support and diversity at its heart; an inventive and artistically challenging curriculum; a huge range of flexible opportunities for students to collaborate and tailor their experience; a community that promotes academic enquiry and artistic experimentation; and a significant contribution to the sustainability of the arts in our region and beyond.

We aim to widen access to conservatoire study and recruit students through audition, interview and portfolio, which ensures that students can be selected based on their potential, not just their prior attainment. We were the first conservatoire in the UK to remove all audition fees to ensure that talented individuals are not prevented from attending an audition due to their financial position, and we refund travel expenses for applicants from access target backgrounds to reduce financial barriers within the application process. In addition, we are a member of Go Higher West Yorkshire, a consortium of 13 higher education providers working together to support local schools and learners in their educational journeys to higher education.

Learning and teaching at the conservatoire is characterised by inspirational training with experts in a wide variety of specialisms, supported by bespoke workshops and masterclasses by world-leading visiting practitioners. Our facilities are industry-standard, our curriculum is designed around industry practice, and students have access to a wealth of professional partners and expert knowledge both within and outside our curriculum.

Our programmes have intensive training at their heart, enabling students to attain an elite level of specialism while celebrating individuality that equips students with the confidence and independence to forge their own path. Synergies with extra-curricular activity broaden, deepen and contextualise the curriculum content and add a diverse range of influences.

We do not prepare our graduates for a specific career path; rather we nurture their independence and support them to find their own path into the creative industries, armed with a range of contemporary skills and experiences, and the energy and confidence to create the industries of the future.

### Risks to Equality of Opportunity

In order to understand where risks to equality of opportunity may be present at Leeds Conservatoire, we have completed an assessment of performance (Annex A), which explores enrolment, continuation, completion, degree outcomes and progression to employment for our students over the last 6 years. We have used the Office for

Students (OfS) Access and Participation dataset as our primary data source, supplemented with internal data and other external datasets and evidence where appropriate. We have considered information and data from our student body. We have considered the data against the OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) and we have identified three key risks. As a small, specialist provider, we have considered which risks are likely to be the most pertinent to our student body and which we can reasonably seek to mitigate and make a positive impact on at an institutional and sector level. Our intervention strategies seek to address the risks we have identified as a priority for us.

## Access

### **1.1.1 Risk 1 – There is a risk that learners from the most disadvantaged backgrounds and learners from the global majority are experiencing inequitable access to pre-entry music and performing arts provision, advice and guidance.**

We have identified three indicators of risk that suggest this risk may be occurring.

#### Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)<sup>1</sup>

The gap between entrants to Leeds Conservatoire from IMD Quintile 1 compared to IMD Quintile 5 initially appears to be growing. Since the academic year 2019-2020, the gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 at Leeds Conservatoire has grown from 8.8 percentage points (pp) to 13.8pp in 2021-2022, an increase of 5pp. In comparison, the sector average gap reduced. Our four-year aggregate gap is 14.10pp. Across a period of 6 years, the conservatoire's gap has been fairly volatile with movements of growth and reduction. Leeds Conservatoire should therefore endeavour to work closely with state schools and colleges to enhance their provision and support students in developing knowledge and skills pre-application in order to access our undergraduate offer. In addition, we recognise that cost pressures are a large factor for this group when considering their career options. We'll endeavour to provide support in the best ways that we can however we may not be able to influence the more systemic financial issues these students may face on our own. We'll endeavour to work collaboratively with our conservatoire peers and with other providers in our region to explore how best to support this group of students.

#### Students Eligible for Free School Meals<sup>2</sup>

The proportion of students who were eligible for free-school meals prior to enrolment at the conservatoire has decreased from 11.8% in 2016-17 to just 7.9% in 2021-22. In comparison the current national population of free-school meal eligible students is 23.8%. Work directly with schools and colleges should focus on FSM students as this is a data set that is commonly used in schools and may make targeting activities easier when engaging.

#### Students from the Global Majority

The conservatoire has a consistently low intake of students from the Global Majority enrolling on our courses, over the last 6 years, with a four-year aggregate of 10.7% (2018-19 – 2021-22). Data for some ethnic groups is suppressed due to the small cohort numbers and therefore granular analysis is not possible. Analysis is therefore grouped into white compared with all other ethnic backgrounds. There is a need for Leeds Conservatoire to work with other similar providers as well as our wider partners to champion the economic and cultural value of the arts for these communities and provide a greater understanding of career prospects for potential applicants. This is a focus of work with our partners at Black Lives in Music and South Asian Arts UK. We will take a whole-lifecycle approach to addressing this area, acknowledging the impact that on-course provision, such as a diverse workforce and an

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the [UK Government website](#) for full details on IMD 2019

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to the [UK Government website](#) for details of the Free School Meals scheme

inclusive curriculum can have on students' sense of belonging and fit at the pre-enrolment (i.e. audition, interview) stage and subsequently their choices of study.

### 1.1.2 Links to the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR)

Along with education sector and industry evidence (see Annex B), our institutional experience and student consultations suggest that these differential enrolment rates may be a result of EORR Risks 1 to 3. These risks may be present in different combinations and to varying extent across for each identified target group, across our recruitment footprint.

- **Risk 1**, access to knowledge and skills, is considered the most likely challenge. We are concerned that target students may not have equal opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills required to access Leeds Conservatoire study. Opportunities to develop the requisite knowledge and skills for university and conservatoire pathways may be limited for target groups due to home, school, or geographical context. Research by Ashton and Ashton (2023) discusses the disparity that exists in the quality and variety of culture and arts opportunities learners get to experience dependent on their enrolment at a state or privately funded education setting – which goes to support findings from Reay (2017) and Whitty (2001) on the varying experiences of learners from lower socioeconomic groups and regions.
- **Risk 2** relates to access to information and guidance about higher education, including higher education choices, study modes, expectations, and access pathways; as well as linked information about careers and employability. Systematic devaluing of the arts in secondary schools, and a lack of understanding about the value of an arts degree and the broader array of opportunities in terms of career and employment outcomes is a concern under this risk which is more likely to affect target groups.
- We consider Risk 2 to be heavily linked to **Risk 3**, which is about perceptions of higher education. Stimulated by generally limited knowledge about the value of studying an arts degree and career outcomes, there are perceptions that a career in the creative industries is the preserve of white middle classes. The Musicians Census (2023) and Arts Council England's (2021) review of the creative industries workforce shows that the industries are still dominated by white artists from affluent backgrounds. As alluded to by Reay (2017) there is a sense among learners from the Global Majority that they must pursue careers that A. enable a typical financially stable lifestyle and B. is a career that can give back to their communities – this is also often linked to achieving what a learner's parents want for them more than what the individual desires for themselves.

## On Course, including Transition

### 1.1.3 Risk 2 – There is a risk that a lack of access to a range of appropriate support, and other capacity issues, may be affecting continuation, completion, and good degree outcomes (achievement of a First or 2:1) for students from various backgrounds targeted by the equality of opportunity risk register.

In Annex A, we have provided analysis across continuation, completion, attainment and progression over the last 6 years, focusing on differential outcomes for students with particular characteristics. Across this analysis, data is particularly challenging due to the size of our cohorts, which lead to low statistical certainty and confidence and fluctuations in year-on-year data, swinging from 'good' to 'poor' performance over time. We have supplemented our assessment with observations on broader sector performance and, of more relevance, with other smaller and specialist providers in the creative arts area. We have determined the following indicators of risk as priorities for Leeds Conservatoire at this time, although we commit to closely monitoring and supporting outcomes for all target students.

## Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

There are gaps in completion and attainment rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged) compared to IMD Quintile 5.

- **Completion:** while data is small there is a persistent gap, with a 4-year (2014-15 to 2017-18) aggregate gap of 12.1 percentage points. This appears to have widened in the latest years of data.
- **Attainment:** again, while data is small there is a persistent gap with a 4-year (2018-19 to 2021-22) aggregate gap of 10.9 percentage points.

## Students from the Global Majority

There is a gap in attainment rates between students from the global majority and white students. While data is extremely small, we are conscious of the national awarding gap, particularly for Black students, which is reflected in our context. The 4-year (2018-19 to 2021-22) aggregate gap is 13.2 percentage points, with attainment rates at 73.5% for students from the global majority, compared to 86.7% for white students.

### 1.1.4 Links to the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register

Along with education sector and industry evidence (see Annex B), our institutional experience and student consultations suggest that these differential student outcomes may be a result of EORR Risks 6 to 11. These risks may be present in different combinations and to varying extent for each identified target group.

- **Risk 10** – Cost Pressures is considered the highest priority risk for our staff and students. The impact of the cost-of-living crisis is being felt acutely, with students on intensive study and training programmes at creative and arts-based providers being disproportionately affected due to limited availability for part-time work. This risk affects all students in some capacity, and the wider-spread impact is being experienced by all.
- We are particularly concerned about **Risk 8**, Mental Health, which was highlighted by students as a key issue. We already attract a significant proportion of students declaring a disability, and many do so due to a mental health condition. More broadly, the on-flow impact of Risk 10 cost pressures is more likely to affect student mental health and well-being.
- **Risk 7**, Insufficient Personal Support is also considered a risk in our context, particularly with increasing pressures on students regarding costs, mental health and wellbeing; and the institutional capacity and flexibility for support as student needs change.

The Ongoing Impact of Coronavirus (Risk 9) and Insufficient Academic Support (Risk 6) particularly are felt to be of lower influence. For example, due to our smaller class sizes, our students are able to build excellent relationships with tutors and most also receive 1-1 tuition in their specialist area, making it easier to meet students where they are and support their success.

## Other Challenges

### Small Datasets

When deciding which risk areas to concentrate on in this APP, we took into account our status as a small provider and our specialisation in music and drama. Given our smaller size, the data we utilised comes from a small cohort, limiting our capacity for comprehensive data analysis and statistical significance. This constraint also impacts our ability to make accurate assessments and interpretations, particularly when examining disaggregated data and intersections of various characteristics. Nevertheless, we have conducted evaluations and provided insights where we deemed it meaningful.

## Systemic Challenges Impacting Equality of Opportunity

We recognise systemic challenges in arts education and the creative industries we are connected to, which pose risks to equal opportunities. We observe the ongoing de-prioritisation and under-valuing of creative arts in secondary school curricula. This limits access to and engagement with arts subjects, negatively impacting education and career choices in our specialised fields. Although the National Plan for Music Education 2023 aims to address some of this historic de-prioritisation, it will require commitment and resource allocation from senior school leaders.

In industry, we face equality of opportunity risks due to the under-representation of women and individuals from Black, Asian, Mixed, and Global Majority groups. These risks pose challenges for our target demographics.

Finally, the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic will persist throughout the lifetime of this Plan. Risks to equal opportunity in accessing higher education, succeeding within it, and progressing to favourable graduate outcomes—disproportionately affecting underrepresented and disadvantaged students—are not yet fully realised or understood. Leeds Conservatoire will remain vigilant in monitoring this context, closely examining our data to address any emerging performance gaps. We will ensure our student support is effective and responsive to evolving needs. Understanding the experiences of students at Leeds Conservatoire will be facilitated through our evaluation and research, as outlined in our Evaluation Strategy and supported in our collaborative efforts through our SEER membership.

## Objectives

From the assessment of performance (Annex A) and consideration of Risks (above, and Annex B), we have identified the following objectives that are our priorities under this Plan:

Target Reference (Annex C, Table 5d)	Objectives	Intervention Strategy
PTA_1	To support access and pathways into higher education and to Leeds Conservatoire for students who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) during compulsory education, achieving 18% FSM enrolments by 2031-32.	IS1, IS2
PTA_2	To support access and pathways into higher education and to Leeds Conservatoire for students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 & 2), achieving 38% IMD Q1&2 enrolments by 2031-32.	IS1, IS2
PTA_3	To support access and pathways into higher education and to Leeds Conservatoire for students from Global Majority backgrounds (Black, Asian, Mixed and Other Ethnicities), achieving 18% Global Majority enrolments by 2031-32.	IS1, IS2
PTS_1 PTS_3	To improve on-course outcomes for students from low socio-economic (IMD Quintile 1) backgrounds, closing the gap in completion and attainment	IS2, IS3

	outcomes for these students compared to their least disadvantaged counterparts (IMD Quintile 5), achieving gaps no greater than 4 percentage points for completion and 4 percentage points for attainment, by 2031-32.	
<b>PTS_2</b>	To improve degree outcomes for students from Global Majority backgrounds, closing the gap in attainment outcomes for these students compared to their white counterparts, achieving a gap no greater than 5 percentage points by 2031-32.	IS2, IS3

*Table 1: Targets*

## Intervention Strategies

We have developed strategies to address risks to equality of opportunity and achieve our objectives. These strategies:

- Outline activities to mitigate risks and meet objectives and targets.
- Identify who will design, deliver, and evaluate the activities, along with an estimated cost.
- Include an evaluation plan.
- Are based on evidence from sector best practices and local insights from students.

We are dedicated to sharing the evaluation findings. Publication plans are indicative and will expand as dissemination opportunities arise. Relevant evaluation outcomes will also inform and drive ongoing practice improvements.

### Intervention Strategy 1 - Sustained, Targeted Outreach, including Partnerships to Raise Attainment

The activities in this strategy are set under a coherent framework called Leeds Conservatoire Futures. This framework includes activities which provide a range of experiences for both learners and their teachers, both on our campus and in their own setting. A full insight into our provision is available [on our website](#) and in the activity map in figure 1 below.

#### Objectives and Targets

To support access and pathways into higher education and to Leeds Conservatoire for students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 & 2, Free School Meals); and, from the Global Majority, achieving 38% of enrolments from IMD Quintiles 1&2 students, and 18% of enrolments from students from the Global Majority, and from students eligible for FSM, by 2031-32.

**Targets:** PTA\_1, PTA\_2, PTA\_3 – Annex C, Table 5d.

#### Risks to Equality of Opportunity

Knowledge and Skills; Information and Guidance; Perceptions of Higher Education (at Conservatoire); Cost Pressures.

## Evaluation

Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. The strategy will commence from September 2025, with publication and sharing of findings as per the publication plan below (Table 2).

## Publication Plan

Format of Findings	When findings will be shared
<p>We will produce an annual summary progress and review report, which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities in this Strategy based on the achievement of intended outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Capture learning and insights that inform practice improvements and any appropriate changes and developments.</li> <li>▪ Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website / SEER website.</li> </ul>	<p>Progress ‘highlights’ will be shared annually</p>
<p>We will produce an ‘Evaluation To Date’ or an ‘End of Project’ Report (whichever is relevant) capturing all evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website and the SEER website, and via channels mentioned below where appropriate.</p>	<p>4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2028) and/or at the conclusion of projects.</p>
<p>We will also contribute at conferences and through workshops and events hosted by networks such as, but not limited to, SEER and Go Higher West Yorkshire.</p>	<p>At a minimum every 2 years, starting from 2025-26.</p>
<p>We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO, GuildHE.</p>	<p>As they arise, anticipated contributions at minimum every 2 years.</p>

*Table 2: IS1 Publication Plan*

Primary

KS3

Zero to Hero  
Y7/8  
Popular Music

KS4

Shakespeare in schools Tour  
Y9/10/11/12/13  
Performing Arts

Live Studio  
Experience Session  
Y9/10  
Music Production

Music Production  
Workshop Day  
Y9/10  
Music Production

Performing Arts  
Workshop Day  
Y9/10  
Performing Arts

Concert and Tour Visits  
Y10/11/12/13  
Music

Music Performance  
School Workshop Day  
Y12+  
Performing Arts

Monologue Bootcamp  
Y12+  
Performing Arts

Summer Academy  
Y12  
Music Performance and Production

KS5

Workshops in your school  
Y9/10/11/12/13  
All Pathways

Online Resources Hub

Teacher CPD Workshop

Leeds Junior Conservatoire

Figure 1: Leeds Conservatoire Futures Activity Map

## Intervention Strategy 1

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
<p><a href="#">Schools and Colleges Partnership Scheme</a> – a free, 3-year partner scheme providing dedicated access and curriculum support to schools and colleges.</p> <p>We are able to partner with 15 schools nationally with a two-thirds approach to prioritising schools with higher proportions of our Access target groups though our workshops and other activities are open to all schools and FE Providers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access and Participation Manager</li> <li>▪ Schools and Colleges Liaison Manager</li> <li>▪ Outreach and Recruitment Assistant</li> <li>▪ Go Higher West Yorkshire Outreach Officer</li> <li>▪ LIC Co-ordinator</li> <li>▪ Student Ambassadors</li> <li>▪ Academic Staff</li> <li>▪ Administration and Resource</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Effective (targeted, positive, structural, sustainable) relationships and partnerships.</li> <li>▪ Identification of mutual goals and expectations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collaboration to design and agree the details, content and delivery processes/ schedules of Activities 2 and 3, below.</li> <li>▪ Identification and uptake of opportunities to further develop and improve collaborative practice to achieve the objectives.</li> <li>▪ Deepening understanding and insights of the challenges, barriers and what works for target groups, to improve practice.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils at partner schools and colleges with target characteristics. (T1)</li> <li>▪ Output analysis: the number of schools /colleges in a relationship. (T1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact Evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surveys and focus groups or interviews with partners to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Understand the effectiveness of the relationship and whether agreed goals/expectations were met. (T1, T2)</li> <li>▪ Identify further opportunities. (T2)</li> <li>▪ Draw out deeper understanding about challenges and what works. (T1, T2)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Surveys include a baseline survey and thereafter surveys each academic year to measure changes and development of the partnerships. Comparative analysis of data over the surveys will determine how the activity has met the intended outcomes over time. (T2)</li> <li>▪ Up to 5 semi-structured interviews or focus groups will be held every two years (from 2026-27) to explore key themes. (T1, T2)</li> <li>▪ Development of 2-3 school/college partner case studies. (T1, T2)</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Leeds Junior Conservatoire</a> – our Pre-HE provision offering music tuition for 8-18 year olds</p> <p><a href="#">Workshops on our campus and in host</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Head of LIC</li> <li>▪ LIC Co-ordinator</li> <li>▪ Student Ambassadors</li> <li>▪ Academic Staff</li> <li>▪ Administration and Resource</li> <li>▪ Schools and Colleges Liaison Manager</li> <li>▪ Outreach and Recruitment Assistant</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Improved motivation and engagement in music learning.</li> <li>▪ Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence.</li> <li>▪ Improved sense of belonging in HE /pathways to HE.</li> <li>▪ Increased knowledge and awareness of HE.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data analysis: Number and % of pupils attending activities with target characteristics (T1).</li> <li>▪ Output analysis: the number of activities delivered (T1).</li> <li>▪ Output analysis: the number of practitioners part of the Network (T1).</li> <li>▪ Output analysis: the number of events delivered for the Network(T1).</li> <li>▪ Annual end-of-year Teacher/Staff/practitioner Survey exploring whether content was appropriately aligned to School curriculum LOS (Music and Drama) and Gatsby Benchmarks (T1).</li> <li>▪ Post-activity polls gathering stakeholder (practitioner and students) experiences and perceptions (T2).</li> </ul>

<p><a href="#">setting</a> – a variety of practical, curriculum-linked workshops</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Go Higher West Yorkshire Outreach Officer</li> <li>■ Student Ambassadors</li> <li>■ Academic Staff</li> <li>■ Administration and Resource</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increased knowledge of HE pathways and the HE application process.</li> <li>■ Increased knowledge of financial support and student loans.</li> <li>■ Improved confidence and preparation for HE selection processes.</li> <li>■ <b>(Practitioners)</b> Improved confidence and knowledge in Music and Drama HE pathways.</li> <li>■ <b>(Practitioners)</b> Improved support and development through the network.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Impact Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Baseline and annual student survey exploring interim outcomes and perceptions of improved creative skills outcome (T2).</li> <li>■ Annual end-of-year Teacher/Staff/ Practitioner Survey exploring: (a) perceptions of achievement of interim outcomes for students; and (b) interim outcomes for practitioners (T2).</li> <li>■ 2-3 student focus groups per annum from 2025-26, to explore themes from surveys (T2).</li> <li>■ Data Analysis: analysis of predicted grades and/or mock assessments (T2).</li> <li>■ TBC: Subject to availability of school data and timing, could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Analysis of mock v. predicted exam results.</li> <li>○ Analysis of pre/post mock assessment results</li> <li>○ <i>Tracking participant results / predicted results across year groups.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>■ (Y12-13 cohorts) Data Analysis: Number and % of participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Applying to HE</li> <li>○ Receiving offers from HE providers</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>At present, we do not have a mechanism for tracking student enrolments into HE, particularly due to the associated costs. We will explore this collaboratively with our SEER partners in 2024-25.</p>
<p><a href="#">Monologue Bootcamp</a>, collaborative summer course with Guildhall School of Music &amp; Drama – an intense 3-day course for drama audition preparation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Access and Participation Manager</li> <li>■ Student Ambassadors</li> <li>■ Academic Staff</li> <li>■ Administration and Resource</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Longer-term Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Sustained engagement in music education</li> <li>■ Improved grades in music education</li> <li>■ Improved creative skills.</li> <li>■ Applications to HE.</li> <li>■ Offers from HE providers.</li> <li>■ Enrolments in HE.</li> </ul>	
<p><a href="#">Summer Music Academy</a> – an intense, weeklong residential summer school for music applicants providing a UCAS point reduction on successful completion, we also offer bursaries to target students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Head of LIC</li> <li>■ Access and Participation Manager</li> <li>■ Schools and Colleges Liaison Manager</li> <li>■ Outreach and Recruitment Assistant</li> <li>■ Go Higher West Yorkshire Outreach Officer</li> <li>■ LIC Co-ordinator</li> <li>■ Student Ambassadors</li> <li>■ Academic Staff</li> <li>■ Administration and Resource</li> </ul>		
<p><a href="#">Shakespeare in Schools Tour</a> – an abridged adaptation of a Shakespearean text linked to the curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Access and Participation Manager</li> <li>■ Schools and Colleges Liaison Manager</li> <li>■ Outreach and Recruitment Assistant</li> <li>■ Go Higher West Yorkshire Outreach Officer</li> <li>■ LIC Co-ordinator</li> <li>■ Student Ambassadors</li> </ul>		

<p>alongside acting and career workshops</p> <p><a href="#">Teacher CPD Events</a> and Ad Hoc support – Continuing Professional Development for teachers including sharing best practice in teaching music and drama, what LC can support schools with and developing new or updating school facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Academic Staff Administration and Resource</li> <li>▪ Access and Participation Manager Schools and Colleges Liaison Manager Outreach and Recruitment Assistant</li> <li>▪ Go Higher West Yorkshire Outreach Officer Student Ambassadors Academic Staff Administration and Resource</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved awareness of linkages between self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence and progression to HE.</li> <li>▪ Increased knowledge of HE pathways and the HE application process.</li> <li>▪ Increased knowledge of financial support and student loans.</li> <li>▪ Improved confidence and preparation for HE selection processes.</li> <li>▪ Improved confidence and knowledge in Music and Drama HE pathways.</li> <li>▪ Improved support and development through the network.</li> </ul> <p><b>Longer-term Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved engagement with LC</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils at partner schools and colleges with target characteristics (T1).</li> <li>▪ Output analysis: the number of schools /colleges and third parties in a relationship. (T1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surveys and focus groups or interviews with partners to: Understand the effectiveness of the relationship and whether agreed goals/expectations were met. (T1, T2)</li> <li>▪ Identify further opportunities. (T2)</li> <li>▪ Draw out deeper understanding about challenges and what works. (T1, T2)</li> <li>▪ Surveys include a baseline survey and thereafter surveys each academic year to measure changes and development of the partnerships. Comparative analysis of data over the surveys will determine how the activity has met the intended outcomes over time. (T2)</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Online teaching resource hub</a> – asynchronous online repository of conservatoire standard teaching resources linked to GCSE and A Level curricula</p> <p>Zero to Hero – an intense programme delivered in schools and on campus with students in Years 7 – 8. Raising attainment through musicianship skills, through supporting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Schools and Colleges Liaison Manager Student Ambassadors Academic Staff Administration and Resource</li> <li>▪ Head of LJC LIC Co-ordinator Academic Staff Administration and Resource</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Improved motivation and engagement in learning.</li> <li>▪ Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence.</li> <li>▪ Improved awareness of HE / pathways to HE.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved predicted / mock assessment grades.</li> <li>▪ Improved creative skills.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data analysis: Number and % of pupils attending activities with target characteristics (T1).</li> <li>▪ Output analysis: the number of activities delivered per school/college. (T1)</li> <li>▪ Annual end-of-year Teacher/Staff Survey exploring whether content was appropriately aligned to (a) School curriculum LOs; and (b) Relevant Gatsby Benchmarks. (T1)</li> </ul>

<p>awareness of pathways of music.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement of Arts Award certification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post-activity polls gathering stakeholder experience and perceptions (students and staff). (T2)</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact Evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baseline and annual student survey exploring interim outcomes and perceptions of improved creative skills outcome. (T2)</li> <li>Annual end-of-year Teacher/Staff Survey exploring perceptions of achievement of interim outcomes for students. (T2)</li> <li>2-3 student focus groups per annum from 2025-26, to explore key themes from surveys. (T2)</li> </ul>
<p><u>LJC bursaries</u> – Financial support to cover costs for attending Leeds Junior conservatoire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of LJC</li> <li>LJC Co-ordinator</li> <li>Administration and Resource</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target students can attend LJC events.</li> <li>Reduced financial pressures/ anxiety.</li> </ul> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased engagement from target groups.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Analysis: Number and % of people claiming travel fund moneys and bursaries (T1), analysed by student characteristics (where possible).</li> <li>Output Analysis: Total spend on travel, including by student characteristics. (T1)</li> <li>Poll / short survey gathering travel fund recipient’s experience and perceptions on the process/allocation. (T2)</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact Evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Analysis: engagement by travel fund recipients, by student characteristics.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Audition and Offer Holder travel refunds</u> – reimbursement for travel to an audition or offer holder day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fees and Funding Manager</li> <li>Administration and Resource</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target students can attend on-campus open day and interview events.</li> <li>Reduced financial pressures/ anxiety.</li> </ul> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased enrolments from target groups.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Analysis: Number and % of people claiming travel fund moneys and bursaries (T1), analysed by student characteristics (where possible).</li> <li>Output Analysis: Total spend on travel, including by student characteristics. (T1)</li> <li>Poll / short survey gathering travel fund recipient’s experience and perceptions on the process/allocation. (T2)</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact Evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Analysis: enrolments by travel fund recipients, by student characteristics.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cross Intervention Strategy: IS2, IS3</b></p>			

Table 3: *Intervention Strategy*

## Total Cost of Activities

Annually our investment for IS1 will be shared between our schools liaison team and Junior Conservatoire. This does not cover the entire cost of all activity however, as we recognise a significant portion of this financial investment is part of our regular activities. Over the four-year cycle, we will invest approximately £821,000 in these intervention activities.

## Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, plus a range of other research and best practice references. Empirical research of the impact of active engagement with music and drama (as well as creative subjects more broadly) on school- and pre-university level students (14-19-year-olds) has revealed positive effects on the students' language development, literacy, numeracy, measures of intelligence, general attainment, creativity, motor-coordination, spatial orientation, concentration, confidence, social skills, teamwork, self-discipline, and mental health (e.g., Hallam, 2010; Hampshire & Matthijsse, 2010). Most of those positive effects have been reported specifically for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds (Youth Music, 2011). Yet, opportunities for young people to study creative subjects, including music, at school have been diminishing over the past decade, primarily due to policy and funding changes in compulsory education (Ashton and Ashton, 2023); Broadhead, 2022). Lack of opportunities to engage with and learn about/in creative subjects, including music, is a highly likely contributing factor to the persistent outcomes gap between disadvantaged young people and their more advantaged peers (EPI, 2020).

Evidence suggests that linking current academic studies with an individual's future ambitions can increase student motivation and engagement with academic work (EEF, 2016; Midgley et al., 2000). The importance of effective careers education, information advice and guidance (CEIAG) We also draw on the evidence that teaching young people academic skills such as metacognition, and self-regulation can improve their attainment outcomes by encouraging them to self-reflect on how they learn best (Hattie, Biggs, Purdie 1996; Mannion & Mercer, 2016; EEF, 2021). Use of ambassadors is also found to be effective (Austin & Hatt, 2005). Our literature review also highlights that providing careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) helps students make more informed decisions (TASO, 2023) and provides students with guidance that may not otherwise have been available to them (Thomas and Quinn, 2007). This is even more the case for specialist subjects such as creative arts (PEC, 2020) Within this, we seek to personalise support where possible (UCAS, 2021). See Annex B for further information.

## Intervention Strategy 2 - Role Model Coaching

### Objectives and Targets

To improve on-course outcomes for students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintile 1) and students from the Global Majority, achieving a gap in attainment and completion outcomes of no larger than 4 percentage points for IMD Quintile 1 (compared to IMD Quintile 5); and, a gap in attainment outcomes of no larger than 5 percentage points for Students from the Global Majority (compared to white students), by 2031-32.

**Targets:** PTS\_1, PTS\_2, PTS\_3 – Annex C, Table 5d.

### Risks to Equality of Opportunity

Insufficient Personal Support; Insufficient Academic Support; Information and Guidance; Mental Health; Capacity Issues.

## Evaluation

Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. The strategy will commence from September 2025, with publication and sharing of findings as per the Intervention Strategy below (Table 4).

## Publication Plan

Format of Findings	When findings will be shared
<p>We will produce an annual summary progress and review report, which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities in this Strategy based on the achievement of intended outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Capture learning and insights that inform practice improvements and any appropriate changes and developments.</li> <li>▪ Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website / SEER website.</li> </ul>	Progress 'highlights' will be shared annually
We will produce an 'Evaluation To Date' or an 'End of Project' Report (whichever is relevant) capturing all evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website and the SEER website, and via channels mentioned below where appropriate.	4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2028) and/or at the conclusion of projects.
We will also contribute at conferences and through workshops and events hosted by networks such as, but not limited to, SEER and Go Higher West Yorkshire.	At a minimum every 2 years, starting from 2025-26.
We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO, GuildHE.	As they arise, anticipated contributions at minimum every 2 years.

*Table 4: IS2 Publication Plan*

## Intervention Strategy 2

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
<p><b>Role Model Coaching Scheme</b>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 6 x 30-minute coaching sessions with a staff or alumni coach with a shared background characteristic</li> <li>■ Coaches are supported through the use of tools to set targets, plan actions and reflect on progress</li> <li>■ SMARTER Target setting and Solution-Focused Coaching methodologies form part of the coaching meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Staff or Alumni Coaches</li> <li>■ Coaching Framework</li> <li>■ Administration and Resources</li> <li>■ Access and Participation Wellbeing Advisor</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes.</li> <li>■ Improved motivation and engagement in learning.</li> <li>■ Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities, confidence and belonging.</li> <li>■ Improved module/assessment grades.</li> <li>■ Improved mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>■ <b>(Coaches)</b> Improved understanding of student experiences and challenges affecting student outcomes; and strategies for effective support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Longer-term Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improved continuation rates for target students.</li> <li>■ Improved completion and attainment rates for target students.</li> <li>■ <b>(Coaches)</b> Improved confidence and career development.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils engaging with coaching and % with target characteristics (T1).</li> <li>■ Output analysis: Number of sessions run (T1).</li> <li>■ Data analysis: Analysis of referrals vs. self-sign, by student characteristics (T1).</li> <li>■ Some post-coaching polls gathering student experience /perceptions (T2).</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Baseline and annual student survey exploring perceptions and confidence in respect of outcomes (T2).</li> <li>■ 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore key themes from polls and surveys (T2).</li> <li>■ Annual end-of-year Staff Survey exploring confidence in providing coaching and perceptions on impact for students (coaches) (T2).</li> <li>■ Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups (T2).</li> <li>■ Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree outcome) by target students (T2).</li> </ul> <p><b>if possible:</b> Comparative analysis of outcomes (continuation, completion, attainment) between students who have engaged with coaching and those who have not (T2&amp;T3).</p>
<p><b>Cross Intervention Strategy: IS1, IS3</b></p>			

Table 5: *Intervention Strategy 2*

## Total Cost of Activities

The cost per head for this activity is roughly £150 however, the intervention only costs if a student takes up the coaching offer. Using the current numbers of access and participation students in Years 0 and 1, the investment in this activity is budgeted to be approximately £40,000 over four years accounting for growth of target student numbers. This intervention is exclusive to access and participation target students.

## Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, plus a range of other research and best practice references.

The coaching programme utilises the PRACTICE Model (Palmer, 2008) method of coaching which is solutions-focused rather than dwelling on a coachee's challenges. Our programme also borrows elements of high-performance coaching (Mind Tools 2018) and Growth Mindset (Dweck, 2017).

Our coaches are all staff or alumni who share at least one characteristic with their coachee. This means they have some shared, lived experiences to bring to their role which will help the coachee to engage with the programme and provide a positive role model (Behavioural Insights Team, 2018) to aid their progress.

Coachees will set targets and create an action plan using the SMARTER target-setting method (Leader Syndrome, 2015) to further embed the value of evaluating and reflecting on progress. A full rationale and evidence base are available in Annex B, section 9.2.2.

## Intervention Strategy 3 – Wrap-around Student Support

Intervention Strategy 3 is a holistic package of support on offer to students at Leeds Conservatoire. It encompasses activity across academic support, wellbeing, disability and student experience, as well as employability, enterprise and progression. Our academic support is characterised by our commitment to Learning Enhancement through technology, digital accessibility and inclusivity. Our in-house Learning Technology team develop our systems and platforms in order to best enhance our students' digital capabilities, which we believe is key to reducing the awarding gap. Supported by more traditional skills for learning support for academic practice and assignments, with particular focus on the needs of creatives.

We offer a comprehensive and innovative Student Support service, comprising a number of teams working in parallel to provide students with a robust package of support. We were the first UK higher education provider to introduce in-house occupational therapy which allows us to bridge the gap between disability support, wellbeing and mental health counselling and our academic programmes.

In terms of progression, we provide our students with experiences and services that are tailored for those wishing to pursue careers or further study in the creative industries. Ranging from practical activities like headshots and showreels, through to more traditional support such as CV and funding bid writing workshops.

## Objectives and Targets

To improve on-course outcomes for students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintile 1) and students from the Global Majority, achieving a gap in attainment and completion outcomes of no larger than 4 percentage points for IMD Quintile 1 (compared to IMD Quintile 5); and, a gap in attainment outcomes of no larger than 5 percentage points for Students from the Global Majority (compared to white students), by 2031-32.

**Targets:** PTS\_1, PTS\_2, PTS\_3 – Annex C, Table 5d.

## Risks to Equality of Opportunity

Insufficient Personal Support Mental Health; Capacity Issues; Cost Pressures.

## Evaluation

Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. We will also consider the strategy as a whole and seek to bring evaluation together to understand how the activities work together. The strategy will commence from September 2025, with publication and sharing of findings as per the Intervention Strategy below (Table 6).

## Publication Plan

Format of Findings	When findings will be shared
<p>We will produce an annual summary progress and review report, which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities in this Strategy based on the achievement of intended outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Capture learning and insights that inform practice improvements and any appropriate changes and developments.</li> <li>▪ Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website / SEER website.</li> </ul>	Progress 'highlights' will be shared annually
We will produce an 'Evaluation To Date' or an 'End of Project' Report (whichever is relevant) capturing all evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website and the SEER website, and via channels mentioned below where appropriate.	4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2028) and/or at the conclusion of projects.
We will also contribute at conferences and through workshops and events hosted by networks such as, but not limited to, SEER and Go Higher West Yorkshire.	At a minimum every 2 years, starting from 2025-26.
We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO, GuildHE.	As they arise, anticipated contributions at minimum every 2 years.

*Table 6: IS3 Publication Plan*

### Intervention Strategy 3

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
<p><u><a href="#">Disability Support Service</a></u></p> <p>Providing support for applicants and students who declare disabilities to the conservatoire, ensuring adjustments are made and advice given in line with the protected characteristic of ‘disability’ in the Equality Act 2010, alongside promoting inclusive teaching &amp; assessment practice with academic staff. Diagnostic screening is available for students who have had no earlier intervention and identify the need for assessment or require evidence for DSA applications. This service also provides mentoring support to our students who have our service allocated to them.</p> <p><b>Support to Study</b> – Support package offered to ensure students with additional learning needs are fit to study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Head of Student Support and Wellbeing</li> <li>▪ Disability Support Manager</li> <li>▪ Disability Support Advisor</li> <li>▪ Disability Mentors x2</li> <li>▪ Diagnostic funding for students who are screened and show signs of Dyslexia, Dyspraxia or traits of ADHD</li> <li>▪ Administration and Resources</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased applications for DSA</li> <li>▪ Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to ability to obtain DSA support.</li> <li>▪ Student needs are supported.</li> </ul> <p><b>Longer-term Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence.</li> <li>▪ Students are personally and appropriately supported with study.</li> <li>▪ Improved module / assessment grades.</li> <li>▪ Improved continuation, completion, and attainment rates for disabled students.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils engaging with service and % with target characteristics (T1).</li> <li>▪ Output analysis: Number of sessions run (T1).</li> <li>▪ Data analysis: Analysis of DSA applications, by student characteristics (T1).</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baseline and annual student survey exploring student mental and emotional wellbeing (T2).</li> <li>▪ 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore key themes from polls and surveys (T2).</li> <li>▪ Annual end-of-year Staff Survey exploring confidence in providing coaching and perceptions on impact for students (coaches) (T2).</li> <li>▪ Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups (T2).</li> <li>▪ Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree outcome) by target students (T2).</li> </ul>

<p><a href="#">Health and Wellbeing Service</a></p> <p>The Health Wellbeing Team offer support with any practical, emotional, or mental health-related issues that are affecting a student's life at the Conservatoire. The support is personal and client-centred. Our dedicated Access &amp; Participation Wellbeing Adviser offers specifically tailored support for students from identified A&amp;P groups, as well as specialist Performers' Wellbeing support. This service also runs a Neurodivergent network for students.</p> <p>In addition, Occupational therapy has become an important bridge between wellbeing and disability support offered to students at Leeds Conservatoire. The OT service helps to enhance the traditional student support mechanisms employed, whilst assisting in the promotion of students' functional independence, increased participation, recruitment and retention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Head of Student Support and Wellbeing</li> <li>▪ Wellbeing Manager</li> <li>▪ Wellbeing Advisors, including Access and Participation Wellbeing Advisor</li> <li>▪ Alexander Technique Tutor</li> <li>▪ Student Counsellor x2</li> <li>▪ Physiotherapist</li> <li>▪ Audiologist</li> <li>▪ Administration and Resources</li> <li>▪ Senior Occupational Therapist</li> <li>▪ Occupational therapist</li> <li>▪ Student Occupational Therapist placements</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Improved motivation and engagement in learning.</li> <li>▪ Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence.</li> <li>▪ Improved student emotional and mental well-being.</li> <li>▪ Improved module/assessment grades.</li> </ul> <p><b>Longer-term Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved continuation rates for target students.</li> <li>▪ Improved completion and attainment rates for target students.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils engaging with service and % with target characteristics (T1).</li> <li>▪ Output analysis: Number of sessions run (T1).</li> <li>▪ Data analysis: Analysis of referrals vs. self-sign, by student characteristics (T1).</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baseline and annual student survey exploring perceptions and confidence in respect of outcomes (T2).</li> <li>▪ 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore key themes from polls and surveys (T2).</li> <li>▪ Annual end-of-year Staff Survey exploring confidence in providing support for students and perceptions on impact for students (coaches) (T2).</li> <li>▪ Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups (T2).</li> <li>▪ Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree outcome) by target students (T2).</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Accommodation</a>, <a href="#">Financial Support and Bursaries</a></p> <p>The team provides assistance to help applicants and students; understand how student finance works, receive correct funding entitlement, stay on track with budgeting tips and signpost students in financial difficulties, find the right student accommodation, to navigate potential issues with flatmates and landlords.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Head of Student Support and Wellbeing</li> <li>▪ Bursaries, including funding opportunities</li> <li>▪ Accommodation Advisor</li> <li>▪ Fees and Funding Manager</li> <li>▪ Fees and Funding Advisor</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to financial security.</li> <li>▪ Student's financial needs are supported.</li> <li>▪ Students able to participate in various academic and social facets of university life (positively impacting sense of belonging).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data Analysis: Number and % of students receiving fee waivers and bursaries (T1), analysed by student characteristics.</li> <li>▪ Output Analysis: Total spend on fee waivers and bursaries, including by student characteristics. (T1)</li> <li>▪ Poll gathering bursary/ fee waiver holder's experience and perceptions (students and staff) of the process / allocation. (T2)</li> </ul>

<p>Applicants and students with disabilities can be prioritised for accommodation and we will provide information in an accessible format to meet their needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration and Resources</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job/ income pressure is decreased.</li> <li>Increased continuation and completion rates for target students.</li> <li>Increased attainment rates for target students.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Impact Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As per relevant parts of the OfS Evaluating the Impact of Financial Support toolkit, every two years from 2024-25.</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Employability and Enterprise Service</a> - extracurricular and Co-curricular support to students and graduates studying at LC. Through industry-tailored support, mentoring, professional opportunities and funding, they ensure students can contextualise their studies, developing skills and experiences that prepare them for a life in the creative industries and beyond.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Strategic Partnerships and Enterprise</li> <li>Agency Staff</li> <li>National Career Service Staff</li> <li>Administration and Resources</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased knowledge and capacity relating to career and employability skills.</li> <li>Increased level of professional networks and contacts.</li> <li>Increased knowledge and understanding of the labour market, professional standards and competencies.</li> <li>Improved self-perceptions about career and employability capacities, readiness and confidence.</li> <li>Improved motivation and engagement in learning.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved attainment rates for target students.</li> <li>Improved progression rates for target students.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils engaging and % of pupils with target characteristics (T1).</li> <li>Output analysis: Number of sessions run (T1)</li> <li>Data analysis: Analysis of referrals vs self-sign up for extra-curricular activities, by student characteristics. (T1)</li> <li>Some post-activity polls gathering student experience and perceptions (T2).</li> <li>Annual end-of-year Staff Survey exploring whether content was appropriate and effective, and to explore challenges. (T1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baseline and annual student survey exploring perceptions and confidence in respect of career development and management / employability skills and professional networks. (T2)</li> <li>2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore key themes from polls and surveys. (T2)</li> <li>Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups. (T2)</li> <li>Data Analysis: attainment by target students. (T2)</li> <li>Data analysis: progression into employment and into highly skilled employment or post-graduate study pathways for target students.</li> <li>If possible: Comparative analysis of outcomes (continuation, completion, attainment) between students who have engaged with (extra-curricular) careers and employability support and those who have not. (T2 &amp; T3)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Skills for Learning</b> – Academic skills support including study skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Skills for Learning Manager</li> <li>▪ Skills for Learning Tutors</li> <li>▪ Administration and Resources</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Improved motivation and engagement in learning.</li> <li>▪ Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence.</li> <li>▪ Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing.</li> <li>▪ Improved module / assessment grades.</li> </ul> <p><b>Longer-term Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved continuation rates for target students.</li> <li>▪ Improved completion and attainment rates for target students.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils engaging with service and % with target characteristics (T1).</li> <li>▪ Output analysis: Number of sessions run (T1).</li> <li>▪ Data analysis: Analysis of referrals vs. self-sign, by student characteristics (T1).</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baseline and annual student survey exploring perceptions and confidence in respect of outcomes (T2).</li> <li>▪ 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore key themes from polls and surveys (T2).</li> <li>▪ Annual end-of-year Staff Survey exploring confidence in providing support for students and perceptions on impact for students (T2).</li> <li>▪ Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups (T2).</li> <li>▪ Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree outcome) by target students (T2).</li> </ul>
<p><u>Learning Enhancement</u> – Technology-enhanced learning and online learning platforms, including digital accessibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learning Enhancement Software</li> <li>▪ Head of Learning Enhancement</li> <li>▪ Learning Enhancement Development Manager</li> <li>▪ Administration and Resources</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Early identification of students at risk of discontinuing, not completing or not achieving a good Degree outcome.</li> <li>▪ Identification of target groups at risk.</li> <li>▪ Proactive monitoring of and support provided to identified at risk (target) students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We will run a small staff review evaluation that considers the effectiveness and value of, and desired improvements to, the Student Engagement Monitoring and Interventions system. This is likely to include a Staff Survey and Action Learning. (T1, T2).</li> </ul>

		<p><b>Longer-term Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved module / assessment grades.</li> <li>▪ Improved continuation rates for target students.</li> <li>▪ Improved completion and attainment rates for target students.</li> <li>▪ Improved utility of analytics to inform understanding of patterns of behaviour and affects on learner outcomes.</li> </ul>	
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**Cross intervention Strategy: IS1, IS2**

*Table 7: Intervention Strategy 3*

## Total Cost of Activities

Our investment in this activity is a portion of the total cost of the total activity costs and allows the services to increase capacity and thus the ability to offer more places for target students. Over the four-year plan cycle, we will invest approximately £2,341,000.

## Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, plus a range of other research and best practice references.

Our academic support is characterised by our commitment to Learning Enhancement through technology, digital accessibility and inclusivity, underpinned by key guidance from AdvanceHE (2024). Our in-house Learning Technology team develop our systems and platforms in order to best enhance our students' digital capabilities (JISC 2024), which we believe is key to reducing the awarding gap, as students arrive to us with differing backgrounds and prior experiences. We work towards applying the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) (W3 2024) to all digital materials our students may interact with to ensure that accessibility issues are considered and mitigated as a priority and is also part of our commitment to The Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018. Our technology enhancement is also supported by more traditional skills for learning support for academic practice and assignments, with a particular focus on the needs of creatives. This strategy involves embedding multiple pedagogical approaches and learning theories into our offer.

We offer a comprehensive and innovative Student Support service, comprising a number of teams working in parallel to provide students with a robust package of support. Underpinning this service is a deep commitment to The Equality Act (2010) and the most recent QAA Quality Code (2024) ensuring our students receive support to access an equitable experience of higher education. The full service operates using practices developed by our experienced staff in combination with the latest research in their relevant professional areas. Our recent addition of an occupational therapy (OT) team develops a practice model based on the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (2018) research into the impact of OT on mental wellbeing and the benefits service users gain from practical adaptations.

In terms of progression, we provide our students with experiences and services that are tailored for those wishing to pursue careers or further study in the creative industries. This area of support is focused on industry-level research and seeks to address the gaps highlighted in key reports such as the Musicians Census (2023), Arts Council England's Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case (2021) and the Women and Equalities Committee's Misogyny in Music report (2024). We work with sector representation bodies such as The Musician's Union, Equity UK, PRS for Music and Spotlight to ensure our students have robust insights into life working in the creative industries.

## Whole Provider Approach

We are committed to equality of opportunity and particularly to reducing barriers to entry associated with conservatoire arts-based higher education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and students from backgrounds that are under-represented both in our study context, and the industries we serve. We are an inclusive community, with support and diversity at our heart; with outstanding provision in teaching, learning and curriculum; and, excellent links with our industries and artistic professional communities, ensuring that all students succeed and enjoy fulfilling careers.

We take a whole provider approach (WPA) to access and participation, which we have considered under this Plan via participation in emerging research on the WPA, working with our SEER colleagues and led by Professor Liz Thomas<sup>3</sup>. We have evaluated our current WPA context and identified areas where we can go further, as part of the commitments in this Plan. This is a continuing research piece that we are pleased to be part of developing and which has benefitted ourselves and will be used more broadly across the SEER provider network of other smaller and specialist higher education providers. The following provides a summary against the key domains in the WPA approach.

## Commitment

The whole provider approach at Leeds Conservatoire is an emerging area of work. Since our last submission, we have begun further embedding access and participation values throughout our institutional activity. Leeds Conservatoire Leadership are committed to ensuring Access and Participation is an intrinsic part of the makeup of the conservatoire, as can be seen in [our current strategic plan](#) and in our [Learning and Teaching strategy](#).

Internally, access and participation activity is reportable to our Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Access and Participation Committee (EDIAPC). Membership of this committee comprises staff from across the conservatoire and external members from our evaluation provider (SEER) and from the education group we are a subsidiary of (Luminate Education Group). This committee feeds into our Executive Leadership Committee or our Board of Directors, as relevant. We also maintain an EDI and A&P presence on all of our committees to ensure that these agendas and any key risks or impact are always considered.

In addition, we seek to build partnerships with external organisations that share our values and support our efforts to improve our student experience. We're proud to be the first education partner of Black Lives in Music, an organisation which champions and platforms the experiences of artists and performers from the Global Majority. We've worked with Black Lives in Music for the last few years and continue to engage with them as critical friends and a source of advice.

## Alignment

On a day-to-day level, staff and students are increasingly aware of both access and participation and EDI activity at the conservatoire and proactively seek the guidance and support of our A&P and EDI professionals, to ensure that APP and EDI are embedded and aligned with 'business as usual' activity. We are striving for an approach where both access and participation and EDI are "invisible" within our institution, because they are coherently embedded and intrinsic to our activity. We believe that our ethos and approach to everything we do should have inclusion at its core.

As such, we continue our journey towards fully inclusive policies and strategies. Some instruments are easily within our sphere of control as an individual provider; others are policies we contribute to developing as part of the wider Luminate group, and require effective navigation and alignment of both OfS and Department for Education requirements. Key policies relating to our staffing are made in line with the Equality Act 2010 and as part of our recruitment processes all interviewees are asked an EDI question at interview. We also deliver high-quality EDI training to our staff as part of our induction process.

We are a TEF silver provider, successfully maintaining our status in 2023, showing an innovative and exciting curriculum delivery model which prepares our students well for their future career paths. Additionally, we garnered excellent results in the most recent National Student Survey, ranking highest among the 11 Conservatoires UK members for Organisation and Management, and Assessment and Feedback, as well as surpassing the sector average in a number of areas.

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<sup>3</sup> Thomas, L. (2024) Higher Education Provider *enabling environment review tool (version 1)*. WPA support programme. CRESJ, University of York.

Despite the challenges of being a small institution we have an excellent ability to be flexible and responsive to our student body, with practices in place to listen and co-develop meaningful ways to enhance the student experience. Additionally, as a wholly owned subsidiary of the Luminate Education Group, we have the ability to easily network, share best practice and showcase our achievements on a substantial internal platform. The group host a rich and valuable teaching and learning conference where we are able to platform our early findings and prepare to share them with the wider sector.

## Engagement

Our staff and student engagement with our access and participation activity is developing, we have a number of existing approaches and practices that are inclusive without being explicitly linked to Access and Participation, and we are progressing this to reach consistency across the conservatoire. Particularly in our academic schools, we employ a high number of part-time and fractional staff which present some challenges in embedding institutional priorities. Engagement of these staff is critical to achieving consistency. Our student body also have variable scheduling, so whilst all students are informed of EDI and access and participation agendas, and associated activity, during induction week, some of our courses have higher numbers of contact hours so students may not be able to engage consistently with additional activities.

Our management staff are all aware of our policies and procedures in regard to access and participation and EDI and know who to liaise with when expert advice is needed. We provide updates throughout the year for managers to disseminate to their teams, this may be information around celebrations and awareness days or training opportunities.

Our student body, through their representatives and the student union, regularly engage with and hold the conservatoire to account. We host two student-staff forums each academic year, where students can raise issues and ask questions of key staff members. The SU President and other representatives sit on all of our committees including our Board of Directors, ensuring student voice is captured at all levels and so that students are aware of the rationale behind decisions made by the conservatoire.

As can be seen in the Student Consultation section (section 6), we do have some mechanisms in place that allow us to involve students in the design of our activities. This is an approach we are developing, particularly through our access and participation work as we know it will aid us in ensuring that all of our activity is needed and right for our students.

Over the last year, we formed a working group to explore the experiences of students who decided to no longer continue their studies. Access and Participation has formed part of this conversation from the beginning, through examining our non-continuation rates with regard for background characteristics, we've been able to identify a clear trajectory for this work.

## Capacity

Operationally, our full suite of access work is overseen by our access and participation manager, who supports the design, monitoring and evaluation of intervention strategies that are delivered by appropriate teams throughout the institution. Our Student Recruitment team leads the majority of our access work through their schools and colleges liaison activity, evidenced in IS1 (article 4.1). Having this activity live here allows for an embedded approach to our recruitment and admissions practices – thus leading to a reflexive and consistent approach to applicant queries, issues and concerns, whilst proactively seeking to embed common questions and misconceptions into our information resources.

Our on-course provision is a combined effort from our academic, student support and learning enhancement teams. Our Student Support offer highlighted in IS3, (article 4.3) is open to all students regardless of background, with specific elements available should they meet relevant criteria. Full details of our student support offer are [available on our website](#).

The majority of our progression work is looked after by our Employability and Enterprise team. This activity is largely available to all students with additional specific funding opportunities available for access and participation students. All students are eligible for representation through our agencies<sup>4</sup>, Music students may choose to enrol on our booking agency to secure bookings for professional events and our drama students are automatically enrolled on our books to enable them to secure auditions for professional work without having to fund a private agent. Drama students also receive free headshots and showreels to use on their professional pages. Third-year target students may also apply for funding<sup>5</sup> for either lifetime membership for PRS for Music or the first year of representation on Spotlight, which will enable them to access work opportunities and claim payment or royalties for their work.

In addition to this, all students may access high-quality career guidance sessions provided by the National Careers Service, as well as support to find professional opportunities and funding, options for postgraduate study and support with setting up as a freelance artist. These services remain open beyond graduation and accessible through our [progression portal](#). Our student support services are all tailored to the needs of artists and creatives, ensuring that we help to develop our students as holistic and well-rounded performers and professionals.

We regularly engage with sector networks and membership bodies, working closely with other higher education providers both within our region, nationally and internationally. Through our memberships, our staff contribute to and benefit from sector best practice and innovation. We often have to be smart with our practices, both from a capacity and a financial perspective which has led to us sharing some of our work at conferences and symposiums.

## Communication

Our communications around academic and support matters are generally well-considered and as jargon-free as possible. We aim to ensure students are aware of what is on offer to them with as little fuss as possible. Our online student handbook, alongside our online learning platform, house the most up-to-date student information and is regularly maintained for accuracy.

We communicate with our student body in several ways depending on the purpose. We have an online student opportunities platform which allows us to share both internal and external opportunities, information regarding masterclasses and events. We utilise a mass messaging service to send urgent messages to students' mobile devices and our principal sends out a weekly newsletter to share updates as well. Our ability to assess engagement with our student body through our communications channels is somewhat limited however our Learning Enhancement team are exploring our learner analytics functionality at the time of writing this plan.

Alongside other members within the Luminate Education Group, we are currently mid-way through a significant project to overhaul our student records system. This should allow us to efficiently centralise the information we collect through the multiple services a student may interact with. At present, we collect high-quality information however our current records system does not provide a centralised functionality. This development should help us to better spot areas and students in need of support.

## Data

Our data capability is often limited and is in development. Our data management team are highly skilled; however, being a small institution resource is stretched. We are also limited by the age of our systems and software. We collect a range of high-quality data across the services in the conservatoire but due to the lack of centralisation (a capacity issue), we are limited in interrogating the data efficiently. We recognise this limiting factor and as such we are undertaking a significant upgrade to our systems with the objective of addressing these concerns. Considerations for data relating to access and participation will feed into these developments.

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<sup>4</sup> See LC Agency pages for further details: <https://www.leedsconservatoire.ac.uk/about-us/progression-portal/performance-placements-professional-opportunities/leeds-conservatoire-agency/>

<sup>5</sup> See further details at <https://www.leedsconservatoire.ac.uk/about-us/progression-portal/artistbusiness-support-funding/prs-for-music-spotlight-fund/>

Within our systems and processes, we have some areas which pose risks as a whole. We collect detailed learner data and analytics in a number of systems which are difficult to collate. This may impact our ability to triangulate what services students are accessing, this can be done manually though it would have a significant impact on staff resource and capacity. Work is underway to mitigate this risk, through the implementation of a new student records system. Once this is in place, teams within the conservatoire and Luminate Education group (our parent organisation) will work towards developing a data maturity framework and we should be able to access a coordinated pool of student data.

We have engaged the Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER) team from Applied Inspiration as our external evaluators for Access and Participation. Their team provides a wealth of experience and expertise that we would not normally have access to in-house. Already in the last year significant progress has been made towards improving our practice and we have begun to share some of this learning in other areas of the conservatoire.

## Student Consultation

Leeds Conservatoire's student representation channels have been through several variants in recent years. Currently, our Student Union (SU) is formed of a sabbatical Student Union President, aided by our Student Union and Engagement Manager and Student Engagement Officer. We then have two strands of student representatives, Course Representatives and Diversity Representatives. Course Representatives are students who represent their year cohort from their programme of study. Our Diversity Representatives are students who belong to and represent our Access and Participation target groups and the groups protected by The Equality Act 2010. Together these representatives carry out a number of duties including forming a Student Union Council to advise and challenge the Student Union and the president, and vote on Student Union matters. Each year we also host two Student-Staff Forums, where the SU council meet with relevant senior leaders, academic heads and heads of services to discuss matters arising in-year.

Throughout the development of this plan, our Student President and Student Union Council have been given opportunities to consult. At various key stages in the development cycle, there have been attempts to garner student feedback to varying levels of response. The Access and Participation Manager attended a Student Union Council meeting to introduce the Access and Participation submission and discuss what may be required of them. We then consulted on the development of Annex A via a survey. The Student Union including their council have also received the full plan to consult upon before further internal approval. For this submission, the Access and Participation Manager provided the Student Union with information on how to compile and submit the Access and Participation Plan student submission and met to provide access to the assessment of performance data and answer questions about how this was developed.

In the last academic year, a consultation on Access and Participation activities was opened to the full student body. This consultation looked at the profile of Access and Participation at the conservatoire as well as seeking to explore student insights on current interventions. As a result of this, we commissioned a number of research and audit projects to dive deeper into specific interventions and activities. The first of which was a best practice literature review of Student Involvement activity at small and specialist institutions which is now supporting the development of our student insight policy. We are also conducting audits on our Financial Support Provision and the accessibility of our settings and provision for students with disabilities.

The conservatoire is undertaking a significant piece of work to redefine our approach to Student Involvement, this approach will have Access and Participation and EDI at its core and should be in place by the commencement of this plan.

## Evaluation of the Plan

### Strategic Context for Evaluation

Evaluation and research are part of our ‘whole institution’ approach to access and participation. Our academic, professional and leadership teams contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of targets, intervention strategies and activities in this plan through supporting and inputting on the range of evaluation measures. Our data team have skills in ensuring data capture is appropriate for the required monitoring and evaluation outputs, including designing new reports and processes to capture, collate and extract data for various evaluation and research questions. We also draw on the skills of staff responsible for the delivery of the Activities in this Plan, and our student representatives, to effectively incorporate evaluation.

In our assessment of our current context for evaluation, using the OfS evaluation self-assessment tool, we are ‘emerging’ across all areas. We have some foundations in place, but need to develop our practices, including embedding evaluation into activity design and delivery and ensuring feedback cycles into improving practice. Therefore, as we continue to build our cross-institution capacities for effective evaluation and the application of findings to improve practice, staff and student representatives will be supported with relevant training in Theory of Change and evaluation methods, provided through our SEER membership. Students are important in this work, and we will work in partnership with students on the design and implementation of evaluation and research, particularly where this pertains to current students.

SEER provides us with the evaluation and research expertise we need to deliver our commitments in these areas. We will actively participate in this network, which provides us with opportunities to be part of collaborative research and evaluation projects and learn and share practice with other members and external stakeholders. SEER host an annual Symposium and regular workshops, roundtables and ‘learning lunches’ throughout the year, as well as providing us with opportunities to showcase our practice and insights. We will also engage with TASO and other relevant organisations in calls for evidence, conferences, events, and training.

### Activity design

As detailed in the Strategic Measures section of this Plan, evaluation has been established at the start. We have built effective evaluation practice into our Strategies by establishing a range of evaluation attached to the individual activities that contribute towards the overall objective of each Strategy. We can therefore build up an understanding of which activities are ‘working’ and which are not.

We have taken a Theory of Change approach to the development of our Intervention Strategies, identifying clear intended outcomes (intermediate and end) and a supporting evidence base that has informed our activity development and challenged assumptions. With the help of SEER, we will continue to review, develop and strengthen our Theories of Change (ToC), adding to our evidence base as our evaluation findings emerge and developing enhanced activity-level ToCs where required.

### Evaluation design

We have collaborated with SEER and drawn from OfS and TASO toolkits and guidance on effective evaluation approaches. We have considered how the outcomes of activities can be evaluated credibly, particularly as our context as a small and specialist provider means that we are likely to be dealing with small cohorts.

Employing mixed method approaches is particularly important, as we will need to rely on qualitative data to support our understanding, or fill gaps, in quantitative data. We will triangulate findings where possible and seek to deepen our insights through qualitative methods. Given the developmental stage of our evaluation practice, the majority of our evaluations are type 1 (narrative), and type 2 (empirical enquiry) of the OfS ‘Standards of Evidence’. We have however noted that we will explore and consider where type 3 evaluation could be implemented in future.

Our evaluation approach has also considered the context and scale of the activities and, as we have proposed working with strategic partners (schools, colleges, community groups, specialist service providers) in our Intervention Strategies, we wish to note that some flexibility and development may be required as our collaborations take shape, allowing for input and advice from partners.

We have also considered our context and, where appropriate, will trial more creative evaluation instruments (as methods in surveying, focus groups and interviews). This may help to mitigate the issue of survey fatigue, which is a significant issue for effective evaluation and is compounded in small cohorts where the same students are more likely to be subjects of multiple evaluation and research projects. We will continue to be cognisant of this in the collection of feedback and have aligned our evaluation and measures across our activities to enable us to minimise the number of collection points, where possible and appropriate.

Our evaluation approach, data collection and analysis have been formulated on the intended outcomes and objectives of our activities. Where appropriate and possible, we will consider and employ validated scales to our evaluation practices. We have also considered evaluation that spans (a) process and (b) impact, to provide a comprehensive understanding of how our activities are working. We will explore, with SEER, further research projects in relation to our activities and our ambition to better understand the experiences and challenges of target students and issues of equality of opportunity. For example, consultation with students as part of the development of this Plan supports the identification of risks relating to insufficient to personalised academic and non-academic support; however, we consider that there is further research, supported by our learning analytics activity, that would add insight to this area.

## Implementing our Evaluation Plan

We will collaborate internally across our team and with our strategic partners to deliver our evaluation plan. We will be guided by our school, college and community partners, and our students in respect of effective implementation of the plan. Our evaluation process will comply with institutional policies and complies with all legal requirements relating to data protection, following ethical, safeguarding, legal and risk considerations.

As noted above, we are members of the Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER) service, with whom we will work in partnership to deliver our evaluation plan. A Data Sharing Agreement has also been established. SEER provides us with opportunities to collaborate on various evaluation and research items, including for example the evaluation of the impact of financial support, using the OfS toolkit.

The design of our evaluation has also been heavily informed by intended and projected standardised outcomes being adopted by SEER across its membership base, which not only increases efficiencies but provides opportunities to increase the sample size and evaluation, helping to mitigate the issue of small datasets. SEER incorporate and draw on TASO guidance on best practices for evaluations with small cohorts (small n). Further, such collaborations may provide us access to tools that would otherwise be unaffordable. For example, concerning our access activity, we have noted the possibility of implementing tracking, which will be explored via SEER. As a practice network, we are also able to participate in peer review of practice and evaluation and share practice and findings.

As a smaller provider, we are also well-placed to respond with agility to interim findings and emerging data. We are able to be responsive in flexing our activity accordingly to help to keep us on track to achieve our objectives and targets, and continuously improve our practice.

## Learning from and Disseminating Findings

We are committed to sharing our learning and findings internally, with our partners, within our close networks and with the broader sector, to develop a stronger and increased volume of evidence about what works and what can be improved. We are pleased to help to grow the evidence base for equality of opportunity in higher education and we will submit evaluation outputs to OfS' repository of evidence as appropriate. In Section 4, we have set out our publishing plan, which includes publishing findings on interim and longer-term outcomes through a range of

channels. In developing the format of our communications, we will consider creative and visual methods, and different audiences/purposes. We will ensure that our findings are open access.

Our SEER membership provides us access to academic experts in evaluation, including in access and participation and the broader teaching and learning arena. These staff are involved in design, delivery and analysis. We are also a member of Conservatoires UK, Go Higher West Yorkshire (including UniConnect), FACE, NERUPI, GuildHE, Culture Consortium Leeds and Yorkshire Universities, at which we can share and present findings. It is anticipated that we will actively contribute to conferences, network events and publications. Where appropriate we will draw on existing networks to collaborate and engage with similar organisations. We also look forward to sharing our findings and our thinking with other small specialist institutions and SEER members and collaborating on the development of effective practice for this particular part of the sector.

Internally, developing a community of practice (staff and students) regarding access and participation will help to facilitate improvements to sharing of findings from evaluation, and subsequent improvements to practice. Shared practice across the institution allows for review and feedback on evaluation findings and reports, and discussion regarding the improvements that could be made. More broadly, evaluation findings related to access and participation work will inform other agendas and practice, such as programme review and revalidation, communications and recruitment strategies and community engagement. We will publish the findings of our evaluation activities on our website and with sector bodies as appropriate. Further details about how we will evaluate our intervention strategies is included in Section 4.

## Provision of Information to Students

An accessible summary of this plan alongside this full version will be made available on our website. The full plan will be shared with the Student Union when approved and our Access and Participation Manager will also deliver information sessions for current students. Alternative formats to information on our website are available to request from [hello@lcm.ac.uk](mailto:hello@lcm.ac.uk). These include accessible PDF, large print, audio recording or braille.

Information regarding our fees, entry requirements and support services are available to students and applicants through our prospectus, website and internal student information platform. As well, friendly and knowledgeable staff are available for guests on our open days or via email and telephone. Scholarships and bursaries are subject to change, for the most up to date information on our scholarships and bursaries (including criteria) [please refer to our website](#).

Financial Support Scheme	Purpose	Criteria for Eligibility	Number of Awards	Level of Support	Level of Support in Subsequent Years of Study
<b>Funded by Leeds Conservatoire</b>					
<b>Audition and Offer Holder Day Refund</b>	To ensure finance is not a barrier to attending an in-person audition or conversion event	UK domiciled plus: Low-income household (below £25k) Or Global Majority Ethnicity	Available to all who meet the criteria	At the discretion of the Fees and Funding team.	N/A
<b>Accommodation Start-up fund</b>	To support the move into student accommodation	In receipt of benefits, care leavers or estranged from family	Available to all who meet the criteria	£150	N/A
<b>Leeds Conservatoire Bursary</b>	To support students from a low-income background	Household income below £42,875	Available to all who meet the criteria	Household Income: £0 - £25,000 =£800 Bursary Household Income: £25,001 - £42,875 =£400 Bursary Paid in two instalments	Assessed each year based on SFE application
<b>Leeds Conservatoire Postgraduate Progression Scholarship</b>	To encourage progression onto postgraduate courses for students from underrepresented backgrounds	UK domiciled and Leeds Conservatoire Alumnus, plus: Low-income background, Global majority ethnicity or have a reported disability	15 Scholarships	A 10% reduction on tuition fees in addition to the standard alumni discount	N/A
<b>Externally Funded Scholarships</b>					
<b>The Leverhulme Trust Arts Scholarship</b>	To help towards living costs for exceptional UK students in their first year of study	UK domiciled, had potential identified at audition and in first year of study of one of the following courses: BA (Hons) Music (Jazz)	A total of 12 scholarships are available	Three scholarships worth £4,000 each	N/A

			BA (Hons) Music (Songwriting) – Additional criteria of a household income of £25,000 or less <sup>6</sup> BA (Hons) Music (Folk, Roots and Blues)		Three Scholarships worth £3,000 each Six scholarships worth £2,000 each	
<b>The Reuben Vincent Trombone Scholarship</b>	To support up to two student trombone players annually to either purchase a new instrument or provide financial support	Be studying with the Trombone as your principal instrument	Two scholarships	£2,500	N/A	
<b>Leeds Cathedral Scholarships</b>	To provide additional financial support whilst studying	Award is based on application and audition during enrolment week	Six scholarships in total: Four choral scholarships, One choral conducting and one organ scholarship	£1,000 plus £500 for any additional events at the discretion of Leeds Cathedral	N/A	
<b>The Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation Scholarship</b>	To provide additional financial support whilst studying	Studying on our BA (Hons) Musical Theatre pathway Award is based on merit and financial need <sup>6</sup>	One scholarship	Full tuition fees to cover the course plus £750 per year to contribute to living costs		

*Table 6: Our current financial support provision for students.*

<sup>6</sup> Not included in Fees, Investments and Targets plan due to potential changing parameters from external funder

## Appendices

### Annex A: Assessment of Performance

We have conducted a thorough performance assessment based on the latest OfS APP data release (July 2023) which covers up to the 2021-22 monitoring year. We have supplemented this with internal data where relevant, to provide additional insights particularly where datasets are small. From this analysis, we have determined our key Indicators of Risk, which we have explored further using supplementary information, data and evidence from internal and local sources; and, from the wider sector and sector bodies (e.g. UCAS).

We considered performance across all APP measures, at each stage of the lifecycle:

- Access – enrolment
- Continuation – continuing students measured at 1 year and 15 days post initial enrolment
- Completion – students completing their course, up to 6 years after beginning their studies
- Attainment – achievement of a First or 2:1 degree outcome
- Progression – progression into highly skilled employment or further post-graduate study

This assessment presents the identified indicators of risk areas from our full analysis.

### Summary of Indicators of Risk and Target Areas

The following table (1) highlights all the indicators of risk we have identified from the full initial data analysis.

Metric /Student Group	IMD Quintile 1	TUNDRA	Global Majority	Black learners	Mature learners (21 & over)	ABCS	Disabled	FSM-eligible learners	Sex
Access	Priority PTA_2		Priority PTA_3	Priority PTA_3	Lower than sector average % mature entrants but not a strategic objective.	Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.		Priority PTA_1	(Female) Not a target under this Plan
Continuation	Small gap is present, but cohorts are very small. Recommend monitoring.				Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.		Very small gap. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring	Small gap but very small numbers make analysis difficult.	
Completion	Priority PTS_6	Small gap, narrowing. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	A gap, but small numbers make analysis difficult.	A gap is present but small numbers make analysis difficult.	Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.		A gap is present but small numbers make analysis difficult.	
Attainment	Priority PTS_4	Gap is present but narrowing. Small cohort. Recommend monitoring.	Priority PTS_5	Priority PTS_5	Gap is present but narrowing. Small cohort. Recommend monitoring.		Small gap is present. Small cohort. Recommend monitoring.	Small gap is present. Small cohort. Recommend monitoring.	
Progression	Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.					Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.		Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	

*Table 1: Summary of Indicators of Risk and Priorities*

## Priority Target Areas

We have determined that the following priority areas will be of concern under our APP, with associated targets and milestones.

1. Enrolment of students who were eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
2. Enrolment of students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds (using the IMD measure as a proxy)
3. Enrolment of students from the Global Majority
4. Attainment (achievement of a 1st or 2:1 degree outcome) for students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds (using the IMD measure as a proxy)
5. Attainment for students from the Global Majority
6. Completion for students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds.

## Analysis - Access

A number of risks to equality of opportunity at Leeds Conservatoire fall into the Access phase of the student lifecycle, due to a myriad of factors including finance associated with private music or drama training outside of school; access to high-quality arts provision in their local area; and indeed, the value placed on performing arts in their schools and local communities.

Overall, numbers of entrants at Leeds Conservatoire were increasing steadily from ~410 entrants (2016-17) up to 540 entrants (2020-21), but fell back to 450 entrants in 2021-22.

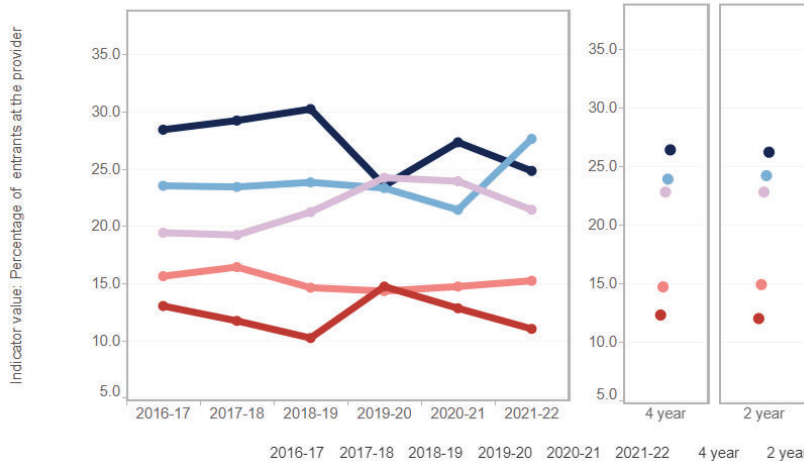
## Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

Over the last 6 years of data, Leeds Conservatoire consistently sees a much smaller proportion of entrants from IMD Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged) compared to those from Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged). The 4-year aggregate figures show 12.3% of entrants were from Q1 compared to 26.4% from Q5.

In the most recent year of available data (2021-22), 11.0% of entrants were from Q1 compared to 24.8% from Q5. This contrasts with the sector which has seen a steady increase in the proportion of entrants from Q1 and a corresponding decrease in the proportion of entrants from Q5 over the 6 years analysed, with the figures for 2021-22 showing 22.8% of entrants from Q1 and 19.6% of entrants from Q5.

Given Leeds Conservatoire's weak performance in attracting students from the most disadvantaged Quintiles and poor comparison with the sector, this area will form one of our priority targets in this APP.

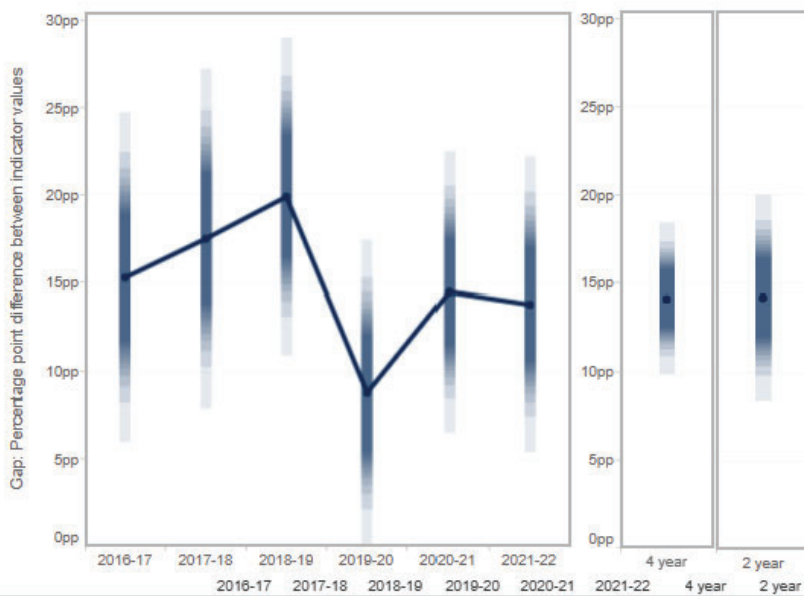
Access indicator values for: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019)



**Key**

- Quintile 1 (least participation)
- Quintile 2
- Quintile 3
- Quintile 4
- Quintile 5 (most participation)

Access gap: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) – Quintile 5 compared with 1



Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -0.7pp

## Students from The Global Majority

Leeds Conservatoire has seen a steady c. 11% of entrants from Black, Asian, Mixed and Other non-white backgrounds over the last 5 years. This is in contrast with an increase in the sector over the same period which has risen from 29.8% to 33.3% of overall intake in the same period.

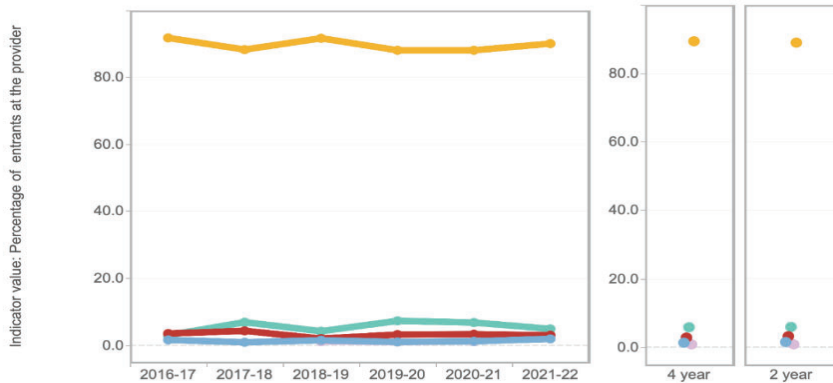
Regarding specific ethnic groups, our data shows a mixed picture in relation to parity with the England and Wales population demographic (2021 census) across groups. Entrants from Asian backgrounds are below population parity over the last 4-year average at 1.3% (population is 9.3%, 2021). We are below population demographics for Black

students, at 2.8% over the 4-year average (population is 4%, 2021), but above for mixed heritage, at 4-year average 5.8% (population is 2.9%, 2021). We are slightly below the population proportion for students with 'other' background, at 0.8% (4-year average) (population is 2.1%, 2021)<sup>7</sup>.

Given consistently low intakes compared to the sector and broader efforts to attract applicants from Global Majority backgrounds this will form one of our priority target areas for Access.

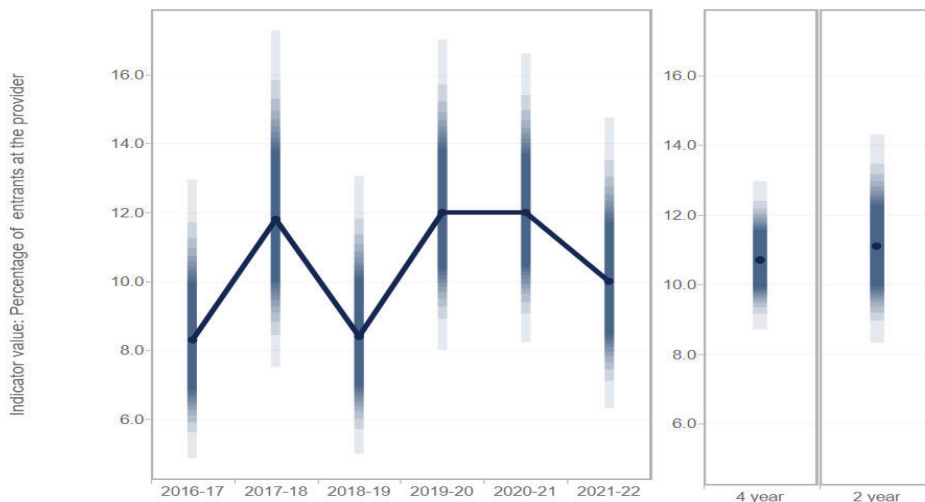
**Key**  
■ Asian  
■ Black  
■ Mixed  
■ Other  
■ White

Access indicator values for: Ethnicity



	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Asian	1.5%	0.8%	1.4%	0.9%	1.1%	1.8%	1.3%	1.4%
Black	3.4%	4.2%	1.9%	3.1%	3.2%	2.9%	2.8%	3.1%
Mixed	2.9%	6.8%	4.1%	7.2%	6.7%	4.8%	5.8%	5.8%
Other	[DPL]	[DPL]	1.0%	0.9%	1.0%	[DPL]	0.8%	0.7%
White	91.7%	88.2%	91.6%	88.0%	88.0%	90.0%	89.3%	88.9%

Access indicator value for: Ethnicity – All ethnicities except white



	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
All ethnicities except white	8.3%	11.8%	8.4%	12.0%	12.0%	10.0%	10.7%	11.1%

Change in indicator from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -2.0pp

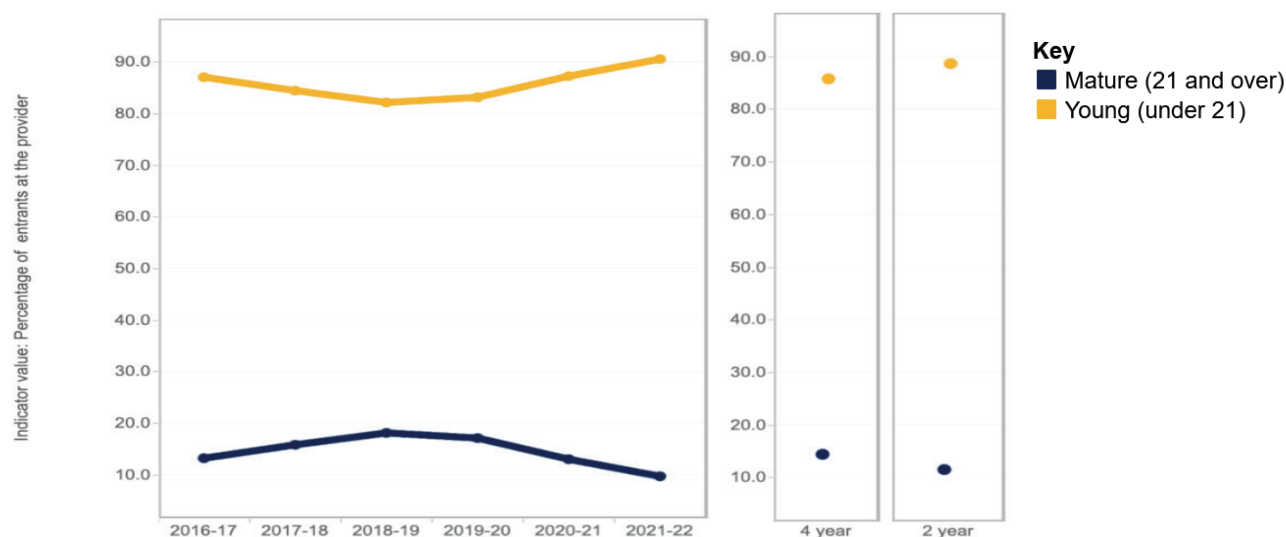
<sup>7</sup> Population figures as per 2021 census data:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenglandandwales/census2021>

## Mature Learners

Leeds Conservatoire has a large cohort of young learners in comparison to mature learners, and this has been consistent over the last 6 years with a 4-year aggregate of 14.3% mature intake, and 9.6% in the latest monitoring year (2021-22). This is lower than the sector average, where the 4-year aggregate is 27.7% and 29.0% in 2021-22. While this is a concern, mature learners are not a strategic priority for the Conservatoire. There are significant challenges to access for mature students for the courses that Leeds Conservatoire offer. These systemic barriers are entrenched and difficult to overcome and we recognise that we are unable to tackle these issues alone. As such, we do not propose to set a target for mature students at this time but will aim to address the underlying issues through our broader outreach and community engagement work. We will also continue to monitor the data available closely.

Access indicator values for: Age



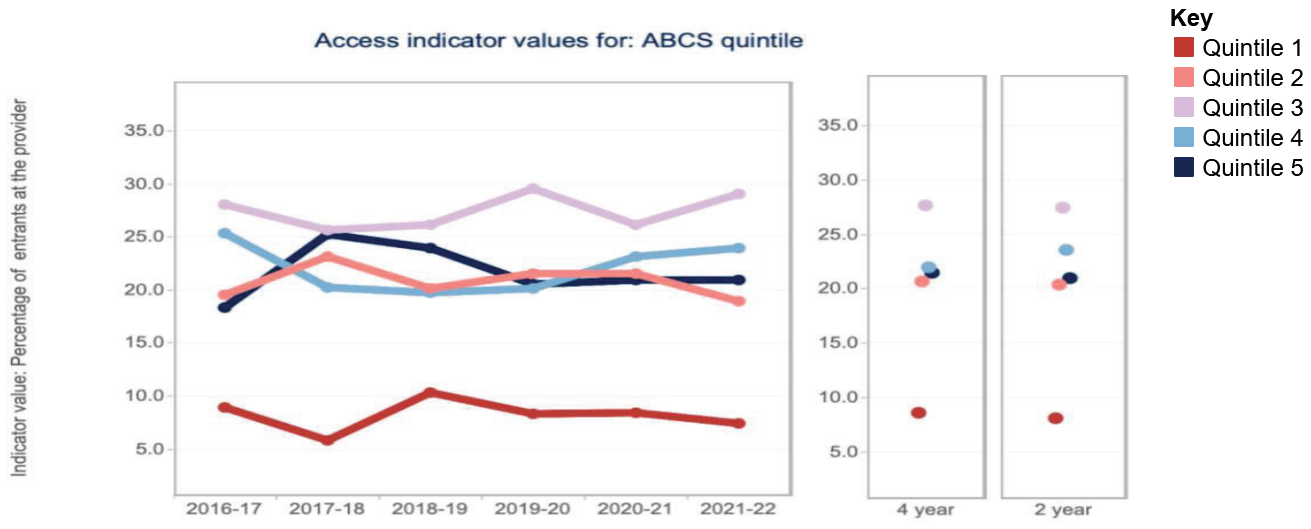
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Mature (21 and over)	13.1%	15.7%	18.0%	17.0%	12.9%	9.6%	14.3%	11.4%
Young (under 21)	86.9%	84.3%	82.0%	83.0%	87.1%	90.4%	85.7%	88.6%

## ABCS

The new ABCS (Associations between characteristics of students) measure considers multiple student characteristics including ethnicity, free school meal (FSM) eligibility, gender, income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI) index of multiple deprivation (IMD) and TUNDRA. It is a quintile measure, with ABCS Quintile 1 representing the most disadvantaged.

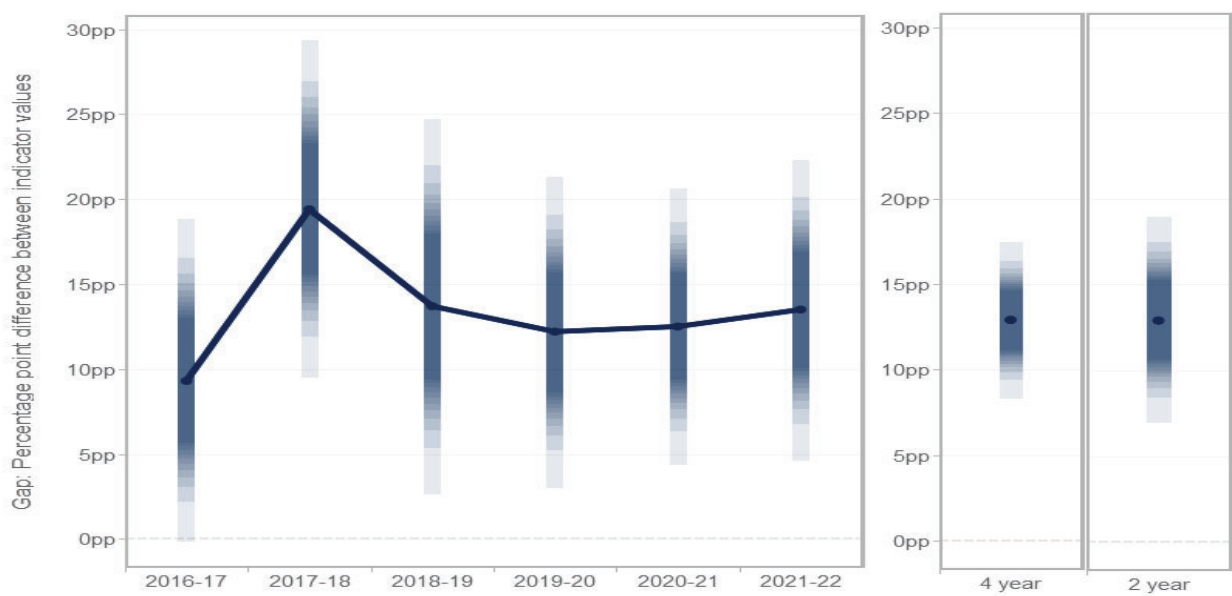
Leeds Conservatoire enrolled 7.4% of students from ABC Quintile 1 in 2021-22, with an aggregate proportion over the last 4 years of 8.5%. The gap between participation between ABCs Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 in 2021-22 is 13.5pp, with the last 4-year aggregate being slightly better at 12.9pp.

The 4-year average sector enrolment rate for ABCs Quintile 1 is comparable at 7.6% but the gap in participation between ABCs Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 is significantly higher at 26.4pp (4-year average). Given this performance, the newness of this measure and our small datasets, we are not proposing setting a target for this group at this time, although we will continue to monitor the ABC measure closely.



	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1	8.9%	5.8%	10.3%	8.3%	8.4%	7.4%	8.5%	8.0%
Quintile 2	19.5%	23.1%	20.1%	21.5%	21.5%	18.9%	20.6%	20.3%
Quintile 3	28.0%	25.6%	26.1%	29.5%	26.1%	29.0%	27.6%	27.4%
Quintile 4	25.3%	20.2%	19.7%	20.1%	23.1%	23.9%	21.9%	23.5%
Quintile 5	18.3%	25.2%	23.9%	20.5%	20.9%	20.9%	21.4%	20.9%

**Access gap: ABCS quintile – Quintile 5 compared with 1**



	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	9.3pp	19.4pp	13.7pp	12.2pp	12.5pp	13.5pp	12.9pp	12.9pp

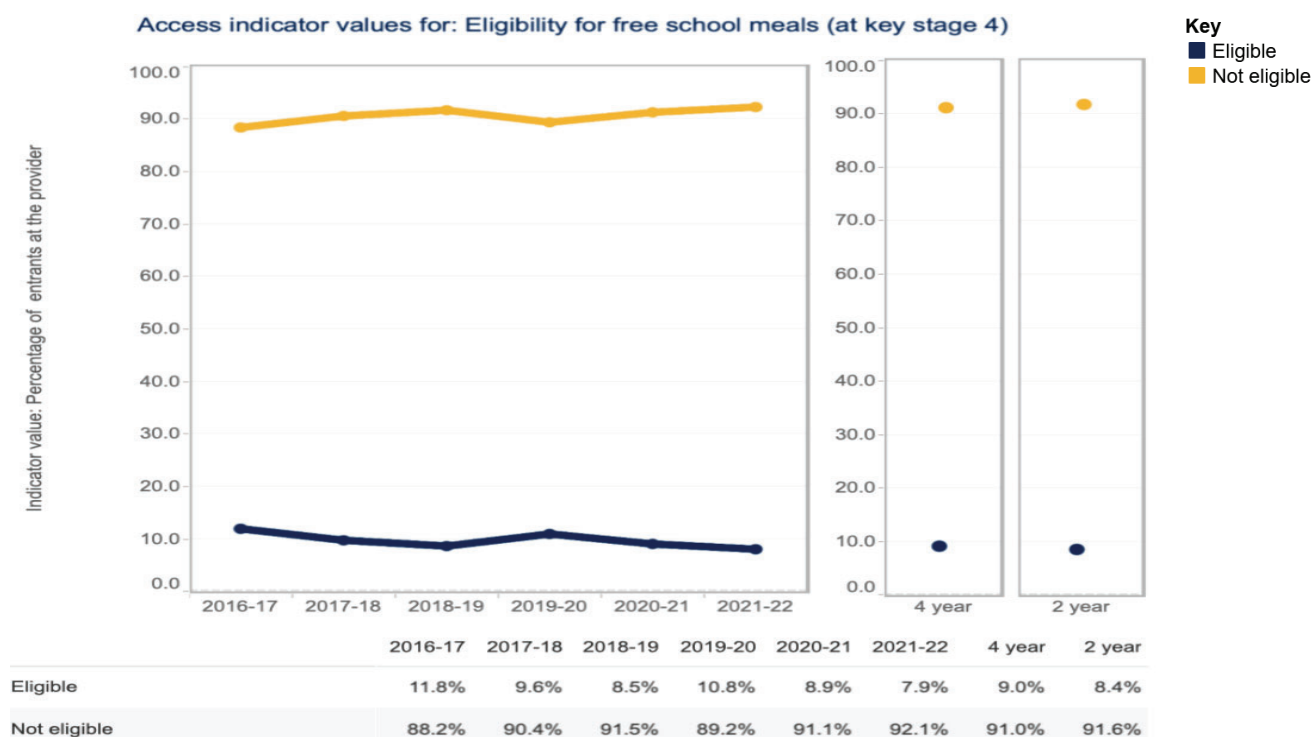
Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 1.0pp

### Students Eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage

This measure explores access rates for students who have been eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4. Leeds Conservatoire has seen a slight decline in enrolling students from this group over time, with enrolment in the latest year at 7.9% (2020-21), down from 11.8% in 2016-17. In terms of actual student numbers, this amounts to between 25-40 students each year at Leeds Conservatoire. This is worse than the sector average, which was 18.4% in

2021-22; and, is lower than the population of FSM learners which was at 17.3% in 2020-21 and has risen year-on-year to 23.8% in 2023-24.

Given this context, this area is of concern and a priority target area under this Plan.



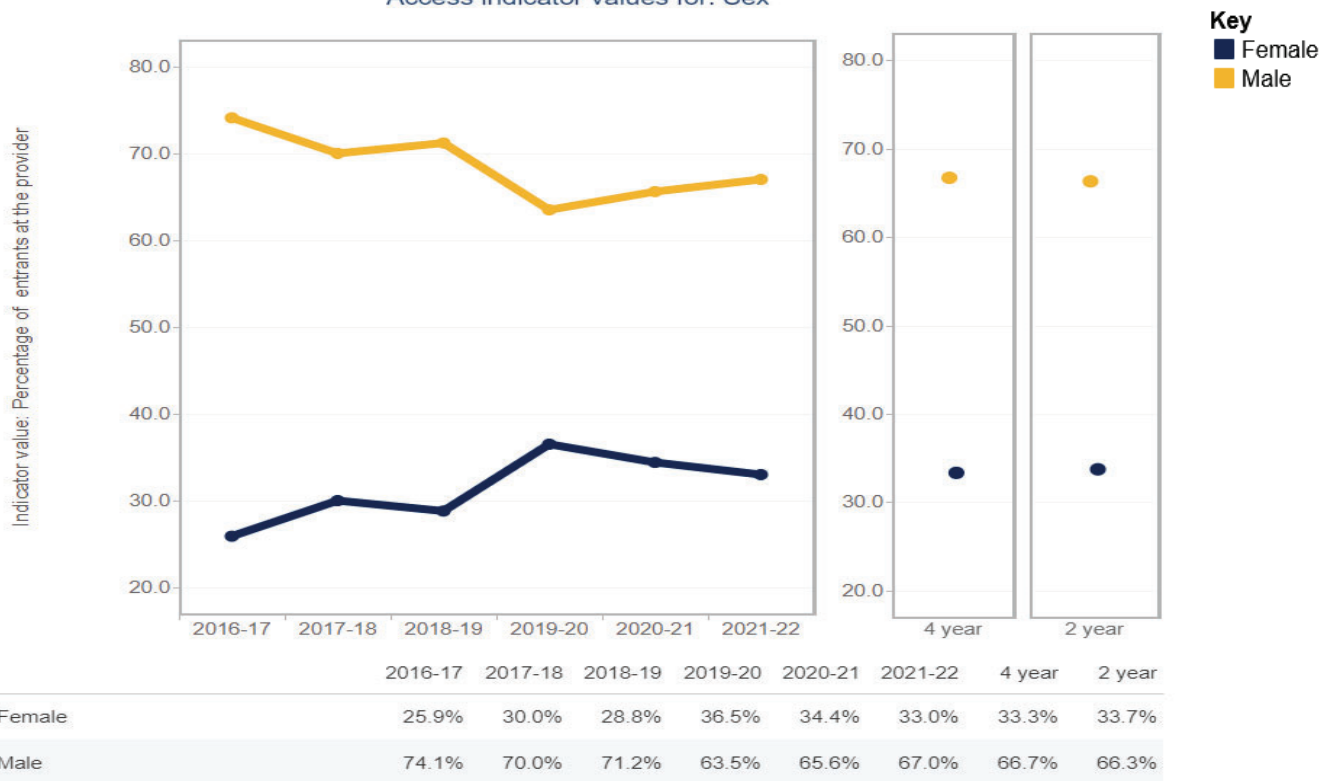
## Sex

Contrary to the national picture, female students on music degrees are significantly outnumbered by their male counterparts. Data for Leeds Conservatoire shows over the last three years, the gap between male and female students on our music courses grew from 27pp to 34pp. The conservatoire recognises that this is a larger risk than we can address on our own. In January 2024, the Women and Equalities Committee published their report ‘Misogyny in Music’<sup>8</sup> which details the extreme levels of inequality and discrimination that women face whilst working in the industry. The conservatoire will endeavour to work with our fellow music education providers to address the issues raised by the report.

In addition, Leeds Conservatoire is home to a community of students whose sex is not always best represented by binary terms. We wish it to be noted that data reporting needs to be improved to more accurately represent our society. We welcome HESA’s ongoing review of the data and identifiers they collect information on. While we are not setting a target here, over the course of this plan, the conservatoire will proactively seek to work with our peer institutions to present a collaborative response to this issue, continue to monitor the data available and commission further research to improve understanding.

<sup>8</sup> Women and Equalities Committee. (2024). Misogyny in Music. [Misogyny in music - Women and Equalities Committee \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk)

Access indicator values for: Sex



## Continuation

This section provides Leeds Conservatoire’s performance for the continuation of students from the OfS key target groups. Continuation is measured from Year 1 into Year 2, at 1 year and 15 days post-enrolment.

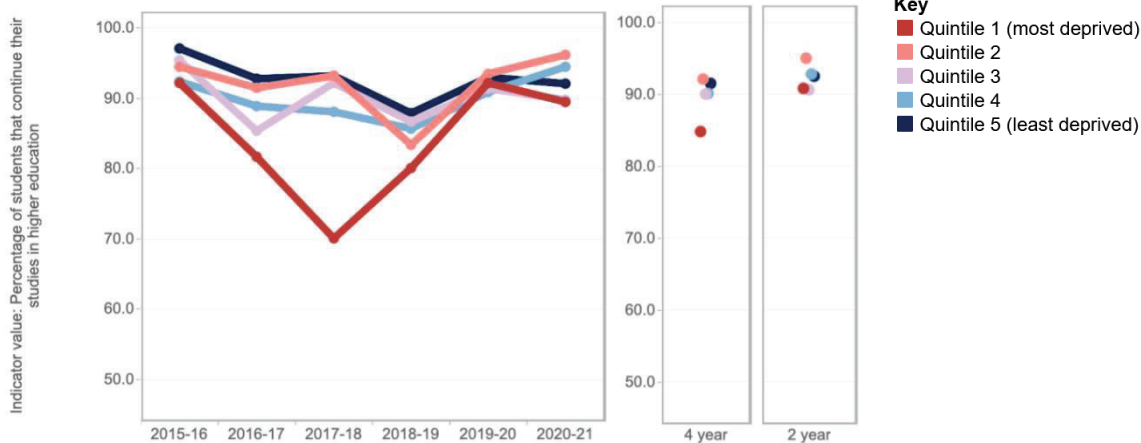
Overall for the whole student population, continuation at Leeds Conservatoire in 2020-21 was 92.4%, with a 4-year aggregate continuation rate of 90.1%. These continuation outcomes are comparable with sector performance over the same period (90.0% 4-year average).

## Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

Continuation for students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds (IMD Quintile 1) across a 4-year average is 84.7%, compared to continuation for students from IMD Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged) at 91.4%, which is a gap in continuation of 6.7 percentage points (pp). While the latest data shows an improvement for IMD Quintile 1 students (89.4%, compared to IMD Quintile 5 at 92%, a gap of only 2pp, 2020-21), our small data means that percentage results can fluctuate significantly.

Given the small numbers of students in Q1 (n=40-70 students each year), the resulting fluctuation in outcome rates, and the trend over the last 2-year aggregate towards closing the gap (which is 1.7pp aggregate (2019-20 to 2020-21), we will continue to monitor this area but do not intend to set a target at this time.

Continuation indicator values for: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019)



	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (most deprived)	92.1%	81.6%	70.0%	80.0%	92.1%	89.4%	84.7%	90.7%
Quintile 2	94.4%	91.4%	93.1%	83.3%	93.4%	96.1%	92.0%	94.9%
Quintile 3	95.3%	85.3%	92.1%	86.6%	91.3%	89.7%	89.9%	90.5%
Quintile 4	92.3%	88.8%	88.0%	85.6%	90.8%	94.4%	90.0%	92.7%
Quintile 5 (least deprived)	97.0%	92.7%	93.1%	87.8%	92.9%	92.0%	91.4%	92.4%

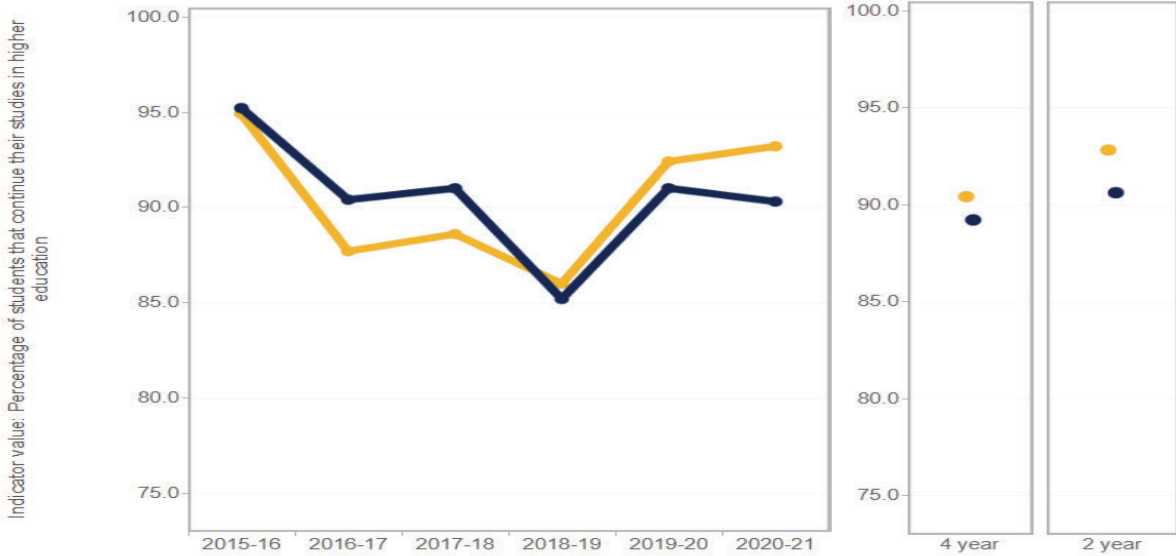
## Disabled Students

Overall continuation for all disabled learners over the last 4-year aggregate is 89.2%, which is slightly lower than continuation for students with no declared disability (90.4%). The gap is wider when looking at the 2-year average, where disabled learners have a continuation rate of 90.6% compared with 92.8% for students without a declared disability, representing a 2.2pp gap.

Data by specific disability type is subject to suppression due to small numbers for many groups. However, we note that students with sensory, medical, or physical impairment have the lowest continuation rates on the 4-year average (80.4%). The gap in continuation between this group and students with no disability is 10 percentage points (pp). Gaps for other disability types are smaller (<6pp), and there is a positive gap for students with multiple impairments (-0.5pp). The extremely small numbers of students should be noted here however, with fewer than 10 students declaring a sensory, medical, or physical impairment in the last three years of data. This makes the continuation rates particularly volatile and makes it difficult to set a specific target.

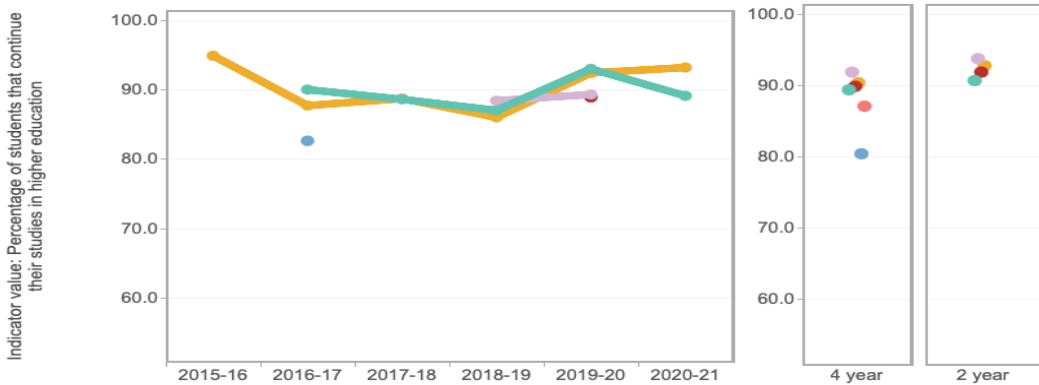
Given the small numbers for specific disability types and the small gap overall between disabled students and those with no declared disability, this is not an area where we will set a target at this time, though we will continue to monitor the data closely.

Continuation indicator values for: Disability



	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	4 year	2 year
Disability reported	95.2%	90.4%	91.0%	85.2%	91.0%	90.3%	89.2%	90.6%
No disability reported	94.9%	87.7%	88.6%	86.0%	92.4%	93.2%	90.4%	92.8%

Continuation indicator values for: Disability type



	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	4 year	2 year
Cognitive or learning difficulties	[DPH]	90.0%	88.6%	87.0%	93.0%	89.1%	89.4%	90.7%
Mental health condition	[low]	[low]	[DPH]	88.4%	89.3%	[DPH]	91.9%	93.8%
Multiple impairments	[none]	[low]	[none]	[low]	88.9%	[DPH]	89.9%	91.9%
No disability reported	94.9%	87.7%	88.7%	86.0%	92.4%	93.2%	90.4%	92.8%
Sensory, medical or physical impairment	[DPH]	82.6%	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	80.4%	[low]
Social or communication impairment	[low]	[low]	[none]	[low]	[low]	[low]	87.1%	[low]

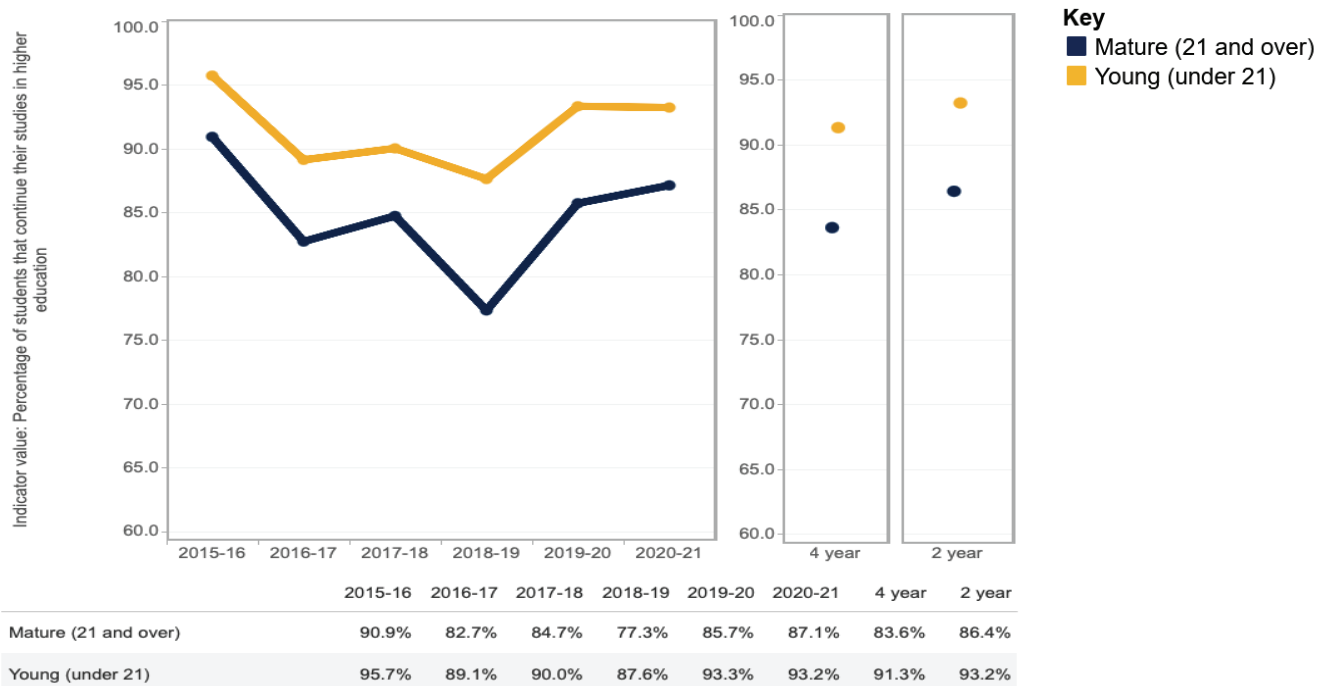
- Key**
- Cognitive or learning difficulties
  - Mental health condition
  - Multiple impairments
  - Sensory, medical or physical impairment
  - Social or communication impairment
  - No disability reported

## Mature Students (21 years and over)

Young learners at LC have consistently continued at higher rates than mature learners, with a gap in continuation between these groups over the last 4-year aggregate (2017-18 to 2020-21) of 7.7pp. This is comparable with the average sector performance, which shows an 8.7pp gap over the same 4-year aggregate.

Despite comparable performance with the sector, the continuation gap for mature students remains a concern and, given issues with completion and attainment for this group, we will monitor this data closely and explore how best to support our mature learners to thrive in their degrees at Leeds Conservatoire.

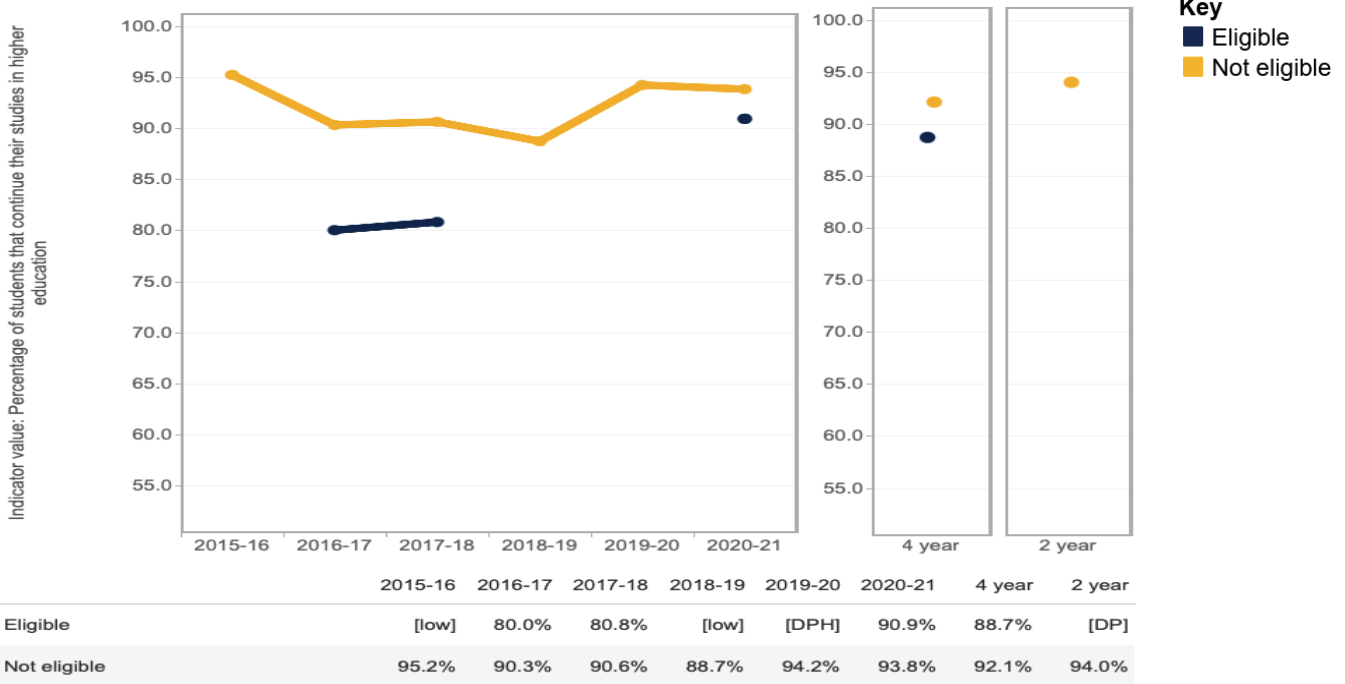
Continuation indicator values for: Age



## Students Eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4

There is a gap of 3.4pp for the 4-year aggregate continuation outcomes between FSM-eligible students (88.7% continuation) and non-eligible students (92.1% continuation). This is comparable to the average sector gap over the same aggregate period, which was 5.0pp. However, Leeds Conservatoire cohort sizes are very small ( $n < 45$  in each year of data), and this makes meaningful analysis for this measure difficult. Again, we consider these data too small to prioritise under this Plan as it would be very difficult to set a meaningful target. We will monitor this measure, and emergent trends, as our datasets grow.

Continuation indicator values for: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4)



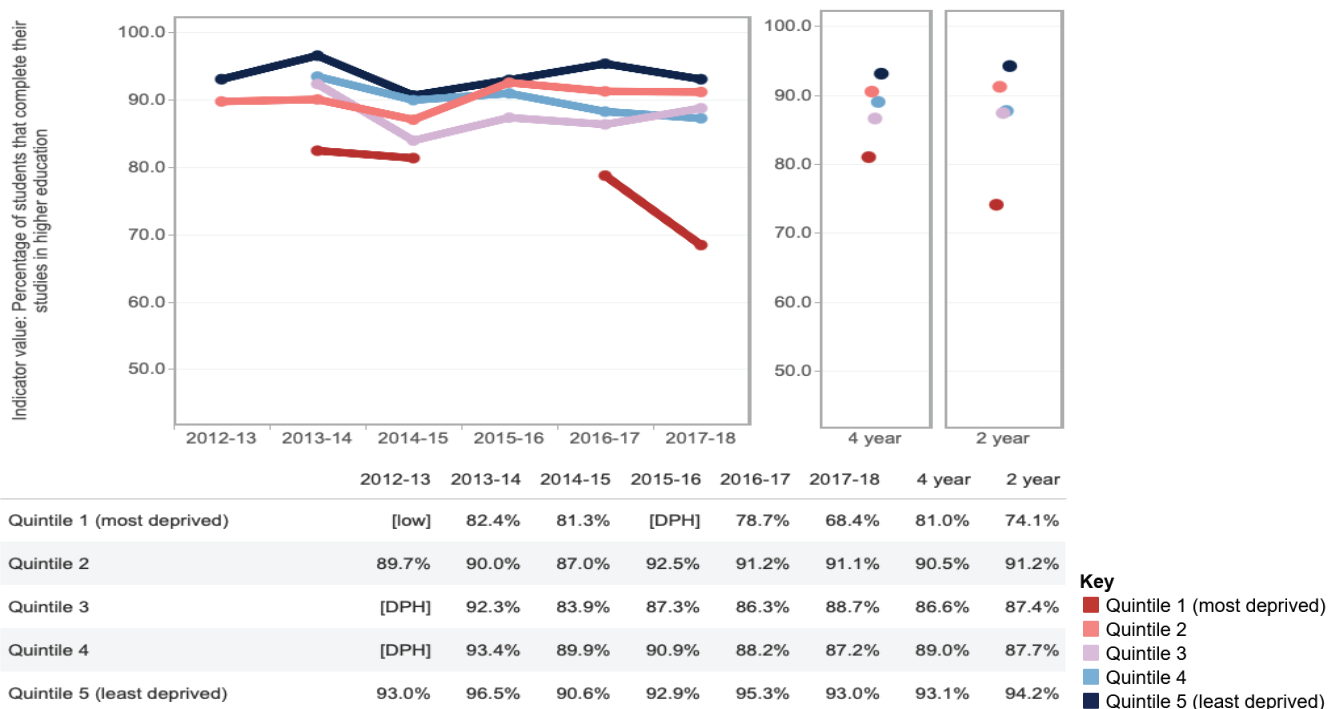
## Completion

This section provides Leeds Conservatoire’s performance in completion of students from the OfS key target groups. Completion is measured by students completing their course, up to 6-years. Overall, Leeds Conservatoire’s completion rate of 89.1% (4-year average) is slightly higher than the sector average of 87.6% (4-year average).

## Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

Due to small numbers, some figures in individual years are suppressed but the 4-year and 2-year averages are populated for all quintiles. Here we see a persistent gap in completion between Q1 and Q5 students, with the 2-year gap being particularly stark at 20.1pp (74.1% completion for Q1 students compared to 94.2% for Q5 students). This is nearly double the sector gap for the same period (10.6pp 2-year average) and, given the most recent year of data shows a sharp decline in completion for Q1 students, this is an area of concern for us.

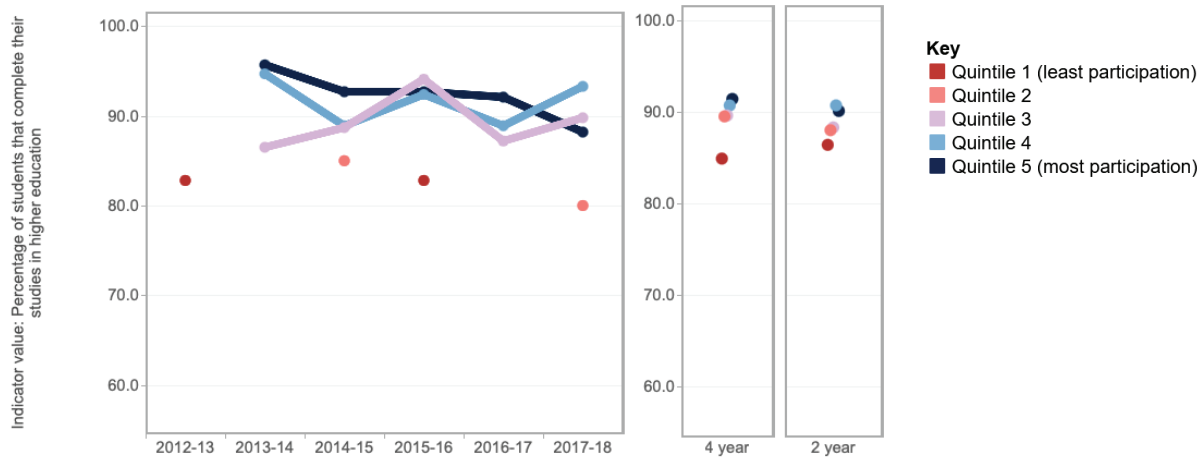
Completion indicator values for: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019)



### TUNDRA (Low Participation Neighbourhoods)

Small numbers mean many figures are suppressed for individual academic years but the 4-year and 2-year averages are populated for all quintiles. Considering the 4-year aggregate data, we note that students from TUNDRA Quintile 1 have worse completion outcomes (84.9%) than their Quintile 5 peers (91.4%). This represents a negative gap for Quintile 1 of 6.4pp. The latest 2-year aggregate data shows a more balanced performance, with the completion gap between TUNDRA Quintiles 1 and 5 closing to 3.7pp. This contrasts with the average sector performance, which shows a steady 4.9pp gap in completion over the 4-year and 2-year aggregate. With this comparable performance to the sector and the small numbers of students in Quintiles 1 and 2, we do not feel it would be appropriate to set a meaningful target in this area.

Completion indicator values for: TUNDRA quintile

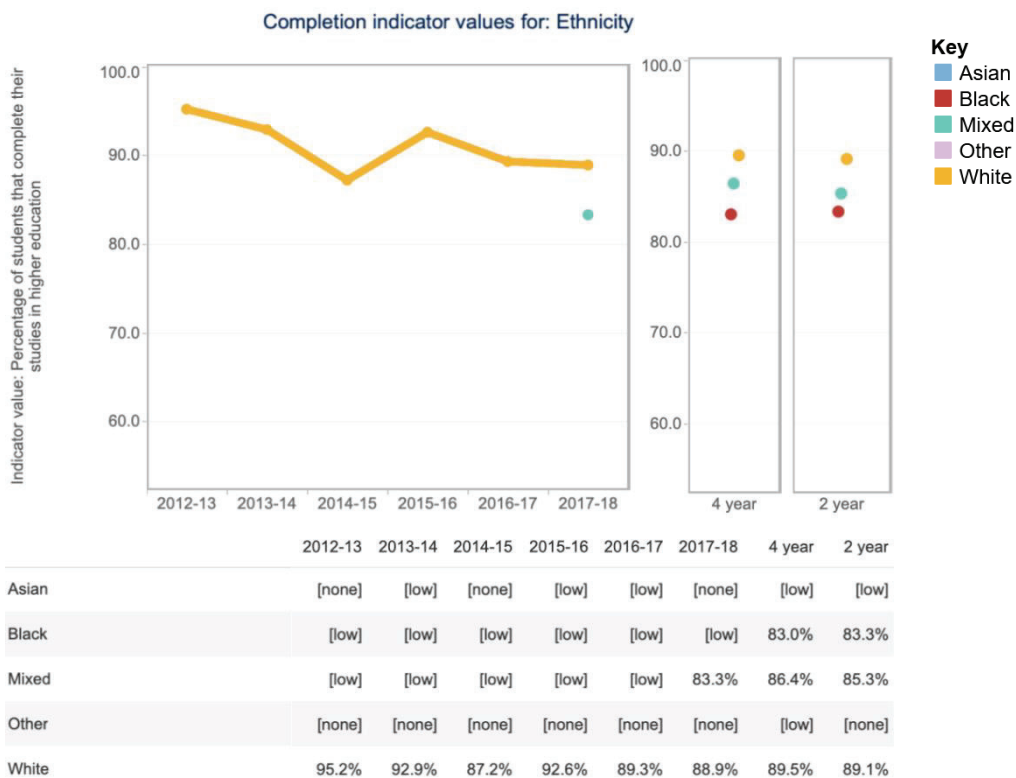


	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (least participation)	82.8%	[DPH]	[low]	82.8%	[low]	[DPH]	84.9%	86.4%
Quintile 2	[DPH]	[DPH]	85.0%	[DPH]	[DPH]	80.0%	89.5%	88.0%
Quintile 3	[DPH]	86.5%	88.7%	94.1%	87.2%	89.8%	89.6%	88.3%
Quintile 4	[DPH]	94.7%	88.9%	92.4%	88.9%	93.3%	90.7%	90.7%
Quintile 5 (most participation)	[DPH]	95.7%	92.7%	92.7%	92.1%	88.2%	91.4%	90.1%

## Students from Global Majority

Ethnicity-type data is very small, with nearly all individual academic year completion rates being suppressed for ethnicity-types other than White. The 4-year and 2-year aggregates are populated for White, Mixed, and Black students and here we see White students at Leeds Conservatoire have the highest completion outcomes of the three, sitting at 89.5% for the 4-year aggregate period. While data is very small for all ethnic groups except white ( $n < 50$  for all ethnic groups across last 4 years), we note that the worst completion rates are for Black students, at 83.0% (4-year aggregate). This represents a 6.5 percentage points (pp) gap in completion between White and Black students. By comparison, the average sector gap between White and Black students over the same aggregate period was 7.6pp.

When combining all non-White ethnicity types into one group and comparing completion outcomes, the completion gap appears to be slightly higher than the sector average over the same period, with Leeds Conservatoire showing a 4.3pp and 5.5pp completion gap for the 4-year and 2-year averages compared with a steady 3.9pp gap for the sector. Small numbers make analysis of the completion gap by ethnicity challenging; we will therefore monitor this measure, and emergent trends, as our datasets grow.



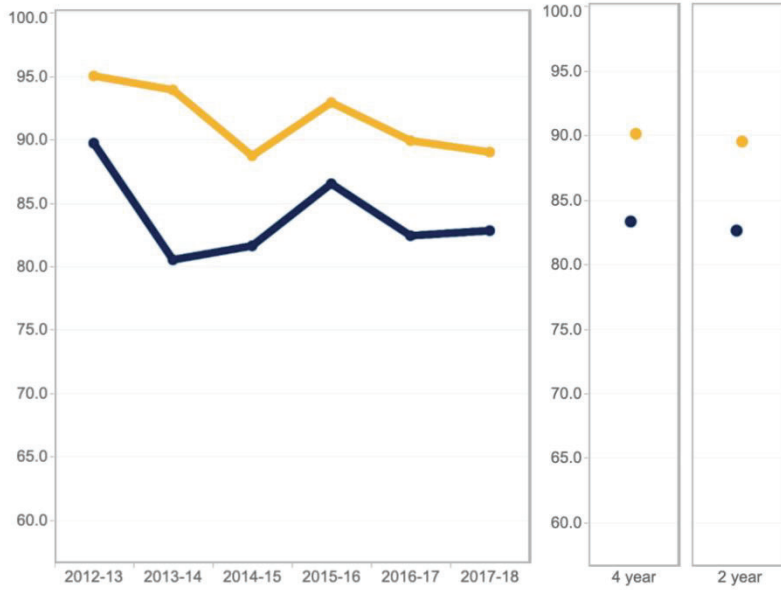
### Mature Students (21 years and over)

Young learners at Leeds Conservatoire have consistently completed at higher rates than mature learners, with a gap in continuation between these groups over the last 4-year aggregate (2014-15 to 2017-18) of 6.8 percentage points (pp). This is better than the equivalent sector figure, which shows a 9.8pp gap over the same 4-year aggregate but is still concerning.

Despite slightly better performance than the sector, and small cohort sizes, the completion gap for mature students is a concern and, given issues with continuation and attainment for this group, we will monitor this data closely and explore how best to support our mature learners to complete their degrees at Leeds Conservatoire.

Completion indicator values for: Age

Indicator value: Percentage of students that complete their studies in higher education



**Key**  
■ Mature (21 and over)  
■ Young (under 21)

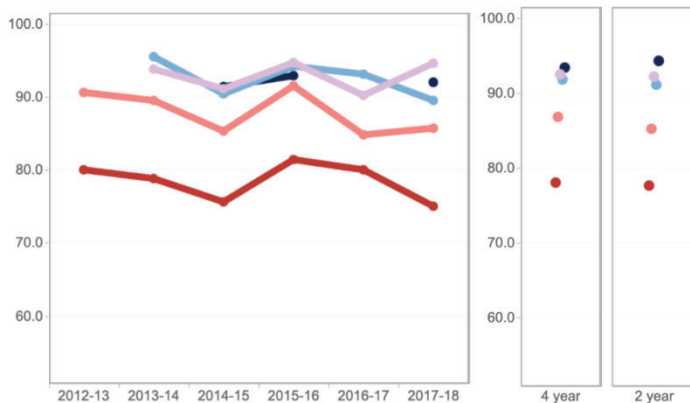
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	4 year	2 year
Mature (21 and over)	89.7%	80.5%	81.6%	86.5%	82.4%	82.8%	83.3%	82.6%
Young (under 21)	95.0%	93.9%	88.7%	92.9%	89.9%	89.0%	90.1%	89.5%

## ABCS

Some data for individual ABCS quintiles are suppressed due to small numbers in some academic years, but the 4-year and 2-year averages are populated for all quintiles. The data for 4-year aggregate suggests a 15.4 percentage point (pp) gap in completion between ABC Quintile 1 and Quintile 5. We note a similar trend in the sector average over the last 4-year aggregate, where a larger 23.2pp gap between ABC Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 is observed. Given our performance against the sector and the newness of the measure, we do not feel it would be appropriate to set a target here. However, we will closely monitor this measure in our own context, and emergent trends, as our datasets grow.

Completion indicator values for: ABCS quintile

Indicator value: Percentage of students that complete their studies in higher education

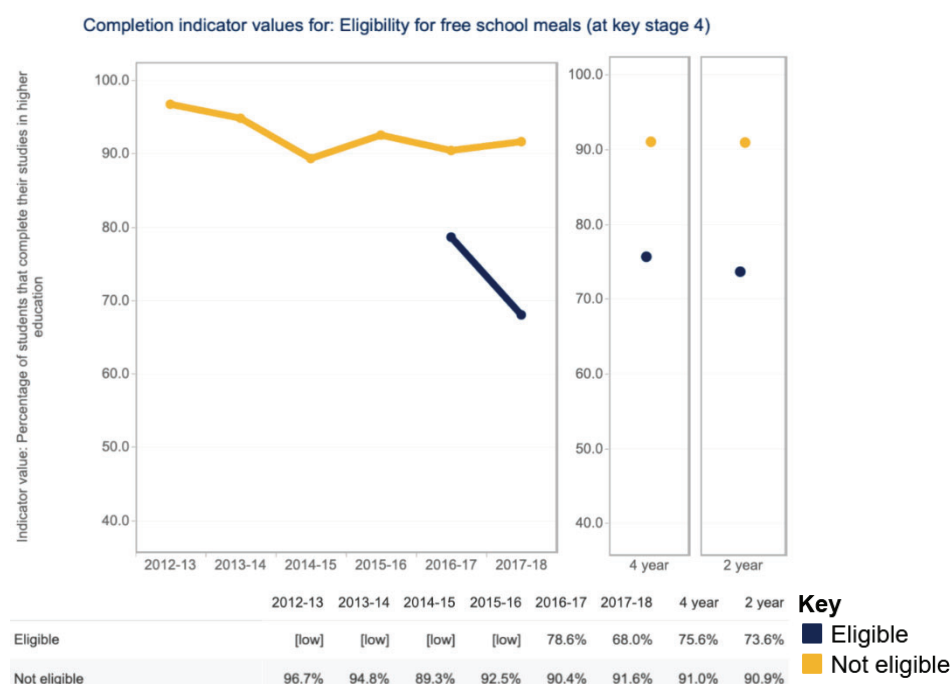


**Key**  
■ Quintile 1  
■ Quintile 2  
■ Quintile 3  
■ Quintile 4  
■ Quintile 5

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1	80.0%	78.8%	75.6%	81.4%	80.0%	75.0%	78.0%	77.6%
Quintile 2	90.6%	89.5%	85.3%	91.5%	84.8%	85.7%	86.8%	85.2%
Quintile 3	[DPH]	93.8%	91.1%	94.7%	90.2%	94.6%	92.5%	92.2%
Quintile 4	[DPH]	95.5%	90.4%	94.2%	93.1%	89.5%	91.8%	91.1%
Quintile 5	[DPH]	[DPH]	91.4%	92.9%	[DPH]	92.0%	93.4%	94.3%

## Students Eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4

There is a gap (15.4pp) in the 4-year aggregate completion outcomes between FSM-eligible students and non-eligible students. This is worse than the average sector gap over the same aggregate period, which was 7.7pp. However, Leeds Conservatoire FSM eligible student cohort sizes are very small ( $n = <30$  in any year), and this makes meaningful analysis in this measure difficult. Again, we consider these data too small to prioritise as it would be very difficult to set a meaningful target at this time. However, given our FSM access target, this is an area for close monitoring as our intake and datasets grow.



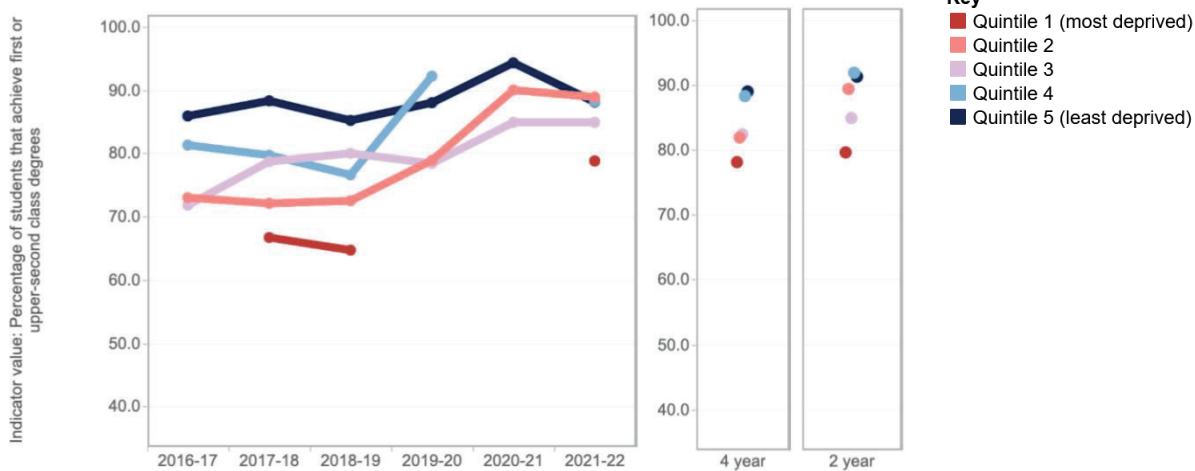
## Attainment

This section provides Leeds Conservatoire’s performance in respect of attainment for students from the OfS key target groups. Attainment is measured as students who achieve a First or 2:1 degree outcome. Overall, attainment rates at Leeds Conservatoire are 85.4% (4-year average), which is higher than the sector rate for the same period which sits at 80.5% (4-year average).

## Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

Students from IMD Quintile 1 have consistently lower attainment outcomes (First or 2:1 degree awards) than their Quintile 5 peers over the latest 4-year aggregate period (2018-19 to 2021-22). The attainment gap between students in Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 over this time is 10.9pp. However, Quintile 1 cohorts are very small ( $n = <40$  students) across each year and several academic years have suppressed data due to small numbers. The average sector gap for attainment rates between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 is 16.9pp (4-year aggregate). However, we remain concerned about this area given the persistent gap along with our access target for IMD Quintile 1. Therefore, this is a priority area under this Plan.

Attainment indicator values for: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019)

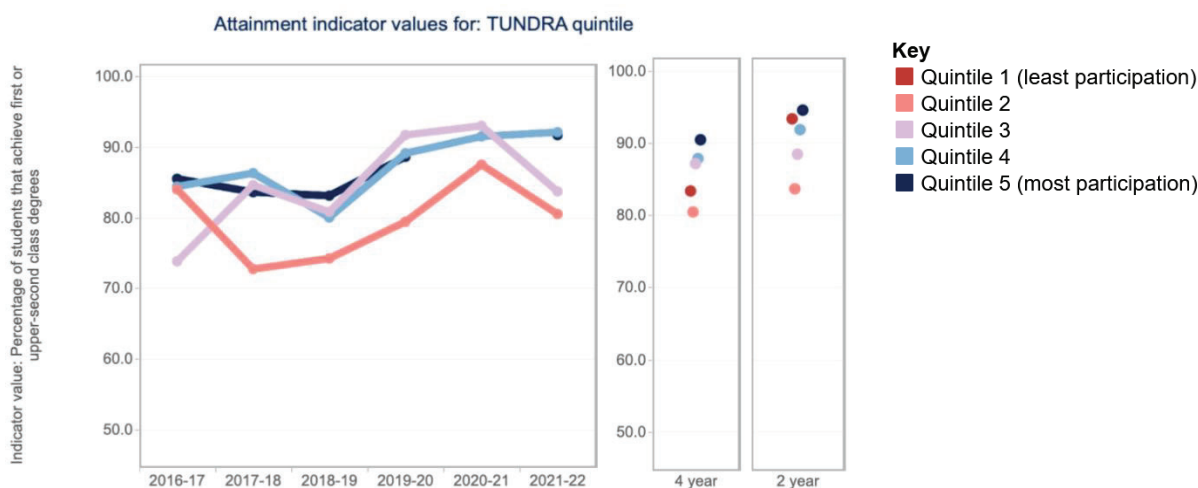


	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (most deprived)	[low]	66.7%	64.7%	[DPH]	[low]	78.8%	78.1%	79.6%
Quintile 2	73.0%	72.1%	72.5%	78.9%	90.0%	88.9%	81.9%	89.4%
Quintile 3	71.8%	78.7%	80.0%	78.4%	84.9%	84.9%	82.4%	84.9%
Quintile 4	81.3%	79.7%	76.6%	92.2%	[DPH]	88.2%	88.3%	91.9%
Quintile 5 (least deprived)	85.9%	88.3%	85.2%	88.0%	94.3%	88.1%	89.0%	91.3%

### TUNDRA (Low Participation Neighbourhoods)

Data by TUNDRA quintiles is very small and therefore suppressed for annual performance across TUNDRA Quintiles 1. However, considering the 4-year aggregate data, we note that students from TUNDRA Quintile 1 have worse attainment outcomes (83.3%) than their Quintile 5 peers (90.4%). This represents an attainment gap of 7.0pp. This is slightly worse than the sector figure, which shows a 5.8pp gap in attainment over the 4-year aggregate.

However, the 2-year average suggests that the attainment gap has closed considerably at Leeds Conservatoire as the gap between TUNDRA Q1 and Q5 has narrowed to 1.1pp. Over the same period, the sector attainment gap has widened to 6.2pp. Some of this may be due to the volatility inherent in measuring outcomes for small numbers of Q1 students but it remains encouraging. Due to the small numbers here and recent improvement in the gap, this is not an area where we intend to set a target but will continue to monitor closely.



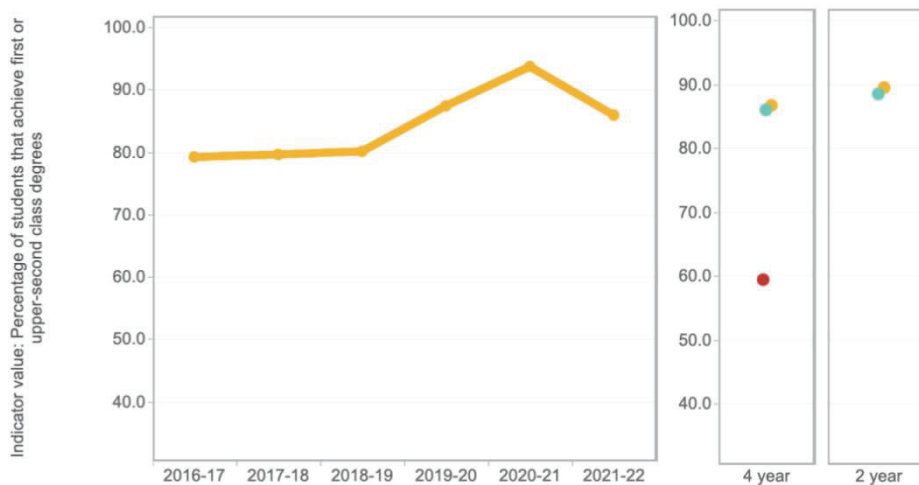
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (least participation)	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[DPH]	83.3%	93.3%
Quintile 2	84.0%	72.7%	74.2%	79.4%	87.5%	80.5%	80.4%	83.6%
Quintile 3	73.8%	84.6%	80.8%	91.7%	93.0%	83.7%	87.1%	88.4%
Quintile 4	84.4%	86.3%	80.0%	89.1%	91.5%	92.1%	87.8%	91.8%
Quintile 5 (most participation)	85.5%	83.6%	83.1%	88.6%	[DPH]	91.7%	90.4%	94.5%

## Students from Global Majority

Ethnicity data is very small ( $n \leq 30$  in each ethnic grouping, each year), with most annual data across the ethnic groupings being subject to suppression. While the data is extremely small, the 4-year average has an attainment rate for White, Black, and Mixed ethnicity students. Here we see that White students at Leeds Conservatoire have the highest attainment outcomes (86.7%) over the 4-year aggregate period. While data is very small for all ethnic groups except white ( $n < 50$  for all ethnic groups across the last 4 years, 2018-19 to 2021-22), we note that the worst outcomes are for Black students, at 59.4% (4-year aggregate, 2018-19 to 2021-22). This represents a 27.3pp gap in attainment outcomes between White and Black students. By comparison, the average sector attainment gap over the same aggregate period for Black students is 20.2pp.

By combining all ethnicities except White into one group, we can calculate an attainment rate for the 4-year aggregate, which is 73.5%. This represents an attainment gap of 13.2pp which is larger than the average sector figure of 11.3pp. Given the ethnicity degree awarding gap is a national concern, coupled with the enduring gap at Leeds Conservatoire and our access target to increase our proportion of entrants from the Global Majority, this is a priority area under this Plan.

Attainment indicator values for: Ethnicity



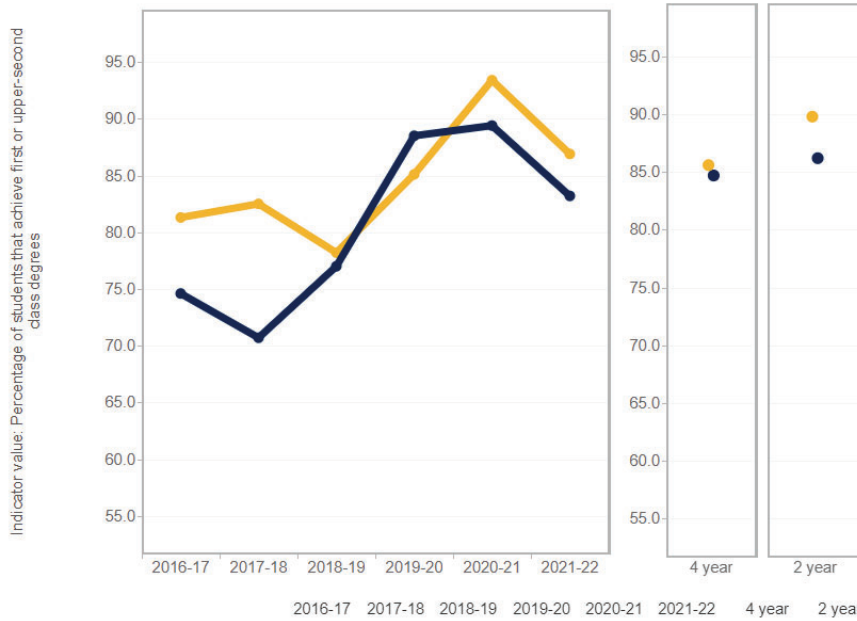
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Asian	[none]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Black	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	59.4%	[low]
Mixed	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	86.0%	88.5%
Other	[none]	[none]	[none]	[none]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
White	79.2%	79.6%	80.1%	87.4%	93.7%	85.9%	86.7%	89.5%

## Disabled Students

When considering attainment by all students reporting a disability compared with students with no disability reported, we see a small gap which has closed and then widened again over the 6-year period analysed – 0.9pp gap at the 4-year average widening to 3.7pp for the 2-year average. This contrasts with the sector figures which have shown the gap close almost entirely over the same period.

Data by specific disability type is very small and often suppressed for annual performance data and aggregate data for some groups. Considering the available 4-year aggregate data by disability type, we note that students with cognitive or learning difficulties have the lowest attainment rates (82.4%). The gap in attainment between this group and students with no disability is 3.2pp. This should be investigated further as continuation and completion rates for this group are on a par with or better than their peers with no declared disability. However, because cohort sizes are extremely small, it is difficult to make further meaningful assessment at the disaggregated level. We will continue to closely monitor this area but do not propose a target at this time.

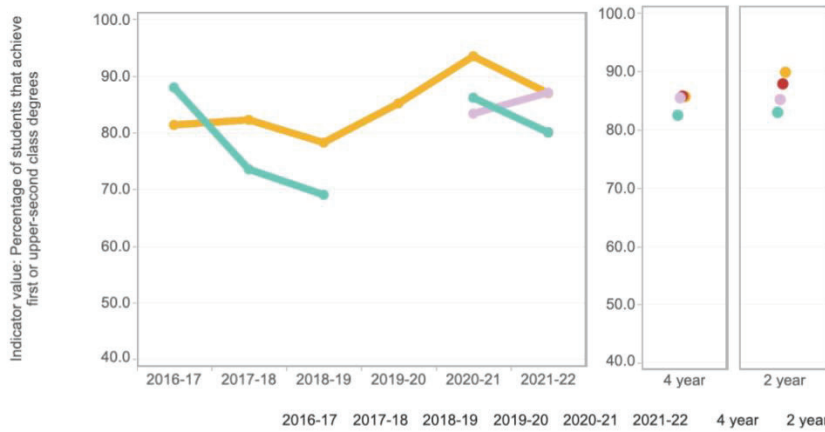
Attainment indicator values for: Disability



	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Disability reported	74.6%	70.7%	77.0%	88.5%	89.4%	83.2%	84.7%	86.2%
No disability reported	81.3%	82.5%	78.2%	85.1%	93.4%	86.9%	85.6%	89.8%

**Key**  
■ Disability reported  
■ No disability reported

Attainment indicator values for: Disability type



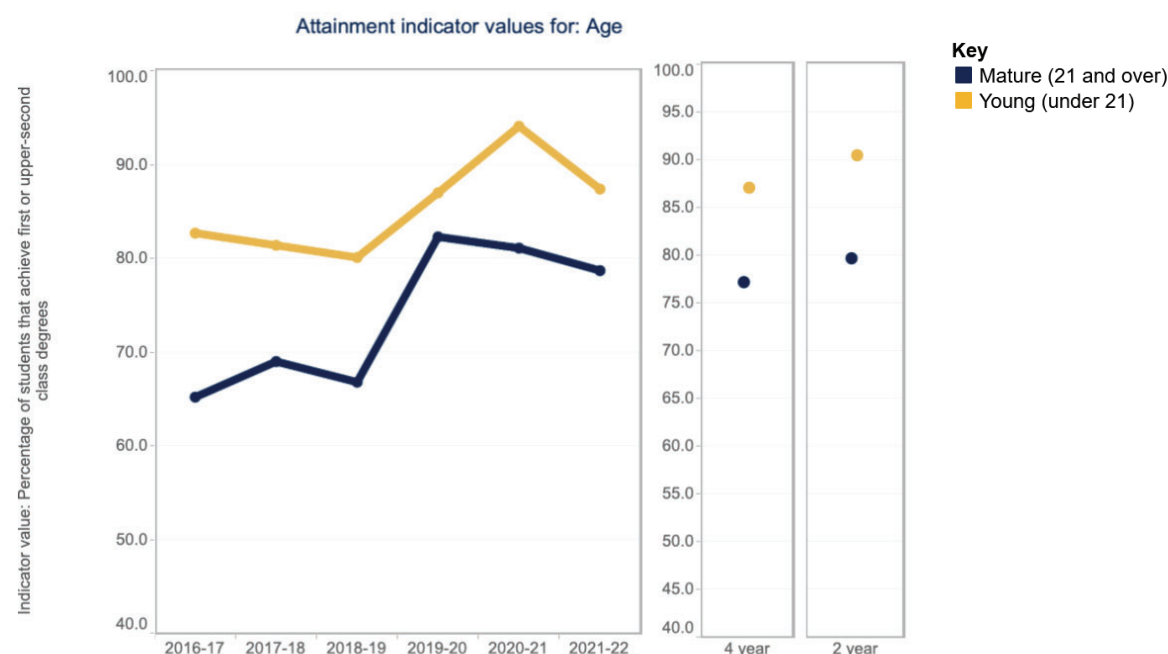
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Cognitive or learning difficulties	87.9%	73.5%	69.0%	[DPH]	86.1%	80.0%	82.4%	82.9%
Mental health condition	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	83.3%	87.0%	85.4%	85.1%
Multiple impairments	[none]	[none]	[low]	[low]	[DPH]	80.0%	85.7%	87.8%
No disability reported	81.3%	82.2%	78.2%	85.1%	93.4%	86.9%	85.6%	89.8%
Sensory, medical or physical impairment	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[DPH]	[low]
Social or communication impairment	[low]	[low]	[low]	[none]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]

**Key**  
■ Cognitive or learning difficulties  
■ Mental health condition  
■ Multiple impairments  
■ Sensory, medical or physical impairment  
■ Social or communication impairment  
■ No disability reported

## Mature Students (21 years and over)

Leeds Conservatoire has an attainment gap between Young and Mature learners over the period examined, with mature learners consistently less likely to achieve a good degree outcome. The gap has narrowed in that time, down from 17.5 pp (2016-17) to 8.7 pp (2020-21) which is encouraging. This was at a time when the sector attainment gap by age remained largely steady between 10-11pp.

Despite the progress made, this attainment gap remains a concern and, given issues identified for this group on continuation and completion, we will monitor this data closely and explore how best to support our mature learners to achieve good degree outcomes at Leeds Conservatoire.

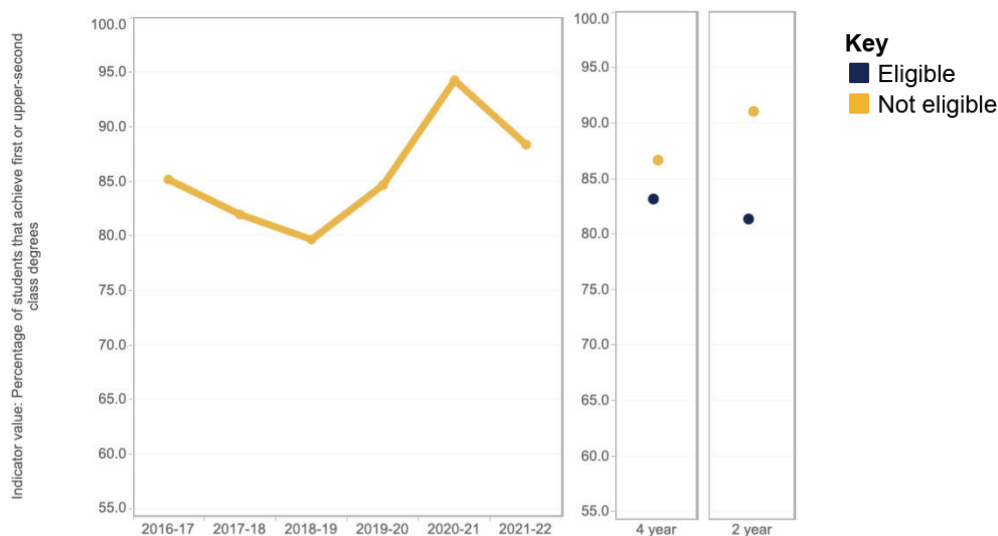


	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Mature (21 and over)	65.1%	68.9%	66.7%	82.2%	81.0%	78.6%	77.1%	79.6%
Young (under 21)	82.6%	81.3%	80.0%	86.9%	94.0%	87.3%	87.0%	90.4%

## Students Eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4

There is a gap (3.5pp) in the 4-year aggregate attainment outcomes between FSM-eligible students and non-eligible students. This is better than the average sector gap over the same aggregate period, which was 11.5pp. The 2-year aggregate for attainment outcomes shows the gap has widened to 9.8pp for Leeds Conservatoire, bringing it closer to the sector (11.3pp) for the same period. This is concerning but the cohort sizes are very small which increases the volatility of the figures ( $n < 25$  each year). Given the small numbers, we will continue to monitor the figures closely as more data emerges.

Attainment indicator values for: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4)



	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	4 year	2 year
Eligible	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	83.1%	81.3%
Not eligible	85.1%	81.9%	79.6%	84.6%	94.2%	88.3%	86.6%	91.0%

## Progression

This section provides Leeds Conservatoire’s performance in the progression of students from the OfS key target groups. Progression is measured as graduation into further post-graduate study, or into highly skilled/ professional or managerial employment outcomes.

Overall, Leeds Conservatoire’s progression rate into these destinations is 74.1% (4-year average) which is slightly higher than the sector figures for the same period (72.6%).

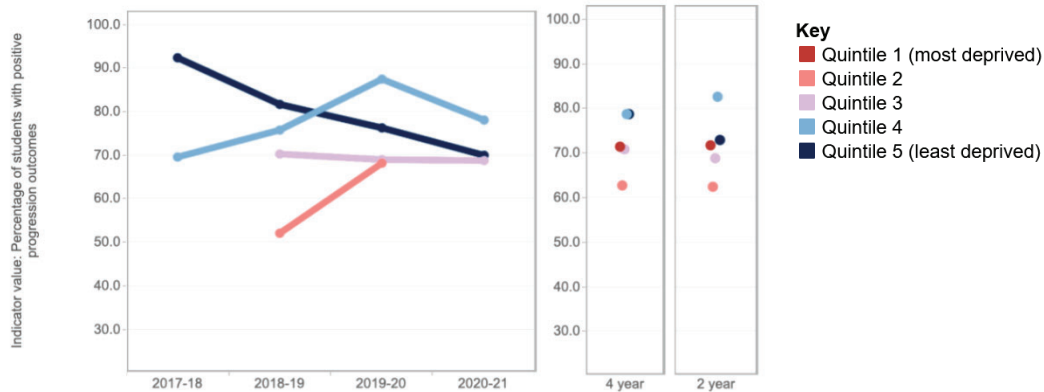
Due to the nature of the industries in which our students work, Graduate Outcomes data is not a reliable source to the extent of their success. Our students leave us as successful artists in their own right and, in line with our ambitions, our students pursue a variety of careers in many disciplines whilst still carrying music and performing arts as a valuable and enriching part of their lives.

The data available for this stage in the student lifecycle is significantly limited. As we work through this plan, we will endeavour to bolster this data and look to collaborating with our peer arts institutions to establish a more helpful definition of graduate success for those pursuing careers in the arts sector.

## Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

Most annual progression data by IMD Quintile for Leeds Conservatoire is suppressed due to small numbers. The 4-year aggregate performance data shows a gap in progression outcomes between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5, at 7.3pp, a gap that narrows in the 2-year aggregate gap to just 1.2pp. This performance is better than the average sector performance, where a gap of 10.3pp over the last 4-year aggregate data is observed. Numbers for Quintile 1 students are extremely small however, with 20 or fewer students in each year of data available. Given the small numbers and narrowing gap it would not be appropriate to set any targets here at this time.

Indicator values for progression into professional or managerial employment, further study or other positive outcomes: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019)

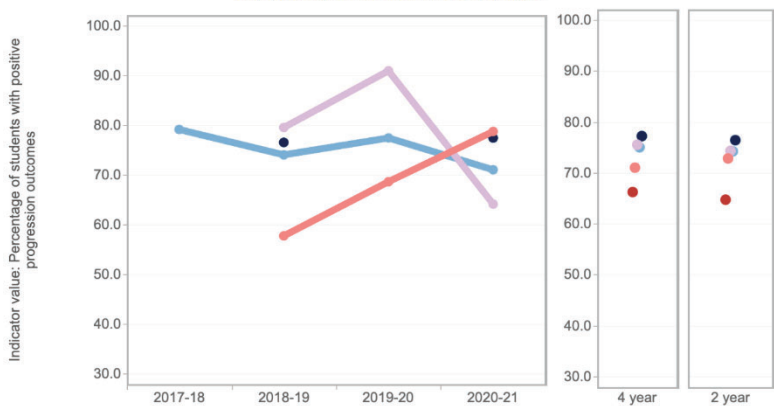


	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (most deprived)	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	71.3%	71.6%
Quintile 2	[low]	51.9%	68.0%	[low]	62.6%	62.3%
Quintile 3	[low]	70.1%	68.8%	68.6%	70.7%	68.7%
Quintile 4	69.4%	75.6%	87.3%	77.9%	78.6%	82.5%
Quintile 5 (least deprived)	92.2%	81.5%	76.1%	69.8%	78.6%	72.8%

## ABCS

Data for the ABC measure is extremely small (n = <20 for Quintile 1 in each year over last 4 years) and is not reportable annually for all quintiles. Given this context, and the newness of this measure, we do not consider this analysis meaningful at this time. While the data for 4-year aggregate suggests an 11pp gap in progression between ABC Quintile 1 and Quintile 5, we consider these data too small to draw conclusions. We also note a similar trend in the sector average over the last 4-year aggregate, where a larger 21.4pp gap is observed.

Indicator values for progression into professional or managerial employment, further study or other positive outcomes: ABCS quintile



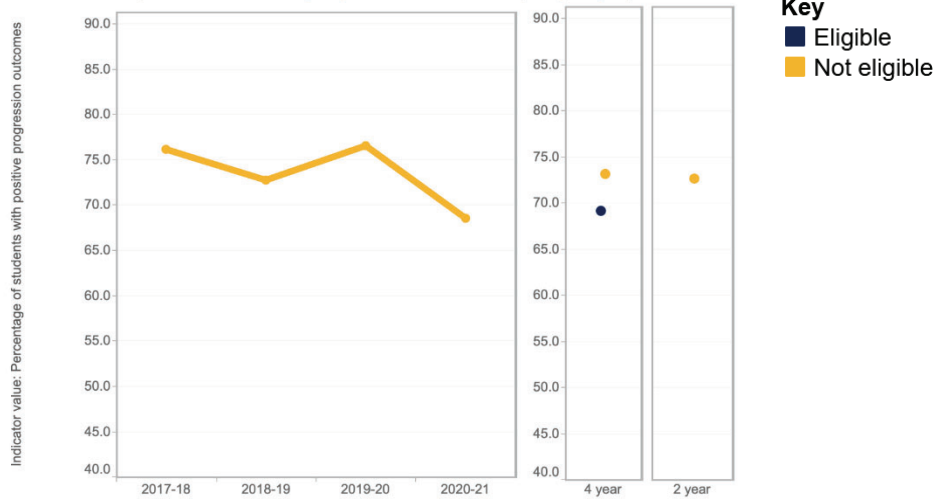
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	66.2%	64.7%
Quintile 2	[low]	57.7%	68.6%	78.7%	71.0%	72.8%
Quintile 3	[low]	79.5%	90.9%	64.1%	75.5%	74.3%
Quintile 4	79.1%	74.0%	77.4%	71.0%	75.0%	74.2%
Quintile 5	[low]	76.5%	[low]	77.4%	77.2%	76.4%

**Key**  
■ Quintile 1  
■ Quintile 2  
■ Quintile 3  
■ Quintile 4  
■ Quintile 5

## Students Eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4

Data for this measure is very small and annual data is suppressed and not reportable for eligible students (n<20 FSM students in each year). There is a gap (4pp) in the 4-year aggregate progression outcomes between FSM eligible students and non-eligible students. This is smaller than the average sector gap over the same aggregate period, which was 6.9pp. Again, we consider these data too small, and it would be very difficult to set a meaningful target at this time.

Indicator values for progression into professional or managerial employment, further study or other positive outcomes: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4)



	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	4 year	2 year
Eligible	[none]	[low]	[low]	[low]	69.1%	[low]
Not eligible	76.1%	72.7%	76.5%	68.5%	73.1%	72.6%

## Summary of Target Areas

We have used the initial performance assessment above and the emerging indicators of risk (i.e. measures where our performance is weak) to signpost to the priority areas for further investigation and/or including as target areas in the new Access and Participation Plan (APP). In summary, these areas are:

### Access

- Students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds (IMD Quintiles 1 and 2) compared to their most advantaged peers (IMD Quintile 5).
- FSM-eligible students
- Students from the Global Majority

### Continuation

- No targets set for continuation.

### Completion

- Students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds (IMD Quintiles 1 and 2) compared to their most advantaged peers (IMD Quintile 5).

### Attainment

- Students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds (IMD Quintiles 1 and 2) compared to their most advantaged peers (IMD Quintile 5).
- Students from the Global majority

### Progression

- Data is unavailable or too small to set meaningful targets here.

## Areas for Continued Monitoring

The priority areas for continued monitoring are:

- Global majority continuation and attainment
- TUNDRA attainment gap
- FSM continuation and attainment gap
- Mature learners across all lifecycle stages

## Risks to Equality of Opportunity

We have considered the identified indicators of risk against the national Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR). This highlights 12 risks that are of national concern, and which are more likely to affect students with particular characteristics.

### Access (Pre-Enrolment)

The first five (5) Risks on the EORR relate to the Access (pre-enrolment) area, and we note that all 5 risks are generally more likely to have an impact on outcomes for the target groups we have identified in relation to enrolment outcomes (disadvantaged students, measured by IMD and FSM; and, students from the Global Majority). We have therefore considered all 5 Risks in relation to our context at Leeds Conservatoire, and in consultation with our community of staff and students.

The following information provides a summary of our context in relation to each risk, and considerations of whether it is occurring and potentially the cause of the indicators of risk (i.e. poor performance) we have identified. Further information can also be found in references in the main Access and Participation Plan and in Annex B.

#### Risk 1 – Knowledge and Skills

It is noted that applicants from our target groups will potentially have had fewer experiences which support their knowledge and skill development to access higher education, it is then even more likely that they will not have the skills and knowledge to enter a specialist music and drama provider. We know this from our experiences working with schools and colleges, as well as from literature but due to the systematic devaluing of creative subjects in state-funded compulsory education, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds have significantly less access to music and art prior to university than their more affluent peers. Work by Ashton and Ashton (2023) discusses the disparity in access to creative subjects between learners in private schools and learners in state-funded schools.

Evidence from [Campaign for the Arts](#) shows a significant decrease in children's access to music and drama in schools since 2010, decreasing by up to 48% in Primary schools and 23% in secondary schools. In addition, the [Arts Council England's](#) plans to reshape Music Education Hubs from a local context to a regional context, further stretch the support available to teachers.

The conservatoire will ensure that our intervention strategies for access will seek to improve this whilst recognising that the impact will be limited due to the need for sustained and regular specialist training.

#### Risk 2 – Information and Guidance

Information and Guidance for accessing specialist providers is often lacking in schools and colleges. The process of applying to study at a conservatoire does differ from the typical UCAS application, often the separate UCAS Conservatoires system is used, which brings along additional considerations such as an earlier application deadline. Some conservatoires may also choose to accept direct applications bypassing UCAS. Sound understanding of these key differences is often lacking in schools, especially where they haven't had a student apply to a conservatoire before. Since the careers education reforms in 2012 (Holman 2014, Chadderton 2015), many schools lost their impartial specialist CEIAG advisor and along with them knowledge of the wider higher education context. In addition, the use of auditions as part of the application process and the knowledge of what providers look for can also be something that is missing as a school may only provide guidance on the more typical application process.

There is also a lack of understanding of a typical career in the arts at compulsory education level. Students often associate a career in music or drama as something that doesn't pay well or is additional work alongside a main career. Some may even only view the arts as simply a hobby. Often only limited information about alternative career paths or portfolio careers is provided due to a lack of knowledge by those advising schools. It should be noted that this is not the same in all schools but there is a great disparity in the quality of careers education in compulsory education (Thompson, 2020).

The conservatoire's intervention strategies must include robust information and guidance opportunities for the applicants we interact with as well as for key decision influencers such as parents and teachers/advisors.

### **Risk 3 – Perceptions of Higher Education**

There is a longstanding perception that a degree in an arts subject is the reserve of the elite and affluent. Learners from the global majority or low socioeconomic backgrounds are often discouraged from pursuing an arts career and degree in favour of courses which are perceived to guarantee a steady income and stable career, and these perceptions are only bolstered by reports from the Musician's Census (2023) and Arts Council England (2021) when examining the makeup of the workforce in our creative industries.

Sense of belonging is crucial to ensuring a successful transition from applicant to enrolled student. Our access intervention strategies must utilise role models from a diverse range of backgrounds where possible to enable perceptions to improve.

### **Risk 4 – Application Success Rates**

Due to the nature of our provision, we utilise auditions as part of our application process, we recognise that auditioning may be a barrier to some applicants, either through costs or through a lack of experience in auditioning. We already do not charge an audition fee like most other arts specialists however we must do more to demystify the audition process and enable applicants to feel confident. Through consultation with staff and students at the conservatoire, it was considered that this risk was not as pressing for our students and potential applicants.

### **Risk 5 – Limited Choice of Course Type and Delivery Mode**

The conservatoire is limited in some aspects of this risk due to our size and our delivery model, however, we do already offer most of our music provision with a foundation year. Over the course of this plan, we are exploring our course offering with an application for Degree Awarding Powers in progress so we will endeavour to make sure future provision is varied and will explore the potential for a range of delivery modes. Given our current external validation and our steps towards DAPs, this risk was not considered a priority for the conservatoire as we are already seeking to vary our current offer.

## **On-Course (Student Success)**

The remaining Risks on the EORR relate to the on-course and progression areas, and we note that all these risks (7) are generally more likely to have an impact on outcomes for the target groups we have identified in relation to attainment and completion outcomes (disadvantaged students, measured by IMD; and, students from the Global Majority). Again, we have therefore considered all 7 Risks in relation to our context at Leeds Conservatoire, and in consultation with our community of staff and students.

The following information provides a summary of our context in relation to each risk, and considerations of whether it is occurring and potentially the cause of the indicators of risk (i.e. poor performance) we have identified. Further information can also be found in references in the main Access and Participation Plan, and in Annex B.

### **Risk 6 – Insufficient Academic Support and Risk 7 – Insufficient Personal Support**

Due to our small cohort sizes and our delivery model, all of our students receive small group teaching with most also receiving 1-1 tuition. This allows our students and staff to build excellent working relationships and allows for academic issues to be dealt with swiftly. Therefore Risk 6 was not considered to be pertinent at the conservatoire. This may not be the case for all our students though so we will continue to monitor this risk.

Risk 7 was seen to be of particular importance to our students and staff. Due to the impact of rising living costs (Risk 10) and an above-average number of students declaring a disability - a significant proportion of these relating to mental health conditions or neurodivergence (Risk 8) – an increasing number of students are seeking support during their studies. As a smaller institution, the capacity to deliver personal support is often limited and therefore our ability to offer some services that may be readily available at a typical-sized institution is also limited. Despite service capacity issues, in the 2023 National Student survey, 80.5% of Leeds Conservatoire students said they were well aware of the support available to them, which is 5% higher than the sector benchmark.

### **Risk 8 – Mental Health**

As previously mentioned, the conservatoire has an above-average proportion of students declaring a disability, with a significant percentage of these students reporting mental health conditions. Given the current cost of living situation in the UK, students who would normally not consider themselves to have a mental health condition are experiencing high levels of stress and worry.

Given the nature of our courses, performance is an expectation for many of our students so we often see many students dealing with performance anxiety. There are also several ‘pinch points’ in our academic calendar where a number of assessments occur within quick succession which may cause some students challenges. Across the UK, the NHS’ mental health services are stretched with extremely high volumes of need so our students may not be able to access the professional mental health services they need to cope with the requirements of study.

### **Risk 9 – Ongoing Impacts of Coronavirus**

Students may be affected by the ongoing consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. Students joining the conservatoire over the next few years will have experienced disjointed and disrupted educational experiences prior to enrolment. This will have impacted students in a multitude of ways, for example at the conservatoire we have seen quite a varied group of students choosing to withdraw from or suspend their studies with no clear pattern or trend in terms of background characteristics, so there should be no one size fits all approach to addressing this. Teaching and support services may need to be adapted to respond to this but should maintain high expectations to ensure students can progress successfully into employment or further study.

### **Risk 10 – Cost Pressures**

Increases in cost pressures may affect a student’s ability to complete their course or obtain a good grade. The Student Academic Experience Survey 2023 delivered by Advance HE and HEPI<sup>9</sup> notes there has been a 10% rise in the number of students in paid employment since 2022. Annually, our Fees and Funding team surveys students to understand our student body’s financial situation, in our most recent survey (2024), 61% of respondents said their maintenance loan was not enough to cover their accommodation costs with 66% of respondents stating they had to supplement their income from other sources of funding.

The conservatoire should continue to undertake this analysis to understand this situation for our students as well as audit our financial support initiatives to ensure we are offering the best and most effective support, with particular insight being sought on the experiences of students from IMD Quintile 1 or the Global Majority.

### **Risk 11 – Capacity Issues**

As in most small providers, space is always at a premium at Leeds Conservatoire. The availability of specialist spaces is finite which may pose issues for students who lack suitable practice space at home or in their accommodation. We provide a loan service for specialist equipment and instruments though do not have an endless supply so at busier times some items may not be available. Students traditionally supply their instruments however these are costly so

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<sup>9</sup> Student Academic Experience Survey 2023. Advance HE. <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/student-academic-experience-survey-2023>

students from low-income backgrounds may only have access to second-hand instruments. Issues at present are sporadic and we are able to support students on an individual basis when they present. This is not a priority risk for the conservatoire but we will monitor the impact and build it into our internal strategies going forward.

## Annex B: Intervention Strategies Evidence Base

### Intervention Strategy 1

IS1 brings together a myriad of sector-level research and thinking alongside a wealth of professional experience by our Access and Participation, Student Recruitment, Junior Conservatoire and Academic staff.

### Summary of Underpinning Evidence

Evidence	Rationale
TASO. (2023). Rapid Review to support the development of the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk">Rapid review to support development of the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (officeforstudents.org.uk)</a>	Evidence to suggest that our target groups are at risk for equal opportunity
Ashton, H and Ashton, D. (2023) Creativity and the curriculum: educational apartheid in 21 <sup>st</sup> Century England, a European outlier? <i>International Journal of Cultural Policy</i> ,29:4,484-499, DOI: 10.1080/10286632.2022.2058497	Discussion on the access to arts in state and private secondary education
Strand, S. (2014). School effects and ethnic, gender and socio-economic gaps in educational achievement at age 11. <i>Oxford Review of Education</i> ,40(2), 223-245.	Discussion on school contexts and the effectiveness of compulsory education providers
Reay, D. (2017) <i>Miseducation: Inequality, education and the working classes</i> . Policy Press, Bristol.	Discussion on the disparity between the educational experiences of those attending state-funded and private education in England
Gartland, C. (2015) Student Ambassadors: ‘role models’, learning practices and identities. <i>British Journal of Sociology of Education</i> , 36(8), 1192-1211.	Evidence to support the positive impact of student ambassadors in outreach work
Austin, M., & Hatt, S. (2005). The Messengers are the message: A study of the effects of employing higher education student ambassadors to work with school students. <i>Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning</i> , 7(1), 1-8.	Evidence to support the positive impact of student ambassadors in outreach work
TASO Toolkit - <a href="#">Aspiration-raising interventions (pre-entry) - TASO</a>	Evidence for a range of outreach interventions
Hughes, D., Mann, A., Barnes, S. A., Baldauf, B., & McKeown, R. (2016). <i>Careers Education: International Literature Review</i> . EEF.	Discussion of the quality of careers education in state-funded secondary education
Fuller, c., McCrum, E., & Macfadyen, T. (2014). Teachers’ knowledge and experiences of information and guidance: Some implications for the current policy context in England. <i>Education Enquiry</i> , 5(2), 23922.	Discussion on the varied experiences of teachers in secondary schools regarding careers education
Haynes, G., McCrone, T., & Wade, P. (2013). Young people’s decision-making: The importance of high-quality school-based careers education, information, advice and guidance. <i>Research Papers in Education</i> , 28(4),459-482.	Discussion on the quality of careers guidance in schools
Great Britain. Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). (2009). <i>Quality, choice and aspiration: a strategy for young people’s information, advice and guidance</i> .	Review and recommendations on careers guidance in schools
Thompson, D. W. (2020). Aspirations and ambiguities – the need for focused IAG for school pupils considering progression to higher education (HE). <i>Journal of Further and Higher Education</i> ., 44(7), 911-924.	Discussion around the quality of careers education in schools and the link with aspirations to study in HE
Garforth, G. (2016). <i>School control of information, advice and guidance during transition: a two-year study into post-16 student decision-making</i> (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Nottingham).	Discussion around the impact of a school’s preferences regarding their students’ aspirations and trajectory
Chadderton, C. (2015). <i>The New Statutory Requirements in Careers Guidance in England and the Implications for Careers Provision under the Coalition Government</i> . <i>London Review of Education</i> ., 13(2), 84-97.	Discussion of impact of changes to IAG provision in schools since 2012
Holman, J. (2014). <i>Good Career Guidance</i> . <a href="https://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/reports/pdf/gatsby-sir-john-holman-good-career-guidance-2014.pdf">https://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/reports/pdf/gatsby-sir-john-holman-good-career-guidance-2014.pdf</a>	Review of careers guidance in schools and recommendations for best practice

Good Career Guidance. The Gatsby Benchmarks. <a href="https://www.goodcareerguidance.org.uk/benchmarks-and-background">https://www.goodcareerguidance.org.uk/benchmarks-and-background</a>	Careers guidance framework in state-funded secondary education in England
O'Shea, S. (2021). "Kids from here don't go to uni": Considering first in family students' belonging and entitlement within the field of higher education in Australia. <i>European Journal of Education</i> , 56(1), 65-77.	Discussion on sense of belonging for 'working-class' students in Australia
Reay, D., David, M. E., & Ball, S. J. (2005). <i>Degrees of choice: Class, race, gender and higher education</i> . Trentham books.	Discussion on the experiences of students from underrepresented groups in HE
Reay, D. (2001). Finding or losing yourself?. Working-class relationships to education. <i>Journal of Education Policy</i> , 16(4), 333-346.	Discussion on 'working-class' perspectives of education
Reay, D., Crozier, G., & Clayton, J. (2010). 'Fitting in' or 'standing out': Working-class students in UK higher education. <i>British Educational Research Journal</i> , 36(1), 107-124.	Discussion on sense of belonging for 'working-class' students in HE
Whitty, G. (2001). Education, social class and social exclusion. <i>Journal of Education Policy</i> , 16(4), 287-295.	Discussion on the interplay between social class and education
Moore, J., Sanders, J., & Higham, L. (2013). Literature review of research into widening participation to higher education. Report to HEFCE and OFFA. AimHigher Research & Consultancy Network.	Discussion on the value of on campus activity to bring around a sense of belonging and familiarity with HE providers
Baker, Z. (2020). The vocational/academic divide in widening participation: the higher education decision making of further education students. <i>Journal of Further and Higher Education</i> , 44(6), 766-780.	Discussion on sense of belonging and familiarity
McInch, A. (2022). <i>Working-Class Schooling in Post-Industrial Britain</i> . Only Schools and Courses. Emerald Studies in the Sociology of Education. Emerald Publishing, Bingley.	Discussion on compulsory education in working class, post-industrial communities
CFE. (2019). The National Collaborative Outreach Programme. End of Phase 1 report for the national formative and impact evaluations. <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/2d55ab17-7108-4e1d-b883-6bf8d1504e72/ncop-end-of-phase-one-evaluation-report.pdf">https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/2d55ab17-7108-4e1d-b883-6bf8d1504e72/ncop-end-of-phase-one-evaluation-report.pdf</a>	Key findings and best practice from Phase 1 of NCOP (Uni Connect)
Rowland, M. (2021). <i>Addressing Educational Disadvantage in Schools and Colleges</i> . The Essex Way. John Catt Educational, Woodbridge.	Practical discussion on combatting disadvantage in schools

Thinking around the need for this intervention stemmed originally from first-hand experience alongside knowledge from existing relationships with schools and colleges across our region and further afield. A number of practices also grew from our relationship with Go Higher West Yorkshire and Uni Connect. Developing our understanding of what barriers needed to be addressed, we looked to prominent research from experts such as Reay (2001, 2005, 2010, 2017), TASO (2023), Ashton and Ashton (2023) and McInch (2022).

As a small, specialist institution, the capacity to undertake multiple interventions and connect with schools and colleges in multiple manners is difficult at best but often not achievable, so we knew that we needed to develop a programme of activity that encompassed both our institutional goals for recruitment as well as served our commitments for access.

Leeds Conservatoire Futures is our multi-faceted programme that brings together key areas of our provision in a clear and engaging brand aimed at schools and colleges. There are four key workstreams to the intervention - our partners scheme, our programmes, our online hub and our bursaries – each covering a range of topics important in the decision-making, aspiration raising, and curriculum support needed by schools and young people and often particularly absent when thinking about studying music and drama.

The partners scheme is our sustained and progressive programme which allows us to develop strong working relationships with schools and colleges. We partner on a 3-year cycle with 15 secondary and further education settings, allowing us to embed conservatoire standard teaching into areas of compulsory education which may need additional support. The need for sustained and progressive programmes was particularly highlighted in the Phase 1 review of Uni Connect (then NCOP) (CFE, 2019) which showed that these were where the most impact could be had.

Recognising that a sustained commitment isn't always the right approach for some of our school and college relationships, our programmes remain open to all settings with some programmes available to small groups and individual learners.

We offer both academic and subject skills workshops as well as careers and IAG-focussed sessions to ensure that learners have a wealth of knowledge to make informed choices for their future. In developing this aspect, we looked ensured that what we offered fit neatly alongside the multiple UK exam board curricula as well as the Gatsby Benchmarks. Where possible we use student ambassadors in these workshops, drawing on their valuable experiences at Leeds Conservatoire as well as their natural ability to engage and enthuse school groups. We have a wonderful, diverse and enthusiastic bunch of ambassadors who connect so well to our school guests.

Our online hub was created during the Covid-19 pandemic but still provides teachers with high quality music and drama teaching resources to complement and enhance their classroom provision. Resources were developed using key research into asynchronous learning and are developed based on needs identified by our partner schools and colleges.

Information about the bursaries we offer, our audition travel refund and support in accessing Leeds Junior Conservatoire provision is also included in this suite of activity. Discussing finances is often still a conversation filled with stigma for many, but we truly believe that finance should not be a barrier to talent. We provide this information easily to teachers and prospective applicants as well as signposting to contact details for more in-depth and personalised conversations.

Leeds Conservatoire Futures is an ambitious and wide-reaching intervention strategy with several moving parts. It's a highly flexible strategy which allows multiple schools and colleges to engage in ways that best suit their settings. The programme has a well-established Theory of Change and evaluation plan looked after by our external evaluator, SEER. We evaluate this strategy as a full suite of activities, with evaluations for all parts contributing to an overall evaluation report.

Risks 4 and 5 – Application Success Rates and Course Type and Delivery Mode – were seen as less of a priority, due to the way the conservatoire operates in these areas. We are a specialist provider with vocational courses, and this is abundantly clear to potential applicants, we pride ourselves on our practical, industry-focussed tuition which may appeal to those who wouldn't consider themselves to be more traditionally academic, as such at present, we currently do not offer part-time or distance learning. For some of our courses, Leeds Conservatoire uses the UCAS Conservatoires deadline of early October to accept applications, therefore a number of our applicants begin preparations for their applications and auditions earlier than most higher education applicants. Equally, the application-audition process at the conservatoire ensures applicants have the creative, technical and performance skill sets needed to succeed at our institution, and through providing feedback on the day to auditionees we can support them to continue preparations for conservatoire study or further auditions.

As mentioned in Annex A, we are in the process of working towards Degree Awarding Powers, so alternative delivery modes and course types will be considered as part of this process, as currently through our degree-awarding from the University of Hull, our ability to deliver courses in non-standard ways is limited.

## Intervention Strategy 2

### Summary of Underpinning Evidence

Evidence	Rationale
Palmer, S. (2008). The PRACTICE model of coaching: towards a solution-focused approach. <i>Coaching Psychology International</i> . Vol.1, No.1, PP 4-8	A solution-focused coaching model which works with the strengths and abilities of the recipient to address their needs
Mind Tools. (2018). Available at <a href="https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_13.htm">https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_13.htm</a>	High-performance coaching technique that enables an immediate shift in practice and behaviours
Dweck, C. (2017). <i>Mindset: Changing the way you think to fulfil your potential</i> . London: Robinson.	Discussion around metacognition which encourages recipients to take a more reflective approach to problem-solving

<p>Burgess, S et al. (2018). Role models, mentoring and university applications – evidence from a crossover randomised controlled trial in the United Kingdom. Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning, [online] 20(4). Available at:  <a href="https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10061074/1/Macmillan_Article%20-%20-%20Sanders%20et%20al_accepted%20version.pdf">https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10061074/1/Macmillan_Article%20-%20-%20Sanders%20et%20al_accepted%20version.pdf</a></p>	<p>Evidence review of the impact of coaching vs. mentoring</p>
<p>Leader Syndrome. (2015). Setting Objectives: Better than smart is Smarter. Available at  <a href="https://leadersyndrome.wordpress.com/2012/02/13/setting-objectives-better-than-smart-is-smarter/">https://leadersyndrome.wordpress.com/2012/02/13/setting-objectives-better-than-smart-is-smarter/</a></p>	<p>Target setting model that builds in self-evaluation and reflection</p>

This programme will work to a solution-focused coaching technique based on the PRACTICE model, outlined by Palmer (2008). This methodology has the coachee at its heart and focuses on finding solutions that are right for them in order to enable them to meet the expected outcomes.

The PRACTICE model works with coachees to identify the issues they are facing, create targets that support them in overcoming these issues, nurtures them in exploring the most feasible solutions for them, aids them in implementing their solutions and encourages them to reflect and evaluate their progress and the solutions they have chosen. Throughout the programme, coachees should feel able and comfortable to speak freely to their coach about their strengths and skills, without being immediately refocused onto their struggles – the coach should take these on board and work with the coachee to develop ways their strengths and skills can be used to support them in meeting their targets.

In this framework, we have adapted the PRACTICE model to make it manageable for our coaching relationships to fulfil over a short period. Considering the techniques used in high-performance coaching to make fundamental changes to performance (Mind Tools, 2018), this framework should support an immediate shift towards reflective practice whilst nurturing a longer-lasting growth mindset (Outlined by Dweck, 2017) approach to problem-solving and professional practice.

Borrowing research from other areas of widening participation, we will be using role models as coaches. The use of positive role models in supporting students from underrepresented backgrounds has been found to have a positive impact as discussed by The Behavioural Insights Team (2018). For this programme, we recognise that our academic staff are not always the most diverse so we will welcome coaches from all aspects of conservatoire staffing and alumni. We will aim to match coachees with a coach who shares at least one of their identities.

Target-setting techniques are plentiful but for this programme, we will use the SMARTER method (Leader Syndrome, 2015).

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-bound
- Evaluated
- Recognised/Revisited

This allows us to create targets with our coachees that are realistic and tailored to them and their specific needs and situations. We have chosen the SMARTER method because it includes evaluation and recognition/revisiting. We feel that this will encourage our students to work as reflective practitioners, evaluating and reflecting on their practice as part of their day-to-day study to enhance their work. If we nurture this skill of reflection during this coaching programme, the coachees are more likely to take it forward with them and ideally make it almost second nature.

## Intervention Strategy 3

### Summary of Underpinning Evidence

Evidence	Rationale
Research in Learning Technology – Journal – Multiple publications. Available at: <a href="https://journal.alt.ac.uk/index.php/rlt/about">https://journal.alt.ac.uk/index.php/rlt/about</a>	The leading academic journal for advancement in practice into learning technology
JISC.(2024). Building digital capabilities framework. The six elements defined. Available at: <a href="https://repository.jisc.ac.uk/8846/1/2022_Jisc_BDC_Individual_Framework.pdf">https://repository.jisc.ac.uk/8846/1/2022_Jisc_BDC_Individual_Framework.pdf</a>	Functional model for implementing Technology Enhanced Learning
Advance HE. (2020). Technology Enhanced Learning. Available at: <a href="https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/teaching-and-learning/technology-enhanced-learning#Overview">https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/teaching-and-learning/technology-enhanced-learning#Overview</a>	Guidance for implementing Technology Enhanced Learning in HE settings
Clark, R. E. (2015) Undergraduate Music Students’ Perceptions of Digital Literacies. PGCAP Research paper. University of Hull. Available at: <a href="https://www.academia.edu/32682862/Undergraduate_Music_Students_Perceptions_of_Digital_Literacies">https://www.academia.edu/32682862/Undergraduate_Music_Students_Perceptions_of_Digital_Literacies</a>	Research into digital literacies and capabilities of HE music students
<a href="#">The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018</a>	Regulatory guidelines all HE providers must adhere to
<a href="#">Web Content Accessibility Guidelines – W3 Consortium</a>	Guidelines for accessibility on virtual learning environments
Duval, E., Sharples, M. & Sutherland, R. (2017) Technology Enhanced Learning. Springer Cham.	Discussion incorporating international research and practical implications for Technology Enhance Learning
Leeds Conservatoire Data Protection Statement. Available at: <a href="https://www.lcm.ac.uk/privacy-cookies/">https://www.lcm.ac.uk/privacy-cookies/</a>	The Leeds Conservatoire Data Protection Statement which details the way the institution handles private data for applicants and enrolled students
QAA. (2024). QAA Quality Code Consultation Document. Available at: <a href="https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/quality-code-consultation-document-24.pdf?sfvrsn=431db481_9">https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/quality-code-consultation-document-24.pdf?sfvrsn=431db481_9</a>	The most recent QAA Quality Code consultation document, which outlines the requirement for HEIs to promote inclusive provision and adopt accessible assessment methodology
Higher Education Commission, Policy Connect. Arriving At Thriving: Learning from disabled students to ensure access for all. (2020). Available at: <a href="https://www.policyconnect.org.uk/research/arriving-thriving-learning-disabled-students-ensure-access-all">https://www.policyconnect.org.uk/research/arriving-thriving-learning-disabled-students-ensure-access-all</a>	Highlights the requirements for institutional change towards the adoption of inclusive teaching and assessment practices.
OIA. (2024). Lessons from the Abrahart Case. Webinar slides. Available at: Not publicly available, available on request	These slides give information which was showcased in the Lessons from the Abrahart Case webinar, including findings from research created with large numbers of HE students with disabilities across the UK. The research was undertaken to improve knowledge and access to support services, in response to the High Court ruling that Bristol University was ‘liable for disability discrimination’ against Natasha Abrahart (under the Equality Act 2010) before she took her own life in 2018, including ‘a failure to make reasonable adjustments’. This research highlighted a lack of understanding of reasonable adjustments that academic staff have, especially in cases where a student’s disability would be considered ‘invisible’, such as those who have mental health conditions, specific learning difficulties etc.
OfS. (2019). IES Report - Review of Support for Disabled Students in Higher Education in England. Available at: <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3838/review-of-support-for-disabled-students-in-higher-education-in-england.pdf">https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3838/review-of-support-for-disabled-students-in-higher-education-in-england.pdf</a>	This report highlights studies that show that academic staff, alongside all staff working at HEIs in England lack the required level of knowledge of access, inclusion, disabilities, reasonable adjustments and individual or institutional responsibilities under Equality Act 2010, and that HEIs are not providing a sufficient training on the subject either.

Madriaga, M., and Goodley, D. (2010). Moving Beyond the Minimum: Socially Just Pedagogies and Asperger’s Syndrome in UK Higher Education. <i>International Journal of Inclusive Education</i> 14 (2): 115–131.	Details of the disadvantages that disabled students face when traditional teaching and assessment pedagogy is used, with inclusive approaches proving to promote a level playing field for disabled and non-disabled students alike.
Building the Right Support Advisory Group, Building the Right Support Delivery Board. (2023). What good looks like - Building the Right Support Delivery Board Advisory group report. Available at: <a href="https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/WGLL%20report%20-%2018082023%20final%20CHECKED%20FOR%20ACCESSIBILITY%20%28002%29%20TP%20amends-11-16.pdf">https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/WGLL%20report%20-%2018082023%20final%20CHECKED%20FOR%20ACCESSIBILITY%20%28002%29%20TP%20amends-11-16.pdf</a>	Report highlighting the ‘othering’ that students with Autism Spectrum Conditions (and similar conditions affecting social and/or communication skills) can face, due to neurotypical barriers and traditions not meeting the requirements that individuals with conditions of this nature are able to build social relationships in.
Disabled Students UK, Snowden Trust. (2023). Disabled Students UK’s Access Insights Report 2023. Available at: <a href="https://disabledstudents.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Disabled-Students-UK_Access-Insights-2023-Report.pdf">https://disabledstudents.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Disabled-Students-UK_Access-Insights-2023-Report.pdf</a>	Report detailing the most recent average percentages of students who declare disabilities in UK HEIs (2021/22).
TASO. Promoting self-advocacy for disabled students (post-entry). Available at: <a href="https://taso.org.uk/intervention/promoting-self-advocacy-for-disabled-students-post-entry/#:~:text=The%20group%20who%20received%20the,et%20al.%2C%202021).">https://taso.org.uk/intervention/promoting-self-advocacy-for-disabled-students-post-entry/#:~:text=The%20group%20who%20received%20the,et%20al.%2C%202021).</a>	Resource on the importance of the promotion of self-advocacy amongst disabled students, whilst highlighting the positive impact that Mentoring support can have on disabled students
UK Government. (2010). The Equality Act 2010. Available at: <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents</a>	Legislation outlining the requirement to prevent discrimination of the identified protected characteristics, which are as follows: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation
Gartland, C. (2015). Student Ambassadors: ‘role models’, learning practices and identities. <i>British Journal of Sociology of Education</i> , 36(8), 1192-1211.	Evidence showing the positive impact that student ambassadors can have to access for applicants
Royal College of Occupational Therapists. (2018). Getting my life back: Occupational therapy promoting mental health and wellbeing in England. Available at: <a href="https://www.kmpt.nhs.uk/media/1059/getting-my-life-back_england.pdf">https://www.kmpt.nhs.uk/media/1059/getting-my-life-back_england.pdf</a>	Report explaining the positive outcomes students can have after accessing occupational therapy whilst studying in HE. With contributions from Clare Copley, Occupational Therapist at Leeds Conservatoire, the report gives information about how OT support can enable students to manage their own wellbeing and develop mental resilience through meaningful occupations whilst studying in HE.
Go Higher West Yorkshire. (2023). GHWY Disabled Learner Transition Pack. Available at: <a href="https://gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk/courses/ghwy-disabled-learner-transition-pack/">https://gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk/courses/ghwy-disabled-learner-transition-pack/</a>	Transition Pack for disabled students moving from Further Education, into Higher Education, helping to explain the different support structures and reduce barriers to understanding and accessing disability support in HE.
The Musicians Census - <a href="https://musicianscensus.co.uk">Musicians' Census (musicianscensus.co.uk)</a>	Review of workforce in the music industry
ACE. (2021) Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case: A Data Report. <a href="https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/equality-diversity-and-creative-case-data-report-2019-20">https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/equality-diversity-and-creative-case-data-report-2019-20</a>	Review of the workforce in the creative arts industries

## Academic Support

Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) is a term used in education to describe the use of technology to maximise student learning. TEL is often used as a synonym for e-learning but can also be used to refer to technology-enhanced classrooms and learning with technology, rather than just through technology (Advance HE, 2024).

In addition to learning enhancement, the TEL Team at Leeds Conservatoire aims to develop students’ digital capabilities (JISC, 2024), enabling participation with learning technologies no matter their background. Developing digital capabilities is key to closing an attainment gap, students arrive in HE with different levels of capabilities based on their access to technology and learning technology in their prior studies and personal lives. Digital capabilities will be a key part of student’s lives upon graduation, whether in further study, practice in the creative arts industry, or the modern workplace.

Digital Accessibility is another key area in which the TEL Team ensure access for learners with disabilities and/or cognitive conditions. Digital Accessibility is the application of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) (W3, 2024) to digital materials an individual may interact with. This includes website content like the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), student intranet (Life), and student information content, but also other digital media which students may interact with, such as documents, slide decks, videos, podcasts and digital communications. This is part of the conservatoire's obligations to The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

Alongside our Technology Enhanced Learning Service, the conservatoire also offers a robust academic skills support programme. The Skills for Learning service's key ambition is to retain and support the attainment of all our students. Our strategy involves embedding multiple pedagogical approaches and learning theories into the support we have on offer:

- 1-1 drop-ins with academic staff ensures students can receive tailored support. Offered to all student, 80% of booked sessions have been made by AP students;
- Online self-directed learning allows students to learn reflectively and asynchronously;
- In person workshops offer a collaborative and active learning style
- Our co-curricular sessions embedded within student timetables, 'The Survival Guide Series', offers a mixture of blended, scaffolded learning. Topics covered in this series are informed by student consultation, industry consultation and internal research related to learning and knowledge gaps.

By providing this variety in the support that the service offers, we mitigate any barriers to studying and learning by ensuring that regardless of a student's background, learning style or needs, they have access to varied academic support to be able to achieve their potential here and beyond studying at the Conservatoire.

## Wellbeing, Disability and Wider Student Experience Support

A holistic multi-disciplinary approach to support for disabled students at Leeds Conservatoire is in place throughout the Student Support Department's specialist trained staffing body. The department is made up of four teams, with the Disability Support Team working closely with the Health and Wellbeing, Funding and Accommodation Teams to promote a student-centred approach to inclusion through the lens of the Social Model of Disability. Students can access a single point of entry Student Support Referral Form for all teams within the Student Support Department, helping to reduce any perceived barriers in accessing support that disabled students may have faced otherwise.

The Disability Support Team start emailing offer holding applicants from the April before their first enrolment, specifically to fully inform them of the differences between Further Education and Higher Education support methodology, whilst also encouraging them to declare any disability, neurodiversity, mental health condition and/or long-term health condition to Leeds Conservatoire. This action helps to ensure that support and reasonable adjustments are offered and organised for disabled applicants in an anticipatory manner in line with the Equality Act 2010. This early contact method also enables the Disability Support Team the opportunity to encourage eligible students to start applying for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA), with advice offered about the types of documentation that is required when applying for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). As an active member of the Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY) working group, Leeds Conservatoire have helped to improve access to disability services across the region through contributions to (and utilisation of) the GHWY Transition Pack. This document helps inform all stakeholders of the differences in support mechanisms for disabled students between Further Education and Higher Education before they enrol.

A member of each team within the Student Support Department is present at each Open Day that applicants attend, with each team offering tailored advice in their specialism and answering questions that applicants or family members may have at the time. The Accommodation Team also offer tours of student lettings during Open Days, whilst private tours of specific room options for disabled students are given, helping to ensure that students with disabilities can request necessary adaptations and choose the room that best suits their circumstances.

The Accommodation team work closely with our accommodation provider partners early in the application cycle, to ensure that the providers are fully prepared for students with disabilities that require any adaptations to their respective buildings before enrolment takes place. Students with disabilities can request the prioritisation of their accommodation type to best suit their individual needs, helping both Leeds Conservatoire and our accommodation provider partners meet any reasonable adjustments required in an anticipatory manner, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

The Disability Support Team run a summer Orientation Day to offer holding applicants with conditions that may cause difficulties of a sensory, social, communication or anxiety nature. Attendees meet other applicants with similar difficulties to themselves before the student population of Leeds Conservatoire, and other Leeds HEIs, move back for the start of the new academic year. Attendees are given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the Leeds Conservatoire support staff, have access to example lectures from academic staff, tailored tours of student accommodation, and experience the campus buildings during a quieter period of time when a lower level of sensory stimuli is present both at the Conservatoire, and in the city itself. Student Ambassadors also attend, offering applicants the opportunity to ask questions about the student experience and be given a tour of Leeds from the perspective of a current student. Students who have difficulties funding the trip or from low-income backgrounds are offered financial assistance to attend the Orientation Day by the Student Funding Team.

Students can access advice from the Disability Support Team, as well as declare any existing/newly identified conditions using the disability support section of the Student Support Referral Form throughout the application cycle and during their studies. The form can be filled out as many times as required, with any initial or additional conditions/information declared informing either the creation, or update of, an Individual Adjustments Plan (IAP) document. IAPs are shared with academic staff after the student has been registered and enrolled, and are kept on record for seven years after they leave Leeds Conservatoire. Applicants that decide not to enrol have their declared data deleted after the enrolment period concludes, in line with the Leeds Conservatoire Data Protection Statement and GDPR guidance on information that is no longer relevant.

Yearly training is delivered to academic staff during the Staff Development Week each September by the Disability Support Manager, centred on the importance of the implementation of all recommended reasonable adjustments that are agreed for students in both the lecture and assessment environment. The training also gives advice on inclusive teaching & learning methodology, to encourage a more inclusive institution for all. This training is mandatory for academic staff to attend, whilst a recording is made available for staff that were absent for reasons outside of their control or new members of staff. Both the Students' Union President and Disability Support Team brought the Executive Leadership Committee a request to initiate further external training on essential disability and Equality Act 2010 knowledge, due to the Bristol University ruling and student feedback. The Disability Support Manager raised a request with management that all staff require a mandatory training module about their responsibilities towards disability support and the Equality Act 2010, with the HR department recently starting the process to explore the development of an additional mandatory online training module for this, helping to address any gaps in knowledge that new employees may have.

The Disability Support Manager has been encouraging the institution to develop and adopt inclusive assessment practices, with the Heads of Schools and Director of Teaching agreeing to use these recommendations when building new courses and the re-writing of existing course for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 academic years respectively. The Disability Support Team attempt to encourage students to declare conditions and/or investigate disability advice required through email communication, posts on our intranet system and through events held throughout the academic year. 28% of students at Leeds Conservatoire have been given Individual Adjustments Plans (IAPs) detailing their agreed reasonable adjustments this academic year, which is a high percentage compared to the national average of 19% across HEIs in the United Kingdom when last reported in 2021/22. The Individual Adjustments Plan documents are shared directly with the respective students, as well as their academic staff, to help enable them to be in control of their own information and have a route to self-advocacy if they feel confident/comfortable to speak with tutors about adjustments. The Disability Support Team always discuss concerns raised by students with the respective course staff whenever necessary though. To ensure that students can access the support that they

require, students are offered advice and guidance on how they can gain diagnostic criteria when they are unsure, or when evidence would likely be rejected by Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA).

For students who wish to investigate whether they have Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs), we offer and fund a screening and diagnostic referral process for eligible students. This process also includes the identification of traits of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), with information also provided to all students about how they can seek formal medical diagnostic investigation and NHS Right to Choose information. Although no diagnosis of ADHD can be confirmed due to the educational basis of our diagnostic testing, we help to enable students to access evidence to help support DSA applications, largely in light of the length of time spent on NHS ADHD diagnostic waiting lists often being longer than the time that they will study with us.

Leeds Conservatoire are a registered supplier of DSA-Mentoring support. Disabled students who have been recommended our service in their DSA Award are offered tailored support to remove any disability-related barriers that they may have when accessing their studies. The essential retention-related work Mentors deliver includes (but is not limited to) assisting the development of independent coping strategies, alongside planning, organisational and communication skills. Along with supporting the adoption and regular use of assistive technology where appropriate, Mentors have been shown to increase academic engagement and promote the retention of disabled students. Allocated students are given their preference of in-person or online support sessions, usually an hour per week (depending on the individual's DSA allocation), which supports students to engage fully in their studies and address any difficulties that may arise throughout each of their academic years studying at Leeds Conservatoire.

As the first Higher Education Institution in the United Kingdom to employ Occupational Therapists (OTs), Leeds Conservatoire has taken a broad approach to supporting disabled students in a holistic manner. The OTs bridge any possible gap in support that may occur when students access both the Disability Support offer and the short-term interventional support that the Health and Wellbeing Team offer. The OTs help students identify and adopt meaningful ways to engage in their learning, alongside any other occupations that can positively affect their educational experience

The Student Support Department runs a bi-weekly social group for students who have been diagnosed with, or identify with traits of neurodiversity. The Neurodivergent Network social group has helped enable students with similar conditions to build relationships with each other, to take part in fun activities, or just settle quietly into the calming, sensory friendly environment. It has also become a part of our multi-faceted approach to tackle any doubts that some students may have towards accessing support for their disabilities in Higher Education, which has been found to occur largely due to their perception of support delivery in earlier education leaving them feeling socially 'othered'.

We also provide a Quiet Room to students having difficulties with high-anxiety moments whilst studying at Leeds Conservatoire. The Quiet Room provides a quiet, comfortable, sensory friendly environment and gives them a place to relieve any anxiety-inducing difficulties they are facing at the time.

In regards to mental health and disability support referral mechanisms, the Student Support Department offer students help to self-refer/apply for external support, with the most frequent student requests coming in the form assistance applying for DSA or completing NHS referrals. Some other examples of referral support given by the Student Support staff are through requests for DSA support changes, diagnostic intervention and NHS direct referrals with the student's consent, helping to remove barriers that disabled students may face due to their conditions, whilst ensuring that the department complies with GDPR guidance and respect the students' right to decide their own support routes. The department staff often assist students to refer to General Practitioners, Leeds Mental Wellbeing Services, Leeds Student Medical Practice, Leeds Autism Diagnostic Services, Leeds Adult ADHD Services, Aspire, Emmerge and Link Dyslexia (our diagnostic assessment partner).

The Health and Wellbeing Team often help students to use the NHS Leeds & York Partnership Single Point of Contact, to assist with student mental health crisis situations. Funding and referrals for Hearing Checks and

Physiotherapy are organised by the department staff where necessary, assisting students with their physical, as well as mental, wellbeing throughout their studies.

On rare occasions where a student may be at risk of harming themselves or others, and where the named trusted contact cannot be liaised with in the required timescale, direct referrals without student consent can be initiated in-line with the Leeds Conservatoire Safeguarding Policy. NHS crisis or emergency services are the most frequent recipient of referrals without student consent, which would only ever be actioned by department staff to ensure the immediate wellbeing of a student in a crisis situation.

### **Employability and Enterprise**

Students are also supported into employment and further study by our Employability and Enterprise team. This team work closely with the creative industries to support our students by providing opportunities, guidance and advice in preparing for a career as an artist or entrepreneur. The team provide services ranging from headshots and marketing through to career guidance, support with applying for funding and networking. The activity provided is directly influenced from sector bodies such as the Musicians Union, Equity UK, PRS for Music and Arts Council England to name a few.

# Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Leeds Conservatoire

Provider UKPRN: 10034449

## Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

\*course type not listed

### Inflation statement:

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

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	N/A	N/A	9250
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	N/A	N/A	9250
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Fees, investments and targets

## 2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Leeds Conservatoire

Provider UKPRN: 10034449

### Investment summary

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

#### Notes about the data:

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

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

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

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

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

**Table 6b - Investment summary**

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£190,000	£200,000	£210,000	£221,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£319,000	£328,000	£338,000	£347,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£30,000	£31,000	£31,000	£32,000

**Table 6d - Investment estimates**

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£42,000	£44,000	£46,000	£49,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£145,000	£152,000	£160,000	£168,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£3,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000
<b>Access activity investment</b>	<b>Total access investment (£)</b>	<b>£190,000</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£210,000</b>	<b>£221,000</b>
<b>Access activity investment</b>	<b>Total access investment (as % of HFI)</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>
<b>Access activity investment</b>	<b>Total access investment funded from HFI (£)</b>	<b>£190,000</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£210,000</b>	<b>£221,000</b>
<b>Access activity investment</b>	<b>Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£304,000	£312,000	£321,000	£330,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£15,000	£16,000	£17,000	£17,000
<b>Financial support investment</b>	<b>Total financial support investment (£)</b>	<b>£319,000</b>	<b>£328,000</b>	<b>£338,000</b>	<b>£347,000</b>
<b>Financial support investment</b>	<b>Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>8.7%</b>
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£30,000	£31,000	£31,000	£32,000
<b>Research and evaluation investment</b>	<b>Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>



