

Institution applicant name:	Cardiff University
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2018/19 Fee and Access Plan: focus and contents

Executive summary

We are pleased to present Cardiff University's 2018/19 fee and access plan. The plan details how we will support equality of opportunity for groups of students who are traditionally less likely to access higher education (HE) and work to ensure that those students progress and succeed at Cardiff University. The plan also details the ways in which Cardiff University will continue to promote Welsh medium higher education and provide a high quality student experience for all students, supporting them to achieve successful outcomes as graduates. The views of our students at Cardiff University are listened to and have helped to shape the development and delivery of the activities included in this plan. The University has an effective academic representation system, with over 1,000 student representatives. We also coordinate a range of annual events and campaigns including 'Speak Week' and 'Student Voice' (p.22), as mechanisms to seek feedback from students, as well as drawing on data provided by students through our regular cycles of student survey and course evaluation.

Cardiff University successfully combines high entry standards with a strong widening participation agenda. Our outreach and community engagement programmes identify potential amongst students from areas where participation in HE is low and supports them to access HE, including through our flagship 'Step Up to University' scheme and HE Roadshows. We try to ensure that finance is not a barrier to accessing or continuing in HE, providing bursaries and a financial assistance programme (p.43). We also offer bespoke packages of support for specific groups who face barriers to HE, including care leavers, students with Autism, carers and asylum seekers. We offer study options through the medium of Welsh in a range of subjects, so that our students have opportunities to study in Welsh and work bilingually after graduating. Our peer-to-peer mentoring schemes, available in all our academic schools, help students to settle in to university life (p.41) and our well established personal tutor scheme, available in Welsh and English, provides all students with academic advice and pastoral support (p.43). Our Global Opportunities Centre offers opportunities for students to spend time overseas, and runs specific schemes to ensure that under-represented group have access to international experiences, and that financial considerations are not a barrier.

Cardiff University's fee and access plan includes investment in the quality of the student experience at Cardiff. Our new Centre for Student Life will create a hub for our student support services and flexible, technology-rich social learning spaces (p.45). We are also continuing to update teaching, learning and social study spaces across campus (p.45) and to enhance the digital learning environment, including the provision of online personalised timetabling, lecture capture capability and off-campus access to University services. Our plan reflects our strong commitment to supporting students to achieve their full potential after university by providing a wide range of opportunities for work experience, summer research placements and entrepreneurship activities, as well as tailored career planning support (p.47). At Cardiff University students also have additional opportunities to enhance their employability, including learning a language or taking part in a range of volunteering projects (p.48).

The student voice

The student voice and students as partners

Cardiff University aims to be known as a University which encourages high levels of student engagement, and that listens to students, responding to their needs and expectations, and providing them with opportunities to shape their education and the wider student experience.

The [Student Charter](#) underpins the partnership between the University, the Students' Union and students. The document highlights how the University works in partnership with students to provide a positive student experience, and identifies what they can expect from each other. It is reviewed annually by the Student Charter Review Group to ensure that it remains relevant and accurate. The Students' Union President and elected Student Officers are members of the Student Charter Review Group.

The [student academic representation system](#) is managed by The Students' Union's Student Voice team in partnership with the University. It is a mature and embedded system, with over 1,000 representatives. All academic student reps are trained, in partnership with our Students' Union, and with training materials recognised as being well designed and appropriate in the University's most recent Institutional Review. Student representatives actively engage with their programme cohorts and speak on behalf of students in a range of well-established forums at School, College and University levels. There is a network of Student Rep Co-ordinators across all academic schools, to provide support and ensure student academic representation is embedded within school practice. Student representatives feedback students' views on their experience via regular, and at least termly, at Student-Staff panel meetings. Student-staff panels are also utilised as an important aspect of School and University consultation with students. They provide an important mechanism through which the wider student voice is listened to and acted upon at School level. Student representatives work to ensure that their cohort are regularly updated on developments arising from student feedback. Student chairs of Student-Staff panels also meet three times a year in College forums. These forums are chaired by the Students' Union Vice President Education / Vice President Postgraduate and are attended by College Education Deans, and other senior members of staff. Forums can invite members of staff from any area of the University to attend, to listen and respond to student views and to provide information about University business.

Our annual Student Voice campaign is designed to encourage students to share their views and opinions about what the University is doing well and what it can do better. The campaign seeks to inform students about the variety of ways in which their views can be communicated, and how the University makes changes in response to the feedback it receives from students including through key investments, changes to policies and practices and enhancements to services. It also seeks to use student communication channels such as Blas (the student newsletter) and social media to promote the different opportunities at School, College and University-wide levels through which students can use their student voice.

[Students' Union elected officers](#) are voted in by students during a high-profile election campaigns which enjoy consistently high levels of engagement amongst the student body and support from the University. Elected officers and senior University staff work in close partnership on the full range of University business. The Students' Union Student Voice team meet with the University Student Engagement and Student Communications teams on a monthly basis. Students also have direct and regular access to senior decision-makers. Students' Union officers meet regularly with the Vice

Chancellor and other members of the University Executive Board. The Students' Union and University Partnership Group, Chaired jointly by the President of the Students' Union and the PVC Student Experience & Academic Standards, also meets regularly across the academic session, and includes all elected Student Officers as well as academic and professional services representatives. Student Officers also participate as full members of major University committees, including Senate and Council, and serve on the steering boards for all student-facing capital and revenue projects, including the Centre for Student Life (CSL), a new £50M landmark building marking a major investment in the student experience (See 'Promotion of Higher Education' on p.45 for more information on CSL).

Our annual cycle of student survey and module evaluation enables direct engagement with our wider student body about their educational experience. Opportunities for students to share their views and opinions are highlighted across our student communications channels, including the intranet, student news and social media. Successive cohorts completing the optional NSS questions around engagement confirm that students feel they have good opportunities to provide feedback about their experience of studying at Cardiff. Students' Union surveys of students located at our University Hospital of Wales campus have also led directly to the enhancement of study, social and support services including investment in additional common room spaces. The impact of regular and responsive dialogue with our students is evident through both operational changes such as introducing reading weeks, increasing social and group study spaces, altering feedback processes and increasing work placement opportunities, and more strategic, institution-wide measures, for example a new approach to library fines, changes to student printing provision and extending counselling services.

The University works collaboratively with the Students' Union to encourage the wider student community to contribute to University life and to shape the student experience. The University is a supportive partner in the Students' Union's annual 'Speak Week', which serves as a principal mechanism for reaching out and listening to students through a diverse range of student-led events. Engagement with Speak Week has increased year-on-year: in 2017 there were just under 3,000 individual response cards from students (up from 2,200 in 2016 and 800 in 2015). These student responses tell us what we are doing well and how we might improve the student experience further. Issues raised during Speak Week are discussed in our regular Students' Union-University partnership meetings and College education forums, and also inform the Student Written Submission (SWS). This document is produced by the Students' Union and is considered by University Council on an annual basis, together with response and actions agreed by University Executive Board. This distinctive approach allows the student voice to be heard by the Governing Body of the University, and in turn helps to shape the University's investment priorities. In the last three years, the SWS has directly influenced a number of changes across the University including the expansion of 24/7 library opening hours, changes to the delivery of wellbeing and careers support services for our University Hospital-based students, the roll out of lecture capture capability across the institution and the introduction of contactless payment facilities across campus.

Our Students play a key role in our quality assurance processes, including annual and periodic review cycles, and all new programme approvals. Students are full panel members for key quality assurance processes such as School Annual Review and Enhancement (ARE), and are core members of all our enhancement projects and activities. In 2015/16, almost 100 students participated formally in quality-related events as panel members. This work provides significant challenge for participating students and supports the development of a range of transferable skills. Students' Union officers are also members of our Academic Appeals, Complaints, Disciplinary and Fitness to Practice appeal panels. The University operates an extensive framework for seeking student feedback, including through surveys, and consultations, and embeds the outcomes of those activities into the University's quality enhancement processes. This was highlighted as a feature of good practice in the University's most

recent Institutional Review, which recognised our work to support and embed the positive contributions of students in developing a culture of enhancement for the quality of learning opportunities.

Cardiff University Student Education Innovation Projects (CUSEIP) enable students to work directly with academic and professional services staff on learning and teaching enhancement projects that help to shape the broader student experience. The projects can be proposed by staff, or by staff and students working together. A new initiative, this programme is being piloted in 2016/17 and 22 projects have been funded. The anticipation is that CUSEIP will become embedded as part of our commitment to working with students to enhance the student experience and shape our education offer to all of our students.

The Students' Union has recently voted to officially establish a union for Welsh speaking students and learners, (Undeb Myfyrwyr Cymraeg Caerdydd - UMCC). This development will be established in the academic year 2017-18, and will seek to further represent students who are Welsh speakers and learners across all aspects of University life. This will further ensure that the Student Voice of Welsh-speaking students impacts positively on both the Students' Union and the University.

The University supports to the Students' Union to provide facilities and services to increase students' participation in university life, including through sporting activities and societies, and to provide access to important support and advice services. The University will continue to invest resource to facilitate the Students Union achieving its goals, which are underpinned by clear plans to engage all students, to provide developmental opportunities for students (including volunteering) and to create sector-leading facilities (see 'Promotion of Higher Education' on p.46 for developments for 2018/19). We know from international research that students who participate in structured student-led activities are more likely to engage in university life and have positive outcomes overall. We have worked in partnership with the Students' Union to develop frameworks that enable students to recognise and value the skills that positive engagement with clubs, societies and volunteering can help them to develop. From 2016/17 onwards, certain types of participation are also eligible for inclusion within the University's enhanced transcript, itself a project that has benefitted from strong University-student collaboration.

Engagement with the student body in developing, assessing and finalising the fee and access plan

The University's fee and access plan is directly aligned to the institutional strategic plan (2018-23) and strategic equality plan (2016-20), both of which have been developed with significant and ongoing student involvement.

The University's Strategic Plan (2018-23), and supporting strategies (including Education and the Student Experience) have been developed over the academic years 2015/16 and 2016/17. A range of events, including strategy development workshops, enabled students to work alongside staff members to contribute to the formulation of plans to realise Cardiff University's ambition to support all students to fulfil their potential. The Vice-Chancellor has also held an ongoing series of student focus group meetings. The focus of these sessions has been directed by the students during which they have been able to communicate directly their views about the University and in turn to shape the strategy for 2018-23. Students' Union elected officers have also had the opportunity to shape the strategic plans of the University through membership of Senate and Council, and through our established partnership approach.

The Strategic Equality Plan (2016-20) activities that relate to students are included in the fee and access plan, in particular our objective to attract and retain the brightest students from a diversity of backgrounds by providing an inclusive and supportive learning and teaching environment. Again, students were closely involved in the development of the plan, its strategic objectives and actions. This was enabled through a series of engagement events throughout the consultation period, including a dedicated student consultation event via the Students' Union. Student representatives are also members of the University Equality and Diversity Committee which oversaw the development of the strategic equality plan and is responsible for delivering on actions and monitoring progress.

Students are also consulted on an ongoing basis on the development of provision that is included in fee and access plans through our range of student voice mechanisms. Students' views and opinions on what is working well and what could be improved is received throughout the academic year, including through regular consultation between students and the Deans for Education and Students, and through our staff/student panels. The fee and access plan reflects changes that have been made as responses to and in partnership with our students, including enhancements to the learning environment.

Students' Union Elected Officers are involved in the drafting and finalisation of the fee and access plan. This provides an additional opportunity to see how the range of activity translates to, and is presented in, the fee and access plan. The Students' Union President and Vice-President Education also share and discuss the draft document with their executive committees. Elected Officers are full members of Council, responsible for approving the fee and access plan for submission and holding the Vice Chancellor and University Executive Board to account in relation to plan monitoring and delivery.

The University continues to refine and enhance the process for monitoring fee and access plans, and the development of future plans, particularly to reflect the requirement and best practice to align fee and access plans explicitly with overarching institutional strategies, thereby ensuring that plans are embedded at a strategic level across the University. Fee and access plan monitoring and development is being increasingly captured within our established University committees and sub-committees. This ensures that students can engage with the University's fee and access plan in the same way as they participate in the monitoring of all our strategic plans and related projects and provision. In addition to this, students continue to play important roles in steering specific developments within the remit of the fee and access plan, such as projects which set priorities for improvements to the learning environment. As representatives on the University's committees and working groups, including Academic Standards and Quality Committee, Equality and Diversity Committee, Senate and Council, students regularly review information about the University's performance against the fee and access plan and will continue to influence the evaluation and enhancement of its provisions.

All students are able to view information about the University's investment of fee income on the external website and student intranet pages, including information about progress in key areas of activity within the remit of the fee and access plan and investment of fee income, as well as activities aimed at widening participation, enhancing the student experience and our graduates' employability. These pages provide additional opportunities for dialogue between the University and students on the progress of our institutional plans. They also include information presented in different media (e.g. short videos, blogs, and infographics) about our key investments and initiatives, including reports about changes that have been made in response to feedback received from students. We are continually working to improve the information we make available to students about the University's performance within the remit of the fee and access plan and more broadly.

How proposed fee levels are communicated to students

Cardiff University has a comprehensive communications framework to provide consistent information about tuition fees, financial assistance and student support to its prospective and current students. These communications are aimed at potential applicants to the University, current students, parents, staff in secondary schools and colleges, and University staff, and are designed to ensure that all stakeholders receive accurate, timely and consistent information. We ensure that the information provided about the University and its services meet the quality standard set out in Part C of the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the requirements of the recent guidance published by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). Related to this, our student complaints and appeals procedures are aligned to the CMA's advice and also to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's good practice framework. The University will continue to use a wide range of communication methods including:

Website

- There are dedicated web pages containing information on tuition fees and student support, frequently asked questions, links to other related websites including Student Finance Wales/England/Scotland/Northern Ireland, as well as links to key University contacts.
- An online Student Finance Calculator is also available which provides information about fee levels, Welsh Government financial support and what other financial support may be available.
- The continuing development of our Key Information Set (KIS) has ensured that a wide range of information specific to each course of study, and on the institution in general, is made available to prospective students.
- The University's online application portal clearly displays links to relevant information on fees and student support.

Marketing materials/Open days

- The University communicates information on fees and student support to prospective students at open days, visit days, HE Fairs and in schools and colleges liaison work via prospectuses, brochures, scholarship and bursary leaflets and advice from university staff. Information is included in presentations for teachers and careers advisers as well as in the student finance talks for applicants.
- The University also uses social media including Facebook and Twitter, blogs and YouTube to communicate with both prospective and current students.

Email

- All students who apply to the University will receive an email acknowledging safe receipt of their application and providing web links to our online fees information.
- The University communicates with all offer holders in respect of scholarship and bursary provision.

Communication of fee charges during the duration of study

- For students commencing studies in 2018/19, the fee level for standard three year undergraduate degree courses, and for each year of an Integrated Masters programme, currently £9,000 per year, is determined upon approval of our fee and access plan by HEFCW at the end of July. Fees in 2018/19 may increase in line with Welsh Government policy.
- Where fee variations apply to courses due to a period of placement or overseas study while registered at Cardiff University, these will be clearly communicated at the time of application.
- Cardiff University adheres to the guidance published by the Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA) on compliance with consumer protection law relating to higher education students.

The extent to which our plan reflects the principles of key policy statements and guidance

Cardiff University is committed to the Welsh Government Policy Statement on Higher Education and supports the ambitions in Future Directions and the principles of **WISE** (Welsh Initiative for Student Engagement) Partnership for Higher Education in Wales. We have a strong, meaningful and action-orientated commitment to **working in partnership with our students** (see above) and our thematic strategy for Education and the Student Experience (see 'Strategic Approach' on p.33) is predicated on a strong partnership with our students. The Students' Union, supported by the University, is working to increase participation in **student opportunities and social action** by reducing and removing identified barriers. For example, the Students' Union's 'Cardiff Volunteering' initiative offers a wide variety of different projects and one-off opportunities which students can fit around their University schedule (also see p.48 for information about volunteering opportunities for students).

Rationale for the fee and access plan, including strategic approach

Critical review of fee and access plan outcomes to date

We regularly monitor and review our performance against the measures and targets in our fee and access plan. This is linked to the continuous evaluation of the activities in our fee and access plan and the extent to which they support the progress we wish to make (see review of current provision below). We benchmark our performance against comparator universities in a range of measures including widening participation and graduate outcomes. We review national and university research evidence on policy and practice in widening participation and equality of opportunity and apply findings to the development of our own provision. We also listen and respond to the views and opinions of students about what is working well and where we can make improvements to the student experience.

Performance to date

Cardiff is an institution that successfully combines high entry standards with a strong widening participation agenda. In 2015/16, the University had a significantly higher proportion of young full-time first degree students from UK low participation backgrounds (9.3%) compared to the Russell Group average (6.4%) and a higher proportion of UK-domiciled young full-time first degree entrants from state schools or colleges (85.9%) compared to the Russell Group average (77.8%). Despite this strong performance, Cardiff University remains committed to equality of opportunity and has steadily increased recruitment of students from low income and low participation backgrounds. We have gradually increased the proportion of all students from UK low participation areas at the University (undergraduate and postgraduate levels, full and part-time) from 21.2% in 2012/13 to 24.0% in 2015/16. We have also increased the proportion of students from Community First (CF) cluster areas / bottom quintile of wards in Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) from 16.4% of the Welsh student body in 2012/13 to 17.3% in 2015/16. The target we have set of at least 18% of Welsh students from CF/WIMD areas in 2018/19 is appropriately ambitious, while taking account of prevailing challenges in the recruitment market, including a declining 18-year-old population and the expansion of competitor institutions in England,.

We monitor our performance against widening participation performance indicators published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) which enable us to assess our performance compared

to the sector average, allowing for the University's subject and entry qualifications, thus providing the means for meaningful comparison.

- Since 2012/13, the University has remained within the appropriate range from the **benchmark for recruitment** of young, first-degree full-time students from low participation neighbourhoods, and mature students with no previous HE experience from low participation neighbourhoods.
- Since 2012/13, the University has remained within the appropriate statistical range from the **benchmark for student retention**: the number of young first-degree full-time students from low participation backgrounds, and mature full-time first-degree entrants with no previous higher education qualification from low participation backgrounds, who are still in higher education the year after entry. Internal data show that, of those who leave the university, the majority do so early in the academic year. This pattern of non-continuation indicates the impact of the initial difficulty some students experience when transitioning into university life. We have introduced provision to strengthen support for student transition into HE in 2018/19 (e.g. see p.30 below).

As performance across the sector improves and HESA benchmarks rise, Cardiff University will strive continually to improve its performance to keep pace with those benchmarks.

We have been working to establish better evidence relating to, and understanding of, barriers to progression and attainment for under-represented groups of students at Cardiff University. During the development of our strategic equality plan, we analysed a range of equality data and evidence to inform the formulation of objectives to tackle instances where students with protected characteristics have worse outcomes than their comparator groups. One of our strategic equality plan objectives is to attract and retain the brightest students from a diversity of backgrounds by providing an inclusive and supportive learning and teaching environment. Building on this, the University commissioned research by the Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data & Methods (WISERD) to further examine the relationship between progression and attainment and protected characteristics, and other factors such as socio-economic background and domicile. The study was first carried out in 2016 and repeated in 2017 to establish trend data. This evidence will continue to inform the development and enhancement of the interventions and support services described in the fee and access plan, which are aimed at closing gaps in attainment and progression between under-represented students and their comparator groups. In particular, the work contributes to the University's Race Equality Charter Mark application, which will be submitted in July 2017.

Numbers of undergraduate students participating in Welsh medium provision have increased steadily over the last three years from 321 undergraduates studying at least 5 credits and 233 studying at least 40 credits through the medium of Welsh in 2013/14 to 419 and 276 respectively in 2015/16. In the context of the withdrawal by Welsh Government in 2016 of the Masters in Educational Practice, which contributed significantly to the number of students studying at least 40 credits of Welsh Medium provision, the University is expanding its Welsh-medium provision strategically, focusing on where the most significant contribution can be made to prepare highly-skilled graduates for the Welsh workforce (see more information about our Welsh medium policy and provision in the 'Strategic Approach' section on p. 33 and in the 'Equality of Opportunity provision' under Category 2, p. 46).

Overall student satisfaction is high. Our institutional level score was 87% in NSS (National Student Survey) 2016, which exceeds both the UK and Welsh sector averages. Further analysis shows that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are as satisfied with their University experience as students from more advantaged backgrounds. Although strong, our overall satisfaction rate in 2016 represented a small dip in performance after a gradual increase over the preceding five years (culminating in a 90% student satisfaction rate in 2015). We are continuously reflecting on our performance and using our extensive student voice structures with an aim of further increasing student satisfaction.

Graduate employability of Cardiff University students remains high. 94.2% of students were employed, studying or both six months after graduation in the most recent year (2014/15) according to the DLHE (Destination of Leavers of Higher Education) survey. We were ranked joint 14th in the UK for employability in the Global University Employability Ranking 2016. Our 2014/15 performance in the DLHE survey for highly-skilled employment was a little anomalous (77% compared to 84% in 2013/14 and 2012/13), and we have actively sought to understand any local circumstances such that we can put corrective actions in place. Graduate outcomes for disadvantaged groups are as good as those for students from more advantaged backgrounds, which demonstrates our success in attracting widening participation students and supporting them to do well. The DLHE survey data collection method is changing. Information about the graduate outcomes of graduates from 2017/18 onwards will be collected 15 months after leaving University, rather than 6 months as currently. 'New DLHE' data will be available in January 2020.

In Wales, Cardiff University enabled the largest number of students from NS-SEC 4–8 to experience outward mobility as part of their programme of study. Cardiff University is also in the top ten institutions across the UK for this measure. Our outward mobility bursary scheme ensures personal circumstances are not a barrier to accessing international experiences.

How the review of current provision informs enhancements to provision we will deliver in 2018/19:

We have established an evaluation framework to inform the continuous development of the University's widening participation and community outreach provision. The evaluation framework is structured around a set of strategic aims which underpin all our widening participation and community outreach work: to support transition, to support educational aspiration-raising, to enhance educational knowledge and skills, to promote equality of opportunity and inclusive approaches and to enhance personal development of participants. The framework will enable a more consistent approach to gathering quantitative and qualitative evaluation data about our programmes, clearly related to the knowledge, skills, or attitudes that the work is aiming to influence. The evaluation framework will also allow us to take a holistic approach to developing our widening participation offer across all our projects and programmes and support a more coherent experience for participants (see more information on review of WP programmes below). Related to this, the University's online programme monitoring tool (Upshot) will enable us to benchmark our performance in outreach work by having comparable data with other providers, and to capture the engagement and progression of participants.

We have reviewed our current widening participation programmes and made a number of key improvements. The changes improve the coherence of prospective students' journey from their initial participation in our aspiration-raising and outreach programmes to a supported transition to University and access to ongoing support once at University. Step Up and Step Up Plus have been reviewed and enhancements made in response to a range of evidence including participants' feedback, emerging best practice (which the University co-creates through its involvement in sector-wide communities of practice), the identification and understanding of the needs of additional under-represented groups, and assessment of other schemes in the sector. Key changes include:

- The eligibility criteria for Step Up Plus has been broadened and relate to indicators of under-representation in HE: eligibility for free school meals, being a young carer, being the first in the family to enter HE, and asylum seeker status. The programme will also feature intensive academic content for under-represented groups with a stronger link to access to the professions. This will provide participants with subject / profession-specific activities, including in Healthcare and Law.

- We have widened the eligibility criteria for 'Live Local, Learn Local', our community outreach programme, to include asylum seeker and refugees, BME groups and foster carers. This ensures that our widening participation initiatives reaches more students from under-represented groups in higher education, and that a more consistent approach is taken to targeting those groups across different outreach activities.
- Stronger links have been created between our outreach provision and the University's support and wellbeing services for when students arrive at university, for example through specific welcome events and dedicated staff for specified groups (e.g. care leavers) to further improve the continuity of support from participating in outreach activities through to becoming a University student.
- We continue to participate in the South East Wales regional widening participation partnership 'Reaching Wider'. We have helped to develop a revised GCSE English and maths programme in conjunction with the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service, and First Campus to ensure that provision meets the needs of participants and fits with other regional provision. The new programme supports 60 trained student volunteers to visit local schools on a weekly basis to deliver English and Maths tuition to support the raising of pupil attainment.
- Cardiff University has established a partnership with The Brilliant Club Scholars Programme, which recruits and trains doctoral and postdoctoral researchers to deliver six academically rigorous tutorials to small groups of high-potential pupils in key stages 2-5 in non-selective state schools and sixth form colleges. Students also make two visits to selective universities, where they receive targeted access information, advice and guidance. Cardiff University will work with over 300 Scholars Programme pupils in 2017-18.

We continually review our contextual admissions policy to ensure that we assess applicants' potential to succeed in the context of barriers they may have encountered. During 2016/17, a working group is evaluating our current policy and process and assessing the indicators we use as evidence of contextual information. The review is taking account of new data releases and how these can enable a more nuanced approach to contextual admissions. The review is also assessing findings from external research evidence (particularly from SPA [Supporting Professional Admissions] who are a strategic lead on fair admissions and supporting fair access) to inform any changes to Cardiff University's policy. We will investigate the possibility of using additional indicators of disadvantage to support the recruitment of students from under-represented groups. In the first instance, and subject to the availability of robust data, we will use indicators of carer and parental responsibility in our contextual admissions policy for entry in 2018/19 as well as indicators of socio-economic disadvantage.

Our bursary offer has been updated to ensure we are providing the most effective financial support at the right time to the groups identified as likely to experience barriers to participation in higher education (see 'Equality of Opportunity provision', Category 2 on p.46). In 2018/19 we will create additional bursary provision for students with caring responsibilities or who are armed forces veterans.

Our Welsh Medium provision strategy review will inform the growth of sustainable Welsh medium provision. The review, due to be completed in Autumn 2017, will assess the sustainability of current provision, identify and evaluate the viability of opportunities for new development and define the University's priorities for investment. We want to focus on areas of strategic importance so that the University can prepare highly-skilled graduates with the ability to contribute bilingually to Welsh economic, social and cultural life. We are collaborating closely with *Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol* on these developments, which include new provision in Journalism, Medicine, Nursing Pharmacy and Maths. (See p.34 for more information on the way in which we support and promote the Welsh language more generally at Cardiff University).

We continue to review and enhance our student support and wellbeing activities. We have made changes as a result of our assessment of activity, including analysis of feedback from students on our services, data on participation rates, and assessments of the impact of services. These include the following:

- **Extended peer-to-peer student mentoring:** The scheme particularly helps to support transition to university. Following a successful pilot, by 2015/16 this scheme was in operation across half our academic Schools (42% of the student body). Satisfaction rates are high: in 2015/16, 69% of mentees assessed the scheme as beneficial to their first year transition and 93% of mentors valued the opportunity to support their peers. As a result of the positive impact of the scheme, and its role in assisting with the transition to University life, the scheme will be extended to all our academic schools by 2018/19.
- **Enhanced induction** to support transition into University life, by providing information tailored to student needs in an engaging and interactive way.
- **Increased mental health support for students:** In the context of a sector-wide rise in student mental health concerns, we have invested in both early intervention and crisis support. We have seen a marked increase in students seeking support from our wellbeing and counselling services before they reach crisis point: between 2013/14 and 2015/16 unique service user numbers rose from 1,187 to 3,694 individual students. Of students considering dropping out, 90% said the support they received enabled them to continue their studies. We have increased our full-time counselling staff and have expanded our online offer, as well as extending core service delivery hours. We also collaborate with our Students' Union on a number of annual wellbeing campaigns, including *Mind Your Head Week* and the *Time to Change Pledge*, both designed to destigmatize mental health concerns.
- **Extended Study Skills Support Service:** Our Academic Study Skills Centre helps individual students to develop their confidence and abilities with foundational concepts and skills. Students evaluate the support provided consistently highly, with 93% of those participating in academic skills classes in 2015/16 reporting that they had developed their knowledge as a result. Our Maths Support Service also provides students with the opportunity to enhance the mathematical and statistical skills they require to be successful in both their academic studies and future employment. This service offers flexible daily drop-in sessions, pre-arranged appointments and access to a wide range of learning resources. In 2015/16, 734 students made use of face-to-face services, of whom 25% were from a low participation neighbourhood. This service will be extended by 2018/19 with additional sessions provided during the Easter and summer break periods.
- **Established the student support and wellbeing inquiry management system:** Alongside the establishment of Cardiff University's Centre for Student Life, our student support and wellbeing service redesign is creating new capabilities to identify, engage and monitor vulnerable students and those at risk. In particular, the inquiry management system will create efficiencies by removing manual processes and duplication, thereby increasing the resource available for student-facing services including counselling and student advice. The introduction of a front-line Advice Bar and supporting systems will also mean that students who are not located on our main campus will also have improved access to support and wellbeing services.

We will provide further opportunities to enhance the employability of our graduates, particularly for under-represented groups. We will enhance the comprehensiveness of our employability services (see 'Promotion of Higher Education', Category 3 p.47) which will benefit from additional provision in 2018/19:

- **Introduction of a career registration system.** This will enable students to register their career readiness upon enrolment, which provides a starting point from which they will progress throughout their time at University. Careers registration will enable the University to deliver

career planning and employability services that are more tailored to students' individual requirements, based on factors such as their career decidedness and employability experience.

- **We will provide all our students with opportunities to gain employment-related experience as part of their studies.** We will also pilot new employability measures to support students who experience financial barriers to accessing work experience and ensure that all students can participate in employment rich opportunities regardless of personal circumstance.
- We have established a project to develop an agency approach to working with our alumni to secure work experience and recruitment opportunities for our students
- We have developed a pilot employability module toolkit in targeted areas within the College of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences, aimed at areas where the greatest need has been identified.

We are improving our ability to analyse and respond to the requirements of different groups. Our business intelligence (BI) capability is continuing to develop allowing us to derive more insight from the data students provide us. Through BI, we will be able to analyse information such as module evaluation feedback by different groups of students, which will provide the insights we require to support the progression and attainment of those students

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation on fee and access plans

Performance against the targets we have set in the fee and access plan, and the activities to support progress towards them, will be monitored and evaluated through a number of key University committees and strategic groups (see table below and also p.24). The inclusion of and reference to institutional key performance indicators in fee and access plan targets reflects the alignment of the fee and access plan with our overarching institutional strategy for 2018-2023. The approach for monitoring and evaluation will provide the appropriate level of scrutiny and assurance about the University's progress against the plan, including by students who serve as full members of committees and groups, as well as timely mitigation of risk to the achievement of the plan by identifying and addressing any areas for concern raised in regular performance reports. Fee and access plan progress reports will be presented to all relevant committees / groups at key points in the year. This will enable our University Executive Board (UEB) and Governing Body (Council) to receive quarterly reports of progress against fee and access targets, coordinated by the Department for Strategic Planning and Governance.

Specific areas of work in our plan (for example, widening participation outreach projects), will be subject to an evaluation framework, which we will progress in partnership with our sector partners across Welsh higher education. We will invite all HEIs and Reaching Wider partners to work with us to further develop our evaluation framework (see p.28). We will work with partners to explore the possibility of a shared evaluation framework, which, combined with our new programme monitoring tool (Upshot) will allow us to benchmark and measure the cumulative impact of various WP interventions across Wales longitudinally. We would expect significant progress to be made with developing and implementing this framework across the sector by all partners by 2018/19. The Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research Data and Methods (WISERD) will support and guide the further development of Cardiff University's current framework to support wider use across the sector.

Our Business Intelligence programme is developing a range of tools which will allow us to undertake empirical testing of our support interventions, for example in relation to academic and welfare student

support and employability support. This will provide a quantitative evidence base to sit alongside the qualitative data we collect to help us target support at those students who need it most. As our analytical and reporting capability develops in this area, this intelligence on our performance will be able to be linked to existing performance reports on access, progression and success for particular groups of students, and in turn used by the University to assess progress and inform decisions about the development of future fee and access plan activity and investment. For example, we anticipate having the capability by 18/19 to evaluate the outcomes for students with specific characteristics receiving scholarships. This will build on earlier work to analyse the efficacy of our scholarships and bursaries portfolio for specific student groups, with our new tools offering more detailed and flexible analysis.

Summary of monitoring and evaluation approach:

	ACTIVITY	MONITORING
Monitoring and Evaluation Reporting	ALL FEE AND ACCESS PLAN ACTIVITY	University Executive Board and onwards to Governing Body (University Council)
	ACCESS / RECRUITMENT	Admissions and Recruitment strategic Group
	STUDENT PROGRESSION /SUCCESS	Student Experience strategic Group
	EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	Equality and Diversity Committee
	SPECIFIC PROJECTS (e.g. Centre for Student Life)	Project Steering Groups on onwards to Portfolio Scrutiny Group
	Performance Data	Monitoring reports against Fee and Access Plan targets (See table G)
	Business Intelligence analysis	
	Widening Participation monitoring and evaluation framework outcomes	

Rationale for the fee and access plan and how it informs the objectives, provisions and targets

We will continue to deliver and develop our fee and access plan provision, including by implementing the enhancements outlined in the critical review section above. Through the delivery of these services and activities, we will continue to achieve incremental, sustained and measured improvement in our performance, which is reflected in our targets (set out in Table G at the end of this document) and underpinned by the following objectives:

Equality of Opportunity

- To continue to deliver and extend outreach activity to raise aspirations to HE, including for those from low participation backgrounds
- Promote and support access to HE for specific vulnerable groups, including those with a background in care and with autism
- Operate a system of recruitment and admissions that is fair, transparent and inclusive.
- Seek to remove financial barriers to HE for students from low income backgrounds, care leavers, asylum seekers, carers, armed forces veterans
- Provide support for students with disabilities to access HE
- Develop and deliver sustainable Welsh Medium provision and promote the Welsh language
- Deliver high quality and timely academic skills support provision

- Support progression and attainment of students from under-represented groups, using evidence to remove barriers and increase inclusive policies and practices
- Deliver a peer-to-peer mentoring scheme to support transition into HE, including those from low participation backgrounds
- Deliver timely health and wellbeing services to our students
- Provide and support opportunities for under-represented groups to undertake international experiences
- Provide a range of information to under-represented groups about access to HE and university services and provision.
- Provide a financial assistance programme for our students, combining advice and financial information with monetary support through loans and grants
- Provide a personal tutor scheme to all our students
- Provide targeted support to vulnerable groups who have background in care, are estranged from their families, have caring responsibilities, are asylum seekers or are forces veterans
- Provide pastoral care provision in residences aimed at supporting transition to University life
- Provide employability support measures for disadvantaged and students from low participation backgrounds
- Undertake monitoring and evaluation of all fee and access plan activity.

Promotion of HE

- Deliver a schools and college engagement programme to support high quality teaching and young people's learning
- Deliver a community and civic engagement programme
- Provide a high quality, modern, flexible and accessible learning environment
- Provide a learning infrastructure that supports the diverse needs of students
- Develop and maintain a framework within which the voice of students is heard and acted upon
- Develop innovative opportunities to enhance learning and teaching
- Provide a careers and employability service with a range of provision to enhance student employability
- Provide an opportunity for all our students to learn a language through our Languages for All programme
- Provide an opportunity for all our students to learn / develop Welsh language through our Welsh for All programme
-
- Provide a range of volunteering opportunities for students
- Promote Welsh HE internationally through strategic partnerships and international recruitment (funded outside of fee and access plan investment)
- Deliver sustainable HE (funded outside of fee and access plan investment)
- Provide Cardiff University Scholarships and scholarships in partnership with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.

Our fee and access plan provision in 2018/19 is particularly focused on –

- Maintaining our strong performance in the recruitment and retention of students from widening participation backgrounds;
- Improving our understanding of the impact of our provision on the outcomes for different groups, particularly those who are under-represented in higher education. We wish to do this through continued development of our data capture and data analysis capacity to build a robust evidence base for the ongoing investment in fee and access plan and strategic equality activity;

- Further enhancing the employability of all of our graduates, with a particular focus on under-represented groups, by offering all students opportunities to undertake placements, internships or employment-rich learning experiences during the course of their studies;
- Continuing to engage our students in meaningful dialogue about their learning, including providing regular, timely and useful feedback to inform academic progress, and develop further opportunities for students, particularly those from under-represented groups, to tell us how we can improve their university experience;
- Focusing on the implementation of plans to strategically and sustainably increase our Welsh Medium provision above the level in 2015/16, as part of a suite of measures to support Welsh language more generally across the student body.

Strategic approach

The focus and content section of the fee and access plan derives directly from the University's strategic plan, and its underpinning objectives. The University's strategic direction in 2018/19 will be set out in the University's strategic plan (2018 – 2023). The fee and access plan is also informed by the commitments in our Strategic Equality Plan (2016 – 2020), our Welsh Language policies and our Vulnerable Students Strategy.

Institutional Strategy: 2018-23

Our strategic plans embed the fee and access plan objectives firmly within our institutional mission, where we wish to be known as a University -

- which encourages high levels of student engagement, and that listens to our students, responding to their needs and expectations, and providing them with opportunities to shape their education and the wider student experience;
- which invests in high quality facilities and infrastructure to underpin outstanding learning, teaching and the student experience;
- where all students are supported to enjoy and benefit from a rewarding university education.

In our institutional plan we make very clear commitments to;

- continue to attract high quality applicants from Wales, the UK and across the world, supporting all students to fulfil their potential.
- ensure all our students have the very best access to a wide range of support and extra-curricular activities, working in partnership with the Students' Union.
- extend our provision which supports vulnerable students and those from backgrounds with low participation rates in higher education.
- listen to our students, and continue to develop opportunities for them to tell us what we are doing well and how we can improve their university experience.
- consolidate our strategy for growing sustainable Welsh Medium provision focussed on areas of strategic importance for the Welsh economy, thereby preparing highly skilled graduates with the ability to contribute bilingually to Welsh economic, social and cultural life.

Strategic Equality Plan (2016-2020)

The University's Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) addresses the needs of specific groups of students at Cardiff with protected characteristics. It directly informs the actions we prioritise to increase participation, progression and success for those groups identified in our fee and access plan. We deliver activity to address barriers to participation and progress, and evaluate the impact of that

activity as part of our strategic approach to equality. We will work to ensure that evidence on the impact of activities informs the development of future strategic equality and fee and access planning, in ways that are aligned.

One of our strategic equality objectives is to attract and retain the brightest students from a diversity of backgrounds by providing an inclusive and supportive learning and teaching environment. We have worked to understand our admissions, progression and attainment performance relative to UK benchmarks for groups with protected characteristics. Data presented to the University as part of the 2017 Teaching Excellence Framework further informed our understanding. We have committed to reducing progression and attainment gaps between specific groups and their counterparts to align with sector benchmarks. Where our performance is already in line with UK benchmarks, our aspiration is to further reduce gaps. On this basis, we have prioritised the following actions:

- **Progression of students (focus on Year 1)** – Addressing the non-progression of students from Year 1 for all protected characteristics but with particular focus on ethnicity, male students, disabled students and students with mental health difficulties (with a link to learning and teaching/ curriculum, student support and wellbeing provision and also to the changes with Disabled Students Allowance);
- **Addressing differential attainment for some protected characteristic groups** – focus on male students and BME students who are less likely to attain a ‘good’ (1st or 2.1) degree. Link to looking at Year 1 average marks to see if differential attainment is present at an early stage.
- **Student Admissions** – Addressing the balance of males and females relating to subject choice with particular emphasis on subject choices that have a very low percentage of male participants (e.g. Healthcare, Psychology and Social Sciences) and subject choices that have a very low percentage of female participants (e.g. Computer Sciences, Physics and Engineering).

Welsh Language policies

The University’s commitment to the Welsh language is delivered through three main activities: (i) our Welsh medium taught provision, (ii) our academic and pastoral support to Welsh speaking students and (iii) our promotion of the Welsh language and culture.

- (i) The development of the University’s [Welsh medium taught provision](#) is focused on areas of strategic importance for the Welsh economy, thereby preparing highly skilled graduates with the ability to contribute bilingually to Welsh economic, social and cultural life. Students can study a variety of subjects in Welsh with a percentage of over 130 undergraduate programmes being available through the medium of Welsh. The University and the *Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol* work closely together, and positive developments in recent years include:
- Incentive Scholarships for students to study a variety of subjects through the medium of Welsh. In 2016, these covered degree courses in Adult Nursing, Biology, Ecology, Law, Law and Welsh, Medicine and Philosophy.
 - Students can now study for an LLB Degree in Law completely in Welsh.
 - The Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies, the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Cardiff School of English, Communication and Philosophy have recently welcomed new Welsh medium lecturers. These Schools are developing national Welsh medium provision on the Coleg's behalf in their respective fields. Welsh medium students can also study a new joint honours degree in Journalism and Welsh.
 - The Coleg has funded lectureships in other fields to develop our Welsh medium provision. In the School of Welsh a lecturer has been appointed to further develop our Welsh as a second language (ail iaith) provision. Funding under the Coleg’s subject grant model has

also recently been awarded to further develop provision in Mathematics, Healthcare and Philosophy.

- Delivery of health services within Wales needs to take account of the needs of Welsh-speaking patients and the University's Schools of Medicine, Dentistry and Healthcare Sciences are developing a range of opportunities for students to study and undertake placements through the medium of Welsh to equip them in their professional roles. New Clinical Communications Skills training will further support this objective together with development of rural hubs and increased community-based teaching.
- (ii) The University also provides a range of academic and pastoral services for any Welsh-speaking applicant or student wishing to access such services through the medium of Welsh. These services include the following:
- Applicants based in Wales are offered the choice to be interviewed in Welsh where interviews are held for recruitment;
 - Students can request a Welsh-speaking personal tutor, and this will be provided where there are Welsh-speaking members of the teaching staff in the subject area. If there are no Welsh-speaking members in the teaching staff, an appropriate member of staff from another School is sought where appropriate;
 - Students are offered the opportunity to sit exams through the medium of Welsh, irrespective of whether tutoring is received in Welsh. If a student wants to sit exams in Welsh the University ensures that assessed coursework, examination papers and scripts are translated where Welsh-speaking markers are not available. These arrangements are subject to any national or professional body guidance, regulations or QAA Guidance;
 - Students have the opportunity to apply for accommodation which is specifically set aside for Welsh speakers at two halls of residence.
- (iii) In addition, the University promotes the Welsh language and culture through activities such as 'Welsh for All'. This is a unique provision in Wales which gives all students the opportunity to learn Welsh alongside their studies, free of charge. 'Welsh for All' is popular and take-up is increasing. By making provision accessible, including to those who may not have had the opportunity to learn Welsh earlier in their academic career, the University contributes to expanding the pool of Welsh speakers in Wales. The University is also developing on-line Welsh awareness module for all students and staff, which will be available in 2018/19.

Vulnerable students strategy

The University's vulnerable students strategy sets out how we will target student support provision for specific groups who we have identified as likely to benefit from additional support measures to help them reach their full potential. These groups are defined as: Young people with a background in care; Young people who are estranged from their families; People with caring responsibilities; Asylum seekers; and Forces veterans seeking to return to study/work. This will aid recruitment through creating a reputation for a supportive environment. It will deliver improvements in the support individuals receive, and ultimately aid student retention, attainment and success. The success of the strategy will be measured by:

- increasing the number of care leavers identified as studying at Cardiff University further, and increasing the number of students engaging with student support services;
- increasing the number of students estranged from their families coming forward and accessing support;
- identifying student carers and establishing a student support package ready for when we will be able to identify students through the UCAS application in 2018/19;

- developing ways of identifying student veterans and designing a support package to meet their needs;
- Holistically reviewing the impact of our support measures for these groups and making changes accordingly;
- In 2018/19 we are piloting new bursaries for Carers and for Armed Forces Veterans and are refreshing our Asylum Seekers Bursary to tailor more closely the support provided to their needs (see Equality of Opportunity provision, Category 2, p. 40).

We will actively monitor our performance against the objectives set out in the strategy and the outcomes for specific groups. Our monitoring and evaluation will help to inform and shape future fee and access plan priorities.

Groups under-represented in HE and at Cardiff University

We actively monitor evidence of changing participation patterns in HE, including the identification of groups who experience barriers to HE. We also actively monitor our admissions and progression data to understand barriers to participation at Cardiff University. We draw knowledge and understanding from Wales and UK-level published research, staff involvement in a range of sector networks (for example, Russell Group heads of widening participation group) and feedback from our academic schools and college teams on our admissions, recruitment and outreach activities. We apply this intelligence, as well as referring to Welsh Government and the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCW) policy priorities, to identify the under-represented groups we target in our fee and access plan.

Students who have experienced socio-economic or geographical disadvantage. There is a robust body of evidence to indicate that young people from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to participate in HE than their more advantaged peers (e.g. WISERD (2015) Access to Higher Education in Wales¹). Our outreach programmes focus on raising the aspirations of students from disadvantaged backgrounds and supporting access to higher education for those with the potential to succeed.

Students who have experienced educational disadvantage. Previous educational attainment emerges as the most important determinant of participation in higher education (WISERD, 2015). Students face barriers to education where social or economic disadvantage prevents them from deriving as much benefit from education in schools as their more advantaged peers. In particular, our aspiration-raising and outreach programmes, and our academic skills support services, aim to mitigate the impact of educational disadvantage on opportunities to enter and succeed in higher education.

Students from vulnerable groups, including: care leavers, students with Autism, asylum seekers, refugees, carers, forces veterans, estranged students, first in the family to enter HE. A wide range of groups are known to face barriers to higher education, leading to under-representation. For instance, Care leavers are one of the most under-represented groups in Higher Education and Cardiff University was one of the first universities to engage actively with care leavers in Wales. Our acclaimed care leavers support scheme has now been extended to support students who are estranged from their parents. The University's vulnerable groups strategy sets out the rationale for developing and providing tailored support for vulnerable groups to meet their specific support needs.

¹ Available at: <http://www.wiserd.ac.uk/research/publications/wiserd-publications/reports/>

Students with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (focus on students with a disability, male students and students from BME groups as identified in our Strategic Equality Plan).

Objectives for our Strategic Equality Plan were selected on the basis of evidence from an analysis of Cardiff University's student body undertaken by WISERD and the findings about the progression and attainment of our UK undergraduate students with protected characteristics. Actions delivered over the period of the Strategic Equality Plan (2016-20) will focus on the progression of males and BME students, the attainment of BME students, and gender balance in subject choice.

Our Fee and Access Plan targets seek to measure progress in recruitment, retention and success across the breadth of these under-represented groups. They are a mixture of outcome and delivery indicators, plus some longer-term targets recognising that some changes in provision will take longer to deliver impact.

Students studying through the medium of Welsh

Those who study through the medium of Welsh are under-represented in HE and therefore are also within the scope of our fee and access plan. Cardiff University supports the Welsh Government and HEFCW's priority to increase Welsh medium HE provision and enrolments on Welsh medium courses. We are committed to working strategically and in partnership with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to offer sustainable Welsh medium provision.

Fee and Access Plan Provision

Equality of Opportunity – Context

We are proud of our strong commitment to widening participation and to making higher education accessible and achievable to those from non-traditional backgrounds. We work with more than 300 schools and colleges in disadvantaged areas across Wales to raise aspirations and broaden awareness of higher education, as well as providing advice, guidance and support to students throughout their time at University, with access to tailor-made activities and events. In all, more than 3,000 sixth form students each year benefit from our range of widening participation and outreach programmes. We work hard to support those from backgrounds with a low level of participation in higher education, as well as providing appropriate support to enable successful progression through programmes of study and into employment or further study beyond their degree.

We are committed to supporting our most vulnerable students and have won acclaim for our work in supporting care leavers, who face particular challenges in accessing higher education and maintaining progress throughout their studies. We are committed to further developing the evidence base on the most effective ways of widening participation for specified groups. In July 2017, we will submit an application for an ECU Race Equality Charter Mark which will provide a framework through which we will work to identify and address barriers standing in the way of minority ethnic students. Cardiff University is committed to continuing to work collaboratively with other Universities to deliver widening participation activities. We work in collaboration with Cardiff Metropolitan University on our outreach programmes and are an active member of First Campus which delivers a series of activities for a wide cross section of pupils and adult learners.

Equality of Opportunity provision

Category 1: Promoting and safeguarding fair access to higher education, including identifying individuals with the greatest potential from disadvantaged backgrounds;

Step Up to University is Cardiff University's flagship outreach programme which delivers a range of activities to raise aspiration and support continuation of studies post-16 for secondary aged pupils in Wales from Communities First Areas, Low Participation Neighbourhoods and disadvantaged areas. The scheme has a renewed focus on access to the professions for Welsh students, including in healthcare, which supports Welsh Government's priorities for the recruitment of Welsh healthcare professionals.

Step Up Plus offers a more intensive programme of support to students, with increasing academic content. The scheme is focused on supporting groups under-represented in higher education, including the following pupils: from a Communities First or low participation neighbourhood, eligible for free school meals, first in the family to attend university, care leaver, with autism, young carer, asylum seeker.

The **Confident Futures and the Discovery Project** provide a specific programme of mentoring and support for children age 14-19 with a background in care or with autism respectively. These projects are jointly funded by Cardiff University and First Campus.

- The Confident Futures and Discovery mentoring and support programmes combine group activities with individual support, including mentoring by current university students, to raise aspirations and improve the confidence of care leavers and children with autism.
- The Confident Futures and Discovery Summer Schools are targeted at children with a background in care or with autism deliver additional activities and provide participants with experience of university life.

The revised **GCSE English and Maths support** project will support a team of 60 trained student volunteers to visit local schools on a weekly basis to deliver English and Maths tuition to support the raising of pupil's attainment. The project was developed by Cardiff University in conjunction with the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service, and First Campus to ensure that the project meets identified needs and ties in with other regional provision.

The Higher Education (HE) Roadshow is delivered in partnership with Cardiff Metropolitan University and is targeted at Challenge Cymru schools and schools with a high proportion of Communities First pupils. The Roadshow delivers interactive presentations to pupils in years 9-11, reinforced by online material and '**Uni Inspiration Day**' events on campus, which introduces pupils to a wide range of subjects at University level. The HE Roadshow is targeted at areas where there are low progression rates to HE. It aims to raise awareness of HE amongst younger age groups and provide careers advice relevant to HE at an early stage so that pupils make an informed choice about GCSEs and FE and are aware of the benefits that HE can provide.

The **Student Tutor Project (homework clubs)** student tutors are recruited and trained to provide tutoring and mentoring support to pupils in Communities First and Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPN). The project addresses barriers to attainment and aspiration for these children. It also benefits the student tutors, many of whom are the first in their family to attend university, by providing skills

that are valued by employers. (It also contributes to Promotion of HE, category 3: 'Activities which strengthen the employability of Welsh graduates').

Cardiff University's contextual admissions policy better informs admissions tutors' understanding of applicants' social backgrounds, allowing assessment of applicants' potential to succeed in the context of barriers they may have encountered. The contextual admissions policy involves the identification of individual applicants for 'additional consideration' based on contextual data. The model was piloted in 2012 and continues to undergo regular review and analysis to ensure that it reflects the most recent evidence of effective practice. The policy enables the University to make our admissions system fair to those from socially or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, and to mitigate against disadvantage. Subject to the availability of robust data, indicators of carer and parental responsibility will also be used in our contextual admissions policy for entry in 2018/19 as well as indicators of socio-economic disadvantage.

Category 2: Attracting and retaining students and prospective students from under-represented groups, which may include students from less advantaged backgrounds and students with protected characteristics;

Student financial Support

The University makes available and widely promotes a clear Home/EU undergraduate student financial aid offering that is easy to understand and access, particularly for under-represented groups:

- Cardiff University Bursary Scheme: £1,000 in year 1 and at least £500 for each subsequent years for students with a family income level of £42000 or less. Currently, c. 5400 students benefit from this award annually.
- Next Step Bursary: £1,000 one-off award for students on Cardiff's Step-Up programme. Currently c. 85 students access this support annually.
- Care Leaver Bursary: £3,000 award for students leaving local authority care. Currently around 10 new students receive this award each year.
- Asylum seekers: Tuition fee waiver and financial support through book tokens, travel cards, printer credits, laptop and food vouchers up to the value of £4,000.
- Carers Bursary: A new bursary for 2018/19 which provides £1,000 per year of study for qualifying carers (usually young carers caring for an adult).
- Armed Forces Bursary: A new bursary for 2018/19 which provides a £1,000 to full-time students who have served in the Armed Forces.
- Employability Support: New measures to improve access to work experience and other means of improving access to employment for students from non-traditional backgrounds, including financial assistance and greater access to work experience opportunities.

Support for disabled students

- The University's Disability and Dyslexia Service is currently a provider of Non-Medical Help (NMH). These services enable the University to fulfil its duty to make reasonable adjustments that require the provision of an auxiliary service. The funding of these services is based on income from the Disability Support Allowance (DSA). Where students are not eligible for a DSA, the cost of reasonable adjustments which require an auxiliary service is met from the University's Reasonable Adjustment Fund.
- The University will provide increased resource from 2017/18 to mitigate the removal of some NMH funds for English domiciled students from 1 August 2016 and ensure parity of support with Welsh students.

- Prospective changes to Welsh Government's DSA policy are not currently known. The University remains committed to ensuring legal compliance with the Equality Act and its duty to provide auxiliary services as a reasonable adjustment and to ensure no loss of fee income from disabled students.

Welsh medium provision (see also 'Welsh Language' on p. 34)

- The University will **continue to deliver its Welsh medium provision** across a range of its academic subjects including: Journalism, Healthcare, Biology, Law, Maths, Music, History, Philosophy, Medicine, Social Work and Education. Students who wish to study through the medium of Welsh in 2018/19 will be able to access to clear information on available courses on the University's website and other marketing materials.
- The University will rebuild its Welsh-medium provision following the loss of the Masters in Educational Practice, and will work to increase provision above the current level. The University will continue to work in partnership with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to **grow sustainable provision focussed on areas of strategic importance** for the Welsh economy, thereby preparing highly skilled graduates with the ability to contribute bilingually to Welsh economy, social and cultural life.
- The University will continue to deliver **Coleg Cymraeg lead scholarships** for students studying at least 80 credits a year through the medium of Welsh, and Incentive Scholarships for students who intend to study at least 40 credits a year through the medium of Welsh.

Promoting the Welsh Language

- Our **Welsh for All** scheme offers the opportunity to improve students' Welsh language skills, for free, while studying at the University. Courses will be available at different levels and opportunities will be provided to experience the language beyond the classroom.
- The University will make available a range of materials and activities to **promote the Welsh language and culture and the use of the Welsh language** at the University. This will include -
 - An interactive online Welsh language awareness module;
 - The Coleg Cymraeg Welsh Language Skills Certificate. This enables students studying in Wales to gain an additional qualification (accredited by the WJEC) which demonstrates that they have the necessary language skills to work through the medium of Welsh;
 - Cardiff University students acting as Welsh language ambassadors to promote opportunities to undertake University study in Welsh and the advantages of doing so.

Category 3: Raise the educational aspirations and skills of people from under-represented groups to support success in higher education

Live Local Learn Local is our Community Outreach Programme, bringing free courses close to where people live and work in South East Wales. The programme provides attractive and flexible learning opportunities designed to help support community-based students' progress to the next stage, whether that is work, college or university. The provision focuses on those living in areas where university participation rates are low. Live Local Learn Local also works with refugees, asylum seekers, BME groups and foster carers.

The Study Skills Support Service supports students, including those from groups who face barriers to learning, to progress and succeed at University. The University integrates provision of generic study skills with other support and wellbeing services to enhance the accessibility of services for students. Resources available through this service include classes on academic skills, English language support, and mathematical skills. Online guides, videos and other material across a range of topics are readily

accessible to students via the intranet. Our success at securing 'Invest to Save' funding from the Welsh Government will allow us to extend this provision and make it more accessible.

Category 4: Supporting and increasing student retention and completion, particularly those from low participation neighbourhoods, looked after children, care leavers and carers;

We will continue to develop our use of robust institutional data and reporting on student **progression and attainment by specified protected characteristics** to better understand the needs of these under-represented groups. We will apply this knowledge to policies and processes that can help to remove barriers to progression and attainment for students with protected characteristics:

- Our Annual Review and Enhancement (ARE) process in Schools includes analysis of progression and attainment data for under-represented groups of students and identification of enhancement actions where necessary.
- Module evaluation data will be analysed by different under-represented groups to enable the University to provide the insights we require to make enhancements to support the progression and attainment of those students.
- A Race Equality Charter Mark application will be made in July 2017. This includes further developing the University's framework for developing and reviewing learning programmes to ensure that curriculum design and delivery are shaped by the diversity of its student population. This activity is aligned to our action plan to achieve our Strategic Equality Plan (2016-2020) (see p.35).
- The University's Centre for Education Innovation (CEI) (see p.47) further supports our ambition in this area of activity including supporting projects on inclusive assessment practices and flexible approaches to language learning. The inclusive curriculum is also a core theme for many of the CEI's resources.

Peer mentoring scheme: The scheme assigns mentors who are continuing undergraduates with groups of mentees in their first year of University to meet weekly and provide support during the transitional period of starting University. By connecting with a mentor, new students benefit from the experience of someone who has been in their position. In this way, the scheme aims to contribute to the prevention of withdrawal from University. The scheme will be available in all schools at the University in 2018/19 as a result of Welsh Government 'Invest to Save' funding. We will take measures to establish the effectiveness of this operation and sustain it beyond the 'Invest to Save' funded period.

Health and mental health services for students

- The Counselling, Health and Wellbeing Service provides a range of support to students who may be experiencing difficulties: one-to-one counselling by appointment; a drop in service to discuss problems face-to-face with staff without booking in advance; a 24-hour online support for counselling, health and wellbeing; group therapy and workshops to provide support, ideas and coping strategies for difficulties commonly faced by students; self-help materials are also provided online.
- Support the Team of Student Wellbeing Champions. This peer-to-peer service is founded upon research that vulnerable students prefer to speak to friends or fellow students before accessing formal support. The role of the Champions is to pro-actively engage with students to communicate information on a variety of health and wellbeing topics.
- Grow links with the NHS Health Board Community Mental Health Team.

- Deliver a programme of work leading to the University be a Suicide Safer Campus.
- Continue to support the Park Place Practice in partnership with the University Health Board and a local GP practice.

Category 5: Improving the experience of higher education of students from under-represented groups including activities to promote an international experience;

The Global Opportunities Centre (GOC) is a dedicated resource for all the opportunities available at Cardiff University for students to gain experience in an international setting. The GOC is committed to ensuring that students from under-represented groups benefit from an international experience which contributes significantly to students' employability and to the quality of their university experience:

- The Global Opportunity Centre outward mobility bursary provides additional payments to students from widening participation backgrounds, determined by their eligibility for Cardiff University bursaries. There is also funding built in to support disabled students.
- To ensure that international mobility is accessible to undergraduate students regardless of background or protected characteristic, opportunities are purposefully diverse: they range from 4 weeks to a full academic year, are provided in a wide range of countries, relate to varying activities (study, work, volunteer) and have different levels of funding attached.

Category 6: Providing effective information to students from under-represented groups before and during their courses;

One of the key purposes of our widening participation work is to communicate a range of information to those from students from widening participation backgrounds about entering higher education and the social, cultural and academic aspects of University life in a way that is understandable, supportive and comprehensive. Students gain access to the information they need to make choices about higher education through:

- The University's outreach projects (including the HE Roadshow, Step Up, Uni Inspiration day);
- Schools engagement and schools liaison activities (see promotion of HE category 1 p.46.);
- Local community information points, e.g. Live Local Learn Local;
- The University's website, which details the support available for students from under-represented groups.

As part of our **admission process**, the University provides information about targeted support, services and relevant policies to admissions tutors regarding Widening Participation groups via appropriate routes such as Open Day Working Group and the annual Undergraduate Admissions Conference. The University's First Choice Recruitment and Admissions Project (FCRA) is a major initiative to improve the service we offer to prospective students. At its centre will be process improvement to ensure that prospective applicants are provided with information in an attractive and accessible form. This will help the University ensure that all those who have the ability to study at Cardiff are given the opportunity to do so.

In line with **Welsh Language legislation** and our Welsh Language Scheme, the University does not treat the Welsh language any less favourably than English. All information about studying at Cardiff is available through the medium of Welsh, which supports the recruitment of students studying through the medium of Welsh, and their ability to complete their University experience in Welsh. This includes information in a variety of formats (web, publications, prospectuses etc.) about all aspects of university, including courses, university life, accommodation, services, facilities and living costs. During their course, students can ask for a Welsh-speaking personal tutor, provided there are Welsh-speaking

members of the teaching staff in their subject area. Cardiff students can also access key support services such as careers guidance, counselling, disability and dyslexia advice through the medium of Welsh.

As part of work to re-design our student support and wellbeing services, the new systems together with the application of analytics will establish new capabilities to **identify, engage and monitor vulnerable students and those at risk**. This will enable the university to provide the information and advice that students from under-represented groups require, in an accessible way, to support their retention and success at University. From 2018 the front-line Advice Bar and supporting systems will be operational to deliver the first phase of service integration focussed on finance and registry activities.

Category 7: Provide high quality academic and welfare support to groups under-represented in higher education

The Financial Assistance Programme is an integrated scheme combining advice and financial information with monetary support through loans or grants:

- Financial advice: An accessible service to provide free, impartial, non-judgemental and confidential advice on money alongside a wide range of other matters including housing, academic issues, employment and care leave. This is supported by online information (including e-newsletters and blogs) for students about funding, budgeting, managing costs and increasing income. In addition to financial assistance provided by the University's Financial Assistance Programme (see below), the Money and Advice Team signposts students to other potential sources of external funds such as from charities and trusts.
- Financial Assistance Programme Awards (FAPA): Eligible students who encounter financial hardships can apply for a Financial Assistance Programme Award to help with essential living or study costs. The Money and Advice team support students to complete and submit an application for a FAPA.
- Financial Assistance Programme loans: The University provides eligible students with an emergency loan if they run out of money and cannot get financial help from any other source. This is a short-term interest-free repayable loan, normally to cover basic food costs or travel home at the end of term.

The Personal Tutor Scheme provides a clear and consistent framework for academic support, preparation for employment and pastoral care. All students are allocated a personal tutor. At Cardiff University, this role is founded upon the supportive provision of academic advice to students. Personal tutors play a key role in identifying students whose levels of engagement give cause for concern. In collaboration with the Students' Union, we updated our Code of Practice for Personal Tutoring and in 2015/16 implemented a revised monitoring system through which to capture student engagement. Resultant dashboards of data support early identification of students potentially at risk of underperformance and/or drop-out due to low engagement.

Vulnerable students support: Our vulnerable students strategy (see p.35) underpins a targeted support package for young people with a background in care, young people who are estranged from their families, people with caring responsibilities, asylum seekers and forces veterans seeking to return to study/work. Specific measures for each target group will be different for each group and based on evidence of their specific needs. Support will include financial incentives (e.g. scholarships or bursaries), peer to peer support and study skills where appropriate. A specific lead member of staff for each group acts as a key contact for students and the development of support for that group.

Residence Life will represent a significant enhancement to our pastoral care provision in residences and therefore is aimed specifically at first year students in the transition to University Life. Our Residence Life team will: develop a sense of community in residences; create a referral system (including out of hours) into our student support services; and develop a team of student volunteer Residence Life Assistants. These will be more senior students who are trained and skilled in relevant areas that support the Residence Life team's work. The system will be fully rolled out with the team and student Residence Life Assistants in place by Autumn 2018.

Category 8: Supporting students from under-represented groups to progress to employment or further study;

We are pleased to be a partner with Go Wales, the EU funded project to create tailored, flexible work experience opportunities for specific underrepresented student groups. The **Go Wales team** at Cardiff University is fully embedded within the University's Careers and employability service. Our Go Wales advisors work with students who face barriers to employment and are eligible for support if they: have a disability or work limiting health condition; are from a Black and Minority Ethnic background; have caring or childcare responsibilities; are in care or a care leaver or are from a low participation area. Students who take part in the programme are supported by an adviser who helps them decide what experience would work for them, to liaise with employers to secure a placement, and helps them to prepare for the experience. These opportunities range from short periods of work shadowing and work taster sessions through to longer paid placements.

New employability support measures will be piloted. These will improve access to work experience and other means of improving access to employment for students from non-traditional backgrounds, including funding and greater access to work experience opportunities.

Category 9: Other measures to support groups under-represented in higher education.

Monitoring and evaluation: The critical review section at the beginning of the fee and access plan, describes the evaluation of fee and access plan activity that has been carried out to date, and the enhancements implemented based on the outcome of those reviews. We will build on this work by continuing to monitor and evaluate the impact of our fee and access plan provision on the recruitment, retention and success of under-represented groups:

- Following a pilot period, we will continue to roll out the Widening Participation and community outreach evaluation framework across all projects.
- We will further develop our approach to WP data, including scrutiny at programme, subject, School and College levels, to improve our understanding of performance in widening participation and to better target our activities
- We will undertake a project, working with the Equality Challenge Unit, looking specifically at the most effective ways of improving access to healthcare professions for male students.

See also p.31 which provides an overview of how the University will monitor and evaluate progress against the fee and access plan.

Promotion of Higher Education – Context

Overview

We consider the student experience as our core business and this is reflected in our strategic and operational plans. We continually invest in the quality of our learning environment, both in terms of physical learning spaces and the virtual learning environment. We are equally committed to the engagement of students through regular and responsive dialogue.

The Centre for Student Life, a £50M landmark building marking a major investment in the student experience is itself a partnership project with our Students' Union and a direct response to the results of a 2012 Students Union commissioned survey of student capital investment priorities. This new facility is creating a hub for our student support services, together with extensive flexible and technology-rich social learning spaces, a large auditorium, and extended remote access to support for students across our campuses and studying away from Cardiff. This programme runs in parallel with the development of specialist teaching spaces and improvements to academic buildings including library refurbishments.

Our **£38M strategic programme to update and upgrade our core teaching spaces**, running from 2015-22, is ensuring that teaching and learning continues to benefit from spaces that are modern, comfortable, flexible and technologically enabled. This programme is in addition to our regular cycle of estate maintenance and refresh. We have responded to student requests for more social, group and independent learning spaces both in the Students' Union and on our University Hospital of Wales site.

Our current **LearnPlus project**, is making teaching event capture technology routinely available.. The technology also supports innovative practice including podcasting, flipped learning, live webcasts, delivery of feedback to students, the capture of off-site teaching and student-led recording. We anticipate that it will also provide a valuable, inclusive tool for supporting students with additional learning support needs.

We prepare students for entry to a wide range of professions and work closely with employers. In addition to clinical placement learning across our extensive undergraduate healthcare portfolio, 64 other undergraduate programmes have a professional training/ placement year. This includes provision in the natural and applied sciences, engineering, business and management, psychology, architecture and urban planning. Many programmes offer work-related modules that include placements with an extensive range of partners, including major corporations and SMEs, public bodies, local and national government and third sector organisations. We have a commitment to grow placement opportunities across the University to support our students into high skilled employment. Our provision for graduate entrepreneurship is particularly successful. Our student enterprise team offers training, support and guidance to current students and alumni within five years of graduating.

The Careers and Employability Service supports students throughout their time at University to explore their future, build their skills, and achieve their ambitions. They are supported by a team of dedicated Careers Advisers linked to their academic Schools and can undertake extra-curricular work experience, get involved in Enterprise activities, and network with employers in a huge range of recruitment activities (fairs, panel events, skills sessions, alumni talks) going on throughout the year. Students achieve recognition for their participation in employability-related activities by taking part in the Cardiff Award programme which has been developed in partnership with graduate recruiters.

We also support our students' future career prospects through our **international mobility activities**. We offer 30 undergraduate programmes that incorporate a full-year study abroad, as well as a wide range of shorter options. Our Global Opportunity Centre (GOC), provides a focal point for services to raise students' awareness of the developmental and employability related benefits of increasing international understanding and intercultural competence through overseas experiences, as well as working with Schools to build international opportunities into the curriculum. An outward mobility bursary scheme ensures personal circumstances are not a barrier to accessing international experiences (see equality of opportunity – Category 5).

Promotion of Higher Education provision

Category 1: More effective engagement with private, public or voluntary bodies and communities in Wales

Schools and Colleges Engagement: Cardiff University works closely with schools and colleges to support young people's learning so that they can achieve their potential. The University has developed strategic partnerships with primary and secondary schools to support and enrich the curriculum and runs a range of events and activities throughout the year which help pupils gain the necessary skills and experience needed to achieve a place at university. The University provides a wide range of curriculum-linked school engagement activities, teaching resources and events (e.g. lectures, open days, conferences, workshops, demonstrations) which are itemised on our [curriculum support webpage](#). This extensive resource was developed as part of the Research Councils UK (RCUK)-funded Cardiff University Schools Partnership Project (CUSP) which aimed to enhance the University's provision for engagement, and partnership work, with schools and FE colleges. Our School Engagement Framework has ensured this work is now embedded within the University and continues to be developed.

The Schools Liaison Programme establishes and develops strategic relationships with schools and colleges throughout Wales for mutual benefit. It aims to support teachers and careers officers in preparing students for higher education by providing high quality information, advice and guidance as well as attracting applications from these schools. The Programme includes visits to schools and colleges as well as on-campus events, Step Up programme etc. The Programme also provides CPD opportunities for teachers primarily via teachers' conferences and other on campus events.

Community and civic engagement: Cardiff University works in partnerships with organisations and communities in the Cardiff Capital Region and across Wales to promote social cohesion and improve levels of health, wealth and wellbeing. We deliver diverse community engagement projects such as Community Gateway, which has forged productive partnerships between the University and the community of Grangetown, our Community Journalism project which supports the improvement of community news in English and Welsh, and the award-winning CAER Heritage project based around one of Cardiff's most important archaeological sites, Caerau Iron Age hillfort.

Category 2: Investments in improving the quality of learning and teaching, with reference to the quality of the student experience

Provision of a modern, flexible and accessible learning environment. Our strategic programme to update and upgrade our core teaching spaces, running from 2015-22, is ensuring that teaching and learning continues to benefit from spaces that are modern, comfortable, flexible and technologically enabled. We will continue to deliver the programme of improvement in 2018/19, including the 8,000m² Centre for Student Life (CSL), scheduled for completion in 2019. The CSL includes 600+ individual study spaces, a range of flexible rooms available for students to book for group working and fit-for-purpose space for our extensive student advice, health, wellbeing and futures provision.

Provision of a learning infrastructure that is effective and has the capability to support the needs of our diverse student community.

The University will continue to invest in a range of learning technologies that will deliver the modern, accessible and interactive environment that will contribute to the delivery of a high quality student experience. This includes:

- **Providing an online timetable service** available to all students providing access to teaching timetables on the go and on any device. Students will benefit from a dynamic, reliable, fast, and flexible service which will improve the quality of the student experience.
- **Teaching capture capability across all our teaching spaces, and an ongoing programme of training and development** to maximise increasing staff and student engagement with the teaching event capture technology.
- **Consolidation and further development of technology enhanced learning and teaching provision** including the ability to deliver live and online classroom capability to distance learning students and students on placements.

Developing and supporting opportunities for students to express their opinions about their university experience and be partners in the decision-making of the University including through:

- **A rolling programme of national and Cardiff University student surveys** delivered to inform continuous enhancements to all aspects of the student experience. We will continually review our student survey activity to ensure that it reflects the latest evidence of good practice, and that it generates high quality student feedback to inform continuous improvement.
- **Module Evaluation:** Students provide their feedback on all of their modules via an easy-to-use, mobile optimised online tool. Since this feedback is held centrally, as well as locally at school level, the University now has a much richer source of information from which it can both be aware of and seek to respond to the feedback, taking into account the experiences of different groups of students.
- **The student academic representation system** is managed in partnership with the Students' Union, which allows our student representatives to play an important role in the decision-making of the University using feedback from students (see p.23 for more details).
- **Students' involvement in project steering groups** to ensure the student voice is represented in steering projects to successful completion. These include the Centre for Student Life, the Education Portfolio and the Race Charter Mark.

Developing and supporting opportunities to enhance learning and teaching.

- The **Centre for Education Innovation (CEI)** was launched in November 2015 to support excellence in learning and teaching at Cardiff University. The CEI has established an Online Learning Hub, an interactive repository to bring together and share resources to support the development of good practice. The CEI will continue to grow and develop as a key aspect of our learning and teaching offer.
- **Cardiff University Student Education Innovation Projects (CUSEIP)** enable students to work directly with academic and professional services staff on learning and teaching enhancement projects that help to shape the student experience. The projects can be proposed by staff, or by staff and students working together. All Schools/divisions at the University are eligible to host CUSEIP placements.

Category 3: Activities which strengthen the employability of Welsh graduates

Our Careers and Employability team and Academic Schools will work with our students to enable them to achieve their full potential, by delivering the following services:

- **Careers advice, guidance and information:** One-to-one careers advice, drop-in, workshops and masterclasses, and an online resource, Career Central.
- **Work Experience:** A range of work placements and internships as well as classroom based experience in local schools, the GO Wales programme (see category 8 under 'equality of opportunity').
- The research-focused **CUROP** programme provides summer research placements and is one of the largest undergraduate research schemes in the UK. Placements are allocated competitively and all successful applicants receive a full stipend to support participation in a placement of up to eight weeks' duration, working with supervision on live research projects. Students and supervisors present projects at an annual poster conference. All our academic Schools host CUROP placements and interdisciplinary opportunities are particularly encouraged.
- **Enterprise & Entrepreneurship education** (supported by Welsh Government YES funding 2016-18): A range of opportunities for students to develop their own enterprise and innovation skills and abilities such as workshops, group projects, competitions, skills sessions and one-to-one start-up advice. Enterprise in this context is about having ideas, doing something about them and pursuing opportunities to bring about change. Enterprise education encompasses social enterprise and intrapreneurship as well as new business ventures.
- **The Cardiff Award:** A structured programme for students to improve their employability and gain official recognition for their development.
- **Employer Engagement:** A comprehensive programme of careers workshops, fairs, events (such as high profile guest lectures and networking events) and masterclasses to enable students to explore and develop their career aspirations and employability skills, and also to meet and network with graduate recruiters from a wide range of sectors.
- **Student Mentoring Scheme:** This provides mentors with the opportunity to hone key employability skills such as communication, supervisory, organisational, time management and leadership, as well as given them increased confidence.
- **Becoming a Wellbeing Champion.** Students have the opportunity to volunteer to provide peer support and assistance to other students who are experiencing difficulties at University. Volunteers can gain a range of transferable skills in communication, leadership and self-awareness.

Career registration will be introduced to enable the University to deliver career planning and employability services that are more tailored to students' individual requirements, based on factors such as their career decidedness and employability experience.

Languages for All (LFA) gives students the chance to learn a language free of charge. Courses are available in a variety of languages and levels. There are also a range of study options so that students can learn in a way that suits them. Students can access advice from a Language Adviser by visiting the Languages for all Drop-in Centre or online via a live chat. **Welsh for All** also provides students with the opportunity to learn Welsh free of charge (see p.36).

Students have access to range of volunteering opportunities at the University. The Students' Union delivers 'Cardiff Volunteering' a service that engages students to undertake volunteer opportunities, working in close partnership with over 40 local community groups and organisations. Cardiff Volunteering has trained 25 lead volunteers, all of whom gained a Certificate in Professional

Development in Leadership. A range of other volunteering opportunities are provided through fee and access plan provision such as the peer mentoring programme, wellbeing champions and homework club tutors and through the University's engagement activities for example the 'Community Gateway' project in Grangetown and the Caerau community excavations.

Category 4: Promote Welsh Higher Education more effectively internationally

Strategic Partnerships: We will continue to develop the two institutional strategic partnerships we have established, with KU Leuven and Xiamen University, develop further strategic partnerships and grow our international collaborations through individual academic endeavour, new opportunities for student mobility and initiatives at School, College and University level. This contributes to raising the global profile of higher education of Wales and promotes education and research collaborations between Wales and the partner countries. Our international strategic partnerships enable us to expand our provision of transnational and collaborative education programmes to enhance the education experience for students and staff. Our international research partnerships similarly enhance the global reputation of our work and promotes Welsh academic research on a global stage.

International students: We are committed to attracting talented students from all over the world to study in Wales. Our vibrant international student and alumni community will continue to enrich the learning environment at Cardiff University and provide strong ambassadors for Welsh Higher Education in a global context. We will support our international students and staff in the face of changes and uncertainties in our external environment. We will also actively engage our international alumni groups in our international activities, including student recruitment and enhancement of our global opportunities. We will continue to encourage all of our students to be internationally mobile by providing excellent opportunities and support for study, work or volunteering overseas (see also category 5 in Equality of Opportunity).

These activities are funded from resources other than fee and access plan investment.

Category 5: Deliver sustainable higher education

Environmental and social sustainability is a core value at Cardiff University. We have considerable research strength in sustainable development and aim to be sustainable in our travel plans, performance in energy usage and campus development. For example, Our Centre for Student Life, which is a service-led project, has been explicitly designed with sustainability in mind. It will focus on reducing energy consumption, supplying energy efficiently, and where possible, will use renewable technology to keep the building's carbon footprint to a minimum. Some of the design features include photovoltaic cells, the use of natural ventilation, a green roof and energy efficient lighting. The building will be assessed under Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM), which measures sustainable value in a series of categories ranging from energy to ecology, and is on track to achieve a BREEAM Excellent score.

We support our **students and staff to become sustainable citizens** including by encouraging more sustainable modes of transport and participation in sustainability initiatives such as 'sustainability week' and 'go green week'. The University takes part in the Green Impact environmental accreditation and awards scheme (run by the National Union of Students). In June 2017, the University received six Gold level awards in recognition of staff and student action in support of sustainability and social responsibility. This activity is funded from resources other than fee and access plan investment.

Category 6: Activities which raise awareness of the value of higher education amongst potential learners

Cardiff University Scholarships: We wish to continue to attract high quality applicants from Wales and the UK.

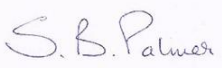
- The Cardiff University Scholarship awards £3,000 for UK students who attain AAA grades in their A-levels (or equivalent). Scholarships are available in a number of subjects and a list of eligible degree courses is provided on the University's website. The scheme is automatic for students in publicised subject areas who select Cardiff as their Firm Choice.
- In addition, there a range of other scholarships and bursaries available with varying entry requirements which are advertised on our website.
- Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol offers a number of scholarships for students studying through the medium of Welsh: Lead Scholarships of £3,000 over 3 years for undergraduates studying at least 80 credits a year through the medium of Welsh. There are up to 35 scholarships available each year. Incentive Scholarships are worth £500 a year (or up to £1,500 over three years), and are open to students who intend to study at least 40 credits a year of their degree courses through the medium of Welsh.

Authorisation of 2018/19 fee and access plan application

Authorisation of the 2018/19 fee and access plan application for submission to HEFCW

In authorising fee and access plan applications to be submitted to HEFCW, governing bodies:

- i. confirm that the information provided in this 2018/19 fee and access plan application is accurate at the time of writing, and is based on verifiable data.
- ii. confirm that it is acceptable for HEFCW to use financial, quality and/or other information/data that it holds about a currently regulated applicant, regardless of whether the information/data was originally provided for purposes of regulation under the 2015 Act;
- iii. understand that HEFCW reserves the right to undertake a visit to applicants to better understand eligibility related to the organisation and management of financial affairs, the data submitted on fee and access plans and the quality of education provided on, or on behalf of, applicants.
- iv. understand that it must provide HEFCW and/or HEFCW's agent, with information, assistance and access to its facilities and the facilities of other bodies providing higher education on its behalf.
- v. understand that HEFCW may carry out, or arrange for an agent to carry out, a review relating to the quality of education provided by, or on behalf of the applicants, and governing bodies must take into account any advice given to it by HEFCW or the body appointed by HEFCW for this purpose.
- vi. confirm that all education provided by, or on its behalf, regardless of the level or location of the provision has been taken into account in fee and access plan applications.
- vii. confirm that the institution is at a low risk of failure on financial grounds over the medium to long term.
- viii. confirms that the accounts are audited each year by a registered auditor and that the registered auditor is not the same firm and/or individual that prepared the accounts.
- ix. understand that the institution must comply with Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidelines for higher education.
- x. understand that any financial commitments to students made in the original 2017/18 fee and access plan, as approved by HEFCW, must be honoured.

Final 2018/19 fee and access plan submission	
Date of Governing Body approval:	31 July 2017
Governing body authorised signature:	
Date:	31 July 2017

Institutional fee and access plan 2018/19

Table A: Fee levels and fee income and investment, 2018/19

Institution name: Cardiff University
 Institution UKPRN: 10007814

Data relating to FT UG and FT PGCE (QTS) courses that you have control of, that come under the post-2012/13 fee regime in 2018/19, are to be returned in this table.

If you provide courses that have a year out, such as a year out on an industrial placement, or a year abroad, and different fee levels are charged for these years, then this should be taken account of in calculating the average fee and the total fee income returned on this table.

For further guidance and definitions used in this table, please see **Annex B** of the guidance.

Any prompts or failed validations will appear in red text in this box

a) What is your highest proposed fee rate for:

	£
Full-time undergraduate	9,000
Full-time PGCE (QTS)	0

b) Will the proposed fees in a) (above) be charged for all full-time undergraduate higher education and PGCE (QTS) provision at your institution or provided on your behalf?

	Enter Yes or No
Full-time undergraduate	No
Full-time PGCE (QTS)	No

c) If no, what is your average (mean) fee per full-time undergraduate and PGCE (QTS) student likely to be?

	£
Full-time undergraduate	8,799
Full-time PGCE (QTS)	0
All FT UG/PGCE (QTS) students in pla	8,799

d) What post-2012/13 fee regime income do you expect to receive in 2018/19? You should include all fee income received per full-time undergraduate and PGCE (QTS) student.

	£
Full-time undergraduate	139,338,900
Full-time PGCE (QTS)	0
Total	139,338,900

e) Please provide details of how much fee income you expect to invest in relation to equality of opportunity and promotion of higher education. Where higher education providers had 2017/18 plans the proportion of total income invested in 2018/19 must be at least the proportion invested in 2017/18. For those applicants, HEFCW has provided below the 2017/18 amount and percentage of total income.

	2018/19		2017/18	
	£	% of total income	£	% of total income
Total amount to be invested in:				
Equality of opportunity	12,957,000	9.3%	12,043,000	9.1%
Promotion of higher education	10,043,000	7.2%	9,495,000	7.2%
Total	23,000,000	16.5%	21,538,000	16.2%

If the proportion to be invested in 2018/19 is less than in 2017/18 please provide commentary below:

Empty text area for commentary.

Institutional fee and access plan 2018/19**Table B: Fee and access plan income forecast expenditure, 2018/19****There are prompts or failed validations**

Institution name: Cardiff University
Institution UKPRN: 10007814

There are prompts or failed validations - refer to red text to RIGHT of table

Forecast expenditure of the fee income returned in Table A, provided against the categories below, is to be returned in this table.

Guidance note

The categories take account of the Welsh Government (WG) guidance to HEFCW on fee and access plans found in Annex A part 2 of HEFCW circular W16/03HE* (paragraphs 4.18 and 4.19). Applicants should refer to paragraph 4.15 of the WG guidance on fee plans in completing this table and categorise expenditure on fee and access plan objectives against the categories below.

The categories of equality of opportunity expenditure relate specifically to individuals from groups under-represented in higher education. HEFCW recognises that each applicant may choose to include similar activities under different categories.

Student financial support activities will be a part of the applicant's total investment in categories of expenditure to support equality of opportunity and/or the promotion of higher education (as set out in Table B (a) and (b)). Table B (d) below asks applicants to separately identify forecast expenditure on student financial support activities **already included** in (a) and (b).

Applicants should set out their level of expenditure against each appropriate category. Not all categories will necessarily have expenditure returned against them.

Where expenditure is forecast in more than one category, it should be split between categories. Total expenditure against a) and b) should match the equivalent returned in Table A.

Annex A Part 2 of HEFCW circular W16/03HE*2018/19 fee and access plan income forecast expenditure****a) Equality of opportunity**

Categories of expenditure to support individuals under represented in HE to:

	2018/19	2017/18
	£	£
1. promote and safeguard fair access to higher education, including identifying individuals with the greatest potential from under-represented groups;	1,139,000	1,275,000
2. attract and retain students and potential students from under-represented groups;	5,393,000	5,893,000
3. raise the educational aspirations and skills of people from under-represented groups to support success in higher education;	250,000	0
4. support and increase retention, progression and completion, particularly people from low participation neighbourhoods, looked after children, care leavers and carers;	2,750,000	2,950,000
5. improve the higher education experience for groups under-represented in higher education;	1,325,000	1,325,000
6. provide to under-represented groups effective information, before and during their studies;	0	0
7. provide high quality academic and welfare support to groups under-represented in higher education; and	1,500,000	0
8. support the progress to employment or further study of groups under-represented in higher education.	600,000	600,000
9. Other, for example fee and access plan evaluation	0	0
Total	12,957,000	12,043,000
Percentage of forecast expenditure to be spent on Equality of Opportunity	56.3%	55.9%

Any prompts or failed validations will appear in red text in this box

b) Promotion of HE

Categories of expenditure to:

	2018/19	2017/18
	£	£
1. deliver more effective engagement with private, public or voluntary bodies and communities in Wales;	198,000	0
2. improve the quality of learning and teaching, with reference to the quality of the student experience;	7,995,000	7,095,000
3. strengthen the employability of Welsh graduates;	1,630,000	1,630,000
4. promote Welsh higher education more effectively internationally;	0	0
5. deliver sustainable higher education; and	0	0
6. raise awareness of the value of higher education to potential students.	220,000	770,000
7. Other, for example fee and access plan evaluation.	0	0
Total	10,043,000	9,495,000
Percentage of forecast expenditure to be spent on Promotion of HE	43.7%	44.1%

c) Total forecast expenditure of 2018/19 fee and access plan income, a) + b)

	2018/19	2017/18
	£	£
Total	23,000,000	21,538,000

d) Student financial support (already included in a) and b) above)

	2018/19		2017/18	
	£	Anticipated student numbers supported	£	Anticipated student numbers supported
Fee waivers	63,000	7	63,000	7
Bursaries	5,010,000	6,000	5,010,000	6,000
Scholarships	220,000	300	220,000	300
Hardship funds	500,000	750	500,000	750
Provision of financial management advice and skills	450,000	15,381	450,000	15,381
Other financial support	0	0	0	0
Total	6,243,000	22,438	6,243,000	22,438
Percentage of forecast expenditure to be spent on student financial support	27.1%		29.0%	

Proportion to be spent on student financial support in 2018/19 is less than proportion to be spent in 2017/18. Please provide commentary in space provided.

If the proportion to be invested in 2018/19 is less than in 2017/18 please provide commentary below:

Investment in student financial support remains at 2017/18 levels. We continue to offer bursaries and scholarships and to deliver our financial assistance programme and integrated financial advice and support service through our Advice and Money Team. Evidence about the benefit of student financial support, particularly bursaries, is currently unclear, and we continue to evaluate the impact of our own provision in this area to establish a robust evidence base for future decisions, particularly as the Diamond review recommendations are implemented. In the meantime, we are investing in a range of high quality outreach programmes and innovative, modern and accessible support services to support progression and success of our students, particularly those under-represented in HE.

Institutional fee and access plan 2018/19

Table G: Targets

Institution name: Cardiff University
Institution UKPRN: 10007814

Guidance note

A fee and access plan should contain SMART institutional targets that contribute to demonstrating the applicant's commitment to increasing and/or maintaining the number of students from under-represented groups in higher education, or other fee and access plan objectives, as appropriate. Targets should demonstrate the level of ambition, pace of progress and distance to be travelled by applicants as a result of fee and access plan provision and investment.

HEFCW accepts that it is neither beneficial nor meaningful to set targets in all fee and access plan area. Applicants will want to satisfy themselves that they have sufficient targets to provide a full account of, and return on, the level of public investment to which the plan relates. The level of public investment will differ between institutions, as will the quantity of targets.

For further guidance and definitions used in this table, please see **Annex B** of the guidance.

Row	Target description (maximum 500 characters)	Related category of expenditure (as listed in table B a) and B b)) Please select from drop down list	Is the achievement of the target the responsibility of more than one fee and access plan applicant?		Baseline year	Baseline data Please provide numbers and/or percentages where appropriate		Target		Optional longer term targets				Please provide a commentary on the 2018/19 targets where numerical descriptions are not appropriate. We would expect most targets to be numerically based. (maximum 500 characters)		
			Y / N	If Y please provide partner name(s)		No.	%	No.	%	2018/19		2019/20			2022/23	
										No.	%	No.	%		No.	%
1	Proportion of students recruited from Communities First / Quintile 1 of Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation areas.	a1 promote and safeguard fair access to higher education, including identifying individuals with the greatest potential from under-represented groups; a2 attract and retain students and potential students from under-represented groups; b1 deliver more effective engagement with private, public or voluntary bodies and communities in Wales;	N		2015/16	1,892	17.3%	1,997	18.0%							
2	Number of subjects in the top 25% of Times Good University Guide subject league tables	a2 attract and retain students and potential students from under-represented groups; b2 improve the quality of learning and teaching, with reference to the quality of the student experience; b3 strengthen the employability of Welsh graduates;	N		2015/16	11	25.0%	13	30.0%			43 (all subjects)	100.0%	This measure is a University key performance indicator and incorporates a basket of metrics including overall satisfaction and assessment and feedback (NSS), student retention and graduate employment (DLHE). This is a long-term target for 2023 in line with our institutional strategic plan (2018-23)		
3	Proportion of UK domiciled full-time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods (HESA PI tables T1a and T2a)	a1 promote and safeguard fair access to higher education, including identifying individuals with the greatest potential from under-represented groups; a2 attract and retain students and potential students from under-represented groups;	N		2015/16		8.5%		9.1%				at least 10%	This measure is a University key performance indicator. This is a long-term target for 2023 in line with our institutional strategic plan (2018-23).		
4	Proportion of YOUNG full time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods (HESA PIs table T1a)	a1 promote and safeguard fair access to higher education, including identifying individuals with the greatest potential from under-represented groups; a2 attract and retain students and potential students from under-represented groups;	N		n/a				meet/exceed benchmark					HESA performance indicators provide a calculated benchmark which we can use to measure our performance against universities with a comparable student body to Cardiff University. HESA widening participation performance indicator data reported in December 2019 will relate to the cohort in 2017/18. Graduate Outcomes (New DLHE) data on 2017/18 graduates onwards will be collected 15 months after leaving University, rather than 6 months as currently. These data will be available in January 2020.		
5	Proportion of MATURE full time first degree entrants from Low Participation Neighbourhoods with no previous HE qualifications. (HESA PI table T2a)	a1 promote and safeguard fair access to higher education, including identifying individuals with the greatest potential from under-represented groups; a2 attract and retain students and potential students from under-represented groups;	N		n/a				meet/exceed benchmark							
6	Percentage of YOUNG full time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods no longer in HE following year of entry. (HESA PI table T3b)	a2 attract and retain students and potential students from under-represented groups; a4 support and increase retention, progression and completion, particularly people from low participation neighbourhoods, looked after children, care leavers and carers; a5 improve the higher education experience for groups under-represented in higher education; a7 provide high quality academic and welfare support to groups under-represented in higher education; and b2 improve the quality of learning and teaching, with reference to the quality of the student experience;	N		n/a				meet/exceed benchmark							
7	Proportion of MATURE full time first degree entrants with no previous higher education qualification no longer in HE following year of entry (HESA PI table T3c)	a2 attract and retain students and potential students from under-represented groups; a4 support and increase retention, progression and completion, particularly people from low participation neighbourhoods, looked after children, care leavers and carers; a5 improve the higher education experience for groups under-represented in higher education; a7 provide high quality academic and welfare support to groups under-represented in higher education; and b2 improve the quality of learning and teaching, with reference to the quality of the student experience;	N		n/a				meet/exceed benchmark							
8	Proportion of leavers in employment or further study after leaving university: Leavers obtaining first degrees from full time courses (measured by the Graduate Outcomes survey 'New DLHE')	a3 raise the educational aspirations and skills of people from under-represented groups to support success in higher education; a4 support and increase retention, progression and completion, particularly people from low participation neighbourhoods, looked after children, care leavers and carers; a8 support the progress to employment or further study of groups under-represented in higher education; b3 strengthen the employability of Welsh graduates;	N		n/a				meet/exceed benchmark							
9	Performance in the HESA Graduate Track Employment Measure (measured by the Graduate Outcomes survey 'New DLHE')	a3 raise the educational aspirations and skills of people from under-represented groups to support success in higher education; a4 support and increase retention, progression and completion, particularly people from low participation neighbourhoods, looked after children, care leavers and carers; a8 support the progress to employment or further study of groups under-represented in higher education; b3 strengthen the employability of Welsh graduates;	N		2014/15		73.9%		80.0%					Graduate Outcomes data for 2017/18 graduates onwards will be		
10	Number of Welsh-speaking students undertaking part of their studies through the medium of Welsh	a2 attract and retain students and potential students from under-represented groups; a5 improve the higher education experience for groups under-represented in higher education; b3 strengthen the employability of Welsh graduates;	N		2016/17	330		420	27% increase from 2016/17 baseline			530	60% increase from the 2016/17 baseline	This University key performance indicator relates to the sustainable and strategic development of our credited Welsh medium provision. The measure relates to the number of students undertaking 5 or more credits through the medium of Welsh. Our commitment to developing broader learning opportunities in Welsh language and culture to meet the needs of our student body is set out in our plan.		

Any prompts or failed validations will appear in red text in this box

