

## THE ACCESS & PARTICIPATION PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2025

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**Summary:** This annual report provides an update on the widening participation interventions that have been delivered this calendar year. These interventions correlate with Falmouth's Access & Participation Plan (APP) objectives and targets, contributing to the University meeting its APP targets.

This APP Annual Report shows how the University is meeting the Office for Students (OfS) A1 APP regulatory condition regarding widening participation and complying with agreed APP milestones.

### 1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 In 2023, the Office for Students (OfS) approved Falmouth University's new Access & Participation Plan (APP). Falmouth's APP was one of the first plans to be submitted to the OfS because we volunteered to be in the first phase of new plan development.
- 1.2 This complies with the OfS's A1 regulatory requirement regarding Access & Participation Plans.
- 1.3 Falmouth's new APP includes both qualitative and quantitative targets. The qualitative targets are 6 identified 'equality of opportunity risks' and associated objectives required to mitigate these risks. Within each of these risks/objectives are a series of interventions and the activities to be delivered. There are also 11 quantitative (numerical) targets to be met.
- 1.4 The university have identified our own equality of opportunity risks by combining localised risks with the national risks identified in the OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR).
- 1.5 This APP Annual Report highlights a selection of the interventions delivered or in development that are contributing to the University meeting our APP targets and milestones.

### 2 RISKS & INTERVENTIONS

- 2.1 **Risk 1-** Lack of ethnic diversity on campus is causing social marginalisation. The small number of Global Majority ethnicity students studying at the University can't form a sense of belonging, or feel part of the local community, leading to withdrawal from their studies, and a widening attainment gap.

**The interventions developed or delivered to mitigate this risk are:-**

- ❖ All Academic teams continuously strive to **decolonise their curriculum**, publications and reading lists. **Curriculum drop-in development** sessions have been offered to give course teams support to embed decolonisation within the curriculum. There is also a racial equality focus for all new course approvals.

- ❖ The Head of Fashion & Textiles has been involved in the production of the **FACE Race Educators Handbook**. This is a training manual for staff members who want to decolonise their curriculum and offer more inclusive practice.
- ❖ **The Outreach Team** plan to collaborate with the **Students' Union** to produce **racial diversity webinars and videos** to be used within the enhanced applicant support programme.
- ❖ **Cornwall Anti-racism Forum** is an anti-racism forum focusing on support options and reporting pathways available for hate crime and hate incidents, situating the discussion in our local context in Cornwall.
- ❖ The **Belonging Module** within the **Fashion & Textiles Institute (FTI)** is annually reviewed and developed and will continue to be delivered across FTI this year.
- ❖ **Global Majority Ethnicity students** have asked the Students' Union (SU) to support a range of new clubs and societies this year. These include the **Cosy Society** which is specifically for remote students, the **International Society**; the **Polish Society**; the **Asian Society**; the **African Caribbean Society**; the **Hispanic Society**; the **Latin American Society**; the **Middle Eastern Society**; the **Oriental Society**; and the **Islamic Society**. The SU have also introduced two new Collectives including the **Interfaith collective** and the **Culturally diverse collective**.
- ❖ The **Wellbeing and Inclusion Fair** was offered twice in 2024/25 and at the start of the 2025/26 academic year. This Fair is always well-attended and successful. Organised for staff and students, the Wellbeing and Inclusion Fair includes teams from both Universities, FX Plus and The Students' Union as well as external groups local to Cornwall.
- ❖ **The Intercultural Cafe events** are now happening weekly on the Penryn Campus and monthly on the Falmouth Campus. These events are very well-attended with an average of 50 students each week, all from different ethnic groups.
- ❖ Events on campus have been planned for **Black History Month**, including an African Drum Workshop and the new **International Society** will be hosting a Karaoke evening in November with songs from across the world.
- ❖ **The Chaplaincy** have stated there has been a marked increase in engagement this year from the **Faith and Cultural societies**. The Chaplaincy, Cornwall Council, along with other faith communities signed a Faith Covenant, to continue to work together and build their voice within the council, and they plan to organise a social event for the faith and cultural societies this year.
- ❖ The **'Support & Report Tool'** is a way for any student to alert others to any issues on campus, including racism and hate speech.
- ❖ We are offering an expanded range of **scholarships for international students** joining in 2026, to support our goals to increase and diversify our international student body. We are also introducing scholarships to support students joining our Integrated Foundation Year courses, as well as through partner institution pathways.
- ❖ The **'Equity Ambassadors'** are student ambassadors specifically appointed due to their relevant lived experience i.e., their ethnicity, their age, their learning difference etc, to provide an authentic guest speaker. The Equity Ambassadors deliver sessions in schools, colleges, the community, and have delivered training sessions with university staff members to raise awareness of specific issues such as racial inequality.
- ❖ The Outreach Team and Equity Ambassadors have developed a **new racial equality project** that will be shared with franchise partners across the country, to ensure delivery in racially diverse areas.
- ❖ A second-year **Photography student** led a project to produce a powerful and inspiring zine, created by the SU, in collaboration with ACS, celebrating Black

student experiences in Cornwall. The publication is called **Solace** and highlights the experiences of Black students in Cornwall, celebrating their diversity, strength, and resilience. [Solace: A Collaborative Zine by ACS and The SU](#)

2.2 **Risk 2-** Below average attainment levels for disadvantaged learners in schools across Cornwall and Devon, causing a widening attainment gap for disadvantaged learners. This leads to fewer students from IMD (disadvantaged) areas being able to follow a HE pathway.

**The interventions developed or delivered to mitigate this risk are:-**

- ❖ We continue to offer the **Falmouth University Travel Fund**, which is designed to support individuals facing financial hardship to visit the University. This fund help's parents and applicants from IMD areas to travel to Open Days/ Applicant Days/ On-campus Interviews. The UMHC assessors cited this initiative as '**Excellent Practice**'.
- ❖ There are **3 National Saturday Clubs** on campus, the Art & Design Club, the Film & Screen Club and the Fashion & Business Club. Saturday Clubs are an outreach programme for any learners aged 13 to 16 years of age, targeted towards learners who meet widening participation criteria. The Clubs are supported by the National Saturday Club Trust.
- ❖ **SPD** have worked with the Outreach Team on a '**New Creatives project**', engaging in the New Creatives design sprint and model making project with the year 6 group of St Day and Caharrack school.
- ❖ The University are part of the **Care Leavers Covenant** and offer an enhanced package of support to students who have experienced the care system or are estranged from their family. We have seen an increase this last year of students with an 'estranged from parents' status needing support.
- ❖ Falmouth's new '**Progression Framework**' presents a framework of activity, from Year 6/7 to Year 13, providing an ongoing series of interventions with target schools and colleges. The interventions start early and sustain engagement through the education journey from primary-secondary transition, through secondary to FE and entry to HE.
- ❖ The **Outreach Team** are working with 3 primary schools towards achievement of **Arts Awards**. The week long sessions introduce Yr5 or Yr6 students to a series of creative subjects as part of a project. Different weeks on offer include: World of Journalism, Film & TV and Performing Arts.
- ❖ The **Outreach Team** have worked with **Bournemouth University** to develop and deliver an attainment-raising programme called '**The Books and Stories Programme**'. This programme is focusing on Yr 8, improving reading levels, with the recent evaluation data indicating this has led to 41% of the pupils increasing their reading for fun at home.
- ❖ Last year the Outreach Team collaborated with our **Uni Connect-Next Steps South West (NSSW)**- to deliver an **attainment-raising programme** with 4 Cornish schools who have been identified as having below average attainment levels. The evaluation of this project shows an excellent improvement in GCSE grades for the pupils taking part in the project.
- ❖ The university are offering for the first time this year a structured **Year 10 Work Experience Programme**. This programme helps local young people to develop transferable skills, raises aspirations, helps the school/university relationship, and raises the profile of the young people's local HEI and the courses we deliver.
- ❖ We now have an '**Enhanced Applicant Support Programme**' which offers eligible applicants (target students who meet widening participation eligibility criteria) a support package based on their individual needs. There have been over 320

interactions and these will be evaluated this year. 90 applicants signed up to use the one to one service, with 65 attending their booked session. Of the 65: 2% were Care Leavers/Care Experienced; 26% have a disability, learning or mental health need; 11% were mature students; 18% were first generation HE; 6% were from a Global Majority Ethnicity; and 12% from a low-income household.

- ❖ The Outreach Team and **Institute of Photography** have supported **Redruth School** again this year with a **GSCE photography pupils newsroom project**. Evaluation of this project has been exceptional with 100% of the group stating they had learnt a new skill, 100% stating they are now considering university with 56% now considering Falmouth. Other academic teams are now developing schools' projects with the Outreach Teams help.
- ❖ During 2024/25, 660 outreach activities were conducted, with in excess of 7,698 participants. Overall interactions with schools have increased this year, with a better relationship with the schools who were difficult to engage previously. Schools are starting to sign **partnership agreements** and meetings are taking place with the Cornwall College Group, Exeter College, Callywith College and Truro & Penwith Colleges to sign a similar agreement, strengthening the relationships with local colleges.
- ❖ The Outreach Team have updated our **'Tiny Tasters' and 'Mini Masterclasses'** workshop offer to schools. These are creative workshops linked to Falmouth courses that have been designed by Equity Ambassadors for younger children aged 9- 16.
- ❖ Falmouth University are starting to offer a **structured Year 10 Work Experience Programme** on campus.
- ❖ **Future Creatives Collective** is a new online programme. The programme includes: workshops designed to generate ideas and develop creative skills; mentoring from Falmouth students; UCAS personal statement and portfolio guidance; and help to create students own piece of work for 'Dreaming & Doing' our 2026 creative competition.
- ❖ The University have continued to fund Cornish schools use of the **Careerpilot platform**. Careerpilot can help to mitigate several of the risks identified through the EORR but it specifically helps to mitigate the following risks; Risk 2: Information and guidance; Risk 3: Perception of higher education; Risk 1: Knowledge and skills.

2.3 **Risk 3-** Post-pandemic, the University has experienced an increase in students requiring intensive learning, mental health, financial and wellbeing support to aid their 'transition-in' from FE to HE study, in addition to the support provided throughout their studies. This results in new applicants feeling unsure and anxious regarding their next steps and once enrolled, disengaged/ struggling target students withdrawing early from their studies.

**The interventions developed or delivered to mitigate this risk are:-**

- ❖ The University has successfully **achieved the UMHC** with evidence of not only meeting the charter principles, but also providing evidence of 'Excellent Practice' and 'Good Practice' in a number of the themes.
- ❖ The **Accessibility Team** organised proactive support last year for any student applying for **Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)**. **National DSA reforms caused major delays last year**, with applications taking far longer to process and delays at every stage — from application through to confirmation of one-to-one support. Many students arrived without their DSA-funded support in place, and those applying after arrival often waited up to three months, creating risks around engagement, progression and retention. To minimise the impact, Accessibility and

the DSA Support Team worked together to identify the support students needed and provided interim one-to-one support immediately, ahead of formal DSA approval, to ensure students weren't disadvantaged.

- ❖ The **Wellbeing and Inclusion Fair** was offered twice during 2024/25 and at the start of the 2025/26 academic year, and is always well-attended and successful. Organised for staff and students, the Wellbeing and Inclusion Fair includes teams from the Universities, FX Plus and The Students' Union as well as external groups local to Cornwall.
- ❖ **Harassment and Sexual Misconduct**- Essential training and new policies are in place for all staff in line with a new regulation from the Office for Students (OfS) Condition E6: Harassment and sexual misconduct that came in to force on 1 August 2025. This is alongside new duties identified under the Equality Act 2010, that came into effect in October 2024.
- ❖ **Personal Tutoring**- Following consultation with Falmouth colleagues, alongside reviewing good practice in Higher Education, we are updating our Personal Tutoring policy and supporting guidance to clearly define and provide consistency in our approach.
- ❖ **Accessibility Project Group**-projects from this working group have now been implemented including; **Student Videos** produced by our HE students with differing accessibility needs and published on our website. These are useful to both prospective students and current HE students. These include 3 videos explaining what DSA is and what mentors and study skills tutors do; The **accessibility questionnaire** has been developed and implemented, but will be further enhanced via the **ongoing ILP review process** and new digital system; **SPA** have completed their **annual review of EC information** available to students and made improvements to the information provided on the student app; **Inclusive Employers**-The Employability Team have been able to identify large companies who are supportive but would also like to find smaller organisations who are inclusive.
- ❖ **New Study Guides** have been developed and are available on the website. These supportive guides are aimed at neurodivergent students, giving detailed information on dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD and autism, including strategies and links to technology tools. (<https://libguides.falmouth.ac.uk/neurodivergent/home>)
- ❖ This year's **Preparing For Falmouth programme** saw a substantial increase in the number of attendees at the live sessions and a huge number of video views- 2238! The number of survey responses also increased this year with some very positive feedback.
- ❖ **The Students' Union** have introduced new clubs and societies this year including the **cosy society** which is specifically for remote students and the **neurodiverse & disabled students society**. They are also running some new '**Collectives**' including; **Neurodivergent students collective**: PG and Mature students collective; Trans and nonbinary students collective; Commuter collective; Interfaith collective; Culturally diverse collective; **Disabled students collective**; **Care experienced and estranged collective**. The **Neurodivergent Students Collective** was the most well attended group meeting at the beginning of this academic year with 38 students.
- ❖ The **Wellbeing team** offer **same day in-person support**; **Phone support line 24/7 365** Spectrum Life offers students access to support and talking therapies without the need for any referral; **Drug/Alcohol addiction- referrals are made to local support organisation** 'We Are With You' is a drug and alcohol addiction advice service; **Eating disorders**- referrals are made to 'Freed' which is an eating disorder advice service; **Sexual Abuse/Domestic Violence**- we offer both 'Bystander Training' and 'Healthy Relationships' workshops to all our students. We also have

SARC and First Light on campus monthly for drop in and pre-booked appointments;  
**Peer Support Groups**- There are weekly/fortnightly or monthly sessions supporting Women, Men, LGBTQ+ or BIPOC students.

- ❖ **Supporting Disabled Students:** The Accessibility and QAE teams have produced a guide for staff to provide information and guidance on meeting the statutory requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and sector best practice on supporting disabled students. [Reasonable Adjustments - Guidance on our Requirements](#)
- ❖ The annual residential '**Transition Event**' for **neurodivergent students** and their parents/carers was successful with 36 students and their parents attending the 2 day event.
- ❖ **The Accessibility Team** develop and deliver **bespoke accessibility training** with team members on demand.
- ❖ There is currently a review of the **ILP/reasonable adjustments process and policy**. The comms and staff training required regarding the ILP review is currently being developed.
- ❖ We have a **neurodivergent staff & allies cafe**, who chat regularly online and organise in person meetings when required.
- ❖ The **Cornwall Business School** event management students have the opportunity to complete the '**Attitude is Everything Disability Equality Training for Live Events**' short course and receive certified recognition. This helps individual students with either physical disabilities, mental health difficulties or learning differences. One of the CBS alumni now runs her own company called **Accessibility Together**, who will be delivering accessibility workshops with our undergraduates this year.
- ❖ In partnership with other departments, the **Employability Team** provides **video content** and participates in **webinars** to ease the transition for new students ahead of them joining university.
- ❖ The **Study Hub** now has new links to a [signposting page](#) and students can find all the information they need in the [Falmouth App](#).
- ❖ Students have been invited to attend **Bystander training** this year (either on campus or online). This links with our **Healthy Relationships programme** of activities and with the 16 days of action against **gender-based violence campaign** organised by **Safer Cornwall**, who are working with partners to deliver events and training activities in support of the campaign.
- ❖ The **Attune Project**- This research programme has just been completed and is being evaluated. The project explores young people's (10-24 yrs) experiences of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) using arts-based methods. ACEs refer to unsafe, abusive and/or distressing events or living conditions during childhood. Three in four adolescents exposed to multiple ACEs develop significant distress and mental health disorders as young adults, including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.
- ❖ The **Do-It Profiler** is offered to all students at the start of their studies. This is a self-assessment tool that provides a referral to the accessibility team for any follow-up assessments that are required.
- ❖ The university now offers a **100% refund** to students' **DSA assessment costs**, making the DSA claim more accessible to all students.
- ❖ The **Outreach Team** in conjunction with the **Cornwall Business School** and Beat Blocks, organised a schools day using the **Haptic Technology Dance Floor**. This technology is aimed at deaf or neurodivergent young people. [Beat Blocks | Modular haptic floor](#)
- ❖ **The Compassionate Communications Guide** has been developed- Every interaction and communication with students (and staff) can have a positive or negative impact

on an individual. For vulnerable students, the language and approach we use in communications can increase their welfare risk, so a compassionate communications guide has been produced.

- ❖ An **Integrated Foundation Year** is now a pathway within most of our undergraduate degree programmes. This programme provides an **accessible pathway** onto an undergraduate degree for any student who hasn't acquired adequate entry qualifications.

2.4 **Risk 4-** The combination of the current national cost-of-living crisis and the consistent higher than average cost-of-living in Cornwall, causes financial poverty for disadvantaged students wanting to study at Falmouth. This is resulting in increased withdrawal rates from target students, widening of the attainment and progression gaps, and discouraging new applicants.

**The interventions developed or delivered to mitigate this risk are:-**

- ❖ **Money Matters** is a new hub on the student app/portal and on our University website, providing information about financial support. This includes eligibility for the Hardship Fund, advice on managing bills, balancing work and study, and peer-led tips and hacks on discounts and money saving. [Money Matters | Falmouth University](#)
- ❖ The **Students' Union** offer a funding pot called **The Student Project Fund**. This is available for students to apply for to support the set up and running of events, campaigns and projects with a focus on helping **build student community**, tackling loneliness and isolation, and creating new friendships among the student population.
- ❖ Falmouth University's **Micro-Internship Scheme** supports students from underrepresented backgrounds to undertake a paid 30hr project with a local employer over 2-6 weeks. The Scheme supports approximately 100 opportunities each year.
- ❖ All students are directed towards '**Handshake**' which is the platform that holds and advertises part-time job opportunities and graduate employment adverts. During 2024/25 there has been a huge increase in students using Handshake.
- ❖ The Students' Union have set up a **Food Bank** on both campuses and also issue food vouchers for those students in need.
- ❖ **Launchpad** are now researching and developing new employer partnerships, who will be offering **work experience placements** to our students, some of which will be paid.
- ❖ The **Student Finance Team** conducted their annual review of student financial support. The review showed that the new automated flagging system for **care experienced and estranged students** is working well and Falmouth are identifying more students with this status early on in the year. The team also highlighted the main financial issues faced by our students currently are the cost of accommodation and the cost of local bus travel. The University plans to increase the **low-income threshold** for the **Falmouth Bursary** this year to support more low-income families.
- ❖ The campus has a **Swap Shop** where you can pick up a preloved item or drop off any reusable things you don't need, all completely free, and helps anyone struggling financially.
- ❖ **Student Finance** can now identify students who are **estranged** from their families, to offer bursaries to. We distribute '**Welcome Packs**' of vouchers to **estranged students** each year alongside the students who are **care-experienced**, funded by the APP budget.

- ❖ The **Students' Union** are still offering '**Free Soup Fridays**', which are always well-attended with usually over 100 students, mainly from Falmouth University.
- ❖ A '**cost-of-living**' workstream group has been implemented by FXPlus, to consider and action a 5-point strategy to support students with the cost of living in Cornwall. There is also a '**cost-of-learning**' academic group who meet regularly to consider ways to help all students to be able to afford to study at Falmouth.
- ❖ The annual **Part-Time Jobs Fair** is held to support students who require additional income alongside their studies, to connect with local employers in Cornwall. At the event in October we saw a high turnout of students and very positive employer feedback.
- ❖ **The [Sustrans](#) charity** regularly come onto campus, offering students a free bike check, free bike security marking, free bus travel for 19-25 year olds or information on sustainable travel options, public transport, local walking and cycling routes.

2.5 **Risk 5-** There is a widening continuation gap for Mature students and students from IMD areas at Falmouth University that needs to be addressed.

**The interventions developed or delivered to mitigate this risk are:-**

- ❖ The university now has a newly formed **Skills & Engagement Team** within the Student & Academic Support Directorate. Mature students can now access **online resources**, held on a [Study Guides](#) website; **Essential skills** - online webinars covering a range of academic skills; **Library Bitesize** - online workshops covering a range of research skills; **Write Time** - structured writing sessions, currently in-person on Penryn campus; **Academic and General English Language** workshops for language skills for writing and speaking; **1:1 appointments**, online and on campus.
- ❖ **All Academic Teams** are developing different reporting and monitoring mechanisms within their faculties, to **review retention, intermissions and withdrawals** across all courses. This is to help the teams to identify reasons for withdrawal/intermission, enabling an early intervention.
- ❖ The **Students' Union** offer 'pop-up' sessions each week called **Wellbeing Wednesday**. These sessions are situated across the campus, offering support and signposting with any wellbeing or health issue.
- ❖ All new students are allocated a **Student Mentor** who they can speak to throughout their first year. This helps the student to settle into University life and helps them to develop a sense of belonging. Over the last three years of feedback surveys (2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25) 81% of responses have said that having a Student Mentor helped them settle into life in Falmouth.
- ❖ The **University Mental Health Charter** workstream '**social connection and sense of community**' considers ways to help underrepresented student groups, such as students from disadvantaged areas (IMD neighbourhoods) and mature students, to form a sense of belonging at Falmouth, which encourages continuation and success. This year we have developed and distributed a **Pre-arrival survey/social wellbeing questionnaire**, to match students with similar interests and linked directly to the Student Union and ResLife. A high number of new students completed this survey and have been matched with mentors and other students to suit their interests.
- ❖ **The Accessibility Project Group** meet each term and produce and update an action plan that includes a range of initiatives to help all underrepresented and disadvantaged students.
- ❖ We are members of a **NEON Mature Learners Working Group**, ran by the University of Leicester, sharing best practice with other institutions.

- ❖ The University are committed to expanding its **online programmes**, which are often a more appropriate mode of study for mature students, disabled students, or those students living in a disadvantaged area.
- ❖ **Peer to Peer support groups** have started on campus, including involvement with community groups such as Georgia's Voice, Man Down and Intercom Trust.
- ❖ The SU offer a new 'Collective' called the **Mature & Post-graduate Students Collective** which is very well-attended.
- ❖ **All Academic Teams** are developing different reporting and monitoring mechanisms within their faculties, to **review retention, intermissions and withdrawals** across all courses. This is to help the teams to identify reasons for withdrawal/intermission, enabling an early intervention.
- ❖ Most **mature students** are commuting to the campus each day. This has led to the Students' Union now offering a '**Commuting Students Collective**' to try to provide peer support for our mature cohorts.
- ❖ The University are exploring options related to the **Lifelong Learning Entitlement** offer related to modular studies. By implementing a range of different educational offers, this provision should support a range of non-traditional learners with more flexible study options and access to high-quality Higher Education.
- ❖ The **Recruitment Team** have been collaborating with the University of Exeter to deliver a mentoring programme with **Access to HE** students at Truro & Penwith Colleges. The team plan to develop the programme further with other colleges across Cornwall and Devon. This programme helps mature students to choose the correct course of study.
- ❖ The **Students' Union** and **Falmouth University** work together to offer a range of **financial support** for students from **IMD neighbourhoods** (deprived areas). The majority of early withdrawals from IMD students are due to financial issues.

2.6 **Risk 6-** The geographical location of Falmouth University is within both a coastal and rural area, causing combined infrastructure challenges and lack of graduate level employment, affecting all progression measures.

**The interventions developed or delivered to mitigate this risk are:-**

- ❖ The **placement year** is a new scheme, with the first large cohort in 2024 / 2025. One student shared insights from her successful Audio-Visual Internship at Disney+, an opportunity she found on Handshake during her second year. During her placement she gained valuable skills, a strong work ethic and learnt the importance of two-way feedback. Despite being an Illustration student on an Audio-Visual placement she was able to utilise her skills on several projects and now wants to merge the experience that she gained into her degree. Whilst Disney have no graduate scheme, she left with lots of contacts and won an Industry award.
- ❖ The newly developed **Employability Framework's** goal is to embed key future skills development at every course level and achieve parity of industry-led employability provision across the institution. The Framework serves as a guiding tool for students, graduates, academics, and course approval teams, to unite on a consistent approach to skills terminology, course development, and employability activity in module delivery. This Framework is the result of extensive research and development, designed to support our students on campus, online and on demand.
- ❖ The **Employability Team** have processed **102 Micro-internships** this last year, with 92 completed their placements by Sept 2025. All departments are now engaging with this programme.

- ❖ **Turing Scheme** graduates went to Spain, Mexico and the Netherlands on the Work Abroad Scheme and Malaysia, Hong Kong, and South Korea on the Cultural Immersion trips, with positive feedback on post completion surveys e.g, 'This experience has expanded my thoughts on my future career'. Unfortunately, only 33 students engaged with the programme this last year. The low number was mainly due to affordability issues with the stipend not being increased since 2021.
- ❖ The **Student/Employer Co-Creation Research Project** has started this year. **SoFT** are conducting the research, interviewing both students and employers to explore the impact of our students working with employers on live briefs and projects.
- ❖ The **Launchpad Futures Graduate Placement scheme** provides a foundation for building a sustainable talent pipeline within participating businesses. It offers local companies the opportunity to take on graduate talent where a skills requirement has been identified. The scheme is designed to help businesses explore how a graduate role can be embedded within their operations, with the intention of extending the internship into a permanent position, supported by the University's Employability team. The scheme has supported a total of 33 students during the 24/25 academic year to undertake a 90hr internship with an organisation in Cornwall.
- ❖ There is now a **Handshake** collection called '**Invests in diversity**' where students can see employers who have committed to making their organisations more inclusive, accessible, diverse, or all of the above. There has been a huge increase over the last year in students activating and engaging with this platform.
- ❖ The **Employability Team** have increased their opening hours this last year on both campuses and have seen a huge increase in student drop-ins, especially from students who meet **widening participation criteria**. The team are also offering two new services – **Mock Interviews** & student run **Photo Labs**, where students can have 'headshots', C.V photos taken professionally for free.
- ❖ The **Employability Team** continue to work with course and module leaders to identify where they can support curriculum delivery, aligning with subject knowledge and Learning Outcomes to design and deliver employability and enterprise content within the curriculum, linking to assessment for fully embedded activity wherever possible.
- ❖ The **Cornwall Angel Network** is marking twelve months of connecting Cornish businesses with angel investors committed to supporting innovation, people and place. Since launching, more than 25 angel investors have joined, four early-stage companies have raised and received a total of £189,000 in investment. Delivered by Falmouth University in collaboration with the British Business Bank, Cornwall Chamber of Commerce and the UK Angel Investors Association, it forms an extension of the **Launchpad Futures programme**.
- ❖ The **Employability Team** have also developed an **alumni directory on LinkedIn**, and an **alumni newsletter**. Alumni act as role models and guest speakers at events on campus and with schools and colleges. This network also helps to provide work experience opportunities to our students. The alumni directory increases by approximately 1000 students each year.
- ❖ All **Academic Schools** help their students to **co-create projects/work on live briefs** and network with industry partners, to build relationships and future employment opportunities for our students. We have numerous examples and case studies relating to co-created projects.
- ❖ The **Employability Team** have created a '**Career Readiness Survey**' which we give students during their first week. This includes questions about whether they plan to

stay in Cornwall post-graduating and what barriers they think they might face, which will give us an idea of their perceptions at the beginning of their HE journey.

- ❖ To **strengthen partnerships** in the local community, following submissions from staff and our local community stakeholders, we have selected community partners for our staff volunteering programme.
- ❖ The **Students' Union** run a platform called **CoLab** ([CoLab](#)). This initiative supports students to collaborate with others on different projects.
- ❖ **The Dragons' Den Competition** helps students gain access to funds to launch their business ideas and to gain advice and guidance from industry professionals.

## 2.7 APP Target Milestones

APP Target Milestone	Target	Result	
	2024-25	Released 2024	Released 2025
Proportion of Asian, Black and other minority ethnicities (%)	8.5	9.6	11.8
Entrant gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 (PP)	16	12.9	13.5
Proportion of mature students (%)	17	17.2	16.3
Continuation gap between young (<21) and mature (PP)	7	3.9	9.3
Continuation gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 (PP)	13.5	0.3	6
Continuation gap between white and other ethnicity groups (PP)	6.1	5.1	1
Attainment gap between white and all other ethnicities (PP)	11.5	17.5	9.8
Attainment gap between disabled and no disability (PP)	6.5	1.1	1.3
Attainment gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 (PP)	16	11.2	9.6
Progression gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 (PP)	15	-9.4	0.6
Progression gap between TUNDRA Q1 and Q5 (PP)	8.5	3.3	-8

## 3 LEGAL, REGULATORY & COMPLIANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 This APP Annual Report will form the basis of the next Office for Students' APP monitoring return (when required). This complies with the A1 regulatory obligations.

## 4 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Throughout the year, all appropriate teams have been regularly consulted, including all Student Support Services, Employability, Recruitment & Outreach, Academics, the Students' Union, ResLife, Student Finance, and the APP Data Analyst. This has enabled all widening participation activities to be added to an APP Operational Delivery Plan, to update the APP Risk Register, and to produce this report.

- 4.2 Falmouth APP Hub team are building an excellent relationship with University of Exeter colleagues at Penryn and collaborating on projects/activities involving Equality, Diversity and Inclusion matters. The Head of Student Access & Success also meets with all franchise partners annually to offer support with APP/widening participation activities.

## **SUMMARY**

- 4.3 In the recent University Mental Health Charter assessment, our Access & Participation Plan (APP) was cited as 'Good Practice', and a number of APP interventions were said to be evidence of either 'Excellent Practice' or 'Good Practice'. These included; Wellbeing & Inclusion Fairs; Solace Project; Micro internships; Open Day Fund; Mentors Programme; Integrated Foundation Year; 2 day Transition Event; Pre-boarding outreach activities; FACE Race Handbook; Transition Attributes Framework; Employability Framework; Belonging Module; Intercultural Café; and Student Journey Research Project.
- 4.4 Currently, we are meeting 9 out of the 11 numerical targets (milestones) agreed by the OfS in the new APP.
- 4.5 You will see in the table above that last year we would have met all APP targets except for the attainment gap measure between white ethnicity students and all other ethnicities. We focused all our efforts towards racial diversity last year and this has meant that we are now meeting this target. However, we have dropped a few percentage points with our widening participation work with mature students. With small numbers of students involved in both measures, significant volatility is to be expected.
- 4.6 However, if we take a two-year average on those measures, we'd have met the 2024/25 target for all but one: 'Proportion of mature students'. Although our two-year average result for that milestone only very narrowly misses the target with a result of 16.8% against a target of 17%.
- 4.7 We have already started to work towards this new focus towards the mature students target group and are currently meeting with our local colleges with the aim of signing partnership agreements. This will mean a more cohesive approach to working with Access to HE students in the future.
- 4.8 We are also helping to attract and retain mature students by:-
- ❖ In 2024/25 we ran three dedicated mature student's webinars for applicants as part of the Enhanced Applicant Support programme. This included personal statement, portfolio advice masterclasses and a Q&A with current mature students at Falmouth about preparing to study. We had 57 attendees across all three of these webinars. Note - we have doubled this provision this year to six webinars spaced throughout the cycle.
  - ❖ We have an annual programme in place with Truro College's Access to HE programme where we welcome them on to campus for tours and workshops which we have hosted annually since 2023.
  - ❖ We also adjusted the Assessment of Prior Experience and Learning (APEL) process to make it clearer and easier for mature students to engage with, including providing more online resources to help. We have also changed the policy so that undergraduate applicants who do not have Level 3 qualifications, or who completed their Level 3

qualifications over 5 years ago, will now be considered within the APEL process. This is the same process for postgraduate applicants who do not have an undergraduate degree, or who completed their Undergraduate degree over 10 years ago.

## **5 ANNEXES**

### **7.1 [Falmouth University Access & Participation Plan](#)**