

## Access and participation plan

[2020-21 to 2024-25]

### 1. Assessment of performance

Petroc is a large, successful further education (FE) and higher education (HE) college that has campus sites in Barnstaple, North Devon, and Tiverton, Mid Devon. The main communities served by Petroc are North, Mid and East Devon, Torridge and North Cornwall. As the only provider of both further and higher education within a 40mile radius, Petroc offers a broad and diverse curriculum to suit the requirements of our local communities. The Ofsted full inspection report for March 2012, graded the college as “good with several outstanding features” and Petroc maintained this grade in the short inspection conducted by Ofsted in 2015. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) conducted a Higher Education Review of HE provision at Petroc during November 2014 and the report published in 2015 judged Petroc as meeting all UK expectations. In June 2017, Petroc was awarded a TEF Silver award.

Presently Petroc has approximately 10,000 students enrolled on programmes that range from level 1 to level 6, of whom approximately 500 are HE students. The vast majority of HE students are taught at the Barnstaple sites, with the Brannams Campus housing a bespoke University Centre. The College aims for “excellence through learning” and launched an ambitious new strategy at the beginning of 2021. This strategy focuses on five key themes, two which include: “Transform life changes and employment prospects for all” and “Boost productivity, innovation and agility of business and organisations”.

Developing local skills and growing new business is particularly important for the College and Northern Devon region. In 2017 the Office for National Statistics (ONS) ranked all local authority districts in terms of average gross weekly pay. Of 361 authorities ranked in England, Torridge was ranked at 360, North Devon at 342 and Mid Devon at 337 with 1 being most prosperous and 361 most deprived. The college hosts the South West Institute of Technology, and the Centre of Technology & Innovation Excellence (Cotie) which provides assistance and facilities to support start-ups, micro and small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The college has a diverse curriculum which is regularly reviewed and developed to meet the skills needs of local employers and the surrounding community.

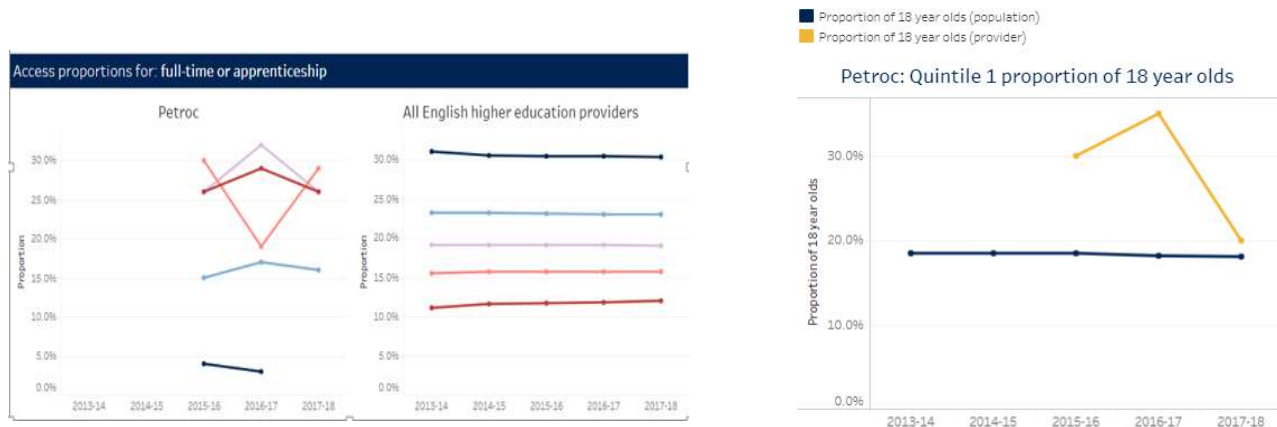
The sources of data used to inform gaps in performance and on the targets and investment plan are the

OfS dataset of Petroc in comparison to English HEI’s and internal data that is collated through Petroc’s

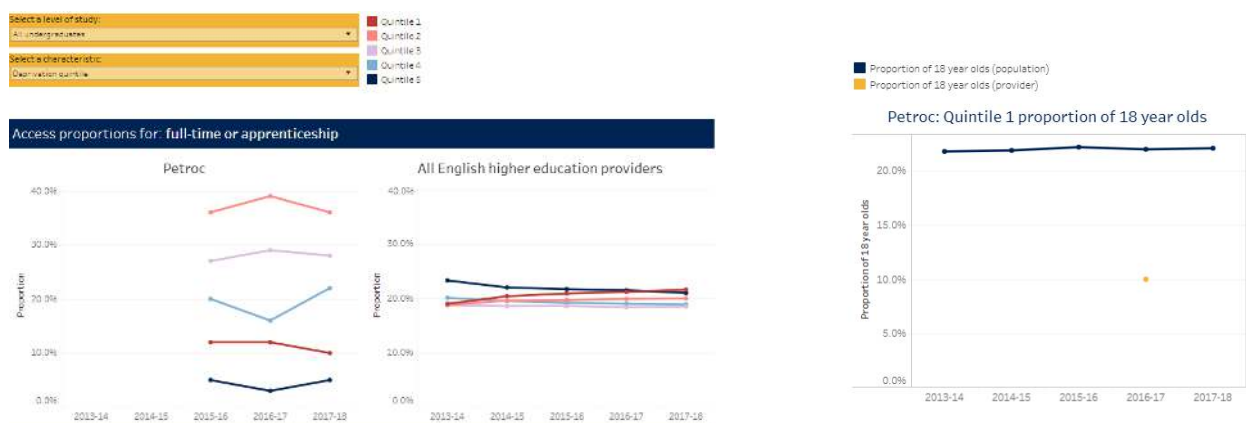
student records and Management Information System. It should be noted that granular analysis of some under-represented groups is limited, particularly in the attainment and progression stage due to limited data on Petroc’s performance across all under-represented groups and stages of the student lifecycle. This has limited the analysis in terms of identifying past progress in closing gaps in performance and degree outcomes in certain sections of this plan, however we intend to improve this data analysis throughout the duration of this plan.

#### 1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status 1

within a local EX postcode, with their main domicile being towns such as Barnstaple, Bideford, Ilfracombe, Tiverton and Torrridge district. The area served by Petroc is considerably less prosperous than areas in the South of the County. There are a number of wards such as Bideford South, Bideford East, Forches and Whiddon Valley, Ilfracombe Central, and Yeo Valley that have a POLAR4 Quintile one participation rate of less than 20 percent.



According to the OfS dataset, trends relating to access and outreach of HE programmes at Petroc demonstrate that we are increasing recruitment in POLAR4 low participation areas with 2017/18 recruitment of 55 percent of full time students from quintile one and two in comparison with 48 percent in 2016/17. The gap between the most and least under-represented groups show a -26.00 percentage point (pp) gap between quintile one and five in 2016/17. This gap is viewed as a strength of Petroc, however the percentage of quintile one students in 2017/18 has fallen in comparison with quintile two, thereby identifying a gap in access proportions. We have also identified a fall in the proportion of 18 year olds within quintile one from 35 percent to 20 percent between 2016/17 and 2017/18, however the distribution of 18 year olds from quintile one is still above that in the population.



Analysis of OfS data in relation to access for students of lower socio-economic status demonstrates that Petroc recruited 46 percent of students from Deprivation quintiles one and two in 2017/18 in comparison with 51 percent in 2016/17. This represents a decline in the proportion of students from quintiles one and two and the gap between the most deprived (quintile one) and least deprived (quintile five) was -5.00pp in 2017/18 in comparison with -9.00pp in 2016/17. Further analysis of the data from 2016/17 identifies a 15 percent gap in the proportion of 18 year old students from deprivation quintile

one in comparison with the population. This represents an area for targeted improvement for Petroc in relation to students of lower socio-economic status.

### Success

Factors such as low socio-economic status, recruiting a high proportion of students from POLAR 4 quintile 1 and 2 and the number of students requiring some form of additional learning support has historically provided a challenge in terms of continuation at Petroc. Internal data suggests that continuation for all students has improved since 2015/16 when it stood at 83.6 percent for full time students and 81.5 percent for part time students compared with Petroc's data from 2017/18 of 89.4 percent for full time students and 82.8 percent for part time students. Further granular analysis of specific under-represented groups at Petroc has identified that a 20.0pp gap exists between continuation for students in quintiles 3, 4 and 5 in comparison with quintiles 1 and 2. This represents a gap in performance for Petroc.

Analysis of the impact of students' socio-economic status has identified that the continuation gap between deprivation quintiles 3,4 and 5 and quintiles 1 and 2 have reduced between 2015/16 and 2016/17 from 4.0pp to 1.0pp and this gap is below the rate of 5.4pp for all English HEI's. As previously stated, the majority of HE students at Petroc are mature, the trend of continuation for this group of students is improving and compares favourably with the national data.

Analysis of internal attainment data in relation to students who progressed to level 6, BA/BSc (Hons) programmes at Petroc in 2018/19 shows there were 51 percent of students from POLAR4 quintiles one and two attained a good degree outcome in comparison with 71 percent for Q3. This gap in attainment will be targeted through a specific intervention.

## 1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

### Access

The ethnic diversity of HE students at Petroc is representative of the local population and the majority of HE students reside locally. Census data from 2011 indicates that 95.91 percent of the North Devon population are white British. The internal data for Petroc is consistent with this demographic profile with recruitment of 3 percent Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) cohorts in each academic year from 2015/16 - 2017/18. In academic year 2018/19 Petroc had a total of 13 (2.9 percent) students considered to be BAME. This data includes a very small number of Indian, African, Bangladeshi, Any Other Asian background and Any Other Mixed Background.

This data would indicate that Petroc's recruitment of BAME students rests in the sector's bottom 25 percent threshold, however this is not deemed statistically significant due to low proportion of BAME students in the local population. Petroc will continue to monitor the access, success and progression statistics throughout the duration of this plan and the specific commitment will be to maintain a 3 percent level of access of BAME cohorts in line with the local population.

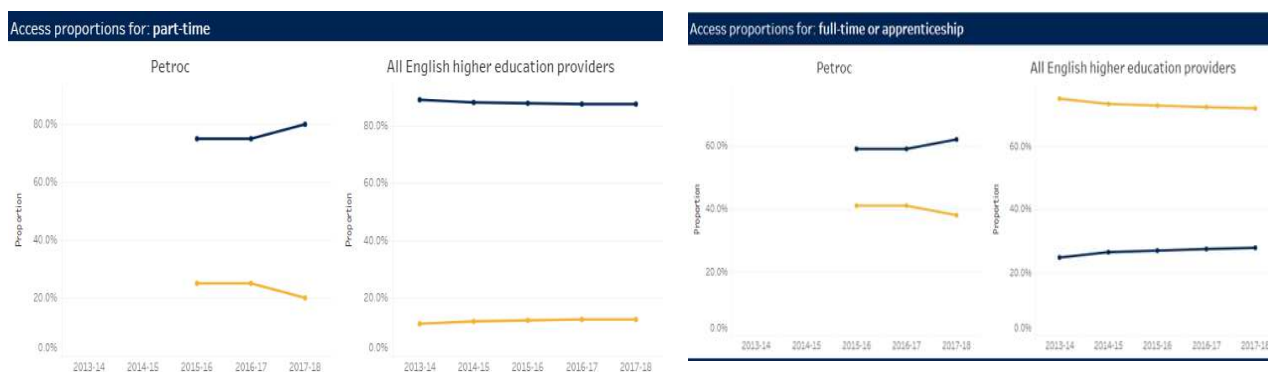
### Success

In terms of success data relating to continuation of minority ethnic groups, the internal data indicates that this group has 100 percent continuation and 100 percent achievement from 2014/15 to 2016/17. However, it is recognised that this is not statistically significant due to proportionately low recruitment and specific strategies to improve success and progression for these particular groups are currently not required as any gains

## 1.3 Mature students

### Access

Previous strategies employed to target and recruit mature students have been successful with 62 percent of full time students aged over 21 on start date in academic year 2017/18 in comparison with 27.8 percent nationally. Access for part time, mature students is below the 2017/18 data for English HEI's with Petroc's recruitment of 80 percent compared with 87.4 percent nationally. Petroc's recruitment of part time, mature students has increased since 2016/17, however this still represents an access gap in performance against English HEI's and will be a targeted area of improvement in this plan.



### Success

Continuation of mature students has improved from 82.1 percent in 2014/15 to 91.3 percent in 2016/17. The data from 2016/17 compares favourably with national data of 84.8 percent continuation of full time, mature students and 61.8 percent for part time, mature students. This would indicate that measures to support mature students whilst on programme, such as improved levels of support with study skills, have been successful. Further analysis of performance gaps identifies that there is a -4.00pp gap between young (under 21) and mature (21 and over) so it is not deemed necessary to employ a measure to improve this through this plan.

## 1.4 Disabled students

### Access

In terms of access for students with a disability, OfS data from 2017/18 indicates that 28 percent of full time and 30 percent of part time students declared a disability compared with national data of 14.6 percent of full time and 14.8 percent of part time students. The trend has not increased significantly over a three year period, however this provides evidence that the emphasis placed upon interviewing all applicants and asking them to complete a disclosure of information form to self-declare a disability has been successful in the past. In terms of disaggregating students with a disability, in academic year 2018/19, internal data suggests that Petroc recruited a total of 83 students with a declared disability, 19 percent of these had a mental health difficulty, 4 percent Aspergers Syndrome, 7 percent mobility disability, 23 percent other medical condition (epilepsy, diabetes) and 35 percent declared multiple

disabilities. Petroc have retained 89.2 percent of these students which is deemed a success and retention for learners with a disability was 77.1 percent in 2016/17 and 77.8 percent in 2017/18. According to the OfS dataset, the gap in access for those that are disabled and not known to be disabled is closing with 28 percent disabled full time students in 2017/18 compared with 22 percent in 2016/17 and 30 percent disabled part time students in 2017/18 in comparison with 25 percent in 2016/17.

### Success

According to internal data, in 2017/18, 23 percent of students declared a disability upon enrolment and the number of students accessing DSA has increased significantly since 2014/15 with 8.2 percent in receipt of DSA in 2017/18 compared with 1 percent in 2014/15. This would suggest that learning support needs have been identified at an earlier stage in the student lifecycle and support on programme has improved success rates for students with a disability at Petroc. All HE students are asked to declare disability at interview through the completion of a disclosure of information form and improvements have been made in the identification of needs through the tutorial support system on all HE programmes. Further analysis of OfS data suggests that the gap in continuation between those not known to be disabled compared with disabled is closing. These figures relate to full time students and the figures for part time students are not currently available on the OfS dataset.

## 1.5 Care leavers

### Access

Petroc currently collects data on care leavers through a self-declaration upon enrolment. Between academic years 2016/17 and 2018/19 a total of 20 Petroc HE students declared that they had been in care. We provide interview training to staff with a specific focus upon disclosure of this information and explain that the information will remain confidential from their peers. Petroc works in collaboration with the Next Steps South West team to develop specific support mechanisms for care leavers and students from low participation neighbourhoods.

### Success

Due to the proportionately low recruitment numbers, we have not analysed the gaps in performance and outcomes for this group, however we intend to improve the data collection and analysis of any gaps in access, success and progression in this under-represented group throughout the duration of this plan.

### Progression

Progression data on care leavers and BAME cohorts is limited due to proportionately low recruitment numbers. Petroc does not currently have access to progression data for disabled students and students from low participation neighbourhoods or lower socio-economic status groups due to the limited OfS data available for these groups. Petroc intends to improve its data capabilities to collect and analyse this data from 2019 onwards in order to inform strategy and evaluation of progression for these cohorts over the duration of this plan.

## 1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

Analysis of the intersections of disadvantage has highlighted that a small number of students declared as mature and disabled, of which 20 percent attained a good degree outcome in comparison with 50 percent for mature, non-disabled students. This represents a 30.00pp gap in attainment for the intersection of disabled and mature students and will be a targeted area of improvement within this plan. Petroc does not currently hold attainment data for students in the lower socioeconomic groups, however Petroc intends to improve its data capabilities to comprehensively collect and analyse this data from 2019 onwards in order to inform strategy and evaluation of attainment for these cohorts over the duration of this plan. It should be noted that the statistical validity of the analysis of attainment for disabled and young students is limited due to the proportionately low student numbers in these groups.

Petroc recognises that there are evident intersections of disadvantage in access for BAME cohorts and care leavers due to the very low recruitment numbers for the institution in comparison with other HEI's. This however is mitigated given the low recruitment numbers are in proportion with the local population and therefore intersectionality analysis is limited for these under-represented groups as the data is not statistically significant.

There is also a recognition that Petroc could have intersections of disadvantage between students that reside in low participation neighbourhoods with other under-represented groups, particularly given the fact that Petroc recruits over 50 percent of students that reside in POLAR4 Q1 and 2 areas. Unfortunately due to a lack of data on continuation, attainment and progression for these cohorts, Petroc is currently unable to analyse these intersections. Therefore improved data collection and analysis for LPN cohorts has been identified as a strategic measure.

The current identified intersection of disadvantage for the institution is the gap in degree outcomes for mature, disabled students with good degree outcomes for 20 percent of mature students with a disability. This would indicate a required improvement in performance, therefore this is identified in the strategic measures and targets section of this report.

## **1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education**

We are developing our data collection and analysis over the life cycle of this plan to better record and analyse a broad range of groupings.

## **2. Strategic aims and objectives**

Our assessment of current performance would suggest that previous investment in access, success, attainment and progression has seen improvements in recruiting mature students and students from low participation neighbourhoods. The number of students with a disability has also increased in the past three years. The main gaps in performance for Petroc are:

- The percentage of quintile one students in 2017/18 has fallen in comparison with quintile two, thereby identifying a gap in access proportions. There is also a decrease in the proportion of 18 year olds within quintile one.
- There is a 15.00pp gap in the proportion of 18 year old students from deprivation quintile one at Petroc in comparison with the population.
- Access for part time, mature students is below 2017/18 national data with Petroc's recruitment of 80 percent compared with 87.4 percent nationally.



- Granular analysis of specific under-represented groups has identified that a 20.0pp gap exists between continuation for students in quintiles 3, 4 and 5 in comparison with quintiles 1 and 2.
- There is a performance gap in attainment of good degree outcomes for the intersection of disabled and mature students and will be a targeted area of improvement within this plan.
- There is a college priority on reviewing progression to skilled employment or further studies. At present there is limited data to identify gaps in specific under-represented groups. This dataset can be small in size, so Petroc will set up a tool to monitor and evaluate the impact of interventions such as bursaries and other activities on these groups.
- A requirement for improved data and analysis of access, success and progression for care leavers in order to identify gaps in performance and outcomes.

## 2.2 Target groups

The College's assessment of performance highlights the following groups across the student life cycle:

**Access:** Part time mature students, 18-year-old students from local income households and low participation areas

**Success:** Mature students, Students with disabilities, Students from LPNs

**Progression to employment or further study:** Students from low income and low participation areas, mature students, part time learners, students aged under 21, students from ethnic minority background and care-leaver students.

## 2.2 Aims and objectives

Petroc's new Strategy 2025 is to realise Petroc's vision of raising aspiration, realising potential and delivering success, meeting the higher level skills needs of our area and to provide clear progression pathways from Levels 4, 5 and 6 into Level 6, 7 and 8 within the region. This is a particularly important issue for North Devon where a trend of migration away from the area in people aged between 18 and 40 (ONS 2011) leave skills gaps in local industries (Serio 2013).

Progression to highly skilled employment or further study remains a challenge for Petroc, in particular for part time students. Petroc has engaged in a number of targeted activities to raise the employability levels of our graduates and promote a focus on highly skilled employment. In order to ensure Petroc students can progress into highly skilled employment the college is working with the wider economic infrastructure to attract and grow businesses and develop a range of interventions to support economic

Specific strategic aims for this access and participation plan derive from and align directly with Petroc's Strategy 2025 and are as follows:

### Access

PTA\_1: Improve access to HE for part time, mature students

PTA\_2: Improve access to Petroc HE programmes by increasing the proportion of 18 year old students who reside within POLAR4 quintile 1.

PTA\_3: Improve access to Petroc HE programmes for 18 year old students from IMD quintile 1

## **Success**

PTS\_1: To reduce the attainment gap between disabled and mature students and non-disabled, mature students.

PTS\_2: To progressively improve attainment of good degree outcomes for students with a disability

PTS\_3: To improve the gap in continuation between those not known to be disabled compared with disabled.

PTS\_4: To improve the proportion of students in POLAR4 quintiles 1 & 2 studying on a level 6 course who attain good outcomes (first and 2.1s)

PTS\_5: To improve the gap in continuation between students in POLAR4 quintile 1 compared to quintile 4.

## **Progression**

PTP\_1: To improve the proportion of mature students who progress to employment and/or further study

PTP\_2: To improve the proportion of disabled students who progress to employment and/or further study

PTP\_3: To improve the proportion of care leaver students who progress to employment and/or further study

PTP\_4: To improve the proportion of part-time students who progress to employment and/or further study

PTP\_5: To improve the proportion of POLAR4 q1&q2 students who progress to employment and/or further study

In addition to our specific objectives for targeted groups, Petroc will be:

- Ensuring innovation and enterprise is at the heart of all HE curriculum provision and in line with the strategic priorities of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) entitled Heart of the South West (HoTSW). This will be achieved by using market research to develop a curriculum strategically in partnership with the University of Plymouth and key employers. The South West Institute of Technology and Cotie will be particularly important in improving progression to highly skilled employment in the Engineering and Digital sectors.
- Investing in established programmes, developing new programmes, developing external partnerships and exploring new markets to improve access for all, focusing on students from lower socioeconomic status.
- Maintaining high levels of student access, continuation, success and attainment to eliminate the gaps in degree outcomes in higher education for LPN, mature and disabled cohorts. Particular



emphasis will be placed upon the attainment gap between mature and disabled cohorts in terms of final degree outcomes.

- Actively involving students in the quality enhancement process and provide learners with opportunities to shape their learning experience at Petroc, particularly providing opportunity for BAME, mature, LPN groups, care leavers, those with disabilities and any other under-represented groups to have their voices heard.

### 3. Strategic measures

The table below identifies the key strategic measures to be achieved by Petroc from 2021 – 2025. These strategic measures have been informed by the gaps in performance identified in the assessment of performance. The source of this evidence is the OfS dataset and college data.

#### Access

##### PTA\_1: Improve access to HE for part time, mature students

Target Group (s)	Targeted intervention	Evidence base	Measurable outcome
Part time mature students	<p>Re-alignment of Access offer to HE programmes to ensure that these are not perceived as stand alone.</p> <p>Institute of Technology curriculum development to align the needs to employers to the curriculum within Engineering and Digital programmes.</p> <p>Focussed marketing and promotional activity to target mature students.</p> <p>Timetable PT programmes on one day per week to facilitate employment.</p> <p>Targeted bursary fund for part time, mature students.</p> <p>Establishment of HE Alumni with a particular focus upon former mature students.</p>	<p>Monitor student numbers on Access and IoT provision.</p> <p>Survey of student attendance at promotional events</p> <p>Timetable information on PT programmes available at interview stage.</p> <p>Uptake and impact of bursary fund for part time, mature students.</p> <p>Uptake and implementation of HE alumni.</p>	Increase of the percentage of part time mature students accessing HE.

PTA\_2: Improve access to Petroc HE programmes by increasing the proportion of 18 year old students who reside within POLAR4 quintile 1.

And

PTA\_3: Improve access to Petroc HE programmes for 18 year old students from IMD quintile 1.

Target Group (s)	Targeted intervention	Evidence base	Measurable outcome
POLAR4 Quintile 1  IMD Quintile 1	Systemic gathering of data to identify current Q1 and 2 students from level 2 and 3 programmes.  Targeted activity identifying benefits of HE offer, awareness of student finance and employability.  Establishment of HE alumni with a particular focus upon former students from low participation neighbourhoods.  Outreach bursary to support Q1 and 2 students	Internal data of Q1 and Q2 students.  Uptake and implementation of HE alumni	Increased proportion of 18 year old students enrolling on Petroc HE programmes from POLAR4 Q1 and Deprivation Q1.

## Success

PTS\_1: To reduce the attainment gap between disabled and mature students and non-disabled, mature students.

Target Group (s)	Targeted intervention	Evidence base	Measurable outcome
Mature students with a disability	Targeted progress tracking for mature and disabled students on BA programme to focus upon attainment and degree outcomes.  Increase the range of summative assessment methods on BA programmes to ensure inclusivity and equality of opportunity for disabled students.  HE staff development and CPD to focus upon pedagogy and inclusive practice within annual CPD cycle.	Student progress tracking records maintained by programme team and skills advisor.  Adjustments to module level assessments.  HE staff attendance at inclusivity focused CPD event.	Reduction in gap of good degree outcomes for the intersection of mature and disabled students.

PTS\_2: To progressively improve attainment of good degree outcomes for students with a disability

Target Group (s)	Targeted intervention	Evidence base	Measurable outcome
Students with a disability	Targeted support from Academic and Skills advisor to identify support need and provide tailored support.	Number of disabled students in receipt of support and advice.	Reduction in continuation gap between students with disabilities and students not known to be disabled

	Provision of a wellbeing mentor to provide targeted support to students from Q1 and Q2.		
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PTS\_3: To improve the gap in continuation between those not known to be disabled compared with disabled.

Target Group (s)	Targeted intervention	Evidence base	Measurable outcome
Students with a disability	<p>Targeted support from Academic and Skills advisor to identify support need and provide tailored support.</p> <p>Provision of a wellbeing mentor to provide targeted support to students from Q1 and Q2.</p> <p>Disability bursary to support the additional costs of higher-level study</p>	Number of disabled students in receipt of support and advice.	Reduction in continuation gap between students with disabilities and students not known to be disabled

PTS\_4: To improve the proportion of students in POLAR4 quintiles 1 & 2 studying on a level 6 course who attain good outcomes (first and 2.1s)

Target Group (s)	Targeted intervention	Evidence base	Measurable outcome
POLAR4 quintile 1 & 2 students	<p>Provision of a wellbeing mentor to provide targeted support to students from Q1 and Q2.</p> <p>Targeted support from Academic and Skills advisor to identify support need and provide tailored support.</p> <p>Progression bursary to support Q1 &amp; Q2 students</p>	<p>Number of Q1 and Q2 students in receipt of support and advice.</p> <p>Number of Q1 and Q2 students progressing to Level 6 study at Petroc</p> <p>Degree outcomes</p>	Increase in the proportion of students attaining good degree outcomes (firsts/2.1s)

PTS\_5: To improve the gap in continuation between students in POLAR4 quintile 1 compared to quintile 4.

Target Group (s)	Targeted intervention	Evidence base	Measurable outcome
POLAR4 Quintile 1 students	Provision of a wellbeing mentor to provide targeted support to students from Q1	Number of Q1 students in receipt of support and advice.	Reduction in the continuation gap between Q1 in comparison with Q 4.

	Targeted support from Academic and Skills advisor to identify support need and provide tailored support.		
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## Progression

PTP\_1 – PTP\_5: To improve the proportion of students who progress to skilled employment and/or further study

Target Group (s)	Targeted intervention	Evidence base	Measurable outcome
Mature students (PTP_1)	Employability and enterprise skills embedded in programmes	Number of students progressing to graduate-level employment and/or further study	To improve the number of students progressing to further study, graduate-level employment and/or starting their own businesses.
Disabled students (PTP_2)	Developing stronger links with employers	Number of work placements students offered paid roles with their employer	
Care leaver students (PTP_3)	Working with the College careers office on a range of employability activities	Number of business start-ups set up by students	
Part time students (PTP_4)	Work experience placements and bursary		
Students from LPNs (PTP_5)	Funding and support for initiating business start-ups		
	Alumni engagement coordinator to engage alumni in providing work experience and link to local businesses		

## All under-represented groups

- Termly review of performance through HE and Faculty meetings.
- Annual monitoring and self-assessment review of impact of interventions.
- Annual operating and action plan developed in response.
- Internal and OfS data tracking.
- HE action planning documentation.
- Gaps identified and assessment of the impact of operational interventions.

## 3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

### Access

In 2017/18 Petroc recruited 55 percent of full time students from POLAR4 quintile 1 and 2 neighbourhoods. Targeted resourcing has included support with the UCAS application process,

particularly for students from low participation areas, engagement with the University of Plymouth Student Union to raise local aspirations and provide improved information on financial support available to students with particular emphasis upon those students from low participation areas. Petroc has additionally provided an emergency hardship fund to support under-represented students with crisis-point challenges and provides a range of bursaries to support students' in accessing a higher education.

Additional regular provision has included a regular Summer School, and taster programmes aimed at cohorts from these areas to provide HE experiences, improve attainment, build confidence and develop HE-relevant skills. Additionally, a range of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) workshops and events aimed at raising attainment at GCSE and A Level, 'Academic Academy' activity for 16-18 year olds in a variety of subject areas to improve attainment.

To support learners at the access stage of the lifecycle, Petroc will maintain modest entry tariffs (56 UCAS points) on all our programmes. In addition, the Higher Education Admissions Policy states that we welcome applications from students from a non-traditional background, some of whom may not yet have achieved a level 3 qualification. Applicants will continue to be able to access Higher Education based upon qualifications, life /work experience to maintain the high levels of access for these target groups. Students will continue to be supported at application, interview, and enrolment stage to understand the Universities and the College's offer and responsibilities, and to be able to access support and pertinent information. This approach to contextualising Admissions and Interviews supports our aim of Widening Participation from the targeted groups of POLAR4 Quintile One and mature students and will support local social mobility. Furthermore, we will undertake targeted activities to improve attainment at GCSE and A Level to improve access to Higher Education for young people from the previously stated target groups.

### Success and attainment

Targeted resourcing has had a strong focus on overall wellbeing and improving mental health, including:

- Additional learning support for students entering higher education with low UCAS entry tariffs and from low participation neighbourhoods.
- Additional study skills sessions to be delivered in the summer to assist students that have referred elements of their programme as a first attempt.
- Drop-in support sessions are provided by dedicated staff to focus upon wellbeing and financial support.

We are additionally aware from student feedback that financial considerations are an issue for a number of under-represented groups, which is addressed by the offer of the bursaries and funds, personal finance workshops to improve students' ability to manage their finances effectively, and expert advice prior to and during their degree. All Higher Education students have been supported throughout their studies by a personal tutor system which provides both academic progress support and pastoral care. Student success is monitored at both programme and institutional level to ensure these strategies are proving effective and delivering benefits for learners, with a dedicated Higher Education Quality and Management team assessing progress and attainment.

This approach, with a clear focus on Widening Participation and social mobility, we believe will continue to be successful for student and institution alike, with delivery based upon excellent individual learner support from application to graduation, and programmes taught to small classes.

## Strategic approach to collaboration

Petroc is committed to developing partnerships with schools to improve access and widen participation in Higher Education. As a core member of the Next Steps South West (NSSW) National Collaborative Outreach Project (NCOP) Consortium, Petroc is collaborating both strategically and operationally with other HE providers in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. The NCOP Outreach Hub expansion in Phase 2 will facilitate relationship-building with a broader range of regional stakeholders, employers and third sector organisations e.g. the HotSW and CioS Careers Hubs, the Enterprise Advisor Network and local councils, which will enable Petroc to capitalise on NSSW-forged relationships to develop broader, partner-led WP activity. Advances in the development of outreach evaluation theory and practice, established through NSSW and shared with the consortium, will promote institutional progress in this field.

Phase 2 of NSSW provides a flexible operational model offering partners the opportunity to match fund NCOP partner-led projects with institutional APP funding. This will support WP outreach delivery beyond the immediate remit of NSSW.

The benefits to Petroc will include:

- Access to NSSW staff with expertise and experience in WP outreach work
- Access to Outreach Hub funding to build economies of scale and increase viability of jointly delivered outreach projects
- Opportunities to deliver activities initiated and fine-tuned by NSSW, to a wider WP audience
- Evaluation of activities by the NSSW Evaluation Team, enhancing capacity and current expertise at [partner institution]
- Opportunities to capture best practice for outreach, communications and evaluation, and implement institutionally

Each partner-led project proposal will be subject to NSSW procedures, which require explicit identification of which barriers to HE will be addressed, SMART targets, a finance profile, project collaborators, shared aims, and rigorous evaluation of impact, through outcomes-based evidence.

Petroc have included a range of aspiration-raising activities in collaboration with NSSW targeted at pupils aged 14 years and above from LPN including roadshows, visits from our HE Admissions team and master classes. Petroc will aim to continue working on these collaborative projects to allow delivery of our wider HE strategy in relation to access and participation.

## Progression

Internal data suggests that 95 percent of our HE student cohort has a permanent residence within 30 miles of their place of study. We are aware that a large proportion of our students choose to study at Petroc, as they have domestic or employment commitments which mean they are unable to leave the area. Upon graduation with either a BA/BSc (Hons) or FdA/FdSc qualification the vast majority of these students will seek appropriate employment in the region. Therefore it is of crucial importance that our HE curriculum meets the needs of our local employers and offers genuine opportunities for graduate employment. The Northern Devon economy having particular strengths in Mechanical Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Pharmaceuticals, Life Sciences, Digital Technologies and Healthcare. Many of the organisations which operate in these sectors have ongoing challenges with skill shortages and struggle to recruit local labour with appropriate skill levels to improve progression to graduate level employment locally.

## Employability

To help address these issues Petroc has been part of the South West consortium, involving the University of Plymouth, University of Exeter, City College Plymouth, Exeter College, Truro and Penwith College and Bridgewater and Taunton College which has successfully won financial support for an Institute of Technology (IoT). This will result in an IoT capital investment in our Barnstaple Campus of approximately £3 million. At present a new HE curriculum in Engineering, manufacturing, digital technologies and healthcare is being developed in partnership with local employers and the University of Plymouth to help resolve these skill shortages.

Our present STEM based HE curriculum has 137 enrolments, our Institute of Technology (IoT) facility indicates we will recruit 437 HE students on our new IoT curriculum by September 2022 /2023. However discussions with local employers indicate that in addition to traditional 18 year old entrants and a significant increase in higher apprenticeship enrolments it is expected the new curriculum will be utilised to upskill existing staff. The aim is to increase the number of non-traditional low-tariff applicants particularly from mature cohorts and low participation areas.

From academic year 2021/22, Petroc plans to significantly increase its investment in progression to highly skilled employment through the implementation of a HE wide strategy of providing paid work placement/internships to students to engage within local businesses and develop their transferable employability skills. This approach aims to improve the progression to graduate level employment for students in all under-represented groups. As stated above, Petroc will monitor and identify if any gaps emerge in specific under-represented groups.

## Equality and Diversity

Petroc is committed to providing opportunities for all students no matter what their background or experience. We actively promote Equality and Diversity as a College and in 2014 achieved accreditation and gained the Equality Standard. As a College, we are committed to achieving an environment which provides equality of opportunity and freedom from unlawful discrimination, acknowledging the protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010).

The College encourages employees and learners to disclose their disabilities, or any additional needs, in order for appropriate support to be put into place. The duty to make reasonable adjustments aims to make sure that, as far as is reasonable, a learner with a disability or additional need has the same access to enable them to carry out their learning as a non-disabled person or any learner attending college to study. A reasonable adjustment may include: making adjustments to premises, rearranging a learner's timetabled classes to allow for access, such as a wheelchair. Providing training or mentoring for a disabled learner, or supplying or modifying equipment, instruction and training manuals for disabled learners.

The approach to inclusivity and equality of access is embedded right from application: where accessible support is offered to learners to help them make the right decision on courses and the College ensures that this support can be accessed in a range of ways: online, in person, at various campus sites, or by phone. Guidance staff will also offer information on the range of support offered for eligible learners. An interview is offered to every applicant, and these interviews conducted by Programme Staff who are given training and guidance to support them in making learners aware of the opportunities to access support, with a particular focus on inclusivity. Those learners who identify particular needs to help them access education are then supported directly by our Additional Learning Support Office, who work with learners to provide individual approaches tailored to meet their needs. Learners are supported through



the ongoing tutorial relationship to access this support at any point in their studies where a need may present itself.

Throughout their studies, inclusivity is supported through a range of teaching and learning activities. The College's Higher Education Assessment and Feedback Policy addresses the range of adjustments and considerations necessary to support learners through access and participation. The policy currently outlines the best practice for assessment in order to meet a range of learning needs, reasonable adjustment for recognised disability or protected characteristics, and works towards an inclusive stance across the learning, assessment and feedback cycle. The College recognises that HE learners may have different needs to FE learners, and so provide dedicated HE staff across Administration, Enrolment, Advice and Guidance, Learning Technologies and Resources, and a dedicated Higher Education Wellbeing Mentor who can offer support and signposting towards additional resources.

### **3.2 Student consultation**

Working in partnership with students is a core part of Petroc's Higher Education and student engagement strategies. Learners are encouraged to feed-back via a range of modes and through elected Student Reps. Each cohort of learners is encouraged to elect 1-2 lead representatives and those Reps are invited to participate in training and a number of guidance and feedback events, include the termly Programme Committee Meetings.

At programme level, student representatives are members of the programme committee, both bringing the student voice to the committee and closing that feedback loop by responding to the student body, in essence we aim to engage with the student voice in partnership and determine to evaluate the impact upon the quality of provision as a result of this engagement with the student body.

Student representatives are invited to a Programme Committee meeting on a termly basis where feedback can be given in an open forum. Actions are taken forward from this forum at a college management level, student reps are kept up to date with progress being made via communication from the their Faculty and/or the HE team. The College provides other avenues for feedback via personal tutors, suggestion boxes, and a tracked compliments and complaints system.

Elected Student Representatives are consulted on a range of Strategic and Policy measures and documents across Higher Education and invited to participate in Programme Meetings and Validation events. The Lead Student Representative and programme Student Representatives were consulted specifically about the range of measures planned to improve Access, Success, Attainment, Progression and Employability outlined in this Access and Participation Plan. The key elements of the plan that have been shaped by the students are the recruitment of the Academic Skills Advisor as feedback from students identified a gap in terms of general study skills support. A further element of the plan that is supported by students relates to employability and progression. The anticipated changes to curriculum and links to employers that will be facilitated by the IoT bid was viewed as a positive step by the student body.

Students further drive this access and participation process in the form of participation as Higher Education Ambassadors, and in post-activity evaluation and review. The Access and Participation Plan will be published on the Petroc website under 'Public Information', internally the plan will be published on the Moodle for open consultation. Student reps will be asked to gain feedback on the plan and report and consult on this (amongst other student enhancement agenda items) at the HE Planning meeting on a termly basis. The attendance for this includes Lead Student Reps, the Vice- Principal responsible for Higher Education, the HE Coordinator and Head of Quality.

Over the next year a Campus Life initiative to develop a more vibrant student community will be developed. This is to encourage a stronger identity and sense of belonging for students. A range of including regular informal meet-ups, peer-peer support and mentoring, regular communications targeted for, and written by HE students.

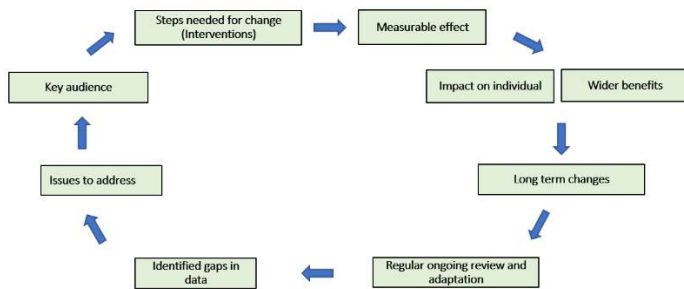
### **3.3 Evaluation strategy**

An evaluation report will be presented to the Senior Management Team, the HE Student Forum and the Governing Body for approval and feedback. This will then be used for future planning and amendments to the Access and Participation Plan between academic years 2021 – 2025. The annual monitoring report will be submitted to the Director of OFS following its approval by the College Governors. The report will incorporate the following sections:

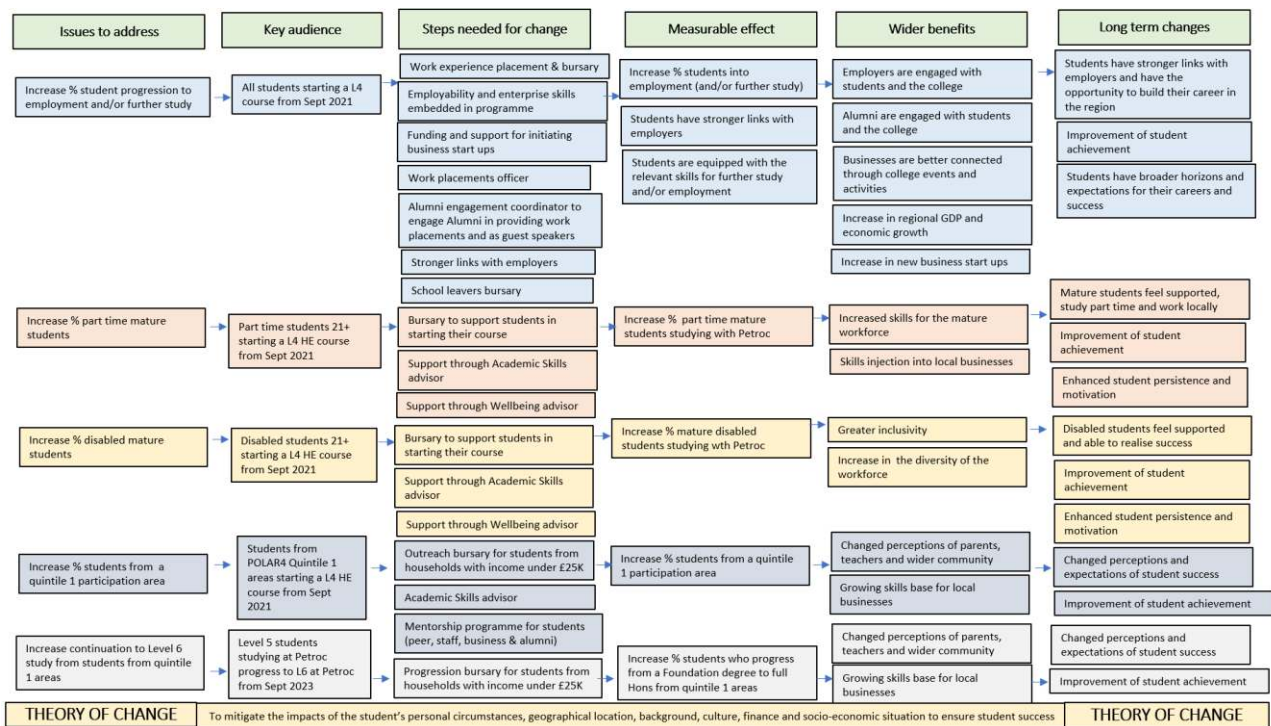
- Financial data summarising recruitment levels, payment of bursaries, and other financial support made available to students.
- Outreach activities that have been undertaken during the year and progress made in meeting institutional targets and milestones.
- Student success and progression support activities that have been undertaken during the year and progress towards meeting institutional targets and milestones.
- Evaluation information regarding the impact of the revised bursary approach which will include details on the financial support made available to students and the impact on their progression to graduate level employment and/or the creation of new businesses.
- Collated data from student feedback questionnaires specifically relating to access, success and progression measures.
- Planned changes to our approach, where relevant, based on the findings of our evaluation activities.

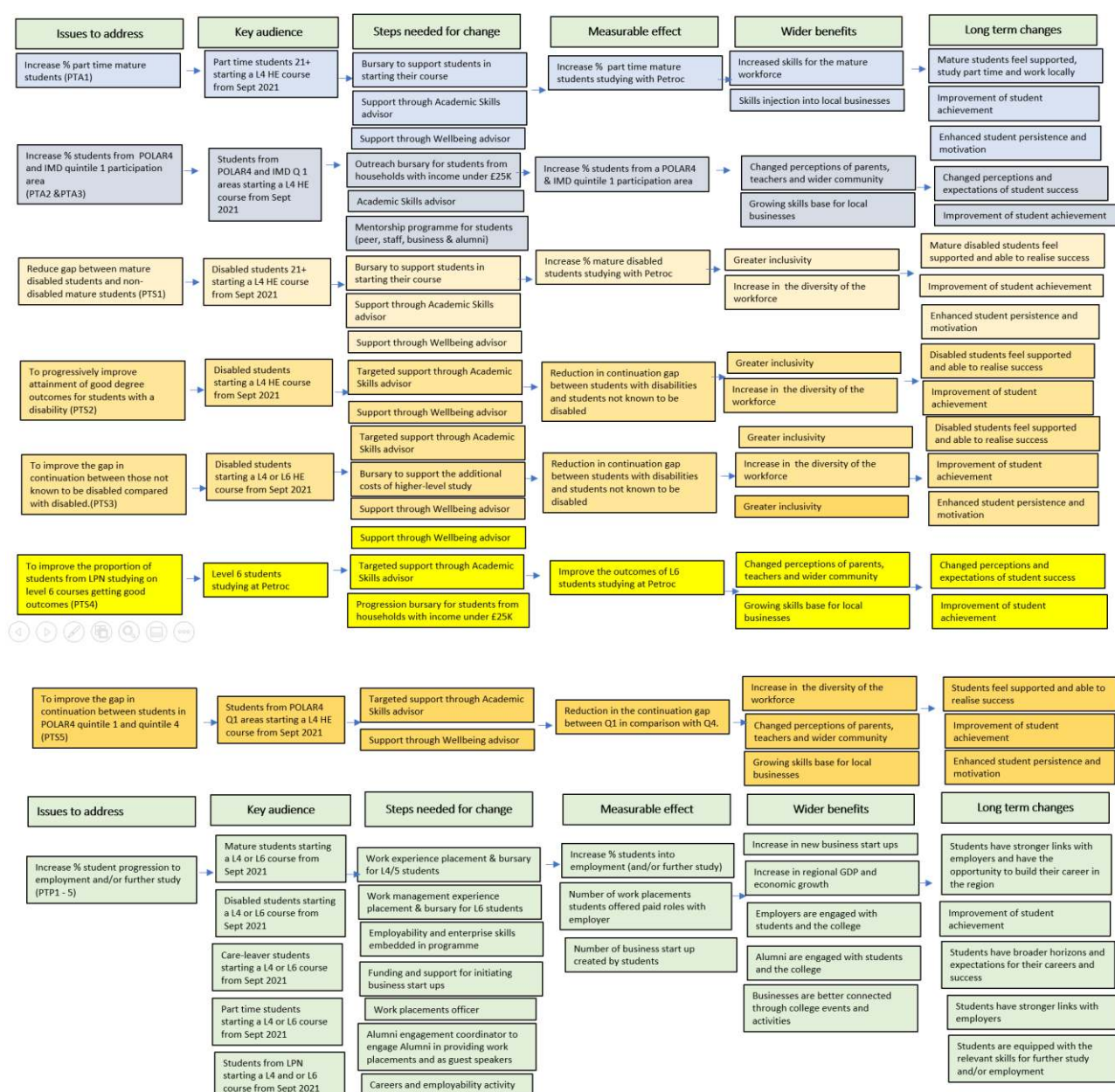
To enable the outcomes of our evaluation to influence practice externally the evaluation findings and good practice will be shared through our partner HEI the University of Plymouth partnership meetings and events including: the Teaching and Learning Conference, Faculty Partnership Meetings and Joint Board of Study. Petroc also forms part of the South West Peer Confederation and South West Colleges Group both offering a critical friend and sharing of good practice. Petroc plans to record, monitor and track the interventions with students from POLAR4 Q1 and 2 using the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) within our evaluation strategy in collaboration with NSSW.

### **Theory of Change**



The evaluation strategy for the Access and Participation programme from 2020 – 2025 will align to the overarching theory of change demonstrated above. The inputs have been devised from the targets and investment plan and this theory of change identifies the intended resource and support for the targeted activities outlined in the strategic measures section of this document. The outputs will be monitored in the annual review of the impact of these interventions, this will include evaluating the revised bursary policy and impacts for our students.





### 3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

Petroc will undertake annual monitoring and impact evaluation of this access and participation plan to confirm compliance and progress towards the achievement of the milestones it has established. Impact of the activity on access, success and progression will be made using a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative data to analyse the effectiveness of the plan and assess the impact of activities and financial investment. The evaluation will include analysis of each of our target groups (students with prior attainment gaps, part time, mature students and protected characteristics including, gender, race, ethnicity and disability).

Responsibility for the monitoring report will rest with the Higher Education Management team. A consultation will take place with students through the HE Student Forum in assessing progress and effectiveness.

The effectiveness of support and intervention for target groups will be monitored at half termly Quality Review meetings with HE Programme Managers overseen by the Head of Quality HE and the Vice- Principal responsible for Higher Education. A review of attendance, retention, progress

and achievement all students with the prioritisation of our target group learners based on a RAG rated 'students at risk' approach allowing for in year targeted intervention and activity for to prevent non-continuation.

The HE Non-Continuation Action Plan is produced and agreed by the Senior Management Team, the plan is reviewed and updated annually. The Vice Principal responsible for Higher Education and the Head of Quality are responsible for implementation and monitoring.

The access and participation plan will form part of the termly Student Forum agenda, a student survey will take place and outcomes will be discussed and addressed at the forum. If students and stakeholders do not feel the plan is wholly being delivered or if improvements or additions need to be made the management team can review and amend where reasonably possible.

## 4. Provision of information to students

We are committed to the provision of accurate and accessible information to prospective students. The Petroc website provides information for both existing and potential students and contains full information on fees, bursaries and programme expectations. The results of all HE student surveys are also publically accessible through the website.

We hold a number of HE open days and evenings throughout the year for all prospective students to come and see the College and meet the staff.

We are committed to providing timely and accurate information to UCAS and the Student Loans Company (SLC) as appropriate.

Financial information will be made available to all prospective students considering courses coming under this plan and made available via the Higher Education website. Such information will be guided by the principles of accessibility, transparency and clarity.

Information will summarise the annual and aggregate fee for the chosen course, hardship arrangements, and other sources of financial support available to students including bursaries.

Bursary and level of study	Bursary value	Criteria	Frequency of payment	Criteria for continued payment
Outreach bursary (Level 4)	£1000	Household income under £25,000	First payment (50 percent at the start of the course), second payment (50 percent) 4 months later	Meets attendance and assessments threshold
Access bursary (Level 4)	£500	Part time mature student 21+	One payment on commencement of course	N/A



Disability bursary (Level 4, 5, 6)	£500	Full or Part time student  Meets disability criteria		N/A
Work placement bursary (Level 4 or Level 5)	£1200	Student registered on a 2 year (L4/5) programme.  Successful completion of 20 days work experience	Once per student across levels 4 and 5	N/A
Progression bursary (Level 6)	£500	Level 5 student at Petroc with household income under £25,000 progressing to Level 6 at Petroc	One payment on commencement of course	N/A
Work management/consultancy bursary (Level 6)	£500	Student registered on a BA/BSc (L6) programme.  Successful completion of 5 days management/consultancy work experience	Once per student in level 6	N/A
Business start-up bursary (Level 4, 5 or 6)	£3000	A student/group of students registered on a L4/5/6 programme	Bursaries awarded each year based on successful business case submitted	N/A

This criteria will be published to all students on the HE Students section of Petroc's website. It will also identify the sources from which students can obtain advice regarding the general financial framework applying to students undertaking full time higher education studies, so that they can establish the likely level of debt they will incur by the end of their studies. The institution will provide a full range of financial advice to prospective and current students through the production of fact sheets outlining fee charges and the hardship funds available to students with worked examples, through individual interviews and in response to queries received in person, by telephone or by email. Student Services will also provide briefing sessions as part of Open Day events and will be available to give individual advice and guidance.

During induction all students will receive a presentation from the Student Services team which will cover issues associated with student finance, student support, careers advice and learning support available. It is the intention of the College that all information relating to costs and means of support for students will be available in the Prospectus and on the college website and accessible via social media. This information is explained verbally during the interview process, supported by the written leaflet, to ensure that applicants are fully informed before they make a decision on whether to accept a place with us.

# Provider fee information 2021-22

Provider name: Petroc  
Provider UKPRN: 10004676

## Summary of 2021-22 course fees

\*course type not listed by the provider as available to new entrants in 2021-22. This means that any such course delivered to new entrants in 2021-22 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

**Table 1a - Full-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	One year course	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,250
Foundation degree	Continuing learners to year 2	Fee applies to continuing students only	£7,400
Foundation degree	Continuing learners to year 2	Fee applies to continuing students only	£7,400
Foundation degree	Continuing learners to year 2	Fee applies to continuing students only	£7,400
Foundation degree	Continuing learners to year 2	Fee applies to continuing students only	£7,400
Foundation degree	New Entrants	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,250
Foundation year/Year 0	*		*
HNC/HND	*		*
CertHE/DipHE	*		*
Postgraduate ITT	*		*
Accelerated degree	*		*
Sandwich year	*		*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*		*
Other	*		*

**Table 1b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

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

**Table 1c - Part-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	Continuing learners from 19/20	Fee applies to continuing students only	£3,625
First degree	Continuing learners from 20/21	Fee applies to continuing students only	£3,700
First degree	New Entrants	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£4,625
Foundation degree	Continuing learners from 19/20	Fee applies to continuing students only	£4,833
Foundation degree	Continuing learners from 20/21	Fee applies to continuing students only	£4,933
Foundation degree	New Entrants	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,167
Foundation year/Year 0	*		*



HNC/HND	Continuing learners from 19/20	Fee applies to continuing students only	£3,625
HNC/HND	Continuing learners from 20/21	Fee applies to continuing students only	£3,700
HNC/HND	New Entrants	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£4,625
CertHE/DipHE	*		*
Postgraduate ITT	*		*
Accelerated degree	*		*
Sandwich year	*		*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*		*
Other	*		*

**Table 1d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

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

# Access and participation plan

## Fee information 2020-21

Provider name: Petroc

Provider UKPRN: 10004676

### Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

\*Course type not listed by the provider as available to new entrants in 2020-21. This means that any such course delivered to new entrants in 2020-21 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

#### Inflationary statement:

The planned fee increase for 2021/22 onwards will apply to new students in year 1 of the Foundation degree and BA/BSc (Hons) first degrees. Students starting their course in 2020/21 will continue to pay the same fee throughout their course and will not be subject to inflation.

**Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants**

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	One year course	£7,400
Foundation degree	New Entrants	£7,400
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

**Table 4b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 students**

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

**Table 4c - Part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants**

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	New Entrants	£3,700
Foundation degree	New Entrants	£4,933
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	New Entrants	£4,933
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

**Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2020-21**

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

# Targets and investment plan

## 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Petroc

Provider UKPRN: 10004676

### Investment summary

The OFS requires providers to report on their planned investment in access, financial support and research and evaluation in their access and participation plan. The OFS does not require providers to report on investment in student success and progression in the access and participation plans and therefore investment in these areas is not recorded here.

Note about the data:

The figures in Table 4a relate to all expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education. The figures in Table 4b only relate to the expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education which is funded by higher fee income. The OFS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

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.

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Total access activity investment (£)</b>	£20,405.00	£42,810.00	£60,675.00	£66,675.00	£68,675.00
Access (pre-16)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Access (post-16)	£8,760.00	£18,520.00	£26,280.00	£29,280.00	£30,280.00
Access (adults and the community)	£11,645.00	£24,290.00	£34,395.00	£37,395.00	£38,395.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Financial support (£)</b>	£72,734.00	£150,609.00	£216,142.00	£235,180.00	£245,980.00
<b>Research and evaluation (£)</b>	£10,949.00	£21,898.00	£31,949.00	£34,949.00	£36,949.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Higher fee income (EHFI)</b>	£471,600.00	£1,009,561.00	£1,449,932.00	£1,579,503.00	£1,647,374.00
<b>Access investment</b>	4.3%	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%
<b>Financial support</b>	15.0%	14.9%	14.9%	14.9%	14.9%
<b>Research and evaluation</b>	2.3%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%
<b>Total investment (as %HFI)</b>	21.6%	21.3%	21.3%	21.3%	21.3%

## Table 2a - Access

Table 2b - Success[illegible]

