

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 40 mile 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’s core purpose as stated in our Mission statement is “an excellent college, inspiring our communities through learning”.

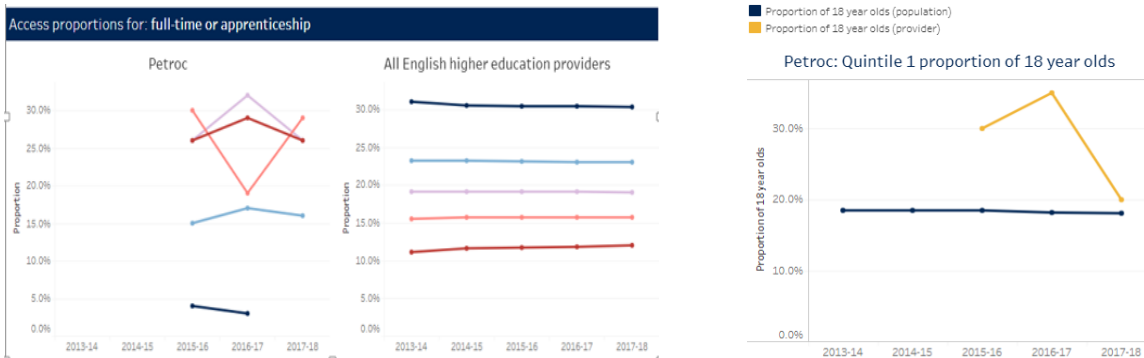
The sources of data used to inform gaps in performance and on the targets and investment plan are the OfS dataset of Petroc in comparison to English HEI’s and internal data that is collated through Petroc’s student records and Management Information System. It should be noted that granular analysis of 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 Access

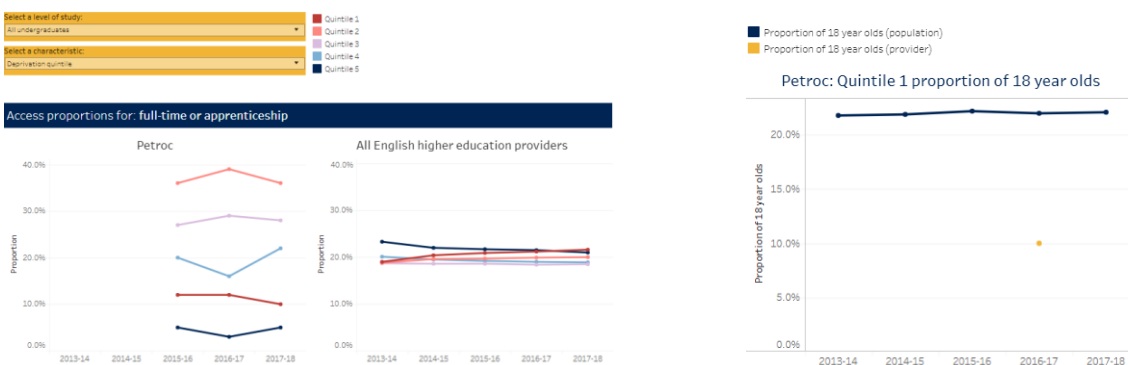
Our rural location, the relative lack of economic prosperity, coupled with the support we offer learners from under-represented groups means that we recruit a very high proportion of our higher education students from our local communities. 2019 data indicates that 58% of our Higher Education students live locally, however the fact that a high proportion of our HE cohort are mature students who have moved into the locality means that this economic migration results in an unrepresentative figure: in reality the vast majority of HE students live within close proximity to one of our campus sites.

The area served by Petroc is considerably less prosperous than areas in the South of the County. There 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%.

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% of full time students from quintile one and two in comparison with 48% in 2016/17. The gap between the most and least under-represented groups show a -26.00pp 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% to 20% between 2016/17 and 2017/18, however the distribution of 18 year olds from quintile one is still above that in the population.

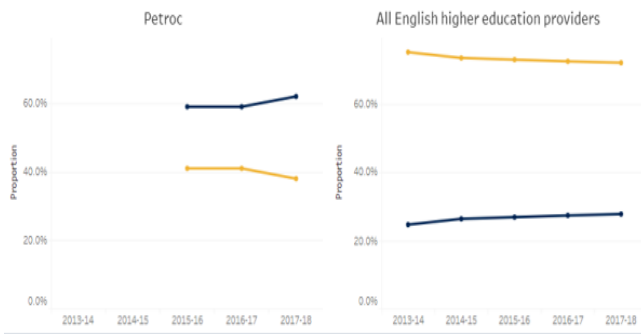


Analysis of OfS data in relation to access for students of lower socio-economic status demonstrates that Petroc recruited 46% of students from Deprivation quintiles one and two in 2017/18 in comparison with 51% in 2016/17. This represents a decline in the proportion of students from quintiles one and 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% 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.

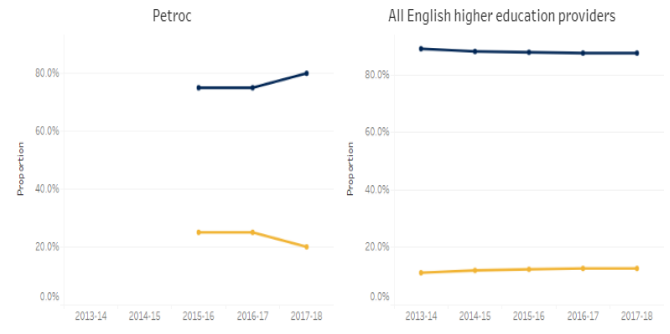


Previous strategies employed to target and recruit mature students have been successful with 62% of full time students aged over 21 on start date in academic year 2017/18 in comparison with 27.8% nationally. Access for part time, mature students is below the 2017/18 data for English HEI's with Petroc's recruitment of 80% compared with 87.4% 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.

Access proportions for: full-time or apprenticeship

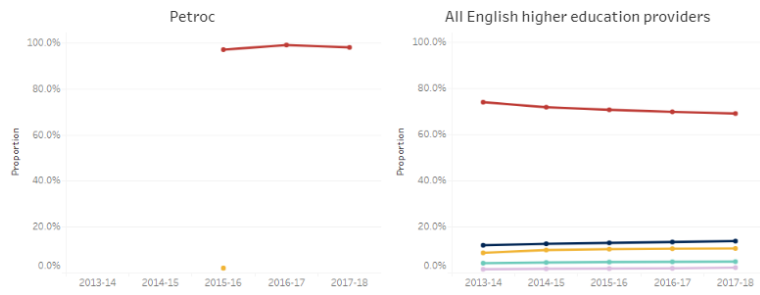


Access proportions for: part-time



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% of the North Devon population are white British. The internal data for Petroc is consistent with this demographic profile with recruitment of 3% 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%) 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.

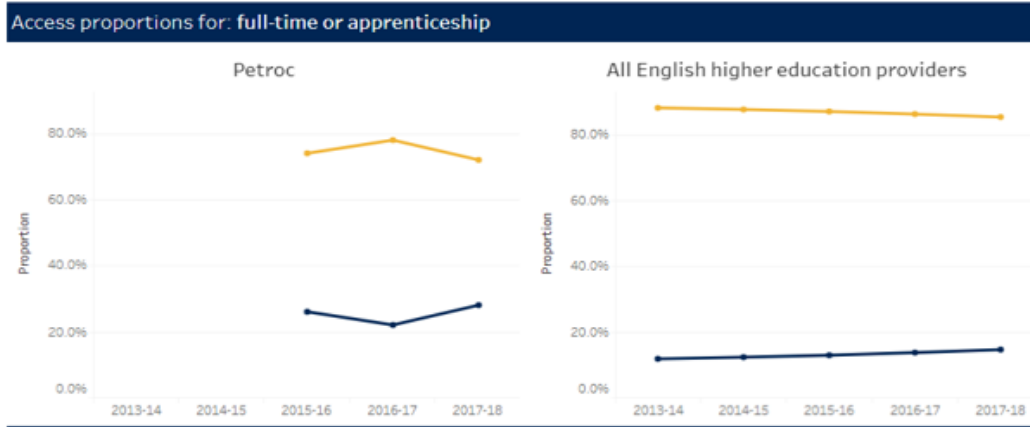
Access proportions for: full-time or apprenticeship



This data would indicate that Petroc's recruitment of BAME students rests in the sector's bottom 25% 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% level of access of BAME cohorts in line with the local population.

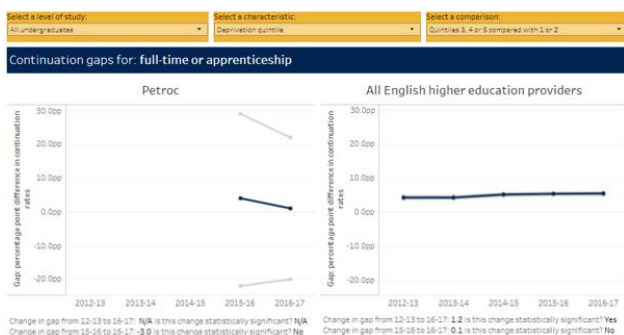
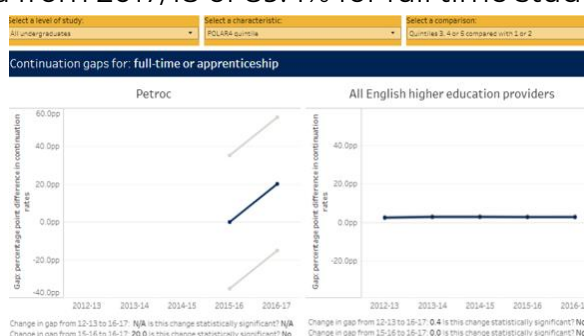
In terms of access for students with a disability, OfS data from 2017/18 indicates that 28% of full time and 30% of part time students declared a disability compared with national data of 14.6% of full time and 14.8% of part time students. The trend has not increased significantly over a three year period, 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% of these had a mental health difficulty, 4% Aspergers Syndrome, 7% mobility disability, 23% other medical condition (epilepsy, diabetes) and 35% declared multiple disabilities. Petroc have retained 89.2% of these students which is deemed a success and retention for learners with a disability was 77.1% in 2016/17 and 77.8% 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% disabled full time students in 2017/18 compared with 22% in 2016/17 and 30% disabled part time students in 2017/18 in comparison with 25% in 2016/17.



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. 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.

1.2 Continuation and Attainment

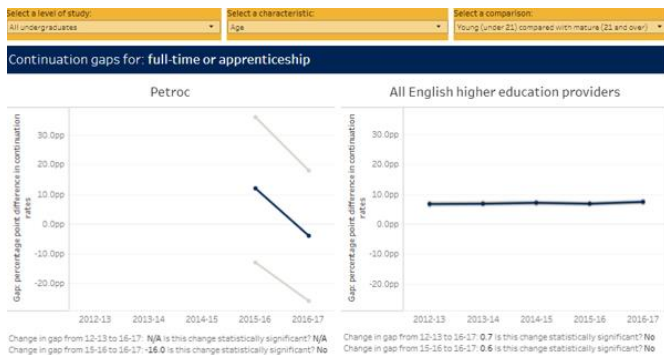
Factors such as low socio-economic status, recruiting a high proportion of students from POLAR 4 quintile 1 and 2 and the number of students requiring some form of additional learning support has historically provided a challenge in terms of continuation at Petroc. Internal data suggests that continuation for all students has improved since 2015/16 when it stood at 83.6% for full time students and 81.5% for part time students compared with Petroc's data from 2017/18 of 89.4% for full time students and 82.8% 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

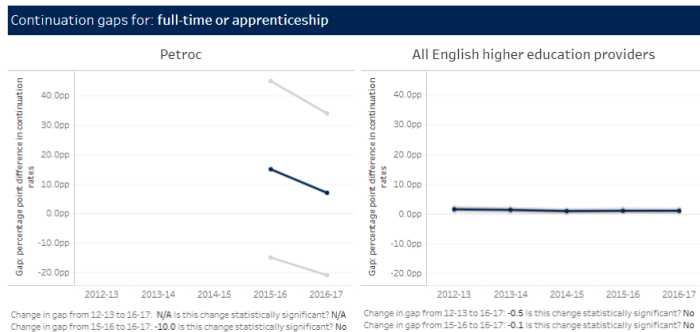
students is improving and compares favourably with the national data. Continuation of

mature students has improved from 82.1% in 2014/15 to 91.3% in 2016/17. The data from 2016/17 compares favourably with national data of 84.8% continuation of full time, mature students and 61.8% 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.



According to internal data, in 2017/18, 23% of students declared a disability upon enrolment and the number of students accessing DSA has increased significantly since 2014/15 with 8.2% in receipt of DSA in 2017/18 compared with 1% 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 with a 7.0pp gap in 2016/17, however this is above the 1.0pp gap for all HEI's so represents an area for targeted improvement. These figures relate to full time students and the figures for part time students are not currently available on the OfS dataset.



In terms of success data relating to continuation of minority ethnic groups, the internal data indicates that this group has 100% continuation and 100% 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 from investment would be marginal.

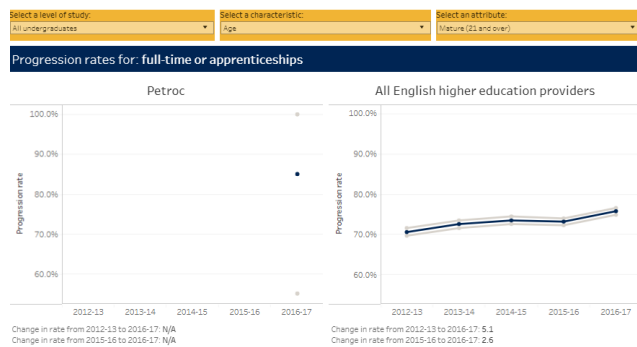
Internal attainment data in relation to students who progressed to a BA (Hons) programme at Petroc in 2017/18 suggests an area of improvement for Petroc. Of the 26 BA (Hons) students enrolled, 18 students attained a degree, of which 61% attained a good degree outcome. Of the 26 students enrolled, five students declared a disability on enrolment, of which 20% achieved good degree outcomes in comparison with good degree outcomes for 48% of non-disabled students. With reference to attainment for mature students, of those that attained a degree, 50% of mature students achieved a good degree outcome in comparison with 0% of young students. There were 73% of students from POLAR4 quintiles one and two and 27% from quintile three. In terms of attainment, 33% of Q1 students and 30% of Q2 students attained a good degree outcome in comparison with 71% for Q3. Due to the low cohort size, attainment for BAME cohorts is not reportable in this plan.

Analysis of the intersections of disadvantage has highlighted that 5 students declared as mature and disabled, of which 20% attained a good degree outcome in comparison with 50% 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.

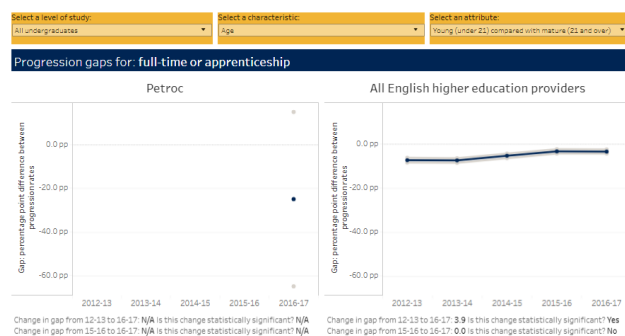
1.3 Progression to employment or further study

All FdA/FdSc programmes have clearly defined and published progression routes at the University of Plymouth with a significant number progressing to the specified 'top up' programmes. Petroc, in partnership with the University of Plymouth, has also developed and successfully delivered a number of full and part-time BA (Hons) top-up routes in key subject areas, allowing learners to complete a full degree locally and information regarding these specified progression routes is available and provided to all cohorts including disabled, care leavers, LPN and BAME cohorts.

Progression rates for full time students aged 21 and over show a rate of 85% in 2016/17 in comparison with 75.7% for all English HEI's.



Analysis of progression gaps between full time young and mature students identifies a -25.0pp gap in so this would suggest that mature, full time students are likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study.



Data from 2017/18 in relation to progression to highly skilled employment or further study indicates that progression for full time students is good with 75.8%, however progression for part time students has seen a decline with only 57.7% progression 2017/18. It is surmised that this may have a particular impact upon mature students however there is not currently evidence to suggest a

specific performance gap within this group.

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. This has encompassed the entire student journey, starting with clear information, advice and guidance to ensure students enrol on appropriate provision and consider progression routes from the beginning of their programme. During their course of studies, students are encouraged to engage with visits to the University of Plymouth Campus to promote progression to BA/BSc 'top-up' degrees and kept well informed about the range of BA (Hons) options available at Petroc, the provision of which has been a key driver in recent years.

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.

1.4 Intersections of disadvantage

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% 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% 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.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

The 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:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Access for part time, mature students is below 2017/18 national data with Petroc's recruitment of 80% compared with 87.4% nationally.
4. 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.
5. There is a gap in continuation between those not known to be disabled compared with disabled is closing with a 7.0pp gap in 2016/17, however this is above the 1.0pp gap for all HEI's so represents an area for targeted improvement.
6. 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.
7. A requirement for improved data and analysis of access, success and progression for care leavers in order to identify gaps in performance and outcomes.

The focus of the strategic aims, targets and measures within this access and participation plan will be on these target groups.

2.2 Aims and objectives

The purpose of Petroc's Higher Education strategy 2018 -2020 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). The targets and objectives of Petroc's wider HE strategy relate to Partnerships and external engagement, Excellent teaching and learning experience, Our people, Growth and innovation and Finance and Resources. Specific strategic aims for this access and participation plan derive from and align directly with Petroc's Higher Education Strategy 2018 -2020 and are as follows:

1. Innovation of curriculum encompassing all taught provision, stream lining curriculum to meet the needs 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. This will enable clear progression from Level 3 academic programmes and Access to Higher Education programmes into Higher

Education. The measurable outcome of this aim will be to increase access to HE for mature, part time students by 2024-25.

2. Investing in established programmes, developing new programmes, developing external partnerships and exploring new markets to improve access for POLAR4 Quintile one, mature students and students from lower socioeconomic status.
3. Maintain 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. The measurable outcome of this aim will be an improvement in good degree outcomes for disabled, mature cohorts and to improve access for full time students who reside within POLAR4 quintile one areas.
4. Actively involve 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.
5. Develop innovative curriculum to meet the planned needs of the South West Institute of Technology, Petroc hub, to address the needs of the region, particularly for Level 4 and Level 5 provision to improve progression to highly skilled employment in the Engineering and Digital sectors.

3. Strategic measures

The table below identifies the key strategic measures to be achieved by Petroc from 2020 – 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 Petroc's internal data.

Target Group (s)	Aim	Lifecycle stage	Targeted intervention	Evidence base	Measurable outcome
POLAR4 Quintile One Deprivation Quintile One	2 and 3	Access	<p>Systemic gathering of data to identify current Q1 and 2 students from level 2 and 3 programmes.</p> <p>Targeted activity identifying benefits of HE offer, awareness of student finance and employability.</p> <p>Student Ambassadors recruited from POLAR4 and Deprivation Q1 and 2 to act as HE advocates.</p> <p>Establishment of HE alumni with a particular focus upon former students from low participation neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>Internal data of Q1 and Q2 students.</p> <p>Recruitment of 4 ambassadors per year.</p> <p>Uptake and implementation of HE alumni.</p>	Increased proportion of 18 year old students enrolling on Petroc HE programmes from POLAR4 Q1 and Deprivation Q1.
Mature, part time students	1 and 5	Access	<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>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>	Increase of the percentage of part time mature students accessing HE.

			<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>Uptake and impact of bursary fund for part time, mature students.</p> <p>Uptake and implementation of HE alumni.</p>	
POLAR Quintile One and Two	3 and 4	Continuation	<p>Provision of a wellbeing mentor to provide targeted support to students from Q1 and Q2.</p> <p>HE Summer School to be delivered pre-entry to starting on programme to focus upon HE study skills and support mechanisms that are available within Petroc.</p>	<p>Number of Q1 and Q2 students in receipt of support and advice.</p> <p>Longitudinal survey of impact of Summer School on Q1 and 2 students.</p>	Reduction in the continuation gap between Q1 and Q2 in comparison with Q3, 4 and 5.
Disabled	3 and 4	Continuation	<p>Targeted support from Academic and Skills advisor to identify support need and provide tailored support.</p> <p>HE Summer School to be delivered pre-entry to starting on programme to focus upon HE study skills and support mechanisms that are available within Petroc.</p>	<p>Number of disabled students in receipt of support and advice.</p> <p>Longitudinal survey of impact of Summer School on disabled students.</p>	Reduction in continuation gap between disabled and not known to be disabled
Disabled and mature	3 and 4	Attainment	<p>Targeted progress tracking for mature and disabled students on BA programme to focus upon attainment and degree outcomes.</p>	<p>Student progress tracking records maintained by programme team and skills advisor.</p>	

			<p>Increase the range of summative assessment methods on BA programmes to ensure inclusivity and equality of opportunity for disabled students.</p> <p>HE staff development and CPD to focus upon pedagogy and inclusive practice within annual CPD cycle.</p> <p>Targeted bursary fund to improve attainment for disabled, mature students.</p>	<p>Adjustments to module level assessments.</p> <p>HE staff attendance at inclusivity focused CPD event.</p> <p>Uptake and impact of bursary fund for disabled, mature students.</p>	<p>Reduction in gap of good degree outcomes for the intersection of mature and disabled students.</p>
Care Leavers		Continuation, attainment and progression	Action plan and systematic tracking of care leavers throughout the student lifecycle.	Internal data to inform annual monitoring of care leavers	Narrow gaps identified throughout the lifecycle of the plan as a result of systematic data collection.
All under-represented groups	All	Access, success, attainment and progression.	<p>Termly review of performance through HE planning meetings.</p> <p>Annual monitoring and self-assessment review of impact of interventions. Annual operating and action plan developed in response.</p>	<p>Internal and OfS data tracking.</p> <p>HE action planning documentation.</p>	Narrow gaps identified and assess impact of operational interventions.

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

3.1.1 Access

As stated in the assessment of current performance, in 2017/18 Petroc recruited 55% of full time students from POLAR 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 a HE Bursary for all students' in particular financial need.

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.

3.1.2 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.

3.1.3 Progression

Internal data suggests that 97% 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

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.

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. This new curriculum will be operational by September 2020.

Our present STEM based HE curriculum has 137 enrolments, our 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

3.1.4 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.

3.1.5 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 CloS 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.

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 HE office. 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 Quality, Curriculum and Learners, the HE Coordinator, Head of Quality Higher Education and the Heads of Faculty for Higher Education.

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 2020 - 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 financial support made available to students, including qualitative and quantitative data.
- 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.

3.3.1 Theory of Change

The evaluation strategy for the Access and Participation programme from 2020 – 2025 will align to the overarching theory of change outlined in the table below. 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.

Input	Resource	Activity	Outputs	Outcomes
OFS countable investment in access, financial support and evaluation	Head of Communications	Targeted activity, marketing and promotional events	Access to HE from low participation neighbourhoods and mature students.	Improve access to HE programmes for 18 year olds residing in POLAR4 quintile one and students in lower socioeconomic status groups.
	Head of Faculty for HE	Curriculum development to align Access offer		
	HE Programme Managers	Allocation to mature and disabled students		
OFS countable investment in success, financial support and evaluation.	Head of Quality for Higher Education	Progress tracking and targeted support to improve continuation and attainment	Improve BA (hons) degree outcomes for disabled and mature cohorts.	students. Gap in good degree outcomes to improve to improve from 30.00pp to 0.00pp by 2024/25.
	Wellbeing mentor/ Academic skills advisor	HE Summer school to improve study skills		

	Programme teams	Curriculum evaluation and design to facilitate and encourage inclusive practice.		

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 HE Head of Faculty. 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 has been produced and agreed by the Senior Management Team, the plan is reviewed and updated annually. The HE Head of Faculty and 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. Financial support in the form of a bursary of £500 per student will be provided for students from lower socioeconomic status groups and low participation neighbourhoods to act as a financial incentive to participate and continue in higher education and will be available to the students in each year of study depending upon a specific level of attendance on their programme. The eligibility criteria to claim financial hardship will depend upon the student's household income (below £25,000) and students will have to evidence that they have received their full entitlement to a maintenance loan. Students will also be expected to show supporting evidence of financial hardship within the application process. 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, inter alia, 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.

5. Appendix

The following appendices include Petroc's Targets, Investment summary and Fee summary for academic years 2020/21 – 2024/25.

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

The planned full time tuition fee for 2020/21 is £7,400 which represents an increase of approximately 2% in line with CPI 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 entrants

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 entrants

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 investment forecasts below in access, financial support and research and evaluation does not represent not the total amount spent by providers in these areas. It is the additional amount that providers have committed following the introduction of variable fees in 2006-07. 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
Total access activity investment (£)	£20,405.00	£20,405.00	£20,405.00	£20,405.00	£20,405.00
Access (pre-16)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Access (post-16)	£8,760.00	£8,760.00	£8,760.00	£8,760.00	£8,760.00
Access (adults and the community)	£11,645.00	£11,645.00	£11,645.00	£11,645.00	£11,645.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£72,734.00	£73,941.00	£76,822.00	£79,860.00	£82,660.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£10,949.00	£10,949.00	£10,949.00	£10,949.00	£10,949.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£471,600.00	£501,462.00	£503,724.00	£503,516.00	£503,308.00
Access investment	4.3%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%
Financial support	15.4%	14.7%	15.3%	15.9%	16.4%
Research and evaluation	2.3%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%
Total investment (as %HFI)	22.1%	21.0%	21.5%	22.1%	22.7%

