



Access Agreement 2015 - 2016

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This access agreement for 15/16 has been developed following internal and external review of our university's performance in our role to promote aspiration and motivation among learners of all backgrounds to consider higher education; support their transition into higher education, retention and attainment. We have a varied and sustained programme of activity that reaches learners at all stages of the student lifecycle. This has been developed by faculties and services to sustain our support for student retention and success. The trend data presented in this agreement demonstrates we need to do more in diversifying our student body in line with the HESA benchmarks. It also provides encouraging evidence of where we meet our benchmark for student employability, and where we outperform our benchmark on student non-continuation. This access agreement for 15/16 demonstrates Leeds Beckett University's strong tradition of, and continuing commitment, to provide socially inclusive and life enhancing higher education opportunities for all our students, regardless of background. It reaffirms our commitment to raising aspirations working with local, regional and national partnerships across the whole educational lifecycle. It demonstrates our successes, our challenges and our aspirations for building upon the significant foundation we have developed in outreach and student success.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 This agreement for 15/16 will apply for the final year of the current strategic plan for our university; *Quality, Relevance and Sustainability 2010-2015*, and the period of transition to our new strategic plan under our new institutional name *Leeds Beckett University*. The new name takes effect from 22nd September 2014 and will ensure the distinctive positioning of our university within a complex UK and global context. Our new name reflects our strong academic heritage arising from predecessor colleges based on the Beckett Park campus in Headingley, Leeds. We will retain and build upon our excellent reputation for delivering a high quality student experience as demonstrated within the current strategic plan. Our highlights from the last four years include a 20% increase in overall student satisfaction demonstrated in the National Student Survey (NSS); becoming the only UK university to hold *both* the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard *and* the Investors in People Gold award; and significant investment in both Headingley and City Campus sites resulting in numerous national awards for design and innovation.

3 Our Vision and Values; the Leeds Beckett University Context

3.1 Our vision statement demonstrates that all our students are at the heart of our university and work with us to realise our ambitions in promoting excellence in learning, teaching, innovation and enterprise:

Vision: *To be acknowledged for our commitment to student success, our innovation and enterprise, our global reach and strong local impact*

3.2 Our values demonstrate how we work with students, staff and stakeholders in promoting a collaborative and collegial environment that supports our students to realise their academic and professional ambitions:

Values: *Inspiring, Creative, Enterprising, Purposeful, Professional, Respectful*

3.3 During 14/15, we will be developing a longer term strategy for access and student success for implementation from 15/16. We will be seeking to build upon our current successes by improving our internal data reporting and evaluation strategies for measuring the impact of outreach and student intervention measures to ensure investment continues to be allocated effectively.

4 Summary of Institutional Performance

4.1 The following section highlights our university's performance to date in promoting student access and success. Overall our performance demonstrates continuing improvement in our target areas by out-performing our benchmark for student non-continuation and meeting our benchmark for graduate employability demonstrating our success in student retention and engagement. All data provided in this section has been taken from the last three years of HESA benchmark data, where available.

4.2 Student Participation

The following provides the three year trend data for our university's profile of participation, from different groups as defined by HESA.

*Participation of under-represented groups (%)
From state schools or colleges*

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Young full-time first degree entrants	93.5	93.1	94.0
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	94.8	94.9	95.3
<i>Difference</i>	-1.3	-1.8	-1.3
Young full-time undergraduate entrants	93.3	93.1	94.0
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	94.9	95.0	95.3
<i>Difference</i>	-1.6	-1.9	-1.3
Young full-time other undergraduate entrants	91.2	92.5	Not available
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	94.7	95.8	Not available
<i>Difference</i>	-3.5	-3.3	Not available

<i>From NS-SEC classes 4,5,6 & 7</i>	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Young full-time first degree entrants	32.2	32.5	35.0
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	36.8	37.5	40.5
<i>Difference</i>	-4.6	-5.0	-5.5
Young full-time undergraduate entrants	32.4	32.4	34.9
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	37.2	37.8	40.6
<i>Difference</i>	-4.8	-5.4	-5.7
Young full-time other undergraduate entrants	35.4	31.3	Not available
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	39.6	40.5	Not available
<i>Difference</i>	-4.2	-9.2	Not available
<i>From low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3)</i>	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Young full-time first degree entrants	14.4	13.0	14.5
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	15.8	15.8	17.4
<i>Difference</i>	-1.4	-2.8	-2.9
Young full-time undergraduate entrants	14.7	12.9	14.5
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	16.1	15.8	17.4
<i>Difference</i>	-1.4	-2.9	-2.9
Young full-time other undergraduate entrants	17.4	11.9	Not available
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	19.2	15.7	Not available
<i>Difference</i>	-1.8	-3.8	Not available

Participation of under-represented groups

Percentage with no previous HE and from low participation neighbourhood (POLAR3) (%)

<i>Mature full-time undergraduate entrants</i>	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
First degree entrants	11.4	13.1	12.4
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	14.3	13.6	12.8
<i>Difference</i>	-2.9	-0.5	-0.4
All undergraduate entrants	13.1	14.4	12.7
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	15.8	14.7	12.9
<i>Difference</i>	-2.7	-0.3	-0.2
<i>Part-time undergraduate entrants</i>	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Young entrants	7.1	7.6	7.6
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	13.4	11.7	13.8
<i>Difference</i>	-6.3	-4.1	-6.2
Mature entrants	3.6	3.2	3.0
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	4.4	3.9	3.3
<i>Difference</i>	-0.8	-0.7	-0.3
All entrants	3.8	3.4	3.3
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	4.9	4.3	3.8
<i>Difference</i>	-1.1	-0.9	-0.5

<i>Mature full-time other undergraduate entrants</i>	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Other undergraduate entrants	26.3	25.8	Not available
<i>Location adjusted benchmark</i>	29.6	29.1	Not available
<i>Difference</i>	-3.3	-3.3	Not available

4.3 A modest growth in participation from state schools/colleges and NS-SEC classes 4, 5, 6 and 7 can be seen for our university but this level of growth is equally reflected in our benchmark group. Representation from low participation groups (POLAR3) dropped by 0.5% in 11/12 when the sector as a whole experienced a decline in first year enrolments and our benchmark group remained static for two years. In 12/13, we experienced a 1.5% growth in participation from this group which follows the benchmark growth of 1.6% demonstrating we maintained sector expectations for growth but remained overall behind the benchmark group. Forward plans for monitoring our access and widening participation outreach strategy to increase our diversity of undergraduate students from under-represented groups can be found later in this agreement.

4.4 Non-continuation

For students who withdraw from studies, our university trend data demonstrates we have consistently lower non-continuation rates than our HESA benchmark. In this category a negative difference between benchmark and our institutional performance shows we are outperforming our HESA benchmark for full-time and part-time students. Two exceptions can be seen from the data below. For students from low participation neighbourhoods (HESA definition: POLAR3) it is only in 11/12 when we start to outperform our HESA benchmark and for other full-time undergraduate entrants (HESA definition: students with existing HE qualifications below degree level) in 11/12 our performance falls behind the benchmark group.

Non-continuation following year of entry (Full time students)

Per cent no longer in HE (%)

<i>Full-time first degree entrants</i>	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Young entrants	9.5	8.1	8.3
<i>Benchmark</i>	9.4	8.6	7.6
<i>Difference</i>	0.1	-0.5	0.7
Mature entrants	11.3	11.8	10.7
<i>Benchmark</i>	14.4	12.6	11.9
<i>Difference</i>	-3.1	-0.8	-1.2
All entrants	9.8	8.8	8.7
<i>Benchmark</i>	10.4	9.4	8.3
<i>Difference</i>	-0.6	-0.6	0.4
<i>Young full-time first degree entrants</i>	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
From low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3)	12.7	10.7	11.2

<i>Benchmark</i>	11.9	10.7	9.2
<i>Difference</i>	0.8	0.0	2.0
From other neighbourhoods (POLAR3)	8.9	7.7	7.9
<i>Benchmark</i>	8.9	8.0	7.2
<i>Difference</i>	0.0	0.3	-0.7
<i>Mature full-time first degree entrants</i>	<i>2009/10</i>	<i>2010/11</i>	<i>2011/12</i>
With previous higher education qualification	9.3	11.4	10.1
<i>Benchmark</i>	13.6	12.2	11.1
<i>Difference</i>	-4.3	-0.8	-1.0
With no previous higher education qualification	12.1	12.0	11.2
<i>Benchmark</i>	15.0	12.9	12.5
<i>Difference</i>	-2.9	-0.9	-1.3
<i>Full-time other undergraduate entrants</i>	<i>2009/10</i>	<i>2010/11</i>	<i>2011/12</i>
Young entrants	18.7	14.8	13.9
<i>Benchmark</i>	20.8	17.5	13.1
<i>Difference</i>	-2.1	-2.7	0.8
Mature entrants	19.9	17.4	19.4
<i>Benchmark</i>	21.8	17.3	15.6
<i>Difference</i>	-1.9	0.1	3.8
All entrants	19.0	15.5	15.0
<i>Benchmark</i>	21.0	17.5	13.7
<i>Difference</i>	-2.0	-2.0	1.3

Full-time other undergraduate student refers to students on foundation degrees, HNDs or equivalent HE qualifications but not a full degree programme.

*Non-continuation two years following year of entry
(Part time students)*

Per cent no longer in HE (%)

<i>Part-time first degree entrants</i>	<i>2008/09</i>	<i>2009/10</i>	<i>2010/11</i>
Entrants aged 30 and under	16.7	15.3	17.9
<i>Benchmark</i>	23.9	25.6	21.3
<i>Difference</i>	-7.2	-10.3	-3.4
Entrants aged over 30	17.6	16.8	12.3
<i>Benchmark</i>	26.5	28.2	23.7
<i>Difference</i>	-8.9	-11.4	-11.4
All entrants	17.2	16.3	15.0
<i>Benchmark</i>	25.2	27.4	22.4
<i>Difference</i>	-8.0	-11.1	-7.4

- 4.5 We utilise a wide range of student-centred operational activities to support our students to engage with their studies and achieve success. For example,
- 4.5.1 Monitoring engagement through academic pastoral support at faculty level;
 - 4.5.2 Support for developing skills for learning through our *libraries and learning innovation* teams;
 - 4.5.3 Our newly formed *services for students* and its centralised *student hub* facility on both campuses;
 - 4.5.4 Local level support in tracking student progression working with dedicated student liaison officers for non-academic support at faculty level.
- 4.6 We will continue to build upon our success for student retention through the development and implementation of a student attendance policy which will further enhance current support strategies to enable faculties and services to ensure every student can be consistently monitored throughout the student lifecycle, with much earlier intervention for those students deemed at risk of withdrawing from their studies.
- 4.7 Developing our *Services for Students*
In our previous access agreement, we were undergoing transformational change to how we provide non-academic pastoral student support for all our students. The newly formed *services for students*' mission are to secure excellence and innovation in the delivery of Student facing services and to place our university as a forerunner in the delivery of an outstanding student experience in the UK. This new service is committed to the concept of supporting a holistic student experience working in partnership with faculties, our Students' Union, and professional services across our university, external agencies and students. The aim is to offer a wide range of relevant services and support throughout the student lifecycle which enable student engagement and success. The service portfolio comprises: student wellbeing centre (counselling, mental health and chaplaincy); student money and advice centre; employability and job shop; disability centre; disability assessment centre; all delivered through a student facing *student hub* on both campuses. By 15/16, this newly combined service will be fully embedded as a central student support service and will have developed its own internal monitoring systems with internal partners to review student support and advice interventions particularly with those students deemed most at risk of non-continuation.
- 4.8 Support for Students with Disabilities
Our newly formed *services for students* will be working closely with our *access and outreach team* to increase the number of applicants declaring a disability, as defined by the Equality Act 2010: a disability is a physical or mental impairment that has lasted or is likely to last for more than 12 months which has an adverse, substantial impact on ability to perform activities of daily life. The table below demonstrates we

are experiencing only 0.5% and 0.3% year on year growth in full-time students declaring a disability against an increase in the benchmark group which has increased over the last 3 years by 0.6%. Conversely, we outperform our benchmark group by 1.1% for part time undergraduate students declaring a disability in 12/13. Follow up studies with both groups of students will be undertaken to understand why our university is experiencing this trend.

Participation of students in higher education in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) (%)

<i>All undergraduates</i>	<i>2010/11</i>	<i>2011/12</i>	<i>2012/13</i>
Full-time first degree	5.0	5.5	5.8
<i>Benchmark</i>	5.3	5.9	6.4
<i>Difference</i>	-0.3	-0.4	-0.6
Full-time all undergraduate	5.0	5.5	5.7
<i>Benchmark</i>	5.1	5.8	6.2
<i>Difference</i>	-0.1	-0.3	-0.5
Part-time all undergraduate	3.1	3.6	4.9
<i>Benchmark</i>	2.7	3.0	3.8
<i>Difference</i>	0.4	0.6	1.1

4.9 Student Success: Attainment

Student degree classification

<i>Year</i>	<i>% Good honours</i>	<i>% Benchmark</i>
2010/11	54.5	56.3
2011/12	57.3	60.4
2012/13	61.2	64.5

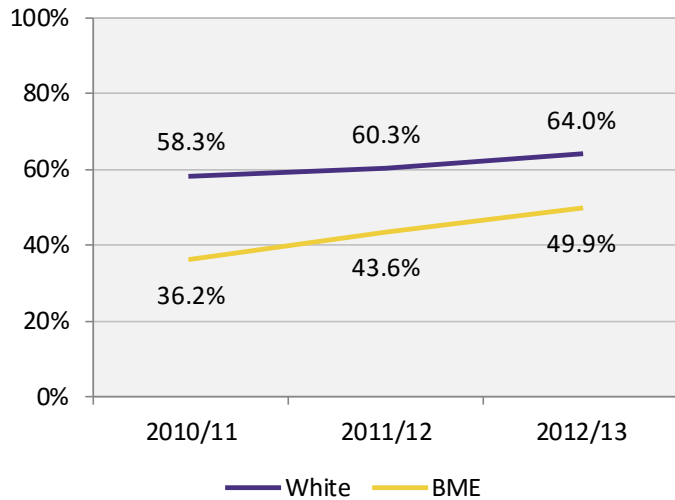
We continue to see an improvement in the % of our students who graduate with a good honours degree but our benchmark position has equally improved at a similar level year on year. Following a review of sector practice concerning methodologies for determining degree classifications, we were concerned our students could be unfairly disadvantaged as we appeared to be operating at higher than usual sector norms. A new methodology has been introduced which is now more line with sector standards. However further investigations into how we are supporting our student's to achieve academic success will be part of our longer term strategy.

Student degree classification by ethnicity

BME includes all student ethnicities other than white and unknown/refused

Source: HESA Student data 2010/11 - 2012/13

	White	BME
2010/11	58.3%	36.2%
2011/12	60.3%	43.6%
2012/13	64.0%	49.9%



4.10 The gap between white students and BME students in terms of attainment is slowly closing from 22.1% difference three years ago to 14.1% in 12/13 but we acknowledge further work is needed to continue to address this. Targeted support for subject areas with high proportions of students from BME communities should continue to see this attainment gap closing. In particular we aim to incorporate the ‘*Ten Guiding Principles*’, drawn up by the Higher Education Academy, designed to underpin changes to policy and practice and therefore enhance BME degree attainment. Closing the attainment gap will form part of our overall performance monitoring due to our commitment to ensuring all our students have equality of access to support and guidance in planning their long term futures.

4.11 Student Success: Employability

We have continued to see a 1% increase each year over the last three years in our graduate population achieving graduate jobs or further study six months after graduation (as per *the destination of leavers in higher education survey* definition). In the 11/12 survey, we met the benchmark expectation of 90.9% and we will endeavour to exceed this in our future target setting.

Year	% in work and/or further study	HESA Benchmark
2009/10	88.9	90.3
2010/11	89.9	90.1
2011/12	90.9	90.9

4.12 The data concerning student employability by ethnicity demonstrates a year on year modest increase for white students of 0.5% and 1% for two years, with BME student growth between 09/10 and 10/11 of 3.4% to 84% but a drop to 82.3% (-1.7%).

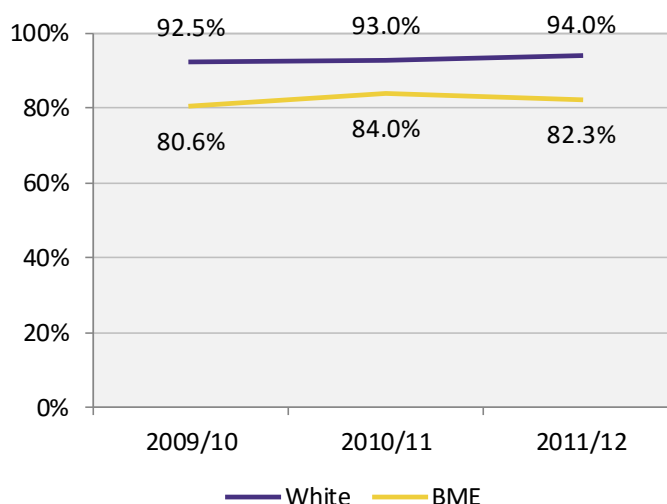
Further investigation will be undertaken concerning BME student performance for this year to understand why this small decline has manifested in the most recent destination of leavers survey. The destination of leavers survey changed its data collection approach for results published for 11/12 graduates and therefore current data is not strictly comparable to previous years.

Graduate employability by ethnicity

Percentage of graduates in work and/or study six months after graduation

Source: DLHE Survey 2009/10 - 2011/12

	White	BME
2009/10	92.5%	80.6%
2010/11	93.0%	84.0%
2011/12	94.0%	82.3%



- 4.13 We have an active team supporting and promoting employability choices, support for skills development and advice and guidance on accessing graduate employment opportunities working across all student groups. Resources are provided both on campus and through the student intranet. Over the last two years, we have spent £100k in total on our annual two week *futures fest* event. This is open to all our students with a full programme of seminars and workshops, both generic and subject/profession specific, for our students to meet with employer organisations, consider further study options and enterprise and entrepreneurial opportunities in their chosen field(s). Our *employability team* have taken part in the undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum reviews, commenting on and making recommendations concerning employability and work-related learning within the new curricula. The team continue to work with our *outreach and access team*, to embed the employability agenda within outreach sessions and on campus visits/summer schools/residential activities with access groups to encourage them to consider early planning for their career when applying to university and to access the support available when they do progress to university.

5 Target Setting and Performance Measures for 15/16

The data provided demonstrates variability in our success in meeting and exceeding our benchmark targets. We are setting four high level targets (5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 outlined below) and committing to the associated performance monitoring, evaluation

and action plans given below to ensure we develop a more informed approach to our future strategy and increase the evidence basis upon which we will measure our success.

5.1 By 15/16 we will meet all HESA benchmarks for the recruitment of students from state schools/colleges, low socio-economic groups and low participation neighbourhoods, and for students with disabilities.

This will be achieved by:

- 5.1.1 The development and implementation of action plans to widen our outreach activity to community groups, third sector organisations and other mature learner groups where higher education aspirations have been traditionally lower than other socio-economic groups.
- 5.1.2 All interventions taking place with each school will be recorded for longer term analysis against future admissions and enrolled student data sets.
- 5.1.3 Monitoring all participants on our intensive programmes through the transition points in key stage 4-5 and through the UCAS application cycle. This will inform future planning for subject specific activities with faculties and services.
- 5.1.4 Undertake focus groups with current students who have declared a disability (both full time and part time) to increase our understanding of why they chose our university, the effectiveness of the support mechanisms in place for them and seek their recommendations as to how we can increase this category of students within our student body.
- 5.1.5 Pilot a transition summer school for students with disabilities to develop skills and knowledge relevant to the first year at university to increase participation of students with disabilities in higher education.
- 5.1.6 Follow up work with alumni to develop case studies of student journeys to inspire and motivate future access students.

5.2 By 15/16 we will have continued to exceed our non-continuation HESA benchmark at 11/12 levels or above.

This will be achieved by:

- 5.2.1 The development and implementation of a student attendance monitoring policy to increase our data monitoring of student engagement and progression allowing for more targeted interventions.

5.3 By 15/16, we will have met our benchmark for students who achieve 1st or 2:1s.

This will be achieved by:

- 5.3.1 Programme level review of the new undergraduate curriculum to evaluate impact on student success and employability in the longer term.
- 5.3.2 In addition we will focus specifically on closing the degree attainment gap between BME and white students.

5.4 By 15/16, we will have exceeded our graduate employment HESA benchmark.

This will be achieved by:

- 5.4.1 Further investigation of the reasons for the trend data downturn in 11/12 in BME student employability and plan for future interventions.
- 5.4.2 Evaluation of our support for students gaining graduate jobs through our Employability service and its various activities with students, our Students' Union and faculties to promote graduate skills.
- 5.4.3 Evaluation of our alumni involvement with outreach and current student success initiatives and increase our evidence basis of how alumni can contribute to our future student success.

5.5 Institutional Oversight

We will build on our existing good practice and establish an overarching monitoring and evaluation framework, based upon some of the activities given under our future targets. This will be implemented across our university in order to increase the evidence base we require to underpin our future strategy. This will be achieved through drawing together the various data monitoring and evaluation activities brought forward in this agreement into regular strategic level governance and planning processes in order to ensure more systematic oversight is achieved. This work is underway following internal review and external feedback on previous access agreements; and will inform our future student access and success strategy.

6 Finance, Fees, Bursaries and Financial Support for 15/16

6.1 Finance

Across our university, our expenditure on access and outreach activities has increased over the last three years in line with our fees strategy to maintain overall expenditure levels around 17% of premium fee income reflecting our university's increase in undergraduate fees in recent years. We anticipate our expected total expenditure on outreach and student success in 15/16 will increase by £0.5m to £8.4million. Expenditure will reflect the OFFA recommendation of 22.5% by 16/17. The financial summary attached demonstrates how our university has increased its expenditure each year on access, retention and student success in line with our fee income profile.

6.2 Fees

We have set our fees to enable our university to continuously enhance our academic and pastoral support to our students to promote their retention and success. The fee for all home/EU students beginning a full-time undergraduate bachelor's degree at our university in the academic year 15/16 will be £9,000. This same fee level will be charged on a pro rata basis for all home/EU students beginning a part-time undergraduate bachelor's degree at our university in the academic year 15/16. In line with the fees regulations we will not charge any part-time student tuition fee greater £6,750 in any academic year. It is our intention to review and set our fees in line with the amount set in government regulations each year and to take account of inflation as set out in our previous agreement.

6.3 If the student's course includes a placement year, there will be no charge to the student, to encourage students to invest in this experience. This is priced as 20% of full time fee, in line with external requirements, and is then waived.

6.4 We have determined a single fee rate for our undergraduate provision and will not charge variable fees based on subject area. We are a university community in which every element of our professional portfolio plays an important role in enabling students to fulfil their career ambitions and we do not wish to create a differential contribution structure which may act as a barrier to some students following their professional career choice. We believe this pricing structure is simple to understand and will have a neutral impact on students who choose to transfer courses.

6.5 Bursaries and Financial Support for 15/16

We wish to encourage students from backgrounds which traditionally do not participate in higher education but who have the ability to succeed in a challenging funding environment and who we believe can benefit from our employability focused curriculum. Our financial support for students will be more focussed from 15/16 following the withdrawal of national scholarship grants and access to learning grants to universities. We are committed to maintaining an access to learning funding scheme because this has been an important part of our student retention activities. In 15/16, we will fund the following:

6.5.1 High achievers scholarship

6.5.2 Replacement scheme for access to learning fund

6.5.3 Associated schools and colleges bursary

6.5.4 Care leavers bursary

6.6 We will continue to help students support themselves financially by offering a range of careers advice and guidance and by providing practical support into paid part time employment and internships through our well established Job Shop.

7 Outreach and Access Initiatives for 15/16 Entry

7.1 Our *access and outreach team* have developed a structured outreach programme working with faculties and professional services which is accessible to potential

higher education learners from all backgrounds. The programme is built around our learner progression framework ensuring robust advice and guidance at key transition points is available. In the last academic year, we worked with 60 schools and colleges, delivered in excess of 300 WP/outreach events and engaged 22,000 learners. We expect this level of engagement to be sustained and grow by 15/16 as we increase our data monitoring and evaluation activities over the next twelve months. Throughout these programmes and interventions, work is embedded to include parents, guardians, carers and other influencers of potential higher education learners in these activities to develop their knowledge and understanding of higher education and increase support for progression into higher education. Appendix A provides further information concerning these activities and how we follow the student lifecycle at all stages from primary to transition into higher education.

7.2 Working with Target Groups:

In support of our continuing commitment to access and outreach work, we also focus on specific target groups to increase their aspirations to consider higher education.

7.3 Care Leavers and Looked After Students: We are recognised by *Buttle UK* for our work with care leavers and looked after students. In our last access agreement we increased our care leavers' bursary to £1,500 following discussion with our Students' Union. We will continue to work with this group in the pre-entry phase utilising an established mentoring programme called *Next Step*. Mentors provide academic support and pastoral care to foster a sense of continuity and stability for the looked after students. Information events for carers are linked to this programme to ensure that looked after students receive the support and guidance needed to progress into higher education. For 15/16 we will continue to offer this support to increase the pool of care leavers and looked after students progressing into higher education.

7.4 Students from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Groups: We have a successful track record of working with students from BME groups to raise aspirations to pursue higher education and are committed to ensuring we increase this pool of students into higher education. Examples of interventions have included the *Larkia*, the *UJIMA* and *Junior Fellowship* programmes. *The Larkia programme*, now in its twentieth year seeks to raise the confidence and motivation of young Asian girls through a three day residential programme focussing on the creative arts. *The UJIMA programme* targets young black males, currently under-represented at our university, and enables participants to gain inspiration and motivation from student ambassador role models who mentor the participants through the three day programme. *The Junior Fellowship Programme* develops programmes to raise the attainment of students from BME backgrounds. Students supported through the scheme take part in Saturday study sessions where they complete the Level 2 ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness qualification. Students who complete the programme and progress into Post-16 Education are invited to take up the *Progression Module*. Throughout these three programmes, parents, carers and guardians are invited to join information and guidance sessions to influence their support for progression into higher education. We will be developing further plans to enhance such interventions to increase BME

student progression in the longer term through extending current small scale activities and extending our support for outreach activities through mentoring schemes, Saturday study programmes, and exam tutoring in partnership with the regional supplementary school network. We will increase our activities across the student lifecycle with transition events and first year mentoring schemes will be developed to maximise attainment once students enter HE.

- 7.5 Students with disabilities: We encourage students with disabilities to consider progression into higher education. We have worked extensively with key stakeholders to maximise uptake within this group. Specific actions have been included in our performance monitoring to increase progression within this student group. New Activities planned will include communication and awareness raising in local colleges of support available, and residential programmes such as *Tomorrow's Professionals* that run over summer for small groups of disabled learners in KS4, to experience the university environment and build confidence and aspirations.

8 Applications and Admissions for 15/16

- 8.1 We will maintain our fair access policy as outlined in our previous agreements and continuously review our entry criteria to encourage applicants to demonstrate a personal and/or professional aptitude for the subject as well as academic potential. As part of our developing strategy for access and student success, we are increasing our internal evidence base for tracking applicants from low participation groups. This will include the following categories:
- 8.1.1 Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR2, 3, NS-SEC classes 4,5,6,& 7)
 - 8.1.2 Care leavers and Looked after applicants (self-declared)
 - 8.1.3 BME groups (self-declared)
 - 8.1.4 Applicants with a disability (self-declared)
- 8.2 In year tracking and end of cycle monitoring reports will inform future targeted activities for outreach and access programmes and provide a further evidence base for our extensive outreach programme. Furthermore, this will increase our understanding of conversion rates across the different groups from offer to acceptance and provide comparative data with enrolled student data.
- 8.3 For 15/16 entry, a modest budget from within our current outreach and access expenditure will be allocated to the *admissions team* to support any applicant from a low participation group who is invited to attend an interview or audition but cannot afford the travel costs to attend. Subject to providing clear evidence of eligibility for such support, we hope to address some of the financial barriers a small proportion of our applicants can have in accessing a university place. This will be particularly pertinent to those applicants living outside of the region and who wish to deliberately seek a university place away from their home areas.

9 Equality and Diversity

- 9.1 We are committed to ensuring we meet our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and have given due consideration to the impact of these proposals and continuing activities on groups of students and potential students with protected characteristics and to those from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as care leavers. Whilst many activities under our access agreement are targeted at specific groups we take an inclusive approach to those within cohorts whether they share protected characteristics or not. Targeted outreach work and internal initiatives to promote student success take an integrated approach so as to benefit as broad a range of students as possible. Programme level initiatives to promote student success, for example, engage the cohort as a whole so as not to be selective and isolate those from under-represented groups. All activity is underpinned by monitoring data arising from student progression and attainment in order to inform targeted activity and future action planning.

10 Consultation with Current Students

- 10.1 We have consulted with our Students' Union who has advised on this agreement. We have discussed with them the proposed tuition fees and the planned form of intended benefit and they have confirmed their support for the full range of student support and benefits packages that will be available. The Students' Union are keen to work with the university to support a wide range of activities within this access agreement and to work with us in enhancing our data monitoring and evidence basis for our next strategy.
- 10.2 In 15/16, students will continue to be centrally involved and have representation within our university's governance structures where key decisions, such as fees, finance and support packages are discussed. They will continue to be supported in taking an active role as Student Ambassadors to promote student success within their faculties and with the *outreach and access team* to promote student-centred activities. Continuing student representation on our governing body will ensure students are represented at all levels of decision making and in the oversight of governance in our university.

11 Provision of Information to Prospective Students for 15/16

- 11.1 We will provide information concerning tuition fees, our university financial support schemes, and other information on student finance on our university website. We will also make this information available through leaflets, direct information and advice sessions for prospective students. Information will also be included in offer letters to applicants. Information about tuition fees and financial support will also be provided to UCAS as soon as it is reasonable to do so for 15/16 entry. Existing students will benefit from publications and direct advice provided by our Services for Students' teams. Both current and prospective students can access up to date information on the scholarships we offer at www.leedsmet.ac.uk/undergraduate/scholarships.htm

with further financial support guidance at www.leedsmet.ac.uk/studenthub/full-time-funding.htm.

Appendix A – Overview of Access and Widening Participation Programme

This section highlights some of our main activities to date.

Primary: We provide a wide range of primary programmes aimed at schools within areas of socio-economic disadvantage. For example, our central programme *kids@uni* engages with 15 primary schools each year with targeted activities delivered in school and on campus. Events have included workshops, campus tours and a mini-graduation. A range of school based activities are supported through our Student's Union with support from faculties and the outreach and access team to promote higher education in schools with current students working with primary schools. For example, The *Let Leeds Read* project is delivered in partnership with our Students' Union and local businesses. It develops reading skills by providing weekly reading support from our undergraduate students. This has been a very effective way of bringing our current students into widening participation activities to inspire future higher education learners but also build confidence and skills within our existing student population to work with such groups in disadvantaged areas.

Pre 16 Secondary Activity: We provide a number of activities for years 7, 8 and 9 students from schools. For example, students are invited to attend our *Arts and Science Circus* events. These events promote the relevance and importance of higher education, allowing students to engage in multi-sensory workshops to inspire and motivate. For example, to develop skills and aptitude in Business and Mathematics we have hosted an annual *Stock Market Challenge* involving 15 schools in competition in a simulated trading game. Schools from across the region are invited to attend an on-campus university day targeted at students in Year 8 and 9. The events have included subject specific workshops developed and designed by our Student Ambassadors (current undergraduate students). In 13/14 we engaged over 650 students in this age-group through on-campus university days.

Work in key stage 4 is focussed on our *Young Professionals* programme, a long-term initiative targeting young people from key target groups who demonstrate the potential to progress to university. In 13/14, we offered the programme to 150 students from 15 schools. The programme included a number of co-ordinated interventions beginning in Year 10. We recognise the importance of the transition phase between Key stage 4 and 5 and consequently build information, advice and guidance sessions into the programme. We will continue to provide additional enhancement work through study skills workshops delivered in schools during Year 10 and prior to GCSE examinations in Year 11. Students who successfully complete the programme are tracked through to Key Stage 5 and are invited to join our post -16 initiatives including the *Tomorrow's Professionals Programme* and the *Progression Module*.

Post 16: We have worked in collaboration with the University of Huddersfield since 2008 on the *Progression Module*, an accredited HE guidance module for Year 12 students in the region. The module works with around 2,500 students led jointly by the two institutions. Students who successfully complete the module are awarded 30 UCAS points for courses at Leeds Beckett University and the University of Huddersfield. Schools in low-participation neighbourhoods are prioritised to take part. 73% of the schools taking part are from Polar 3

quintiles 1 and 2. In 2013, 48% of students taking part in the programme applied to our university. We will seek to build upon this success with our partners for 15/16 entry through increased tracking of students engaging with this module and follow up activity to measure participation against progression into higher education.

FE Colleges and Sixth Forms: We will continue to offer a range of workshops and talks to Schools with Sixth Forms and FE Colleges to ensure effective information, advice and guidance is delivered to Post -16 students. In 2013-14 we engaged with 8436 Year 12 students through careers and HE events held within schools. We have a number of specialist events targeting FE colleges. In 2012-13 we delivered 20 events for this sector, including focus days, HE talks and careers conferences. These events reached 4461 FE students. By 15/16, we will have increased the number of interventions to 32 incorporating colleges in South Yorkshire and Humberside. We have an Associate Schools and Colleges partnership with 25 institutions in our region. In addition to this, we have established a collaborative forum for practitioners from our partner schools and colleges to share best practice relating to access and progression.

Access to the Professions and Tomorrow's Professionals Programmes: In our 14/15 access agreement, we outlined our plans for an Access to the Professions project and further developments on our Tomorrows Professionals project. The *Access to the Professions* project has been slow to gain ground and we anticipate future agreements will bring forward its early outputs. *The Tomorrow's Professionals Programme* has been developed to identify and engage students who have the potential to progress to university but are disadvantaged due to socio-economic factors. The programme offers participants the chance to take part in a year-long programme, specific to each faculty. This includes focus days, guest lectures and subject talks. The programme includes a 3-night residential event which allows individuals to increase their confidence in applying to, and progressing into higher education. Subject specific work ensures that students gain practical experience in their chosen field which includes clinical workshops in dietetics, speech & language therapy, and nursing. Employer partners, such as local NHS Trusts, contribute to the programme to assist participants in recognising the professional world they would be entering upon graduation. In our Education strand of the programme, students are given the opportunity to teach a lesson to Year 6 pupils within local primary schools. Students on the programme are given additional support through the application process through our *Onwards to Offers* event and are tracked through the UCAS process to monitor the impact of the programme. For 15/16 entry we will seek further evidence of impact of this programme and consider how it could be extended to other groups from low participation areas.

Collaborations:

HEART Partnership: We continue to be an active partner in the HEART (Higher Education Access Rewarding Transforming) consortium in West Yorkshire (see appendix B). The partnership facilitates a number of activities with looked after children including networking events and information programmes for foster carers.

Routes into Languages Consortium: Our university has been involved in the *Routes into Language* project since its inception in 2006. We are an active partner in the Yorkshire and

the Humber Consortium. The Routes into Languages project aims to promote language learning, increase pupil motivation and uptake of languages and enhance employability. Stage two of the project commenced in September 2013 for three years. Stage two will concentrate more specifically on the impact of sustained interventions with schools in low participation neighbourhoods. We have worked with 35 of our current students to become 'Language Ambassadors' to promote learning languages to the schools and colleges we work with, targeting low participation areas and arranging visits to our university to explore the possibilities language learning at university can offer. We will continue to be an active member of this group, and seek increased evidence of students entering higher education through such subject specific outreach activities by 15/16.

Languages for All: For all students who come to our university, we offer free language classes to full time and part time students under the *Languages for All* programme. Courses are offered in nine languages and are offered for 26 weeks with 2 hours a week face to face contact. These sessions are open to all students regardless of level. By 15/16, we will be offering these programmes with opportunities for academic credit as part of our undergraduate portfolio.

Accredited IT qualification for students: From 2012-13 students have been offered the opportunity to accredit their IT skills with the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) qualification. This comprises a set of online IT training materials which students can study at their own pace, followed by an exam when they feel they have reached the required level. A MOS certificate is available in MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Accrediting their IT skills allows our students to enhance their digital literacy, one of our university's graduate attributes, and to demonstrate a key graduate skill to potential employers.

Working with Alumni

We have developed a number of ways to both support our recent alumni students, as well as seek their involvement in our outreach activities and support for current students. Our career mentoring scheme is a voluntary programme that Alumni can engage with. Students are matched with a career mentor i.e. an alumnus who is a professional in a job role of interest to the student. It provides an opportunity for students to gain 'real world' insights into their chosen profession. Mentoring offers scope for the personal and professional development of both parties, especially in areas such as leadership and communication.

Our *careers services team* offers free career advice and guidance to recent graduates, (those that graduated within the last five years), covering; career choices, writing a CV, interview skills, part-time work, graduate opportunities and employer engagement. As part of our annual giving campaign *what would you give?* Recent alumni are invited back to engage with final year students to talk them through the journey from graduation to graduate career. This year over 600 alumni provided workshops, mentoring and advice during the *futures fest* fortnight. All these activities are available to all students and alumni, however evaluation of these initiatives will allow us to continuously enhance these support activities and provide evidence of how we can target cohorts with a high proportion of students from low participation groups in our efforts to continuously exceed benchmark of non-continuing students.

Appendix B

2015-16 HEART Partnership Statement for 15/16 Access Agreements

Leeds Beckett University is committed to the Higher Education Access Rewarding Transforming (HEART) partnership established by twelve HE providers in West Yorkshire (FE Colleges providing HE, HEIs and Universities) until December 2015.

HEARTs mission remains to work in partnership to improve access to, and achievement in, Higher Education to enhance individual and economic development.

Strategic target groups for collaborative activity are currently under review however the excellent work in relation to Looked after Young People (LAYP) and Care Leavers will continue together with relationships to the Leeds City Region (LCR) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and through this addressing issues relating to mature and part-time learners. Other areas currently being considered are collaborative primary school activities and learners with disabilities.

HEARTs approach to engaging with LAYP/Care Leavers working through the intermediaries (local authorities, social workers, foster carers and independent fostering agencies) continues to strengthen with a significant increase in activities and attendance at these activities. The network with all West Yorkshire local authorities LAYP/Care Leaver teams meets twice annually and is enabling HEART partners to potentially reach all young people in care (approximately 3,500) in the region. The network has supported development of activities such as coffee mornings for foster carers, attendance at foster carer support groups and 'foster family learning days' to be delivered shortly. The HEART Manager has also taken up the role as representative for Yorkshire and Humber on the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers.

The LCR LEP has clear objectives to create an environment for growth including the development of a skilled and flexible workforce and with particular emphasis on priority sectors of advanced engineering and manufacturing, creative and digital, finance and professional services, food and drink, health and life sciences and low carbon. HEART is working with the LEP to promote the awareness of these opportunities and continues to work in partnership to support the LEP in achieving these objectives. HEART has already established a Higher Level Skills Ambassador (HLSA) role recruiting and expanding numbers of local LCR business leaders who are able to spread the word about the value of higher education and higher level skills to their own workforce and throughout their business networks. A number of the HLSA have also engaged in outreach activities to schools in Polar 3 high priority target areas.

Mature and part-time learner recruitment is a concern within West Yorkshire as it is nationally. HEART represents the twelve partners on the LCR Skills Network, the provider group that reports into and through the Employment & Skills Panel to the LEP. A key challenge of the LCR work is to encourage greater investment in skills by businesses and individuals. HEART supports engagement in this agenda and has recently commenced a process of longitudinal analysis and reporting to the HEART Board on the quality of information provided by partners in respect of genuine part-time course offers with an aim to enhance the access to information for mature and part-time learners.

HEART sponsors the regional Adult Learners Week awards and has supported the introduction of the Adult Learners' Festival in 2014.

HEART continues to be monitored carefully for effectiveness and impact by the Board (comprised of senior managers from all twelve partners and representatives from HEFCE and LCR) with strategy and priority activities informed and agreed by the Board. Operational activity is overseen and guided by members of HEART planning groups (comprised of senior practitioners working in outreach/widening participation and business engagement).