Harper Adams University

2019-20 access and participation plan

Assessment of current performance

Institutional context of our performance

1. The mission of Harper Adams University over the 2015-20 period is to provide, 'World leading higher education and research for the delivery of sustainable food chains and rural economies'. Our vision for 2020 is that Harper Adams will be:

   'Closely engaged with the industries, professions and organisations that comprise the global agri-food chain and the UK rural economy to deliver a high quality and inclusive learning environment that enhances personal development and employability;
   A recognised centre of research excellence, especially in the application of science and technological advances and;
   A trusted source of independent and authoritative commentary to inform public and policy debate on agri-food, animal welfare, land, environmental and rural business matters.'

2. At the time of writing (April 2018), the University has 2,529 undergraduate students actively studying on predominantly full-time sandwich programmes, of whom about 91% are home / EU students. First degree and Foundation Degree programmes are offered at the University's rural campus, based on a working estate, near Newport in Shropshire. Our location, within one of the least densely populated English counties, is rural and not well served by public transport. Our subject base covers agriculture, agri-business, animal health, countryside and environment, agricultural engineering, food production and supply-chain, land and property management, and veterinary related subjects. From 2018/19 we will also offer applied life science subjects to complement our agriculture, animals and countryside and environment programmes.

3. In setting out our commitments to widen access and support student success and progression, it must be recognised that Harper Adams is a small and specialist institution with a unique subject mix and an associated high cost base. The income derived from the maximum fee level that we are permitted to charge is less than the combined income that we have previously received from HEFCE's teaching grant and the fees which students paid before 2012/13. Improved social mobility and the creation of more equitable life chances through Higher Education aligns with our work in providing well prepared and socially diverse graduates who can ensure our agri-food chain and rural economies thrive in a global context. In meeting this challenge at our relatively small scale of operation, it is essential that we focus available funds on those activities that we have evaluated will have most impact on student enrolments, success on-course and progression into employment or further study. This Plan sets out how we aim to achieve this ambition.

4. We believe that, whilst the majority of our student population is from a rural background seeking to pursue a career in support of the rural economy, these figures are, nonetheless, indicative of a diverse population, with over two-thirds of our students facing one sort of challenge or another associated with either disadvantage or under-representation in higher education. Our land-based specialism results in a predominantly rural, national catchment. Typically, around 80% of our new entrants are from a rural background, compared with 19% of the population according to the 2011 census. This does affect our ability to attract students from low participation neighbourhoods, as low participation neighbourhoods are overwhelmingly urban. This distorts our performance indicators related to education disadvantage / participation using both the POLAR 3 and new POLAR 4 categorisations. Both data sets suggest below benchmark performance as a consequence of our rural catchment, which is wholly in line with our institutional mission. Just over 90% of all Q1 wards are categorised as urban and over 78% of all

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compared to just 3.5% of the total population. The Social Mobility Commission identified that, ³ 7 K H H Q V R F L D O P R E L O L W \ F R O G V S R W V L Q R X U F R X Q W U \ D U H D Q G ³ R Q O \ « S H U F H Q W R I G L V D G Y D Q W D J H G \ R X Q J S H R S O H L Q U H P R W F R P S D U H G Z L W K S H U F H Q W L Q &RUQZDOO &XPEULD &RDVWDO DUHDV[1] Remote countryside and coastal areas have the greatest proportion of social mobility coldspots of any areas of the UK[2].

career development activities need a lower start point than in 2017/18. A further illustration of the ways in which we routinely review and revise activity is that, based on student, tutor and employer feedback, the annual University-side Careers and Placement Fair will, in 2018, incorporate a discreet zone to

Students from areas of low higher education participation

11. Access for LPN applicants：In 2016/17, the proportion of young undergraduate entrants from the poorest performing quintile (Q1 using the POLAR 3 basis) was 4.6% against our

employment as not professional or managerial[7]. This course area has the highest proportion of our Q1 and Q2 students and, in 2016, every student progressed to employment as a veterinary nurse, which was clearly their intended outcome. As with other indicators of performance, we have been tracking the destination outcomes for students by characteristic and it is pleasing that, over a three year period, Q1 and Q2 students outperformed all students, once the incorrect classification of veterinary nursing had been corrected in relation to highly skilled employment. This analysis has, however, also identified that one of our less outstanding performing course areas on destination outcomes (Honours animal health and science with a 94% three year employment and further study mean) also has one of the highest proportions of Q1 and Q2 student enrolments and that this has resulted in an overall differential of around -5% points for this course group. This differential has been identified for the course team to identify action to improve the outcomes for this course suite so that they are in line with the rest (paragraph 7).

Students of particular ethnicities

15. Access for BME st

22. Success for disabled students : Three year aggregated TEF 3 data identifies a ±4.7% point differential for continuation for all disabled students when compared with the non-disabled, for the entry cohorts up to 2014/15 and a non-statistically significant negative differential against benchmark. More recent, internal data indicates that the year-on-year investment in, and development of, our provision for disabled students has been effective in improving first year success, with progressive improvements, from 87.7% success in 2012/13 to 91.9% success in 2015/16 and 94.0% success in 2016/17. This most U H F H Q W G D W D L Q G L F D W H G S R L Q W V D E R Y H W K H V D P H Q H W Academic Board has reviewed performance data for 2016/17 that demonstrated that average marks achieved by disabled students were within 0.5% of the overall achievement level. Equivalence of success for the graduating cohort was also noted by our Academic Board, in that virtually the same proportion of disabled students D F K L H Y H G K L J K H U + ' & V which we believe to be a testament to the investment support we have made.

23. Progression for disabled students : Our disabled students, as all others, have excellent progression outcomes. TEF 3 metrics illustrate a three-year mean of 96.4% into employment or further study, with 98.1% of non-disabled students going into employment or further study. The figure for disabled students is statistically significantly above its benchmark. Based on this data, progression into highly skilled employment or further study for disabled students is not only above its sector benchmark (by +10.2% points), it also exceeds the rate for our non-disabled students by +3.0% points, although the position for 2016 leavers had deteriorated, demonstrating the need to maintain attention on disadvantaged groups in successive years.

Care leavers

24. Access for care leavers : We have participated in targeted Looked after Children (LAC) and Care Leaver events organised through the collaborative Widening Participation Collaborative Group and are hosting one event in 2018. These events are intended to advise and guide care leavers on their higher education options

class (using SEC IV-VII W R G H I L Q H µ Z) Males, in particular, where typically comprise around 41% of our total applications, and in the last three years they have been more likely to receive an offer than our overall average, with a 67% offer rate compared to 66% overall. Once on-course, performance has not typically been a concern for this group, other than for first year withdrawal rates have where this group has been around 4% points less likely to continue (in 2014/15 and 2015/16, with 86.2% continuation compared to 90.1% overall), although this reduced to just -0.6% points in 2016/17 (91.6% compared to 92.2%). Overall, our students from SEC IV-VII backgrounds are more likely to achieve a µ J R R G K R Q R X U V ¶ore likely to go into employment or further study, looking across three year trends.

29. Our context of a predominantly rural background intake means that we also take care to consider the outcomes of students from an urban background . Efforts to improve access by under-represented groups including POLAR Q1/Q2, mature, BME and care leaver students intersect with our ambitions to improve access to those from urban backgrounds, not only for reasons of social inclusion and broadening the backgrounds of our students, but also in recognition of the demographic change in the rural population, whereby the decline in 18 year olds over the next three years is much sharper than in urban populations and the forecast reversal is slower in rural than in urban areas. Internal data indicates

Ambition and strategy

32. Our outcome targets Z H U H D S S U R Y H G E \ W K H 8 Q L Y H U V L W \ ¶ V $ F D G H P L F % R in our 2018-19 Access Agreement and as recorded in Table 8 of the resource plan, submitted as a separate Excel file. 7 K H 8 Q L Y H U V L W \ ¶ V V - S H F L I L F E X D (paragraph 3) demands efficient and effective resource deployment to maximise impact and maintain financial security. This is reflected in the balance of spend commitments and the deployment of resources on specific activities.

33. Access targets relate to increasing enrolment rates

ZHOO DV WDUJHWHG HYHQWV IRU \RXQJ SHRSOH LQ FDUH :H ZLO provide a number of events both at Harper Adams and other institutions to provide focused and targeted campus days and sessions to care leavers, BME and Q1 & Q2 students. Local research[9] has reiterated WKH QHHG WR FRQWLQXH RXWUHDFK DFWLYLWLHV WKURXJK WR < inspired to enter HE after A levels, as opposed to employment, as currently the case.

40. Propel and Become : Propel is brought to students by Become, the charity for children in care and young care leavers. They provide comprehensive support and advice to LAC and care leavers allowing them to overcome possible barriers to Higher Education. Harper Adams will be investigating ways to work more intensively with Become to access and support this group. The University will create a clearer and comprehensive package for LAC which allows them to access support pre and post application. This will include the creat

the two years that this has been an aspect of judgment in the survey. The What Uni? Student Choice Awards Scheme also presented the University with first prize for job prospects for the third year running in April 2018. Our industry connections arise from the way in which we involve employers in the design and delivery of our curriculum, applied research including student participation, involvement in an extensive Development Trust programme which provides significant financial and employment opportunities, the various ways we work with employers in supporting extra-curricular activity and, in particular, at the heart of our curriculum, the provision of sandwich degrees. Whilst we are not currently permitted to charge more than £1,850 for the placement year, we calculate the cost of preparing students for placement and supporting them and employers during the placement year to be in the region of at least £3,000 a student. Some under-represented and disadvantaged student groups, of which we have many, are more challenging to support. We are, nonetheless totally committed to sandwich courses; they are integral to the delivery of all our applied curricula and, vitally, help graduates to secure excellent employment outcomes on completion of their studies.

Evaluation for continuous improvement of measures

46. The specific work that we embark on will be monitored and evaluated in diverse ways, dependent on the activity in question. Paragraphs 65-68 set out our approach to the evaluation of our outreach measures. Other aspects of access that relate to our new Access to Agriculture (paragraph 61) programme will be evaluated through student feedback, student success data and considered through the annual course report and reported to the newly created Success and Retention Committee. Initial and informal evaluation, drawing on interim data from students, tutors and attainment records, is that this programme has been transformative for the small numbers of students it has supported in 2017/18. We continually evaluate other aspects of access that relate to admissions arrangements (also paragraph 61), through twice yearly meetings between admissions staff and all course teams, with a view to review offers, including work experience requirements and contextual offers, interview practices and offer holder day arrangements, based on in-cycle applicant data and applicant feedback, alongside enrolment data, in order to minimise unnecessary barriers to all applicants, especially those from under-represented areas.

47. The programmes of support that relate to on-course success are routinely evaluated as part of budget setting considerations and also, for some interventions, through routine reports to the Academic Board and also to the newly convened Success and Retention Task Force (now incorporated as the Success and Retention Committee) which is monitoring progress with a Success and Retention Plan. This Plan is co-ordinated by the Director of Learning and Teaching, and includes heads of academic departments and professional services heads. As the Plan develops, student characteristics will be overlaid on to more holistic considerations of the impact on our planned interventions. From 2018/19, the newly created Success and Retention Committee has a specific remit to consider the on-course success aspects of the Access and Participation Plan. Importantly this new committee will be advised by a newly convened Student Participation Panel. The precise nature of routine evaluation of activities depends on the specific activity but will invariably include the consideration of participant feedback of some sort (online surveys or focus groups being the most typical) and impact on student attainment (continuation and levels of achievement at module and award level). The responsible head of service will, where evaluation indicates such is necessary, revise plans for subsequent years. By way of illustration, the Autumn 2017 Transitions Conference was revised based on participant feedback elicited immediately after the event, part way through the first year on-course, plus course tutor and academic guidance tutor feedback on study skills deficiency needs as well as a review of first year attainment levels in both exams and coursework. The evaluation confirmed the overwhelmingly positive impact of the event but also prompted minor changes in relation to greater student ambassador involvement, consideration of health and wellbeing and physical orientation of the campus within the programme.

48. Our progression interventions are routinely evaluated through student and employer surveys, the outcomes from which feed into both Academic Board and annual course monitoring considerations, at the same time that placement success and final destination outcome data is considered. This routine assessment of our work ensures that we continually refresh our approaches to supporting students into employment, in particular highly skilled employment, or further studies. Paragraph 7 provides an illustration of how a need was identified based on outcomes; the subsequent development of the intervention career development programme was informed by internal course survey data, the DLHE survey data and student and tutor feedback in relation to plans for the 2018 Careers and Placement Fair. Internal Course, Placement, Placement Employer, internal Careers Service, Destination of Leavers from Higher Education and National Student surveys and Professional Advisor reports are routinely

considered in the development of each successive year V ¶ D F W L Y L W L H V D Q G D V U R X W L C Academic Board and annual course reports each Autumn.

49. Our arrangements for financial support have been evaluated in successive years, drawing on student feedback and outcomes data (predominantly new student survey data, early leaver data, although award levels were also reviewed until student feedback indicated, on the whole, that the financial support made little difference to their ability to devote their full attention to their studies) and have resulted in changes to our arrangements, where we have seen they are not making the desired impact. We have withdrawn all household income contingent financial awards as student feedback did not indicate that the investment was justified and the student view was verified in considering success outcomes data. At the time of writing, our initial evaluation of our Success Scholarship Scheme (introduced for 2017 entrants and revised modestly2018 entrants based on 2017 recipient feedback and the quality of applications) is that it is difficult to establish that it is providing value for money in raising aspirations amongst those from under-represented backgrounds to pursue a career within our industries. In part, this is because that Scheme is one amongst several outreach and admissions practice initiatives intended to raise the profile of our sector as providing excellent career opportunities amongst those who might not be aware of such. Accordingly, we have not made a commitment to running a scaled down Scheme for 2019 entrants within the resource plan, although it is possible that we will do so, once our in-progress evaluations are complete. Our current assessment is that Development Trust and Hardship Fund provision both make significant impacts on student success and progression and so should continue. Impact of the Development Trust work, in conjunction with employers, draws on student feedback data that seeks to establish the positive benefits of their awards, not just in financial terms but in the wider opportunities the awards present, as well as subsequent recipient award levels and graduate outcomes. This feedback is fed into Trust meetings and reported to the University Executive, in its consideration of our work. Overwhelmingly positive analyses are reinforced by student outcomes and also by a year-on-year increase in the numbers of employing organisations which contribute to the activities of the Trust and provide both financial support and progression opportunities to students who are typically in the later years of their sandwich programmes. To date, we have used our own student records to evaluate any differential outcomes achieved by students in receipt of the various financial support schemes but will explore using the evaluation tool that is made available to providers along with data submitted to HESA.

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Our outreach programmes will focus on a range of topics relevant to the land and food based sectors in which the university specialises.

63. Strategic Programme of Intervention in Partnership with Schools : Harper Adams has developed an intensive and personal programme that will aim to raise aspirations and awareness of Higher Education and sectors / careers that initially may not have been recognised by individuals. The overall project will run across the next five years and will work with years 5 to 13. This project will be broken down into three tiers as outlined below. These tiers should enable Harper Adams to set attainment targets with the highest tier partner and monitor progression as well as providing more effective interactions with students.

64. The university has identified a secondary school (within Quintile 3 but with very high levels of disadvantaged students (for example, 47% eligible for free school meals[13] against a national average of 26%) and a feeder primary school in Quintile 1 as part of our planned Tier 1 school partnership work.

achieving the intended aim of making the University more accessible to those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

69. Attainment Raising: Harper Adams University does not prioritise academic qualifications as a means to select applicants. It has a permissive and inclusive admissions policy and welcomes applicants with academic, vocational and access entry qualifications. In the 2014-16 entry years, only 21% of entrants were categorised as high tariff and many of these were BTEC holders. BTEC awards are known to be over-valued in tariff terms and, notably, HEFCE considers all BTEC entrants to be at high risk of early leaving, and is one of the reasons why we have developed extensive on-course support. We admit all stude

Tier 2 (10 selected schools)								
Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
1 x IAG session Based on an overall introduction to what university is. *IAG sessions to be more reactive to VFKRRO¶V UHT	1 x IAG session Follow up to previous IAG based around an introduction to university.	1 x IAG session	1 x Ambassador led session Introduction to student life, question, and answer.	1 x IAG session Highlighting the importance of GCSE choices.	*Invitations for project based events on campus.	1 x IAG session Session around understanding entry requirements and goal setting.	1 x IAG session Follow up sessions for support with personal statements Promotion of HAE and Open Days.	Feedback from the schools in % going on to university.
Tier 3 ±all other outreach provision								

Progression Measures

77. The R

* course type not listed.

Full-time and part-time course fee levels for 2019-20 entrants.		
Please enter inflationary statement in the free text box below.		
The University reserves the right to increase fees each subsequent year by no more than the rate of inflation (RPI-X) in line with government guidance and any cap on tuition fees applied by the government.		
Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree		£9,250
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		£1,850
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Franchise 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		*
Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	- Vet Nursing top-up	£4,218
First degree	- Part-time study of full time courses	£6,935
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE	- Vet Nursing Advanced Diploma	£4,218
CertHE / DipHE	- Livestock Auctioneers	£1,875
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*

								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16a_01	Access	Disabled	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	Maintain proportion of full-time, self-declared, university-verified, disabled entrants, despite changes to DSA funding	No	2013-14	18.8%	19%	19%	19%			
T16a_02	Access	Socio-economic	Other statistic - Socio-economic (please give details in the next column)	Increase proportion of NS-SEC classes 4-7 young entrants to all undergraduate courses	No	2013-14	46.5%	48.5%	49%	49%			HESA has ceased publication of benchmark data for NS-SEC, so we have removed reference to the benchmark aspect of this access target
T16a_03	Student success	Multiple	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (All, full-time, first degree entrants)	Improve non-continuation in HE of UK domiciled full time first degree entrants	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	4.5%	4.1%	4%	4%			Baseline of 2012 entrants recorded in 2013-14 HESA record
T16a_04	Student success	Multiple	HESA T3d - No longer in HE after 1 year (All, full-time, other undergraduate entrants)	Improve non-continuation in HE of UK domiciled full time other undergraduate entrants	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	11.6%	8.5%	8%	8%			Baseline of 2012 entrants recorded in 2013-14 HESA record
T16a_05	Progression	Multiple	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	Maintain a sector leading employment rate	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	96%	96.8%	97%	97.2%			Baseline of 2014 graduating cohort
T16a_06	Access	Low participation											

								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16b_01	Student success	Multiple	Operational targets	Improve year one success so that all under-represented entrant groups perform within 3 points of the overall success rate, full-time, first degree entrants	No	2014-15	Not achieved	Within 3.8%	Within 3.0%	Within 3.0%			Improve year one success so all under-represented entrant groups perform within 3 points of overall success rates - to include disabled, SEC IV-VII, low household income (<£25k), mature, LPN and BME entrants
T16b_02	Student success	Multiple	Operational targets	Improve year one success so that all under-represented entrant groups perform within 3 points of the overall success rate, full-time, other undergraduate entrants	No	2014-15	Not achieved	Within 3.8%	Within 3.0%	Within 3.0%			Improve year one success so all under-represented entrant groups perform within 3 points of overall success rates - to include disabled, SEC IV-VII, low household income (<£25k), mature, LPN and BME entrants
T16b_03	Student success	Multiple	Operational targets	Improve year one success so that BTEC entrants success rate is within 3 points of the overall success rate, full-time, first degree entrants	No	2014-15	Not achieved	Within 3.8%	Within 3.0%	Within 3.0%			Improve year one success so that BTEC entrants success rate is within 3 point of the overall success rate, full-time, first degree entrants
T16b_04	Student success	Multiple	Operational targets	Improve year one success so that BTEC entrants success rate is within 3 points of the overall success rate, full-time, undergraduate entrants	No	2014-15	Not achieved	Within 3.8%	Within 3.0%	Within 3.0%			Improve year one success so that BTEC entrants success rate is within 3 point of the overall success rate, full-time, undergraduate entrants
T16b_05	Progression	Multiple	Operational targets	Achieve employment outcomes (in work or further study) for under-represented groups that are in line within 3 points of the overall rate, full-time, first degree entrants	No	2014-15	Not yet known	Within 3.8%	Within 3.0%	Within 3.0%			Support under-represented groups to achieve employment rates within 3 points of overall employment rates - to include disabled, SEC IV-VII, low household income (<£25k), mature, LPN and BME entrants
T16b_06		Multiple		Achieve professional and managerial employment outcomes for under-represented groups that are in line within 3 points of the overall rate, full-time, first degree entrants			Not						Support under-re employment employme low hous BME e

Access Multiple