

Yeovil College University Centre

Access and Participation Plan

2025-26 to 2028-29

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
Introduction and strategic aim.....	2
Risks to equality of opportunity.....	3
Objectives	6
Intervention strategies and expected outcomes.....	7
Intervention strategy 1: Improving HE progression rates for young people across South Somerset.	7
Intervention Strategy 2: Closing the high grades gap for the growing number of students with a SEMH need.	13
Intervention strategy 3: Closing the high grades gap for students with a vocational or contextual entry profile.	18
Whole provider approach	23
Student consultation	24
Evaluation of the plan	26
Provision of information to students.....	28
Annex A: Further information and analysis relating to the identification and prioritisation of key risks to equality of opportunity	29
Annex B: Further information that sets out the rationale, assumptions and evidence base for each intervention strategy that is included in the access and participation plan.	32
Theories of Change	32
Works Cited	32
Annex C: Targets, investment and fees.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Introduction and strategic aim

Yeovil College University Centre (YCUC) is a small Higher Education (HE) provider, based within a medium-sized Further Education (FE) College in South Somerset. We work in partnership with awarding bodies and validating universities to offer courses from Level 4 to Level 6, including Higher Nationals, Foundation Degrees, Bachelor's Degrees, and a range of professional qualifications. Our HE provision is inclusive by design; we pride ourselves on our highly-supportive culture, are entirely committed to ensuring that any student with the potential and desire to study can access, succeed in, and progress from higher education.

Our mission is “to create life changing opportunities”, and our vision is “shaping an exciting future with the best education and collaboration” (Yeovil College, 2023, p. 2), and we are continually humbled by the resilience and commitment our students demonstrate in order to develop the required knowledge, skills, and professional accreditation to transform their lives through studying at university-level. Beyond this, we recognise the life-changing impacts our graduates go on to have across our community, whether through contribution to research and innovation, creating employment opportunities, undertaking work that improves social mobility and creates positive outcomes for others, or, indeed, being able to offer improved financial security and opportunities for social mobility to their families.

Despite our commitment to inclusivity, through robust scrutiny of our data, alongside meaningful engagement with our student body, we have identified areas in which there are still risks to equality of opportunity for students from certain groups. Therefore, this Access and Participation Plan sets out the steps we plan to take to ensure that every single student at Yeovil College University Centre, regardless of background or circumstance, is able to access the very best education and unlock the life changing opportunities that higher education study can offer.

As a small HE in FE provider, we are proud to serve a wonderfully diverse student population. Students who share at least one, if not more, characteristics that are most likely to indicate risks to equality of opportunity are not a minority; they are the vast majority of our learning community, and the heart of the population we serve. As such, we take a proactive and whole-organisation approach to closing equality of opportunity gaps; not solely focussing on outreach or support mechanisms to help students overcome barriers, instead, always first considering if we can simply remove a barrier instead, whether wholly or partially. This approach has proven very successful throughout the lifecycle of our previous Access and Participation Plan (Yeovil College, 2020) – for example, timetabling our HE programmes over one or two condensed days or evenings per week has made higher education more accessible to those balancing study with work, childcare, or other commitments – and as such, will continue to inform our strategy moving forwards.

Geographically situated within a HE cold-spot, sitting within a TUNDRA Quintile 2 MSOA and bordering five Quintile 1 MSOAs (Office for Students, 2022a), we predominantly serve a commuting student community from across South Somerset, North and West Dorset. We recognise that our position in a large and rural county, with poor transport links, means that we are the only viable HE provider within a reasonable travel distance for a significant portion of the community we serve. As such, our HE provision remains responsive to our regional labour market, with an emphasis upon vocational programmes that will support students to progress into high-quality employment upon completion, driving growth and prosperity for our community through ensuring regional industry can fill essential roles across a range of specialist areas. Around one third of our HE students are studying their qualification with us as part of a Higher or Degree

Apprenticeship, a figure which has risen considerably over recent years, and is likely to continue to do so. This high proportion of apprentices, which is also reflected in our FE provision, characterises our approach; we are fully embedded within our employer community, working together to build shared prosperity for our region. This place-based approach is central to our organisational mission, vision, values, and culture – indeed, one of our key Strategic Aims is that “we will use our positive influence to create opportunity for our community” (Yeovil College, 2023, p. 7) – and this geographically-grounded ethos has been an integral part of the development of our Access and Participation Plan. A particular example of this is place-based approach to closing equality of opportunity gaps is outlined in more detail in Intervention Strategy 1, where we have reflected upon the persistent disparity between the lower-than-average rates of young HE progression and working age population qualified to Level 4 or above in our community, and their total misalignment with the demand for professional qualified to Level 4 and above in our regional labour market (Heart of the South West Skills Launchpad, 2022, p.12 and p.18).

Throughout the process of developing this Access and Participation Plan, we have recognised the unique position we occupy as a small HE in FE provider, serving a rurally isolated HE cold-spot. Whilst this position comes with challenges – for example, we do not have the budget of a larger HEI, and being a community-led provider without residential accommodation means we are somewhat limited to effecting change within our commuting radius – this position also carries immense privilege and opportunity. As a small provider, we can be agile, and move quickly in a way that is truly responsive to the feedback of our students. We can engage meaningfully with our entire HE student body on a granular basis as we are at a size where our HE department can (and in many cases do) know every student’s name, and we can be fully immersed in the geographic region and community we serve, as the anchor educational provider for our locality. This understanding of our organisational mission, skills, and place in the world has significantly shaped the approach we have taken in this Access and Participation Plan; undertaking focussed work in priority areas where we can have the greatest impact on closing equality of opportunity gaps.

Risks to equality of opportunity

To identify risks to equality of opportunity that exist within our context, we scrutinised information from a variety of sources. This included publicly available data, such as the Office for Students’ Access and Participation Data Dashboard, the Office for Students’ Maps of Participation in Higher Education, the National Student Survey, and the Graduate Outcomes Survey. However, our small cohort sizes mean that our data is often suppressed in nationally published figures, and so we also undertook a robust analysis of internal data, submitted via the Individualised Learner Record (ILR), aggregating figures across academic years where this gave more appropriate population sizes.

When scrutinising our data to identify where risks to equality of opportunity may exist, we took a lifecycle-based approach, exploring where gaps may exist for particular students across Access, Success (including continuation, completion, and high grades), and Progression stages of the student journey. We considered this data in light of the Office for Students’ Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) and identified three key areas where there are risks to equality of opportunity that our Access and Participation Plan will set out to address. Annex A sets out the analysis undertaken in greater detail; however, our small cohort sizes mean that provider-specific data is not shared if doing so may make individual students identifiable.

Risk 1 – Young people living in our local community of South Somerset are less likely to progress into higher education than their peers elsewhere in the country.

Evaluation of internal information and external research suggests that the very low levels of HE progression in our locality – 17 of the 24 South Somerset MSOAs are TUNDRA Quintile 1 or 2 (Office for Students, 2022a) - links to a range of barriers from the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register, primarily:

Knowledge and Skills - Including students lacking opportunities to develop wider academic knowledge and skills required to confidently access higher education, as well as understanding of how their experience or skills could be relevant in a HE environment.

Information and Guidance – In particular, that students and their influencers may not have access to quality information about HE, the financial support available to study, the variety of routes available, and how study at university-level can support high-quality careers, including within the local community.

Perception of Higher Education – In particular, that negative preconceptions about higher education can mean that students and their influencers believe that HE is not possible or suitable for them, or is not a route that would provide benefit or value.

Whilst this risk is not explicitly correlated to our admissions process – the Office for Students Access and Participation Data Dashboard (2024) shows that we have an above-average proportion of students from TUNDRA Quintile 1 and 2 postcode areas – we recognise that our geographic grounding puts us in a uniquely strong position to positively influence HE progression rates in the high number of low-participation areas within our local community, whether this results in these students progressing to study higher education at YCUC or elsewhere.

Risk 2 – Students studying at Yeovil College University Centre who have a declared Social, Emotional or Mental Health (SEMH) need are less likely to achieve a high grade outcome than their peers without a declared SEMH need.

Evaluation of internal information and external research suggests this links to the key risks below from the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register:

Mental Health – Students may experience mental ill health that makes it hard for them to cope with or flourish within their studies, especially when experiencing difficulties or delays in accessing mental health diagnosis, treatment, or support. This risk is of particular importance when we consider that, in our context as well as nationally, the number of new entrants declaring a SEMH need is rising sharply each year, and as such, closing this gap will ensure this growing student group do not face barriers to equality of opportunity.

Cost Pressures – Students may experience poor mental health due to financial concerns or end up taking on more paid work than is conducive to positive mental wellbeing to try and cope with the rising cost of living.

Risk 3 – Students who commence their studies at Yeovil College University Centre on the basis of a vocational or contextual entry profile are less likely to achieve a high grade outcome than their peers with an A Level entry profile.

Evidence suggests that this is linked to students from vocational and contextual backgrounds having greater gaps in their wider academic study skills prior to commencing their studies, which are not currently being appropriately supported to allow them to achieve the highest grades. Evaluation of internal information and external research suggests this links to three key risks from the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register:

Insufficient Academic Support - In particular, insufficient support for students to successfully develop the wider 'academic know-how' and skills required to be successful on a HE course, beyond core curriculum content.

Ongoing Impacts of Coronavirus - In particular, the impacts for those young people who missed the opportunity to develop key academic skills, including the planning of revision workloads and sitting of traditional examinations, during the pandemic.

Cost Pressures – In particular, pressures due to the rising cost of living for students whose circumstances may mean they are undertaking more paid work alongside their studies than is conducive to high levels of academic attainment.

Intersection with sector-wide risks

Our approach to addressing these three key risks identified within our context intersects well with the three sector-wide risks identified as highest priority by the Office for Students in Regulatory Notice 1 (2023a, p. 3). Our response to Risk 1 - that young people living in our local community of South Somerset are less likely to progress into higher education than their peers elsewhere in the country - includes steps to make a meaningful and effective contribution to supporting schools to raise pre-16 attainment for students who do not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required for higher education. Alongside this, our response to Risk 3 - that students who commence their studies at Yeovil College University Centre on the basis of a vocational or contextual entry profile are less likely to achieve a high grade outcome than their peers with an A Level entry profile - will help to address this sector-wide risk surrounding pre-16 attainment from the opposite direction: supporting those students who may enter higher education with gaps in the knowledge or skill required to be most successful.

At Yeovil College University Centre, we pride ourselves on the flexibility and diversity of our provision; as a HE in FE provider, the majority of our provision is part-time study, evening-only provision, apprenticeships, and Higher Technical Qualifications. Through the steps outlined in Intervention Strategy 1 we will promote and improve awareness of the diversity of HE study available, so more people are aware of these opportunities to learn in the way that suits them best.

Our response to Risk 2 - that students studying at Yeovil College University Centre who have a declared Social, Emotional or Mental Health (SEMH) need are less likely to achieve a high grade outcome than their peers without a declared SEMH need - correlates very clearly with the sector-wide expectation that providers consider how to improve the mental health of their students. As will be outlined in more detail in Intervention Strategy 1, we have also considered how to embed wellbeing and resilience within our outreach work.

Objectives

For each of the identified risks, we have set out a clear objective we intend to achieve to close the corresponding equality of opportunity gap. We recognise that the nature of our objectives – two focussed on grade outcomes, and one on improving systemically low HE progression rates through progressive and sustained outreach – mean that our overall objectives will not be fully measurable within the lifecycle of this Plan. For example, the impact of interventions developed in the first year of the Plan to improve high-grade attainment would not be measurable by 2028-29 for students on many part-time or apprenticeship programmes. Similarly, whilst some impact of outreach activity will be measurable in the lifecycle of this Plan, there will be many primary and secondary school students engaging with outreach activity between 2025-26 and 2028-29 who will not be eligible to progress into higher education within this timeframe. As such, each objective below has two associated targets; a medium-term target linked to an interim outcome indicator from our Theory of Change that can ensure accountability and progress tracking within the lifecycle of this plan, and a longer-term target outlining our ambitious vision for closing equality of opportunity gaps.

Objective 1 – Through the delivery of a progressive and sustained outreach programme, increase the proportion of young people from our local community progressing into higher education, reducing the number of MSOAs in South Somerset identified as TUNDRA Quintile 1 or 2 by at least 25% by 2035.

Target 1a – Increase the rates of HE progression of South Somerset 14-19 Partnership students completing a Level 3 FE qualification to 29% by 2028-29. [Ref: PTA_1]

Target 1b – Reduce the number of ‘South Somerset’ MSOAs coded as TUNDRA Quintile 1 (9) or Quintile 2 (8) by at least 25% by 2035. [Ref: PTA_2]

Objective 2 – Through provision of robust wraparound support, stop the widening of the high-grades attainment gap for students with a declared Social, Emotional, or Mental Health (SEMH) need, and work to reduce this gap to 10 percentage points by 2030-31.

Target 2a – Improve the proportion of YCUC students with a declared SEMH need engaging with support through Disabled Students’ Allowances (DSA), or other equivalent support for those who are not DSA-eligible, to 50% by 2028-29. [Ref: PTS_1]

Target 2b – Stop the widening of the high-grades attainment gap for students with a declared SEMH need, reducing this gap to 10 percentage points by 2030-31. [Ref: PTS_2]

Objective 3 – Through the provision of a range of academic interventions and a wider package of support, stop the widening of the high-grades attainment gap for students with a vocational or contextual entry profile, and work to reduce this gap to 10 percentage points by 2030-31.

Target 3.1 – Ensure that 100% of students with a vocational or contextual entry profile have the opportunity to engage with resources and support to develop their academic skills and academic ‘know-how’ by 2027-28. [Ref: PTS_3]

Target 3.2 – Stop the widening of the high-grades attainment gap for students with a vocational or contextual entry profile, and reduce this gap to 10 percentage points by 2030-31. [Ref: PTS_4]

Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

We have developed three intervention strategies to achieve the ambitious objectives and targets outlined above. This intentional structure is grounded in reflection and learning from the lifecycle of our 2020-21 to 2024-25 APP. We have learned that having a very clear set of identified equality of opportunity gaps, that correlate directly to corresponding interventions, which are subsequently evaluated against correlated targets, ensures that understanding, retaining, and engaging with our APP is as straightforward as possible for students, colleagues, and governors, including those whose primary area of responsibility is a provision type other than HE. Thus, Risk 1 maps to Objective 1 and Intervention Strategy 1, and so forth, to ensure the ambitious plans set forth in our APP are as clear and straightforward as possible to engage with.

Intervention strategy 1: Improving HE progression rates for young people across South Somerset.

Objectives and targets

Objective 1 – Through the delivery of a progressive and sustained outreach programme, increase the proportion of young people from our local community progressing into higher education, reducing the number of MSOAs in South Somerset identified as TUNDRA Quintile 1 or 2 by at least 25% by 2035.

Target 1a – Increase the rates of HE progression of South Somerset 14-19 Partnership students completing a Level 3 FE qualification to 29% by 2028-29. [Ref: PTA_1]

Target 1b – Reduce the number of ‘South Somerset’ MSOAs coded as TUNDRA Quintile 1 (9) or Quintile 2 (8) by at least 25% by 2035. [Ref: PTA_2]

Risks to equality of opportunity

This intervention addresses identified equality of opportunity Risk 1: young people living in our local community of South Somerset are less likely to progress into higher education than their peers elsewhere in the country. Evaluation of internal information and external research suggests this links to three key risks from the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register of Knowledge and Skills, Information and Guidance, and Perception of Higher Education.

Related objectives and targets

This intervention strategy has some links to Objective and Intervention Strategy 2, in particular recognising the potential longer-term impact of interventions to support the development of resilience and wellbeing of younger students (Intervention 1.6) upon those students engaging more proactively with wellbeing and pastoral support when they reach HE level. Similarly, there is some overlap with Objective and Intervention Strategy 3, recognising how supporting the development of metacognitive skills in students from KS3 to KS5 may allow them to enter HE with some of the requisite skills and growth mindset required to successfully navigate the HE landscape.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Links
Intervention 1.1 Chairing the South Somerset 14-19 Careers Partnership.	Chairing the South Somerset Careers Partnership: a strategic collaboration between the 10 secondary schools and FE providers in our region, alongside the local authority. This ensures a coherent approach to careers, post-16, and post-18 IAG across the region. Provision will include a data-sharing agreement and commitment to ongoing tracking of post-18 HE progression rates between partners to allow for interim monitoring of success of APP Intervention 1. Development of existing work.	Cumulatively 9 days per year of executive staff time.	Strategic partnership to support the successful delivery of Interventions 1.3-1.7. Data sharing should also facilitate investment in and engagement with HE outreach for 11-16 providers through awareness of student destinations to improve understanding of the impact of outreach work delivered pre-16.	1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 1.8.
Intervention 1.2 Improving GCSE-level attainment through post-16 offer making approach.	Headteachers sitting on the 14-19 Careers Partnership board have articulated the unequivocal damage to motivation and subsequent attainment when Year 11s receive a FE place offer that requires grades below their predicted achievement levels. As such, Yeovil College commits to making Year 11s offers of FE places based on achieving their predicted grades at GCSE, where these are higher than the standard entry tariff for a course. Development of existing work.	As above.	Student motivation at GCSE-level remains high, reducing the number of Year 11 students who achieve significantly below their predicted GCSE grades. Improved pre-16 attainment leads to improved post-18 progression rates.	1.1, 1.6.

Intervention 1.3 Outreach programme to build 'mechanical' HE knowledge (e.g. UCAS / Student Finance)	A suite of workshops designed to prepare students to access Higher Education. Topics will include application process and student finance, and the delivery timeline will ensure students receive appropriate material for where they are on their educational journey. Available to L2 and L3 students at regional post-16 providers. New delivery, to fill gaps left by the phasing out of UniConnect, as well as augmenting where required. Collaborative with outgoing UniConnect provision, and schools and FE career advisors.	Interventions 1.3 – 1.8 will be supported by 1 FTE of outreach staffing p/a, required travel and resource costs, and circa 0.1 FTE of management oversight. Distribution of time between interventions will vary over plan lifecycle.	Participants have improved understanding of how to produce a successful application, increased understanding of financial support available, and increased awareness of HE opportunities and ability to overcome (perceived or real) barriers to funding HE and application.	1.1, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7.
Intervention 1.4 Outreach programme to build student aspiration.	A suite of workshops including Subject Masterclasses, Meet the HE Teacher, Meet the HE Student, and wellbeing and resilience workshops. Available to Yr 5-13 cohorts across 10 regional secondary and FE providers, and 15 primary schools p/a. Significant expansion of previous post-16 delivery into secondary and primary providers. Collaboration with schools and career advisors, and current HE students.	As above.	Participants have increased expectations of self and belief that 'someone like me' could belong and thrive in the HE community, improved understanding of the benefits of HE study, as well as increased confidence both to apply and in ability to succeed at HE level.	1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8.
Intervention 1.5 Outreach to build knowledge of range of HE available.	Will include workshops such as Intro to HE, Myth Busting, Choosing a Degree Course, Higher & Degree Apprenticeships, Student Life & Budgeting. Available to Yr 8 - 10, and L2/L3 post-16 cohorts across 10 regional secondary and FE providers. Expansion of existing work. Collaborative with outgoing UniConnect provision, schools and FE career advisors.	As above.	Participants have an increased belief that 'someone like me' could belong and thrive in the HE community, increased awareness of local HE opportunities, and increased awareness of HE options and potential benefits of HE study.	1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.7, 1.8.

Intervention 1.6 Outreach programme to develop metacognition skills.	For Key Stages 2-4 this will include both our 'wellbeing and resilience' suite of workshops, as well as our 'study skills' suite. For FE, this will include Teamworking & Study Skills. Available to Yr 5 – 13 cohorts across 10 regional secondary and FE providers, and 5 primary schools p/a. New provision.	As above.	Participants have improved metacognitive skills to facilitate improved achievement at GCSE and post-16 level. These strategies will also support students to succeed when they reach HE level.	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2.
Intervention 1.7 Programme of engagement with parents, carers, and influencers.	Webinars and engagement events for parents, carers and influencers to provide information that will help them to help their young person navigate Higher Education. Available to parents, carers, and influencers across primary, secondary, and post-16 providers in the region. Significant expansion upon small suite of post-16 parent & carer webinars delivered previously.	As above.	Engagement leads to parents, carers and other influencers having increased awareness of HE opportunities, including local opportunities, ability to overcome barriers to entry, as well as the value that HE study can provide.	1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.8.
Intervention 1.8 Utilising employers as influencers.	Collaborating with regional providers to create a suite of employer case studies to raise prospective student awareness of graduate roles and routes available in our locality in order to challenge misconceptions held by both young people and their influencers about the availability of higher skilled roles in our regional labour market and how HE study can support this. New work.	As above.	Students and their influencers more aware of local labour market and ability to achieve HE qualifications that will allow them to access skilled employment in their local area.	1.1, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7.

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy:

£45,000 per year

Summary of evidence base and rationale

We recognise that strong strategic relationships with schools are key to delivering successful support for young people from underrepresented groups to access higher education (Greany *et al.*, 2014). Our approach is therefore underpinned by a commitment to strategic partnership with schools and post-16 providers, and has been well informed by feedback from Secondary and FE colleagues, the South Somerset Careers Partnership, and learning and reflection that has arisen through our partnership with Next Steps South West, our regional UniConnect partnership. As UniConnect delivery is phased out in our region, we have worked carefully to ensure that our APP replaces provision previously delivered through UniConnect, as well as augmenting and enhancing the local outreach offer in line with stakeholder feedback and research findings where appropriate, for example, through recognising the need to embed HE outreach within primary schools and early secondary years to support the wider levelling-up agenda, and raise aspirations from an early age, including awareness of technical routes (UCAS, 2021), (UCAS, 2016), (Archer *et al.*, 2021).

This intervention strategy is underpinned by our Theory of Change, available in Appendix B, and includes interventions focussed on overcoming the “not for us” barrier (ICM Unlimited, 2019, p. 14), to support students and their influencers to understand how ‘someone like me’ can succeed and thrive at university level. This links closely to the gap in awareness of high-quality higher technical and graduate career opportunities in South Somerset (Yeovil College, 2023, p. 7). We recognise that engaging with parents, families, and other influencers is an essential part of an effective outreach strategy (Office for Students, 2020a), and is particularly important as the town of Yeovil has a high concentration of Quintile 1 and 2 Adult HE 2011 MSOAs (Office for Students, 2022b), meaning that young people’s influencers often do not have lived experience of HE study themselves.

Our outreach programmes are designed to be delivered cohort-wide, recognising that “wherever possible, interventions to benefit the highly able should be available to all students” (Holt-White and Cullinane, 2023, p. 48), acknowledging the risk of reinforcing damaging ‘not for us’ assumptions through the introduction of strict targeting criteria for engagement, as well as the value of engaging as many young people and families as possible in the conversation about the opportunities HE can offer when working within a community with historically limited rates of HE progression and understanding.

Our approach is also informed by the Resilient Classroom model of embedding key wellbeing and resilience skills within delivery (Taylor *et al.*, 2020), in response to the national rise in the number of students experiencing mental health challenges, which can prevent HE access and success. This embedded approach to wellbeing complements well work to improve metacognitive and critical thinking skills, which are “linked to significant improvements in attainment, especially for pupils from underrepresented backgrounds” (Holt and Ballaera, 2019).

Evaluation

Intervention	Outcome(s)	Method(s) of evaluation	Publication plan
Interventions 1.1 & 1.2	Schools and post-16 providers engage well with interventions 1.3-1.7, and understand the benefits of doing so.	Type 1: Qualitative feedback from school and post-16 leaders. Type 2: Comparing number and spread of cohorts engaging in outreach to rates prior to this intervention being introduced.	Shared at South Somerset 14-19 Careers Partnership Strategic Board annually.
Interventions 1.3 – 1.6	Students from Yr 5 to Post-16 engage with outreach, and evaluation shows that interventions are having a positive impact on barriers to HE access.	Type 1: TASO Evaluation questionnaire. Type 2: Comparing number and spread of students engaging in outreach to rates prior to this intervention being introduced.	Shared at South Somerset 14-19 Careers Partnership Strategic Board annually.
Intervention 1.7	Improved parent and influencer awareness of benefits of HE study, and information required to support their young person through HE progression journey.	Type 1: Qualitative evaluation data as to impact of sessions on barriers to HE progression. Type 2: Comparing number of parents and influencers attending outreach sessions to rates prior to this intervention being introduced.	Shared at South Somerset 14-19 Careers Partnership Strategic Board annually.
Intervention 1.8	Improved awareness of high-quality graduate and higher technical careers available locally.	Type 1: Qualitative data captured via survey to monitor levels of awareness of young people and influencers.	Shared at South Somerset 14-19 Careers Partnership Strategic Board and with collaborating employers.
Entire Intervention	Intervention leads to improved rates of HE progression for young people across South Somerset.	Type 2: Whether interim indicator of South Somerset Partnership FE to HE progression rates shows improvement in HE progression. Type 2: Whether number of TUNDRA Quintile 1 and 2 MSOAs in South Somerset reduces compared to 2024 data.	Shared at South Somerset 14-19 Careers Partnership Strategic Board annually. Shared at programme completion with other HE partners (validating partners and through Institute of Technology) to allow the opportunity to replicate or adapt locally.

Intervention Strategy 2: Closing the high grades gap for the growing number of students with a SEMH need.

Objectives and targets

Objective 2 – Through provision of robust wraparound support, stop the widening of the high-grades attainment gap for students with a declared Social, Emotional, or Mental Health (SEMH) need, and work to reduce this gap to 10 percentage points by 2030-31.

Target 2a – Improve the proportion of YCUC students with a declared SEMH need engaging with support through Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA), or other equivalent support for those who are not DSA-eligible, to 50% by 2028-29.

Target 2b – Stop the widening of the high-grades attainment gap for students with a declared SEMH need, reducing this gap to 10 percentage points by 2030-31.

Risks to equality of opportunity

This intervention addresses identified equality of opportunity Risk 2: Students studying at Yeovil College University Centre who have a declared Social, Emotional or Mental Health (SEMH) need are less likely to achieve a high grade outcome than their peers without a declared SEMH need. As outlined in more detail above, evaluation of internal information and external research suggests this links to key risks from the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register of Mental Health and Cost Pressures.

Related objectives and targets

This intervention strategy has some links to Objective and Intervention Strategy 1. In particular, there is an intersection between this strand of work and Intervention 1.6, recognising the potential longer-term impact of interventions to support the development of resilience and wellbeing of younger students, in those students being able to engage more proactively with wellbeing and pastoral support available when they reach HE level.

There is also clear overlap with Objective and Intervention 3, insofar as the provision of financial support duplicated across Interventions 2.4 and 3.4 should serve the dual purpose of both reducing the adverse mental health impacts for those students experiencing financial difficulty, and simultaneously allowing students some flexibility to perhaps reduce their working hours to increase the time available to focus on studies through access to this financial support.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Links
Intervention 2.1 1:1 staff support to access learning support.	Proactive signposting and encouragement to engage with 1:1 staff support to apply for DSA (or equivalent for non-eligible students) and access other reasonable adjustments. Available to all YCUC students, recognising that under-declaration remains an ongoing challenge, and that support needs can emerge throughout studies. New work.	0.1 FTE of professional support service staff time.	Improved awareness of support available, understanding of its benefits, and support to access this will increase the number of students accessing appropriate support for their SEMH need. This should lead to improved high grades outcomes for those students accessing support.	2.3, 2.5
Intervention 2.2 Provision of HE student wellbeing service.	Provision of dedicated HE & Adult Student wellbeing support staff, providing 1:1 pastoral support appointments, signposting (including to counselling service), and student engagement activities to improve wellbeing and mental health outcomes, including a peer-support system. Both development of previous work and new work. (Pastoral support roles have existed previously, but programme of work, including peer-support programme, is new).	0.5 FTE of professional support service staff time. Associated budget to cover wellbeing activities, events, and subscriptions.	Students waiting for diagnosis or external mental health support can access interim support whilst awaiting more robust intervention, limiting the adverse impact upon academic outcomes. Increased awareness of support leads to more students engaging, leading to improved academic outcomes.	1.6, 2.5
Intervention 2.3 Financial support to access diagnostic assessment.	Provision of financial support to students with a household income under £45,000 who are currently unable to access DSA owing to a lack of formal diagnosis of a specific learning difficulty. Available to qualifying YCUC students on qualifying courses meeting the income and purpose criteria. A development / enhancement of financial support that has been provided previously.	Up to £7,500 of financial support payments per year. A small amount of staff time – circa £500 per year – to administer the fund.	Financial aid leads to an increase in the number of students who hold the formal diagnosis required to apply for and successfully access DSA. An increase in the number of students accessing DSA support leads to an increase in those students achieving high grades.	2.1, 2.4, 3.4

Intervention 2.4 / 3.4 [duplicated] Provision of financial support to students.	Provision of Bursary funding of £350 for students with a household income under £25,000, and Cost of Living funding of £350 for students with a household income under £45,000. Available to qualifying YCUC students on qualifying courses meeting the household income criteria. A development / enhancement of financial support that has been provided previously.	Financial investment of up to £30,000 each academic year. In addition, investment in staff time to administer funds, circa £1,500 per year.	Financial support reduces adverse mental health impacts of financial challenges, allowing students to focus on their studies and achieving higher grades. In addition, funds may support students to access private wellbeing support to better cope with and engage with their studies.	2.3, 3.4
Intervention 2.5 Staff CPD and wellbeing engagement linked to SEMH.	Provision of CPD to support staff wellbeing and understanding of how best to support student mental health, within the bounds of their role. Recognising that staff across the organisation take a proactive role in supporting student wellbeing, including the early identification of concerns and provision of first-line support before referral to wellbeing services. Particularly important for staff delivering on flexible programmes, such as evening-only or in the workplace. New work.	Investment both in expert delivery of training, and staff time to attend training events.	Robust CPD and support mean more staff can identify indicators of poor mental health in students, provide initial support, and signpost students to appropriate services as required, increasing the likelihood that students receive the support they need to be able to engage with their studies and achieve a strong outcome.	2.1, 2.2

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

£45,000 per year (attributing 50% of the financial support in 2.4 to this intervention strategy, and 50% to Intervention Strategy 3).

Summary of evidence base and rationale

The sector is facing rapidly increasing rates of student mental health challenges (UCAS, 2021), and we recognise that these figures are likely to continue to rise based on demographic data showing the rising rates of children with a probable mental health condition (Fair Education Alliance, 2022, p. 18). Therefore, we have focused on interventions that are sustainable and scalable, recognising that the need for support in this area is likely to grow over coming years.

Research shows the positive impact of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) on student confidence and outcomes, recognising its particular importance for students with two or more declared disabilities (Johnson *et al.*, 2019), a trend that we see reflected in our own data. However, between 2020-2023 only 20% of YCUC students with a declared SEMH need were accessing DSA or equivalent, and therefore a significant number of students are missing out on the opportunities this provides. We will therefore deliver interventions across the learner journey to improve uptake of DSA, as well as engagement with other support services and reasonable adjustments, recognising that "measures to support transition begin from pre-application and continue through application, pre-entry, arrival, induction and through the first year" (Hughes and Spanner, 2019, p. 25). When consulting with students on our proposed plans to improve DSA uptake, we received very clear feedback that even if a student could obtain a SEMH diagnosis free of charge, if that student also had a disability or learning difficulty for which a diagnosis would require a private assessment, they would likely be deterred from engaging with the DSA process at all. This led to further analysis of aggregated ILR data from 2020-21 to 2023-24, where we found that over half of YCUC students with a SEMH need also declared another disability, in many cases a disability for which a private diagnosis would be required. As such, increased support for students to access a diagnosis to pursue a DSA application has become a core part of our SEMH intervention plan.

Alongside this targeted support, our student wellbeing service will develop a suite of engagement activities, including peer-mentoring opportunities, to help support students with a SEMH need to thrive within the HE environment, recognising that "thriving students are engaged intellectually, socially and emotionally, while those just surviving tend to be isolated, disillusioned and overwhelmed" (Richardson *et al.*, 2012, p. 92).

Much scholarship around rising SEMH needs in HE focusses on the efforts of student wellbeing services, or else how academic staff are absorbing overspill arising from capacity issues (Hughes *et al.*, 2018, p. 35). This reflects how "traditionally, activity in higher education institutions has been viewed in binary terms: of an academic domain, and an administrative or management domain that supports this" (Whitchurch, 2008, p. 378). Our approach challenges the traditionally administrative location of student wellbeing (Waddington, 2016, p. 5); recognising that "encouraging and enhancing student relationships within the university environment is crucial to their ongoing integration and success in their first year of study" (Richardson *et al.*, 2012, p. 92). We recognise that, in our context, the 'environment' where these relationships are built will often be within academic spaces – amongst peer groups and with curriculum staff – rather than in broader social domains, especially for students on non-traditional programmes, such as evening-only courses or those assessed in the workplace. However, we understand that "maximising [students with a SEMH need's] success in higher education is dependent on ensuring our own and our colleagues' wellbeing too" (Houghton and Anderson, 2017, p. 30), and as such, if work to support student wellbeing is to be integrated across academic areas, CPD must be prioritised to ensure staff have the skills and resilience to meet the growing SEMH needs of students, ensuring they are appropriately supported, signposted, and given the conditions to thrive.

Evaluation

Intervention	Outcome(s)	Method(s) of evaluation	Publication plan
Interventions 2.1, 2.2 & 2.3	Improved levels of student engagement with SEMH support.	Type 2: Comparing levels of support uptake to rates prior to this intervention being introduced.	Shared annually in YCUC Strategy Group to allow good practice to be applied in other areas.
Interventions 2.1, 2.2 & 2.3	Students with a SEMH need engaging with support achieve improved academic outcomes, including rate of high grades achieved.	Type 1: Student feedback on impact of support via qualitative feedback capture. Type 2: Comparing rate of academic improvement on an assessment basis of students engaging with support with the baseline average rate of academic progress of other students in the cohort.	Shared annually in YCUC Strategy Group to allow good practice to be applied in other areas.
Intervention 2.4	Students with a SEMH need in receipt of financial support are more likely to achieve a high grade outcome.	Type 1: Tracking of outcomes for students in receipt of financial support who also declare a SEMH need.	Reported internally once data available. Cohort sizes mean risk of student identifiability is too high if shared more widely.
Intervention 2.5	Improved staff confidence to provide appropriate SEMH support to students.	Type 1: Surveys, qualitative feedback and focus groups to understand impact of training.	Findings will be shared on an ongoing basis through Somerset Safeguarding Partnership to share good practice with other providers.
Entire Intervention	Interventions result in closing of high-grades gap for students with a SEMH need.	Type 2: Comparison of high grades gap for students with a SEMH need compared to those without. Tracking the narrowing of the high grades gap over time vs. current baseline.	Shared at programme completion with other HE partners (validation partnerships and Institute of Technology) to allow the opportunity to replicate or adapt locally.

Intervention strategy 3: Closing the high grades gap for students with a vocational or contextual entry profile.

Objectives and targets this intervention strategy is designed to achieve:

Objective 3 – Through the provision of a range of academic interventions and a wider package of support, stop the widening of the high-grades attainment gap for students with a vocational or contextual entry profile, and work to reduce this gap to 10 percentage points by 2030-31.

Target 3.1 – Ensure that 100% of students with a vocational or contextual entry profile have the opportunity to engage with resources and support to develop their academic skills and academic 'know-how' by 2027-28.

Target 3.2 – Stop the widening of the high-grades attainment gap for students with a vocational or contextual entry profile, and reduce this gap to 10 percentage points by 2030-31.

Risks to equality of opportunity

This intervention addresses identified equality of opportunity Risk 3: students who commence their studies at Yeovil College University Centre on the basis of a vocational or contextual entry profile are less likely to achieve a high grade outcome than their peers with an A Level entry profile. As outlined in more detail above, evaluation of internal information and external research suggests this links to three key risks from the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register: Insufficient Academic Support, Ongoing Impacts of Coronavirus, and Cost Pressures.

Related objectives and targets

There is an intersection between this strand of work and Intervention 1.6, recognising how supporting the development of metacognitive skills in students from KS3 to KS5 may allow them to enter HE with some of the requisite skills and growth mindset required to successfully navigate the HE landscape.

There is also clear overlap with Objective and Intervention 2, insofar as the provision of financial support duplicated across Interventions 2.4 and 3.4 should serve the dual purpose of both reducing the adverse mental health impacts for those students experiencing financial difficulty, and simultaneously allowing students some flexibility to perhaps reduce their working hours to increase the time available to focus on studies through access to this financial support.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Links
Intervention 3.1 Dedicated academic writing support.	Delivery of dedicated academic writing masterclasses for HE students, ensuring that a lack of academic writing prowess is neither a limiting factor for students' grades, nor prevents them from successfully articulating arguments, concepts, or evaluations of the level of complexity required to achieve a high grade. Available to all YCUC students, whether in-person or via online learning opportunities. A development / enhancement of work that has been successfully piloted in a previous year.	37 hours of specialist lecturer time per term to develop resources, deliver masterclasses, and evaluate impact on student skills and knowledge.	Increase in the number of students from vocational and contextual admissions backgrounds who develop the required academic writing skills to communicate ideas with the nuance and skill, at the level required to achieve a high grade outcome. Increase in the proportion of students from vocational and contextual admissions backgrounds achieving a high grade outcome.	1.6, 3.2, 3.3.
Intervention 3.2 Development of masterclasses and short modules to better share and develop 'academic know-how' skills.	Creation of a suite of content to support those students whose previous experience(s) of study mean they have not yet developed the academic knowledge, skills, information, or 'tips' required to successfully navigate HE study and assessment in a way that allows access to the highest grades. The precise content of these modules will be co-developed with students from target groups, alongside recent graduates who can share insight into the skills that helped them to achieve highly. Available to all YCUC students, whether in-person or via online learning opportunities. New work.	310 hours of specialist staff time to develop the resources required. 37 hours of specialist staff time per term in subsequent years to develop resources, deliver, and evaluate impact.	Increase in the number of students from vocational and contextual admissions backgrounds who develop the required 'academic know-how' to study effectively and demonstrate the skills required to achieve a high grade outcome. Increase in the proportion of students from vocational and contextual admissions backgrounds achieving a high grade outcome.	1.6, 3.1, 3.3.

Intervention 3.3 Provision of evening and intensive block-week English and Maths courses.	Opportunity for applicants who do not yet hold Level 2 English and / or Maths qualifications to study either during evenings or during an intensive block-week to achieve their Level 2 qualification prior to commencing their studies. A development / enhancement of work that has been undertaken previously.	Academic staff delivery time, alongside small amount of administrative time to signpost and organise.	Increase in the number of students from contextual backgrounds who can obtain a formal Level 2 qualification in English or Maths prior to commencing their studies, building a firmer foundation for both HE entry and academic success. Leading to increase in the proportion of students from vocational and contextual admissions backgrounds achieving a high grade outcome.	3.1, 3.2.
Intervention 2.4 / 3.4 [duplicated] Provision of financial support to students	Provision of Bursary funding of £350 for students with a household income under £25,000, and Cost of Living funding of £350 for students with a household income under £45,000. Available to qualifying YCUC students on qualifying courses meeting the household income criteria. A development / enhancement of financial support that has been provided previously.	Financial investment of up to £30,000 each academic year. In addition, investment in staff time to administer funds, circa £1,500 per year.	Provision of financial aid helps to ease the pressure of the rising cost of living, resulting in a reduction in the amount of paid work students have to undertake alongside their studies, leading to students having more time to dedicate to their academic work, resulting in a higher rate of students achieving high grades.	2.3, 2.4.

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

£24,000 in Year 1, £19,000 in subsequent years (attributing 50% of the financial support in 3.4 to this intervention strategy, and 50% to Intervention Strategy 2).

Summary of evidence base and rationale

Research shows that “even when controlling for demographic factors, students who enter higher education with vocational qualifications are unlikely to receive the same degree outcomes as students who enter with academic qualifications” (Shields and Masardo, 2018, p. 162). It is therefore essential to ensure that students from diverse backgrounds “gain not only ‘formal’ access to higher education but, more importantly, ‘epistemological’ access, which is access to these socio-culturally situated ways of knowing and being which sustain the academy” (Morrow 1994, cited in Namakula and Prozesky, 2019, p. 41).

There is a raft of literature and action research around undergraduate study skills, which recognises that whilst there are some “hand-picked students, skilled in the art of university learning even before they arriv[e] at university”, it is increasingly the case that “many students are inadequately prepared for university life and study” (Cottrell, 2019, p.6). The rationale for strategies 3.1 – 3.3 build upon postgraduate research undertaken by our Head of Higher Education and Adult Learning, focussing on how we can “make the ‘unnatural’ and socially constructed nature of academic literacies clear” (Carter, 2009, p. 149), and in so doing, work to dismantle the cultural myth that allows academic writing to “mistakenly be viewed as something to be acquired naturally” (Quigley, 2022, p. 5). Interventions 3.1 – 3.3 recognise that developing academic literacies supports students to access the dominant discourse of higher education, thereby becoming “full citizens” (Carter, 2009, p. 144) of their academic community.

We recognise that the diverse ages of our student community mean that we can have students from the “generation of schoolchildren who were not taught grammar” (Quigley, 2022, p. 7), sat alongside those who experienced the programme of national grammar tests for primary school children (Gove, 2014), and as such, a varied approach to building academic know-how and skills is required. Therefore, our research was supported by focus group work undertaken with a range of groups – including undergraduate lecturing staff, current students, and recent graduates – to identify where gaps in study skills or ‘academic know-how’ prevented achievement of high grades. Alongside this, work was undertaken with KS5 teachers to identify where changes to the FE landscape meant students undertaking vocational programmes were unlikely to be required to develop certain academic skills.

Intervention 3.4 is based upon evidence that demonstrates the positive correlation between bursary support and achieving a ‘good’ degree (1st or 2:1), through providing a “levelling effect” between bursary recipients and their peers (Office for Students, 2020b, pp. 5-6), considered alongside the fact that “the cost of living is an increasing issue for higher education students across many groups” (Office for Students, 2023b, p. 6).

Evaluation

Intervention	Outcome(s)	Method(s) of evaluation	Publication plan
Interventions 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3	Students engage with support available. Students identify support available as beneficial to their studies. Student engagement with support leads to improved levels of high-grade outcomes.	Type 1: Monitoring uptake rates. Type 1: Student and staff feedback on impact of support via qualitative feedback capture (including survey and focus groups). Type 2: Comparing rate of academic improvement on an assessment basis of students engaging with support with the baseline average rate of academic progress of other students in the cohort.	Shared annually in YCUC Strategy Group to allow good practice to be applied in other areas.
Intervention 3.4	Students in receipt of financial support are more likely to achieve a high grade outcome.	Type 1: Tracking of outcomes for students in receipt of financial support.	Reported internally once data available. Cohort sizes mean risk of student identifiability is too high if shared more widely.
Entire Intervention	Interventions result in closing of high-grades gap for students with a vocational or contextual entry profile.	Type 2: Comparison of high grades gap for students with a contextual / vocational entry profile compared to those with a traditional A Level entry profile. Tracking the narrowing of the high grades gap over time vs. current baseline.	Shared at programme completion with other HE partners (validation partnerships and Institute of Technology) to allow the opportunity to replicate or adapt locally.

Whole provider approach

All provision types offered by the College – including FE, Apprenticeships, HE, Adult Learning, and School Links - are unified through our mission “to create life changing opportunities”, and our vision of “shaping an exciting future with the best education and collaboration” (Yeovil College, 2023, p. 2). Our mission and vision are fully aligned to the objectives of this Access and Participation Plan to ensure that every student with the potential and desire to study is able to access the best educational experience to unlock the life changing opportunities that higher education can offer.

As a college based in a town with significant pockets of social disadvantage - 6 LSOAs in South Somerset feature in the lowest 20% of IMD rankings nationally (Somerset Intelligence, 2019, p. 4) - within a region identified as an Education Investment Area (Department for Education, 2022), working to address risks to equality of opportunity is an integral part of how we “create life changing opportunities” for our students and community (Yeovil College, 2023, p. 2), and achieve our organisational mission. Student Experience is at the heart of all we do, and we take a whole-college approach to ensuring that every student is able to thrive and succeed. Our Strategic Aims include that “our learners will have a safe and inclusive place to learn” and that “our ambitious curriculum will accelerate careers, facilitate student success, and create life chances” (Yeovil College, 2023, p. 6). Thus, inclusivity and the opportunities for social mobility offered by education are integral to our culture; ensuring every student is able to access, succeed in, and progress from their studies is not a standalone objective of APP work, but characterises how we operate.

This whole-provider approach is also integral to our approach to teaching and learning. Inclusion is embedded within our pedagogic practice as one of the nine Lecturer Standards against which all teaching staff are observed. Thus, we ensure that lecturing staff not only champion Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion issues wherever possible, but also ensure that inclusivity is embedded within the approach to teaching and learning, through the meeting of individual learning needs.

We are fully grounded in our employer community. Ensuring we can better serve our regional community and employers, through the provision of outstanding teaching and learning to develop highly-skilled individuals who can fill in-demand roles across a range of sectors and roles, is key to our approach across all provision types. This place-based approach is central to our organisational mission, vision, values, and culture – indeed, one of our key Strategic Aims is that “we will use our positive influence to create opportunity for our community” (Yeovil College, 2023, p. 7) – and has been an integral part of the development of our Access and Participation Plan. The College are proactively engaged with our local and regional employers and economy – our Principal sits on the LEP Board for the region, and the College chairs a quarterly Place Leadership Group of the 30 most influential CEOs and MDs in the region. This group, alongside countless other employer engagement forums, continues to unequivocally articulate a need for significantly more staff qualified at Levels 4 and above than they are able to successfully recruit. Thus, our whole-provider work to support our employer community is explicitly linked to the objectives of this Access and Participation plan, especially the plans outlined in Intervention Strategy 1. We recognise the continued importance of our HE provision to ensure we can better support our local community and our regional employers; ensuring that industry can thrive and prosper, and simultaneously, to ensure that individuals from our local community have the opportunity to access the education and training required to access these vital roles, which are often some of the best remunerated and most secure in the region.

Provider-wide oversight of delivery against our APP objectives is facilitated in a range of ways. These include the following:

- APP Outreach delivery is a standing item in every HE programme's termly Programme Team Meeting.
- Progress against APP objectives is a standing item in YCUC Strategy meetings – our quarterly academic governance board.
- Progress against APP objectives is included in the annual course review and improvement evaluation process.
- Progress against APP targets are reported quarterly to the Curriculum, Quality, and Assurance sub-committee of the Yeovil College Corporation.

In developing this Access and Participation Plan, we have given due regard to our obligations under the Equality Act (2010), ensuring that we eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, and advance equality of opportunity and promote and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not. Our Head of Higher Education and Adult Learning is a mandatory member of the College's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) group, ensuring that consideration of HE students and the College's Access and Participation Plan commitments are embedded within strategic EDI oversight. We hold 'Silver' Investors in Diversity accreditation, recognising how the FREDIE principles of Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, and Engagement are embedded across our work (National Centre for Diversity, 2024), and were recognised with a position within the top 50 employers in the prestigious National Centre for Diversity (NCFD) 'Top 100 Most Inclusive Workplaces Index 2023' (Yeovil College, 2024).

Student consultation

As a student-centred organisation, who hold "collaborative" as one of our four key behaviours (Yeovil College, 2023, p. 2), engagement with students from a range of backgrounds has been an integral part of the development of this Access and Participation Plan.

At Yeovil College University Centre, we recognise that 'traditional' student representation structures often rely on students being able to volunteer time during conventional working hours, and as such, are not accessible to many students who embody the diversity of our student community. Therefore, we have taken a range of steps to facilitate broader student engagement, ensuring self-selection bias or logistical barriers do not prevent the broadest possible cross-section of students from having the opportunity to input and shape their student experience. These strategies have ensured robust engagement across our student body throughout the process of developing this APP and will allow a range of student scrutiny and evaluation of our ongoing delivery of APP targets. Steps taken to ensure a breadth of student engagement include, but are not limited to:

- Offering an early-evening online slot for Student Voice meetings, to make attendance more accessible for part-time, apprentice, and evening-only students.
- Allowing cohorts to rotate student representative responsibilities, so all students can participate in course governance without having to commit to a year's worth of meetings.
- Ensuring Student Voice meeting agendas and minutes are open to all students.
- A weekly open invitation for any students to share any feedback directly with the Head of Higher Education or wider University Centre team.
- Creating two, paid, student representative roles, one focussed on Belonging and Student Representation, and the other on Policies and Governance. These roles are paid above Living Wage, offer incredibly flexible hours, and allow YCUC students to take on student

representation roles without having to sacrifice the opportunity to generate income from other part-time work. The means that a truly diverse range of YCUC students can engage with student representation, not just those where self-selection bias or financial security means that this is an available option.

Our students have chosen not to create their own submission to accompany this Access and Participation Plan, recognising that the submission window falling early in the academic year would necessitate time working on the Student Submission over the summer vacation period, where, understandably, paid employment had to be prioritised. However, the APP has been taken to YCUC Student Voice Meetings so that representatives from all cohorts have had the opportunity to hear about the plan's development, our intended target areas, and planned interventions and evaluations, to provide feedback on these, and to ask questions both within and outside of the meeting. Following this, information about the APP, its development, intended target areas, and planned interventions were shared with the entire student body via our weekly bulletin, with the invitation for any students to feed back if they wished to.

Both of our current YCUC Student Voice Officers have played an active role in the development of this Access and Participation Plan and have paid particular attention to understanding how trends described in our APP, such as the rising rates of students with a SEMH need, intersect with national datasets. This Access and Participation Plan has also been robustly scrutinised by our Governing Body, which includes in its membership both a FE and a HE student representative. As such, this has also allowed the opportunity for a FE student representative to also consider and input into its development.

Key changes made as a result of student input include:

- Reframing financial support as 'Cost of Living' funding, rather than 'Hardship' funding, with the intent that using language with which students are more familiar will de-stigmatise application, increase student uptake, and as such, increase the positive benefits of financial support for student wellbeing and academic outcomes for a wider pool of students.
- Robust support for students considering applying for DSA and encouragement to do so right across the student lifecycle, not just at the point of application.
- Including a longitudinal approach to Growth Mindset within the metacognition strand of our outreach programme, based on the findings of a current education undergraduate who has undertaken their action research module in this area and shared their findings with us.
- Access to increased rates of financial support to pursue a diagnostic assessment in order to apply for DSA. This change was implemented as a result of the particularly useful insight from students, including those with lived experience, that even if a student could obtain a SEMH diagnosis free of charge, if that student also had a disability or learning difficulty for which a diagnosis would require a private assessment, they would likely be deterred from engaging with the DSA process at all. This led to further data analysis, where we found that over half of YCUC students with a SEMH need also declared another disability, and in a notable proportion of instances this was a disability or learning difficulty for which a private diagnosis would be required. As such, increased support for students to access a diagnosis to pursue a DSA application has become a core part of our SEMH intervention plan.
- Ensuring that the metacognition programme of outreach outlined in Intervention 1.6 is available to both Level 2 and Level 3 learners at KS5, so that those progressing from secondary school into a Level 2 programme, such as a T Level Transition programme, do not experience a gap in development opportunity.

As part of the student consultation process, we have also worked closely with recent graduates, including alumni with backgrounds including care leavers, young parents, mature students, students from low-participation postcode areas, and students with disabilities. This process has recognised that students who have recently completed their qualifications can have different, but equally valuable, perspectives on the support and interventions that were most effective – and

indeed less so. Alumni feedback has been invaluable in shaping our development of Intervention 3, and understanding what 'secret rules of academia', or their preferred term of 'study hacks', these recent graduates were unaware of prior to commencing their HE qualification, but then discovered and used to unlock higher grade outcomes.

Moving forward, students will be proactively involved in both the delivery and evaluation of this Plan. Our planned outreach interventions include the opportunity for current YCUC students to serve as co-creators of outreach activity for FE students, through their participation in 'Meet a Current Student' workshops (Intervention 1.4). Students will also have the opportunity to be simultaneous recipients and deliverers of APP intervention if they choose to engage in the peer mentoring SEMH programme (Intervention 2.2). Alongside this, both current students and recent alumni will be invited to proactively shape the 'Study Hacks' programme (Intervention 3.2) – sharing the tips and strategies that they have found most valuable to achieving high grades.

Compliance with APP targets and commitments is a standing item at both the Curriculum, Quality and Assurance sub-committee of the Yeovil College Corporation (which our HE Student Governor sits on) and is a standing item at all YCUC Strategy Meetings (which both our HE Student Governor, and HE Student Voice Officer attend). Furthermore, information on outreach activity undertaken is monitored at course level every term, in a Programme Team Meeting which requires both staff and learner representative attendance to ensure quoracy, thus ensuring that alongside the top-level student scrutiny of APP delivery through Corporation and YCUC Strategy Meetings, there is also granular scrutiny of the outreach activity delivered across each programme on a termly basis by student representatives.

Student feedback is sought termly at Student Voice Meetings via Student Representatives on both wellbeing support, and study skills support, which will allow for ongoing real-time feedback on the quality of Intervention Strategies 2 and 3 from across the student body, to sit alongside more detailed evaluation undertaken by those involved. As such, this will ensure that self-selection bias does not mean we only hear the evaluative voices of those directly involved in these services when monitoring the success of Intervention Strategies 2 and 3, but also wider feedback from the entire student population.

Evaluation of the plan

We recognise that a robust evaluation approach is an integral part of delivering a successful Access and Participation Plan. In the development of our APP, we have considered evaluation simultaneously to programme design, and have ensured we have clear baseline data to measure against wherever possible to allow for Type 2 evidence (OfS, 2023c) to be generated. Type 1 evaluation is also being used where Type 2 is not possible, or where Type 1 evaluation may help to add contextualisation and richness to data generated through Type 2 evaluation.

We recognise that given our size and financial constraints we can achieve stronger evaluative outcomes when we use existing mechanisms and data, including our central Student Record System, to review and analyse the impact of interventions. During the creation of our previous Access and Participation Plan we identified that there were a number of student groups where data was not available at an institutional level, owing to limitations in the coverage of the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) (Yeovil College, 2020). At this point, we committed to collecting data on a range of characteristics, including, but not limited to, Care Leavers, Young Carers, students from Military Families, Estranged Students, and students from Gypsy, Traveller, and Roma communities. Since this, we have also added students with English as an Additional Language to our data collection. Whilst none of these groups have large enough student numbers to make the publication of data possible without the risk of individuals becoming identifiable, this improved

approach to data collection has allowed us to develop better understanding through evaluation. The data is scrutinised internally and has allowed us to identify any areas in which gaps may exist, better support students from these groups where an equality of opportunity risk may have emerged and engage directly with students to understand how we can best meet their needs.

Throughout the lifecycle of this plan, evaluation data will be monitored at a strategic level by the YCUC Strategy Group, and at each meeting of the Curriculum, Quality, and Assurance Sub-Committee of the Corporation. Data will be scrutinised operationally by both Outreach colleagues, the HE team, and all HE Programme Teams and Student Voice representatives at termly Programme Team Meetings. Our size and FE context are perhaps a strength when it comes to acting upon evaluative findings; the financial pressures of our sector mean that we cannot afford to spend money on programmes or interventions that are not achieving their desired impact, and so we have an institutional culture of scrutinising outcomes rather than just outputs, and adapting an approach when the outcomes are not as planned. Beyond this, our relatively small outreach team means that the individuals who are delivering interventions have typically been heavily involved in research, design, and development of the outreach methodology, and as such, are able to take a joined-up approach to ownership of all elements of the programmes they are involved in, from planning, through delivery, and into evaluation.

We have used the development of this Access and Participation Plan as an opportunity to involve staff across the college in a conversation about evaluation and its importance, to help strengthen understanding of the strategic context of evaluating our APP beyond just our HE and outreach teams, to ensure staff engagement and investment across the Plan's lifecycle. For example, all staff delivering on HE programmes were invited to collectively scrutinise the literature review that had been undertaken around good practice in areas where equality of opportunity gaps exist in our context, and help to determine which intervention approaches we would focus upon, to ensure collective ownership of our APP work and a collective understanding of the evidence base that sits behind this. This has led to focussed input from academic staff in Early Years Education supporting our Outreach colleagues to develop an appropriate method for evaluating primary school aged children's understanding of outreach sessions. Alongside this, a workshop was run for all Corporation members to support better understanding of the risks to equality of opportunity in our context, how this linked to the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register, and how our Theories of Change were being developed to overcome these barriers.

When developing this APP, we have reflected upon the positive journey our evaluation practice has taken since we developed our first APP in 2019-20, as well as the steps we can still take to improve. We used the Office of Students' evaluation self assessment tool (2023c) to benchmark our current performance, which found our practice was 'advanced' in strategic context and programme design, 'good' in evaluation design, and 'emerging' in evaluation implementation and learning from evaluation. This is significant progress from when we undertook the self-evaluation in 2019-20 and were categorised as 'emerging' in all areas of practice. Over the lifecycle of this Access and Participation Plan, we hope to move to at least 'good' in all areas of practice, and recognise that capacity for growth and development across evaluation implementation and learning will come as delivery is undertaken in earnest and the opportunities for dissemination of findings and learning arise.

Our size remains a limiting factor when it comes to wider evaluation sharing. However, we have explored in the development of this plan how we can strengthen the internal dissemination of findings, how we can use our place in the South Somerset 14-19 Careers Partnership to share findings across regional education providers, and how we could use existing networks, such as the Institute of Technology, to share evaluation findings with partner HEIs who may be able to make

use of this information, even if samples are not statistically significant enough to warrant external publication.

Our robust approach to evaluation has undoubtedly been supported by the positive influence of Next Steps South West (NSSW), our regional UniConnect partnership, both through their modelling of strong evaluation practice, and the fact that both our Head of Higher Education and Adult Learning and HE Access and Success Coordinator previously worked for NSSW so have been able to carry forwards this understanding of the vital role of evaluation, alongside experience of working with things like baseline surveys, theories of change, and longitudinal student tracking on a much larger-scale outreach initiative. We will continue to enjoy the evaluation-strengthening benefits of collaboration moving forwards, as we remain a partner in NSSW, and have committed to jointly funding an Outreach Officer post (currently working 0.6 FTE for NSSW and 0.4 FTE on our institutional APP work) in a model that will allow for continuity of support and the ongoing building of knowledge as UniConnect funding is phased out.

Provision of information to students

Information about fees chargeable and financial support available to HE students is available to all current and prospective students via the college website. Both Fees Lists and the HE Bursary, Hardship, and Diagnostic Support Policy are published in the 'Policies and Reports' section of our website. This information makes clear that fees for YCUC students will not change once they are enrolled on their programme – they will remain fixed for the duration of their course – however, fees may rise between academic years for new intakes of students. Information around fees and financial support is proactively signposted in student communications during the admissions process, and sharing information about bursary support is a mandatory part of the student induction process. Information on financial support is also re-shared with students throughout the academic year, with attention paid to points of likely financial challenge, such as holiday periods, sustained periods of cold weather, or where other external factors (such as rising fuel prices or changes to local council tax rates) may cause financial difficulty.

Through this Access and Participation Plan, we commit to providing Bursary funding of £350 for students with a household income under £25,000, and Cost of Living funding of £350 for students with a household income under £45,000. These funds will be made available annually to qualifying YCUC students on qualifying courses meeting the household income criteria. For more detailed information about these funds, including details of how to apply, how household income is calculated, and evidence to submit, please visit the 'Policies and Reports' section of our website. Both current and prospective students are entirely welcome to contact the University Centre with any queries about financial support available.

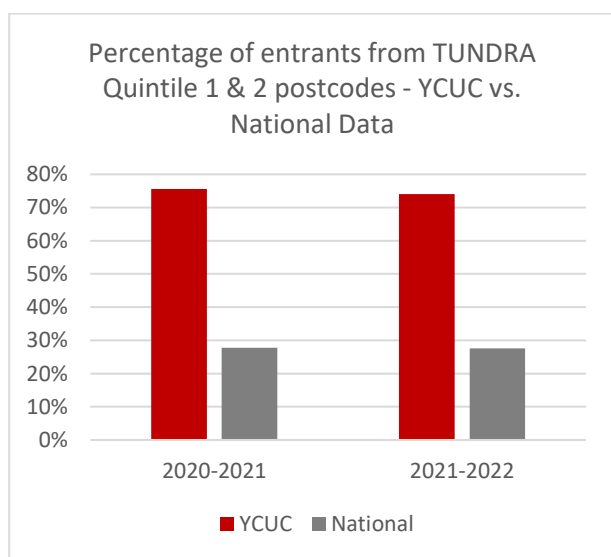
All external-facing materials are reviewed, at least annually, to ensure accuracy, accessibility, and clarity. Our process of review includes, where appropriate, seeking input from external bodies and specialists, including but not limited to partner universities, to ensure continual improvement and adoption of best practice in how information is shared with prospective students. Our YCUC Student Voice Officer (Policies and Compliance) is involved in the annual review of HE student-facing policies and procedures, including the Bursary, Hardship and Diagnostic Support Policy, helping to ensure information regarding financial support is clear, accessible, and can be readily navigated by students.

Annex A: Further information and analysis relating to the identification and prioritisation of key risks to equality of opportunity

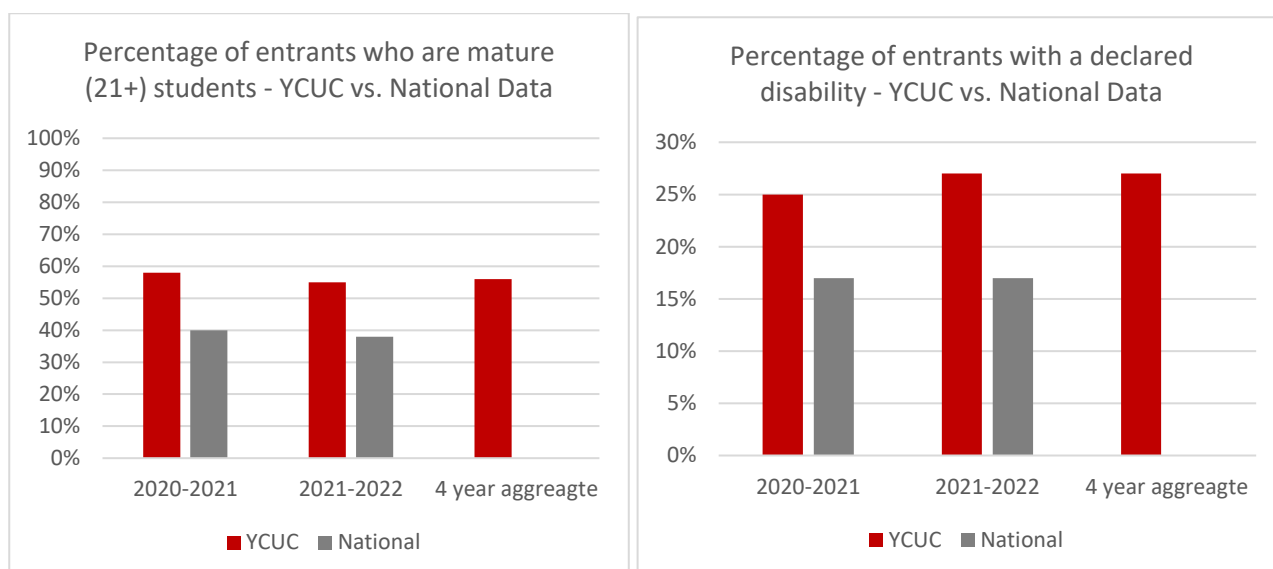
When scrutinising our data to identify where risks to equality of opportunity may exist, we took a lifecycle-based approach, exploring where risks may exist across Access, Success (including continuation, completion, and high grades), and Progression stages of the student journey.

Owing to our small cohort sizes, it is not possible to use the Office for Students' Access and Participation Data Dashboard (2024) to gain a comprehensive picture of all stages of the student journey and where equality of opportunity gaps may exist for certain students. As such, we also undertook a robust analysis of our own internal data, submitted via the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) across the four academic years 2020-21 to 2023-24, aggregating data across academic years where this gave more appropriate population sizes to undertake analysis with a greater degree of confidence. We chose to exclude data from 2019-20 from our analysis, recognising that the significant impact of Covid-19 meant that data from this year included potentially misleading and anomalous figures, in particular in relation to Continuation and Completion.

We found that in terms of Access, Yeovil College University Centre sat comfortably above most national averages in terms of the diversity of our student cohorts, giving confidence that our historic and ongoing work to ensure our provision is as accessible as possible to a wide range of students is continuing to be successful. Office for Students Data Dashboard figures (2024) showed that an above-average proportion of YCUC students came from a TUNDRA Quintile 1 or 2 postcode area.



Similarly, comparing ILR data from 2020-21 to 2023-24 to national levels, available via the Office for Students Data Dashboard (2024), shows access levels above national levels for both mature students and students with a declared disability.



Whilst this data did not show gaps, when disaggregating by disability type, we noted a distinct rise in the number of entrants declaring a Social, Emotional, or Mental Health (SEMH) need. Over the four-year period there was a range of 9 percentage points between the lowest and highest rates. This was a far sharper rise and greater variance than that seen in the overall disability declaration rate (6 percentage points), or the rates in other sub-groups where population sizes made comparability possible, such as students declaring Dyslexia (1 percentage point), or Autism Spectrum Condition (2 percentage points), where rates of declaration remained relatively stable over the four-year period. This rising rate of SEMH need is noteworthy, as it formed important context in our approach to supporting high-grades outcomes for students with a SEMH need – considering interventions that could be scalable and resilient as the volume of student need is likely to continue to rise.

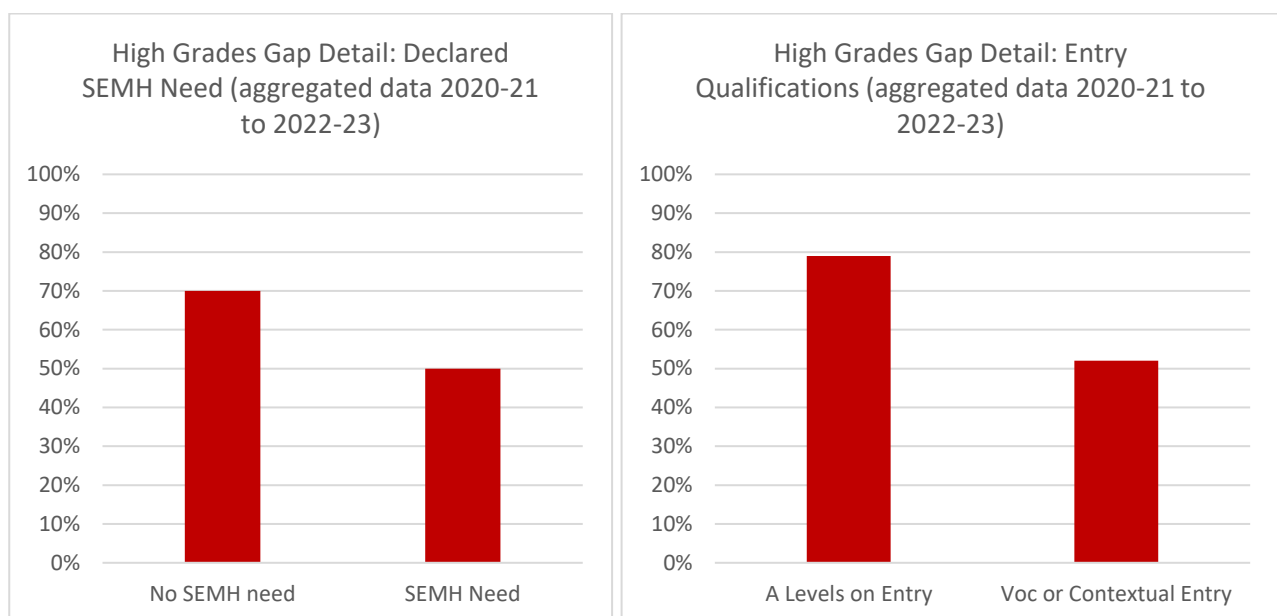
When considering our proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students, whilst we did not sit above national average, as a community-based provider with no accommodation and serving, therefore, a commuting population, we compared our figures to regional demographic data. Aggregated data from 2020 – 2023 entry showed that on average 9% of the Yeovil College University Centre cohort were from a Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic group. Whilst we recognise that good practice is to disaggregate this data into individual ethnic groups, cohort sizes meant that data disaggregated to this level cannot be published for risk of making individual students identifiable, and so only the collated figures are shared here. These figures showed that our University Centre population is actually slightly more ethnically diverse than the baseline of the community we serve - Somerset 2021 census data showed that 1.5% of the usually resident population were Asian, Asian British, or Asian Welsh; 0.4% were Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African; 1.2% were from Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups; and 4% were from an Other ethnic group (Somerset Intelligence, 2021). Therefore, we believe that the fact that we sit below national averages for ethnic diversity does not present an equality of opportunity risk in our context.

We also saw very strong rates of student continuation and completion, with no statistically significant gaps for students from any demographic groups. This gives great confidence in the interventions we have developed and delivered in recent years, as closing continuation gaps was a key feature of our 2020-21 to 2024-25 Access and Participation Plan (Yeovil College, 2020). There were small gaps in continuation identified for students with a SEMH need and students with a vocational or contextual entry profile. Whilst these gaps were not statistically significant, it is hoped

that the interventions designed to improve high grades outcomes for students from these groups may also benefit retention.

Whilst retention was strong, we also explored high grades outcomes to further scrutinise student success. As our HE students undertake a combination of HNC, HND, Foundation Degree and Bachelor's Degree qualifications, direct comparisons of student achievement across cohorts is not possible. For the purposes of this Access and Participation Plan, we have decided to include students achieving 'Merit' or 'Distinction' in HNC, HND or Foundation Degree courses alongside students achieving a first or upper second class honours in Bachelor's Degrees when considering our 'high attaining' students.

When it came to achievement, aggregated data from 2020-21 to 2022-23 identified high grades gaps for two different groups of students. Firstly, students with a declared SEMH need were less likely to achieve a high grade than peers without a SEMH need. Secondly, students with a contextual or vocational entry profile were less likely to achieve a high grade than their peers with an A Level entry profile.



This led us to reflect that whilst our continuation and completion rates are strong, we should consider further a 'surviving vs. thriving' model to identify those students who are being effectively supported to complete their programmes of study, but not necessarily achieving high grades at the same rates as their peers.

Progression data was not available via the Office for Students Data Dashboard (2024). However, considering Graduate Outcomes Survey data alongside internally-collated student destination information, did not suggest any statistically significant equality of opportunity gaps in student progression. The character of Yeovil College is shaped by our business community, the high number of apprentices shapes the student experience, with professionally current teachers and employers supporting students with their skills and knowledge development. As a consequence, employability skills are embedded within all HE programmes, through Personal Development Planning, employer-led briefs and work-related learning where appropriate. This allows tutors to tailor support in a student-led and subject-specific way. This support, combined with the broadly vocational nature of our course portfolio, means that employment outcomes for students are typically strong. Therefore, we have not targeted any interventions in this area.

Annex B: Further information that sets out the rationale, assumptions and evidence base for each intervention strategy that is included in the access and participation plan.

Robust literature review was an integral part of our intervention development, ensuring that the intervention strategies we employed were supported by a clear evidence base. The 'Works Cited' subsection that follows includes much of the research included in the Literature Review process.

Alongside this, we have developed three Theories of Change – one for each Objective and its associated Intervention. Each Theory of Change outlines the initial risk to equality of opportunity that was identified, then presents the planned activities, intermediate measures, and long-term outcomes involved in each intervention, as well as the associated assumptions. As part of each Theory of Change, we have included a breakdown of the barriers the intervention strategy intends to overcome, and what the anticipated outcomes on these barriers will be. This mapping of barriers and anticipated outcomes will help to focus session-level evaluation, ensuring we can target evaluative questions and knowledge assessments on whether an intervention is achieving its anticipated outcomes.

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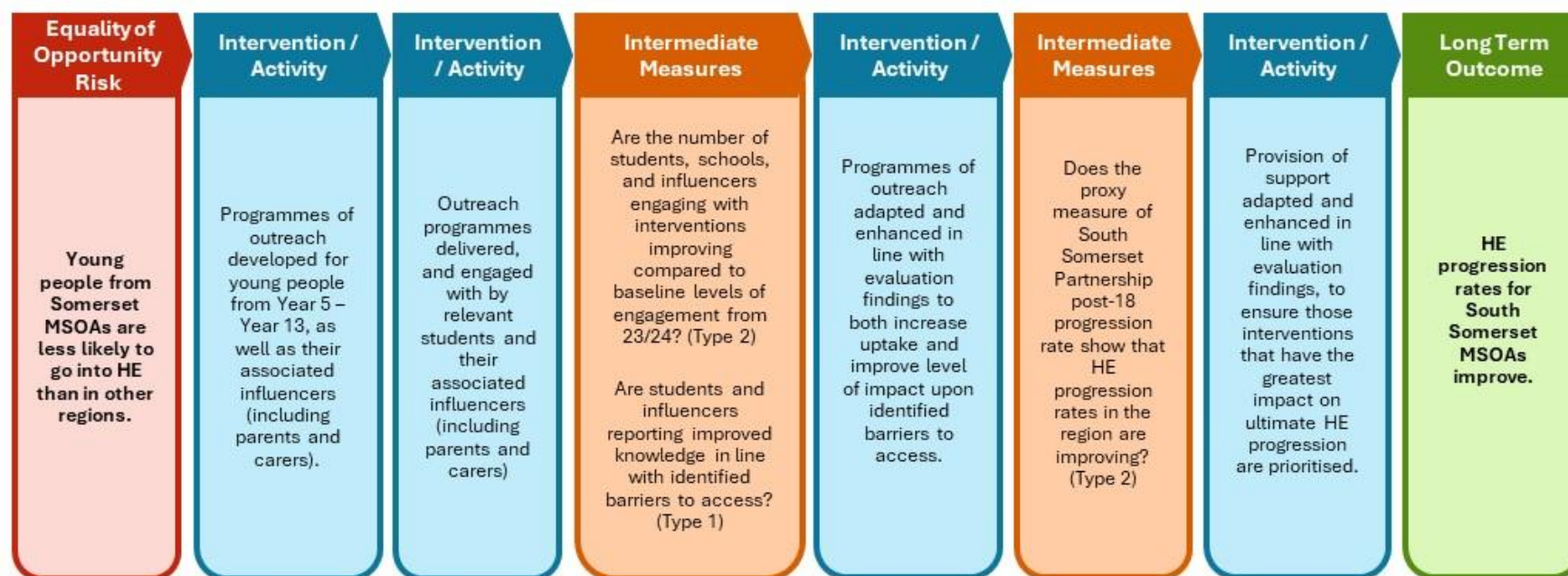
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Theories of Change

Theory of Change 1: Improving HE progression rates for young people across South Somerset.

Objective 1

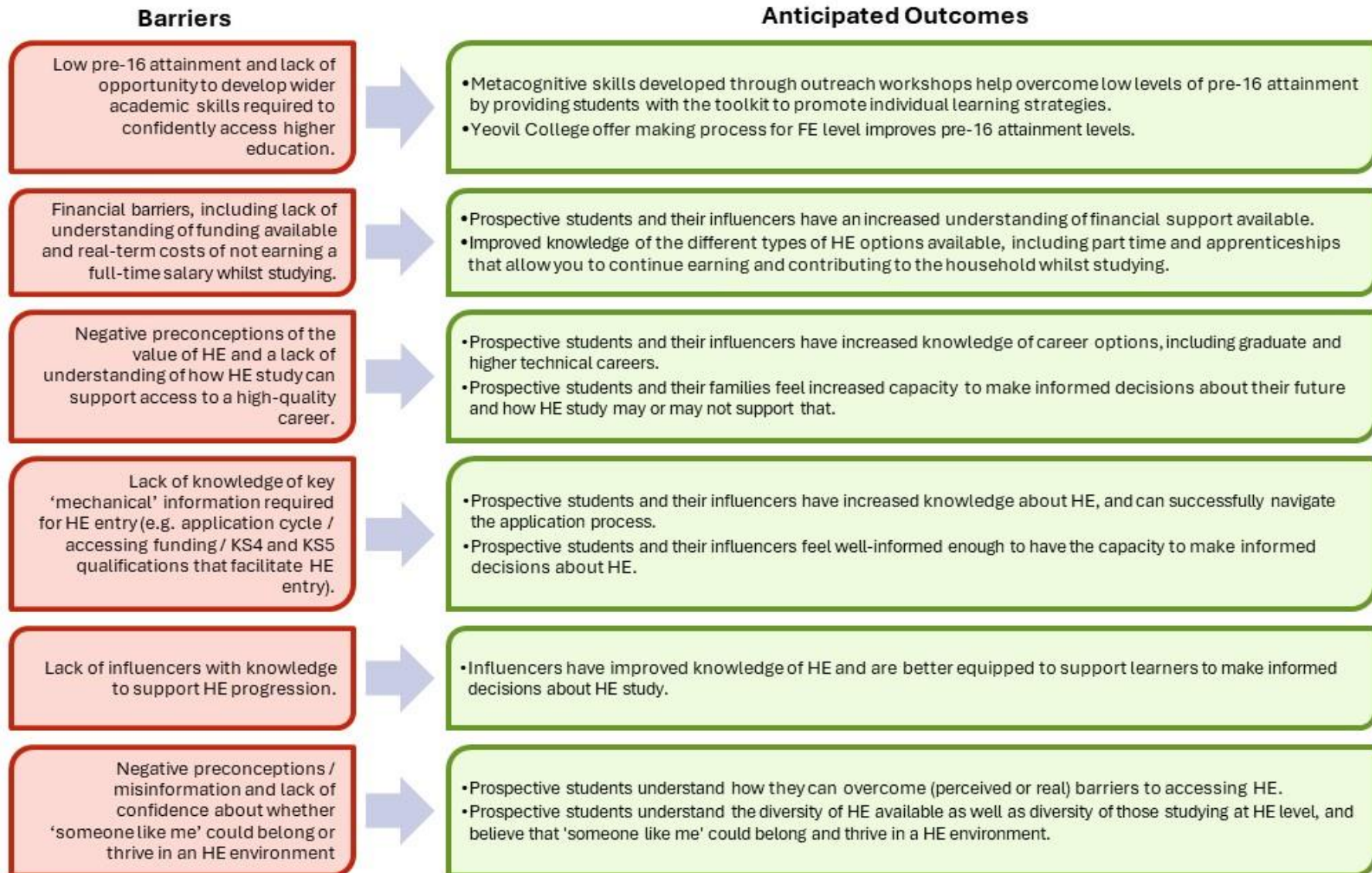
Through the delivery of a progressive and sustained outreach programme, increase the proportion of young people from our local community progressing into higher education, reducing the number of MSOAs in South Somerset identified as TUNDRA Quintile 1 or 2 by at least 20% by 2035.



Assumptions

1. Students in scope of progressing onto higher education will engage with the interventions offered.
2. Overcoming barriers means students will then want to progress into HE.

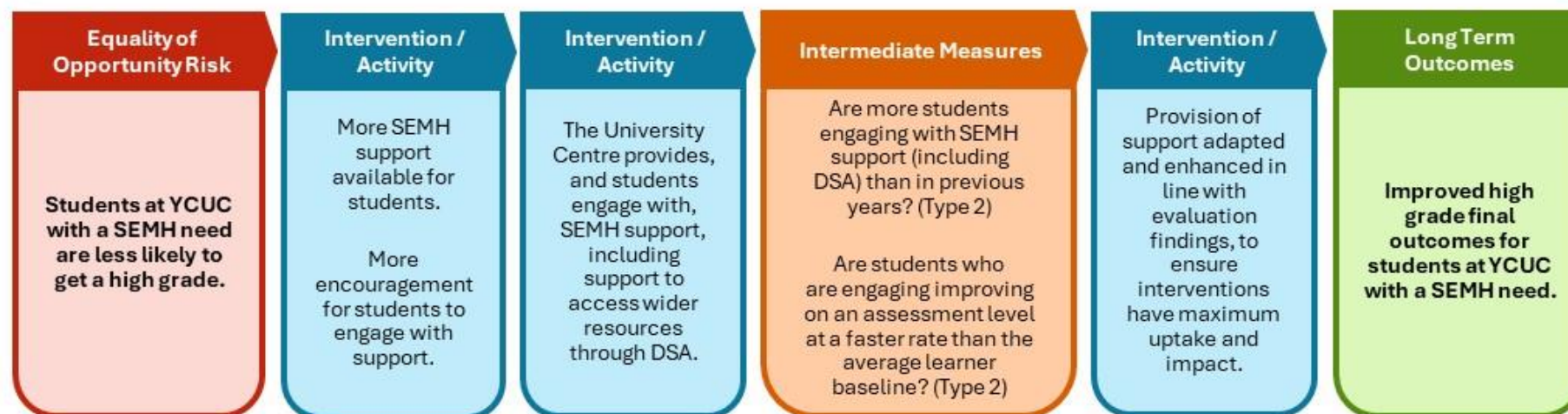
Theory of Change 1: Improving HE progression rates for young people across South Somerset.



Theory of Change 2: Closing the high grades gap for the growing number of learners with a SEMH need.

Objective 2

Through provision of robust wraparound support, stop the widening of the high-grades attainment gap for learners with a declared Social, Emotional, or Mental Health (SEMH), and work to reduce this gap to 5 percentage points by 2030-31.

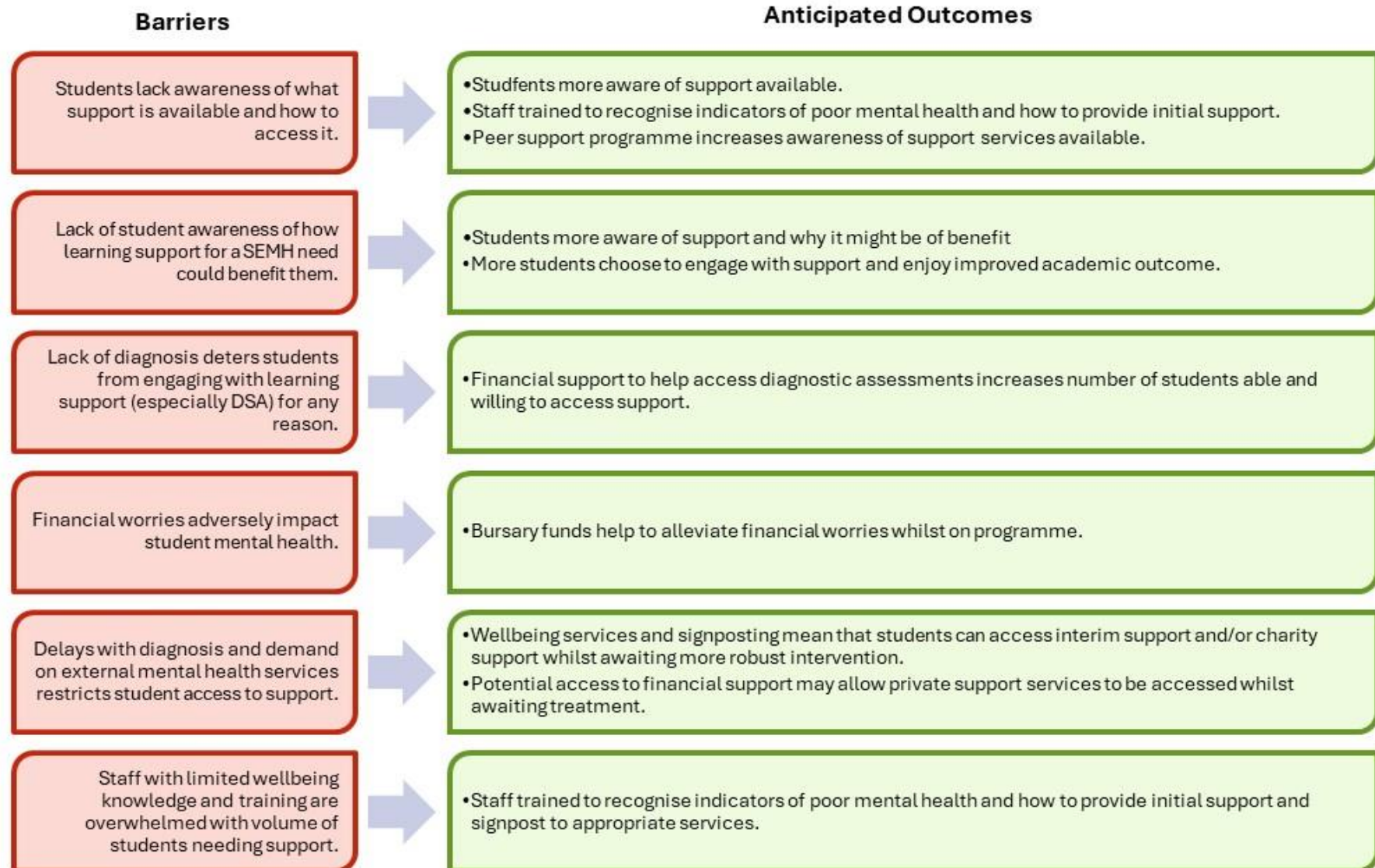


Assumptions

1. Engaging with learning support (such as DSA) and accessing reasonable adjustments support a learner with a SEMH need to achieve a stronger academic outcome than they would have achieved without support.
2. Access to NHS-funded mental health support and treatment will continue to be a challenge for many learners, including, but not limited to, those transitioning between CAMHS and AMHS.

Scope: The core risk being addressed by this Theory of Change and its associated Intervention Strategy is that poor mental health prevents learners from engaging fully with their course and achieving the best possible outcomes. We recognise that, as an education provider, we are not able to provide the medical or therapeutic interventions that would be necessary to prevent mental ill health from adversely impacting upon a learner's engagement with their course in a way that would facilitate achievement of a high grade. However, the measures outlined below can help to reduce the extent to which mental ill health inhibits a learner's engagement with their studies in a way that would facilitate the achievement of a high-grade outcome.

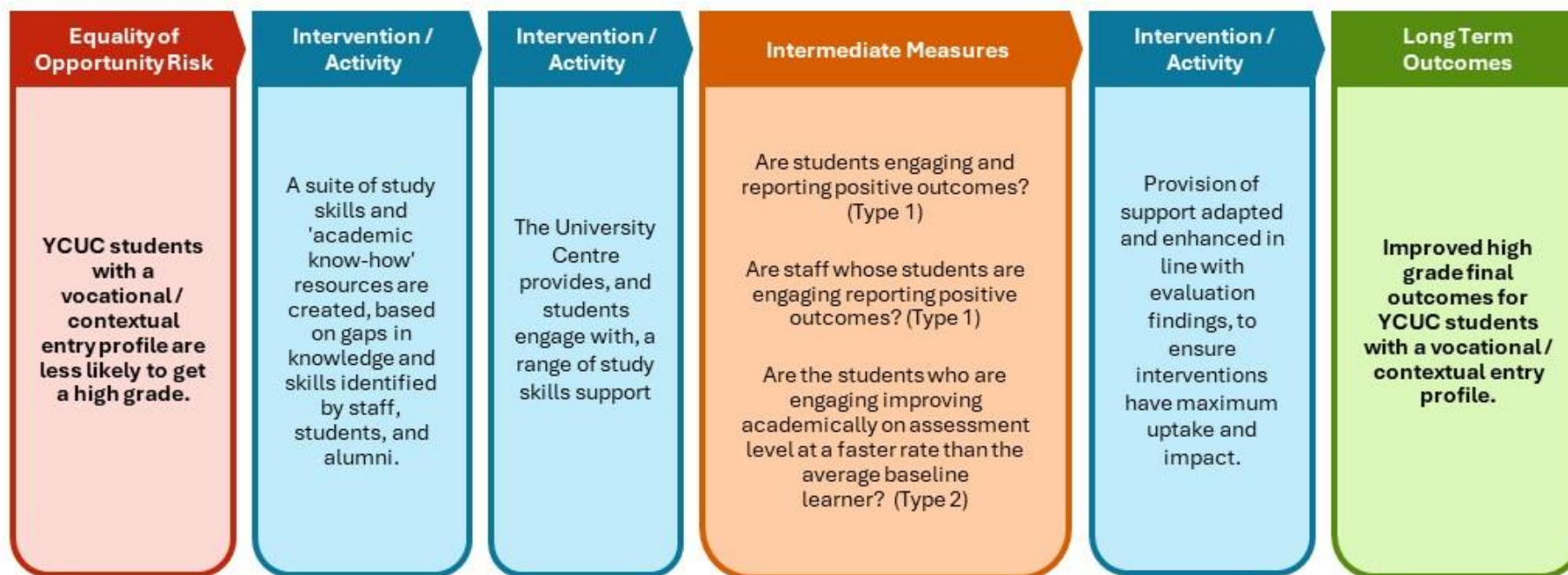
Theory of Change 2: Closing the high grades gap for the growing number of learners with a SEMH need.



Theory of Change 3: Closing the high grades gap for learners with a vocational or contextual entry profile.

Objective 3

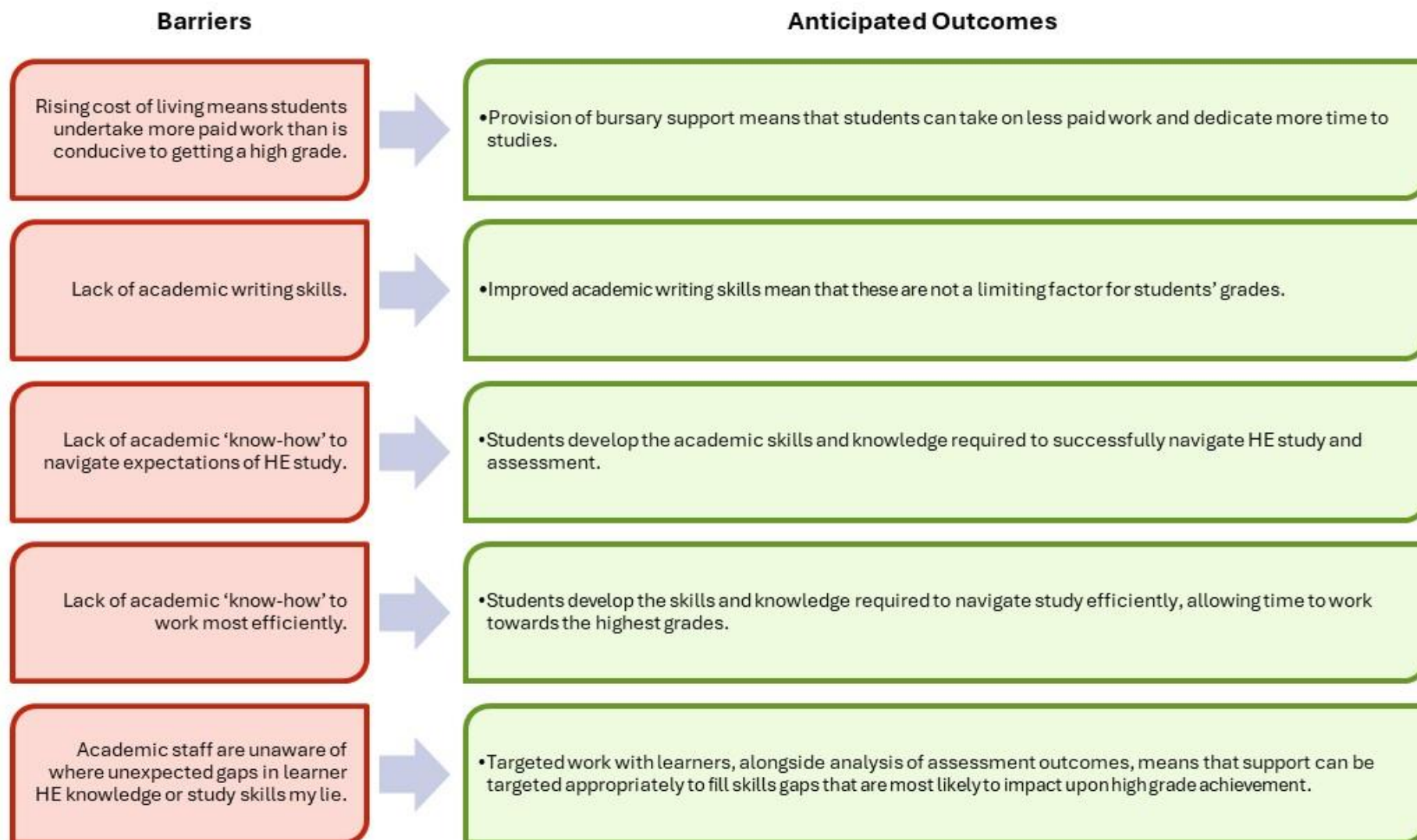
Through the provision of a range of academic interventions and a wider package of support, stop the widening of the high-grades attainment gap for learners with a vocational or contextual entry profile, and work to reduce this gap to 10 percentage points by 2030-31.



Assumptions:

1. Learners want to / aspire to achieve a high grade.
2. Learners who learn relevant skills and techniques will then implement these in their studies.

Theory of Change 3: Closing the high grades gap for learners with a vocational or contextual entry profile.



Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Yeovil College

Provider UKPRN: 10007696

Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations, we will increase fees annually for new entrants in line with CPIH. However, for learners who are already enrolled on a programme of study, the fee level will remain fixed for the duration of that programme of study.

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	8160
Foundation degree		N/A	8160
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND		N/A	7440
CertHE/DipHE		N/A	8160
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

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

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

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	Fee will vary in line with student FTE. Example fee listed here for student studying at two thirds FTE.	N/A	5440
Foundation degree	Fee will vary in line with student FTE. Example fee listed here for student studying at two thirds FTE.	N/A	5440
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	Fee will vary in line with student FTE. Example fee listed here for student studying at two thirds FTE.	N/A	4960
CertHE/DipHE	Fee will vary in line with student FTE. Example fee listed here for student studying at two thirds FTE.	N/A	5440
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	Fee for Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training.	N/A	1560

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

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

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Yeovil College

Provider UKPRN: 10007696

Investment summary

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

Notes about the data:

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

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

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

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

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

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£44,000	£44,000	£44,000	£44,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£38,000	£38,000	£38,000	£38,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£18,000	£18,000	£18,000	£18,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (£)	£44,000	£44,000	£44,000	£44,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (as % of HFI)	23.7%	23.7%	23.7%	23.7%
Access activity investment	Total access investment funded from HFI (£)	£44,000	£44,000	£44,000	£44,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£38,000	£38,000	£38,000	£38,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (£)	£38,000	£38,000	£38,000	£38,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)	20.4%	20.4%	20.4%	20.4%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Yeovil College

Provider UKPRN: 10007696

Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Increase the rates of HE progression of South Somerset 14-19 Partnership students completing a Level 3 FE qualification to 29% by 2028-29.	PTA_1	Access	Tracking Underrepresentation by Area (TUNDRA)	Other (please specify in description)	N/A	Utilising ILR and UCAS end-of-cycle report data to identify what percentage of Level 3 FE finishers in the South Somerset 14-19 Partnership group progress into HE each year. Utilising this as a proxy measure to indicate likely levels of progression across the region, in advance of more comprehensive TUNDRA data availability. Baseline data of 22.4% aggregated across 2021-2022 to 2023-24 data.	No	UCAS data (please include details in commentary)	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage	22.4	23	24	26	29
Reduce the number of 'South Somerset' MSOAs coded as TUNDRA Quintile 1 (9) or Quintile 2 (8) by at least 25% by 2035.	PTA_2	Access	Tracking Underrepresentation by Area (TUNDRA)	TUNDRA quintile 1 and 2	N/A	The Ofs Maps of Young Participation by Area data identifies that 17 of the 24, or 71%, of South Somerset MSOAs are currently identified as TUNDRA Quintile 1 or 2 (Office for Students, 2022a).	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	2020-21	Other (please include details in commentary)	17	17	17	16	15
	PTA_3														
	PTA_4														
	PTA_5														
	PTA_6														
	PTA_7														
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Improve the proportion of YCUC students with a declared SEMH need engaging with support through Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA), or other equivalent support for those who are not DSA-eligible, to 50% by 2028-29.	PTS_1	Attainment	Reported disability	Mental health condition	N/A	Based on information reported in the ILR, using a baseline figure of 20% from aggregated 2020-21 to 2023-24 data.	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage	20%	25%	30%	40%	50%
Stop the widening of the high-grades attainment gap for students with a declared Social, Emotional, or Mental Health (SEMH) need, when compared to those without a SEMH need declared, reducing this gap to 10 percentage points by 2030-31.	PTS_2	Attainment	Reported disability	Mental health condition	Other (please specify in description)	Based on information reported in the ILR, showing a baseline gap of 28 percentage points based on aggregated 2021 and 2022 compeltor data (gaps of 22 percentage points and 33 percentage points respectively).	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	28	28	26	23	20
Ensure that 100% of YCUC students with a vocational or contextual entry profile have the opportunity to engage with resources and support to develop their academic skills and academic 'know-how' by 2027-28.	PTS_3	Attainment	Other	Other (please specify in description)	N/A	Based on data reported in the ILR, alongside internal tracking data of availability of and engagement with tailored resources.	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	2022-23	Percentage	0	30	60	100	100

