Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD)

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2026-27 TO 2029-30

1. INTRODUCTION AND STRATEGIC AIM

1.1 MISSION

Based in Chapeltown, Leeds, Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD) is a leading centre for contemporary dance in the UK, and currently the only institution to offer conservatoire-level professional dance training in England outside London. Our mission is to provide an inspirational learning experience, from first contact through into the profession, enabling aspiring dance artists, and dance professionals, regardless of background, to shape the future of dance. Guided by the principles of the Equality Act (2010), NSCD actively works to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations among people from diverse backgrounds. As a champion of social mobility and inclusion, NSCD is dedicated to making dance education accessible to diverse communities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, regardless of their age, personal background or location.

1.2 CONTEXT

NSCD attracts students from all over the world and on average, 22% of its undergraduate students are not UK domiciled. Leeds, like many cities, faces social and economic disparities. Though known for its vibrant cultural sector, many neighbourhoods experience significant deprivation, which affects educational and career opportunities. According to data from the Office of National Statistics (2024) NSCD is situated between the poorest neighbourhood in Leeds (Woodhouse/Little Woodhouse/University) and a mere four miles away in Roundhay West, considered one of the wealthier suburbs. Unemployment and claimant count is in line with the national UK statistic of between 3.6%-5% varied across Yorkshire, however NSCD has ambitions to work with the communities to empower higher education as a lever into work and employment aspiration.

Established in 1985, NSCD has a long history as a Higher Education Provider (HEP). In 2022, NSCD became independently registered Higher Education Provider with the Office for Students (OfS), having previously been part of the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (CDD). For the last 15 years our programmes have been validated by the University of Kent but in 2024 we began the Full Degree Awarding Power process (FDAP).

By securing FDAP, NSCD are intending to support and validate partner organisations to build a portfolio of courses. Over the lifespan of this plan, we imagine our data will change as NSCD's course offer widens and partnership portfolio develops.

NSCD is more than just a higher education provider—community engagement is at the core of our mission. We have a well-established Learning and Participation (L&P) department who offer children and youth classes in the building on evenings and weekends throughout the year and engage with schools and community groups through our outreach programmes. This department oversees the Centre for Advanced Training (CAT) scheme which offers an extra-curricular pre-vocational programme designed to prepare young people for full-time professional dance training at university or conservatoire level.

NSCD is an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). This funding (secured until March 2026) enables NSCD to deliver four strands of activity:

1. A high-quality annual programme of performances at Riley Theatre, our own performance venue.

2. Riley Theatre Reach, a new project which provides high quality performance across the North of England in partner venues with a particular focus on work for children and young people and their families.
3. A strategic artist development programme which includes Northern Colour, a bursary programme for artists of the global majority.
4. Continued delivery of Children and Young People's Dance Network in the North.

NSCD's campus is centred around a former synagogue, a listed building with an additional 7 large studio spaces. It is currently at capacity with the 270 students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) that it serves. NSCD hire out other local dance spaces and are in the process of looking for a second campus. In the last 3 years NSCD has been impacted by funding changes, having not received World Leading status and being too small for the Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF) funding.

1.3 STUDENT COMMUNITY

At time of writing NSCD offer two undergraduate courses, a level 4, one-year course, CertHE specifically designed for preparing dance artists to undertake further in-depth professional training. This course has two pathways: contemporary and street dance styles. The second undergraduate course is the BA (Hons) Dance (Contemporary) course (levels 4-6) is a 3-year course specifically designed for the education and training of professional contemporary dance artists, performers, choreographers and artist facilitators. NSCD also offers five postgraduate master's courses. NSCD expects to validate a new BA (Hons) Dance: Choreography, Production and Teaching course which is planned to launch for 2026 entry. This course will add a more flexible pathway to NSCD's offer, with fewer contact hours, allowing students to balance studies with other priorities such as part-time work and caring responsibilities, and to create opportunities for commuter students.

We have 210 undergraduate places available across the two courses. On a 4-year aggregate (2019-2023), the NSCD undergraduate student body is made up of 14.1% of students from TUNDRA quintile 1, 10.8% of students from IMD quintile 1, 89% white students, 96.4% young students, 38.4% disabled students, 5.5% students from ABCS quintile 1 and 24.4% male students (data from OfS Access and Participation dashboard).

Embedded through our 2023-30 strategic plan is an underlying commitment to Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI). Within all four of our strategic development strands, *shaping who we are*, *building our foundation*, *building our visibility and profile*, and *shaping our future*, EEDI is critical to both our successful development and our institutional values. NSCD aims to utilise EEDI as a lens through which to make a difference through the art form, and in how we interact with all our key stakeholders. NSCD sees corporate social responsibility as crucial to enable our aims of enabling sustainable growth, ensuring financial stability and continuing to develop institutional resilience

1.4 STRENGTHS

As a small specialist institution, NSCD has limited published data available, however we have spent the previous 3 years improving our internal data capturing processes. It is encouraging to see that the Continuation, Completion, Attainment and Progression stages of the student life cycle show that NSCD has no gaps for underrepresented student groups. Notably, students with a disability tend to achieve higher levels of Continuation, Completion and Attainment than the sector average, and higher levels of Progression than NSCD students who are not disabled.

1.5 AMBITION

In this Plan, we set out how we will strive to address the inequalities of opportunity at the Access Stage of the student lifecycle, by introducing a wide range of Access interventions. The interventions will reach participants across the UK and provide a scaffolded approach to developing participants' knowledge and

skills to succeed at application for a Dance Conservatoire, as well as help to demystify perceptions of dance at HE.

2. RISKS TO EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

2.1 RISKS

After conducting our assessment of performance (see Annex A) and reviewing the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR), we have identified three indicators of risk to equality of opportunity. This has helped us to identify three key risk areas we wish to prioritise in this plan. We have considered which risks are likely to be most relevant to our student body and which we can reasonably seek to mitigate, making a positive impact at an institutional level and contributing positively to sector performance. Other indicators of risk that were identified as part of our assessment of performance can be found in Annex A, with commentary on the reasons why they have not been prioritised.

We have used the Office for Students (OfS) Access and Participation dataset as our primary data source, supplemented with internal data, including student consultation.

The potential risks to equality of opportunity that we have identified are:

Access:

> **There is a risk that learners from the most disadvantaged backgrounds (IMD Quintile 1 and 2), learners from the Global Majority, and learners who identify as male are experiencing inequitable access to pre-entry provision, advice and guidance, and may as a result have limiting perceptions about higher education in dance pathways.**

We have identified three indicators of risk that suggests this may be occurring:

1. Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

The difference in percentage enrolment rates between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students indicate a considerable enrolment gap, favouring Quintile 5. Although over the latest 4-year average (2019-20 to 2022-23), the gap was 21.7pp and has reduced to 18.5pp over the 2-year average (2021-22 to 2022-23), for IMD Quintile 2 entrants there is a wider gap of 23.1 percentage points compared with students from IMD Quintile 5 during the same 4-year aggregate. This suggests that students from both IMD Quintiles 1 & 2 are affected by a risk to equality of opportunity.

2. Students from the Global Majority

Our performance assessment shows a 17.2% enrolment rate for Global Majority students in the 4-year aggregate (2019-2020 to 2022-23).

In relation to the sector enrolment of Global Majority students there is a higher enrolment rate at 33.3% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23). Therefore, we consider that we have work to do to reduce the risks to equality of opportunity for this group and contribute towards increasing the future makeup of Global Majority professionals within the dance industry.

3. Sex

While not a discrete target group for the national equality of opportunity agenda, the issue of access and participation of male students in our discipline area of dance is an institutional and industry concern. Therefore, we consider the male characteristic as relevant in our context for risks to equality of opportunity.

The intake of male-identifying learners at NSCD averages 24.4% in the 4-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2022-23 and reduces to 18.8% in the 2-year aggregate 2021-22 to 2022-23.

2.2 LINKS TO THE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY RISK REGISTER

Along with education sector and industry evidence (see Annex B), our institutional experience and student consultations suggest that these different enrolment rates may be a result of Risks 1 and 3. These risks may be present in different combinations and to varying extents across the identified target groups.

Risk 1: Knowledge and skills

Students from the groups identified are less likely to have opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills required for study.

The competitive application process and the high level of experience required at audition present significant barriers for young people from underrepresented backgrounds, who often lack access to opportunities and support for developing relevant performing arts skills in school and college. We have noticed that for target groups such as IMD Quintiles 1 and 2 there is a significant skills gap. These groups tend to receive fewer offers than their peers as at the point of audition, they currently are not demonstrating the required skills to progress onto an NSCD undergraduate course.

Through NSCD's pre-vocational training programme, we have recognised that career advice in schools is lacking and therefore schools are not adequately supporting young people to explore creative options.

Risk 2: Perceptions of higher education

The perception that arts degrees are reserved for those from elite and affluent backgrounds remains strong. Underrepresented groups can not only be at risk of having a negative perception of higher education, but also of studying dance at higher education.

Perceptions of dance providing a lack of career opportunities, as well as a time-limited one, can discourage applicants from Global Majority or low socioeconomic backgrounds from studying an undergraduate course which they do not feel would result in an opportunity for them to change their financial circumstances.

The One Dance UK report *Taking it higher: Dance in HE* (2023)[1] report states that respondents believe that the negative rhetoric used to discuss dance and other creative subjects publicly has led to a reduction in student applications and an increased pressure from parents for young people to follow a more 'valuable' or 'academic' career path.

The One Dance UK report *Everything we Loved about Dance was Taken* 2023[2] poses that it is the pressures of the EBacc accountability measure and nationwide focus on subjects that are perceived to be 'more academic' and of 'more value' to students' future careers that are causing this detrimental effect on dance in education. It also evidences that dance is not valued in the same way as other subjects, even other creative and arts-based subjects. The DfE have previously committed to investing around £115 million per annum in music and cultural education over the next two years...this includes £76 million per year to Music Hubs, and around £31 million per year for the Music and Dance Scheme[3].

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[1] One Dance UK (2023). Taking it higher: Dance in HE. https://www.onedanceuk.org/media/rz1hw55k/he-report-2023.pdf

[2] One Dance UK (2021). Everything we loved about dance was taken. https://www.onedanceuk.org/media/yb0p2wcl/dance-in-education-report.pdf

[3] Arts Council England (2024) National Plan for Music Education. Music Hub Investment Programme: Frequently Asked Questions | Arts Council England

We understand that male-identifying individuals who are interested in dance often experience bullying and discrimination from peers and society at large, due to the widespread perception that dance is not a socially acceptable activity for males.

In our experience, People of Global Majority heritage often view dance more as a hobby than as a subject to pursue in higher education. While the progression data for Global Majority graduates of NSCD's Centre for Advanced Training (CAT) scheme is too limited to report, it is common for many of these graduates to follow commercial dance pathways rather than contemporary dance. Asian dancers often choose to pursue traditional academic subjects at university, even after completing intensive pre-vocational training such as the CAT scheme. Over the past three years, none of the graduates from the FABRIC Yuva Gati CAT Scheme — which focuses on South Asian dance styles — have progressed to study dance in higher education. Instead, all have opted for academic degree courses at university.

Risk 10: Cost pressures

Alongside these primary risks, we also consider Risk 10 (cost pressures). Over the last two years 9 in 10 HE students report experiencing a rise in their cost of living, more than 9 in 10 worry about that, nearly 50% feel they are in financial difficulty, 60% of those who receive a student loan consider it insufficient to cover their cost of living, 30% have taken on more debt, and nearly 80% worry about the impact of the financial squeeze on their learning (Johnson & Westwood, 2023)[4].

The rising cost of living will undoubtedly be putting pressure on applicants, especially those target students from IMD Quintiles 1 and 2, to ensure that their choice results is a profitable career. However, NSCD have no evidence to support the theory that the more recent cost of living increases has negatively affected applications. This is likely due to the investment into financial support for those with low household income at the access stage. NSCD's own observations and discussions with students show that NSCD's undergraduate courses are also perceived as good value for money because of the number of contact hours students receive in comparison to other universities.

BROADER SYSTEMIC ISSUES

Reduction in pre-vocational dance training: Literature highlights the systemic undervaluing of creative subjects in state-funded compulsory education and its varying provision of extracurricular opportunities. There has been a 50% decline in the uptake of dance at GCSE and A-level since 2008 as noted by One Dance UK (2021). Aston and Aston (2022) discuss the stark disparity in access to creative subjects between students in private schools and those in state-funded schools.

Lack of qualified dance teachers: The number of PGCE dance teacher training courses is at an all-time low, with just four remaining in England and the closing of more to come due to reforms in the delivery of Initial Teacher Training. There are currently no dance specific post graduate teacher training courses within Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland[5]. NSCD have responded to this by developing their MA teaching provision to embrace in-person delivery of skills in teaching and facilitating in creative arts subjects aligned with the professional standards framework for ALT-HE and aimed at teachers working across small specialist institutions as well as graduates from BA arts courses.

The percentage of entries to Expressive Arts subjects are lowest in Yorkshire and the Humber, the North East, and the West Midlands – with the latter two regions having the highest percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.[6] The decline of dance in state schools, coupled with the reduction in funding for

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[4] Johnston, C. & A. Westwood. 2023. Cost of living and higher education students, England: 30 January to 13 February 2023. Office for National Statistics.
https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/educationandchildcare/bulletins/costoflivingandhighereducationstudentsengland/30januaryto13february2023

[5] One Dance UK (2023). Taking it higher: Dance in HE. https://www.onedanceuk.org/media/rz1hw55k/he-report-2023.pdf

[6] Cultural Learning Alliance Report Card 2025

youth dance initiatives, is changing the trajectory of the dance industry, making it more difficult for higher education providers to recruit applicants from the most disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Department for Education (DfE) have recently announced funding cuts to the Centre for Advanced Training (CAT) scheme. In 2023-24, 48% of NSCDs UK domicile new entrants had trained at a CAT scheme. The uncertainty of this provision is extremely worrying for the dance sector, especially considering the reduction in GCSE and A-level provision across the country.

Value of the arts: With the government focusing on STEM subjects, coupled with the regular use of derogatory language used by the Government and media when describing creative subjects as 'low value', 'non-priority' and 'dead end', fewer and fewer young dancers are getting the exposure to dance within a school setting. Through our pre-vocational training programme, we have recognised that career advice in schools is lacking and therefore are not adequately supporting young people to explore creative options. This has been recognised by Employment & Skills Leeds, who have created Leeds Creative Skills Festival to plug this gap. The national initiative *Discover! Creative Careers*, also demonstrates the national need to support careers in the arts.

Uni Connect suitability: As a specialist provider, it is more challenging to take advantage of Uni Connect partnerships, as in our experience, the schools they partner with do not offer dance on the curriculum, and therefore the learners do not have an opportunity to build the specialist skillset a NSCD applicant would need to succeed at audition. NSCD have found that it is more successful in partnering with youth dance organisations, such as those attached to a professional company, or individual schools who support dance, rather than utilising a Uni Connect partnership. These youth dance organisations are also experiencing reductions in funding and are therefore experiencing instability.

High cost of being a small specialist provider: As evidenced above, as a small specialist provider, we mostly offer Access activities independently of partnership initiatives which would reduce cost. Our size and location add pressure on our resources. In addition, we have previously missed out on funding opportunities because we did not have a large enough cohort yet also struggle to receive funding from private trusts who tend to select London based institutions. Our limited resources also impacts our ability to improve some of our structures, for example, to be part of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT), as well as attend training and conferences provided by organisations such as the National Education Opportunities Network (NEON) as they outprice us.

Small datasets: As a small provider, the data we have drawn upon is small cohort data which means that analysis and statistical significance is more limited, and the data is more volatile. We have factored this in when setting targets for this APP, to ensure they are ambitious, yet realistic given the above-mentioned issues. Small datasets also limit our ability to explore disaggregated data and intersections of characteristics. We have explored and provided assessment where we considered it meaningful and are committed to building up our evidence based over a longer period to support the capacity for more comprehensive analysis.

3. OBJECTIVES

From the assessment of performance (Annex A) and consideration of Risks (above, and Annex B), we have identified the following objectives that are our priorities under this Plan:

Target Reference (Annex C, Table 5b)	Objectives	Intervention Strategy
PTA1	To increase the proportion of students from IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 2 areas enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 26.0% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 30% by 2035-36.	IS1, IS2

| PTA2 | To increase the proportion of students from the Global Majority enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 21.3% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 25% by 2035-36. | IS1, IS3 |
| PTA3 | To increase the proportion of students who identify as male enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 20.4% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 23% by 2035-36. | IS1, IS3 |

4. INTERVENTION STRATEGIES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

We have developed strategies to address risks to equality of opportunity and achieve our objectives. These strategies:

- Outline activities to mitigate risks and meet objectives and targets.
- Identify who will design, deliver, and evaluate the activities, along with an estimated cost.
- Include an evaluation plan.
- Are based on evidence from sector best practices and local insights from students.

4.1 PUBLICATION PLAN

We are dedicated to sharing the evaluation findings from all our intervention strategies. Publication plans are indicative and will expand as dissemination opportunities arise. Relevant evaluation outcomes will also inform and drive ongoing practice improvements.

Format of findings	Sharing of findings
We will produce an annual summary progress and review report, which will: 1. Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities across our Intervention Strategies based on the achievement of intended outcomes. 2. Capture learning and insights that inform improvements in practice and any appropriate changes and developments. Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website/SEER website. Findings will also be shared internally to relevant committees and forum groups, to inform practice and decision making. See 'Evaluation Strategy' section.	Progress 'highlights' of what both works and doesn't work will be shared annually.
We will produce an Evaluation to Date or End of Project Report (whichever is relevant) capturing all evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website and the SEER website	4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2030 and/or at the conclusion of projects. For Financial Support evaluation, this will be every 3 years, from 2027-28.
We will also contribute at conferences and through workshops and events hosted by networks such as SEER, NEON and GuildHE.	At minimum every 2 years, starting from 2026-27.
We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO.	As they arise – at a minimum every two years

INTERVENTION STRATEGY 1: TO DEMYSTIFY THE PERCEPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND NSCD FOR APPLICANTS FROM UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS.

This intervention strategy is designed to provide target groups with information and guidance on higher education, and the benefits of studying dance at NSCD.

This is done in four broad ways:

1. Giving pre-16 pupils a positive experience of dance.
2. Supporting target groups to engage with NSCD.
3. Ensuring that information is accessible and inclusive.
4. Evolving our offer to appeal to target groups.

Objectives:

To increase the proportion of students from IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 2 areas enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 26.0% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 30% by 2035-36.

To increase the proportion of students from the Global Majority enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 21.3% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 25% by 2035-36.

To increase the proportion of students who identify as male enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 20.4% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 23% by 2035-36.

Targets: PTA_1, PTA_2, PTA_3 – See Annex C, Table 5b.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Perceptions of higher education (EORR Risk 3). This intervention also addresses knowledge and skills (EORR Risk 1) and information and guidance (EORR Risk 2).

Evidence Base and Rationale: We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, plus a range of other research and best practice references.

The research suggests that partnerships with schools and colleges have been a very effective approach to widening participation for studying in HE[7] and long-term engagement with schools supports building local knowledge of student needs and facilitates cultural change across the partnership, benefitting students from our target groups in particular.

Structural barriers such as discrimination; lack of belonging, representation and role models; cost of equipment, participation and admissions, etc., that disadvantaged students (e.g., students from low-income families, first-in-the-family in HE, Global Majority, disabled, etc.) face in accessing dance education pre-HE (outside of the curriculum), dance-related outreach, and admissions activities to study dance in HE, combined with perceptions among such students and their parents of dance, as elitist, impenetrable, and financially risky to pursue for HE study and a career, and of HE generally as too

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[7] Comunian, R., Dent, T., O'Brien, D., Read, T. & Wreyford, N. 2023. Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category. KCL. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

expense, which translates into lower rates of such students applying and enrolling to study dance in HE.[89101112]

Workshops, subject tasters, and campus visits[1314151617] that integrate information, advice, and guidance (IAG) on accessing HE are all likely to have small, positive effects on student attitudes and aspirations related to HE, confidence in the ability to achieve sufficient entry qualifications for, and a sense of belonging to HE.

For the creative subjects, helping teachers enhance their pedagogic skills increases their students' engagement and aspirations for studying it in HE. This is especially applicable to Global Majority students[18].

Evaluation: We will evaluate the activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and 2 standards of evidence, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being met. As well as evaluating each individual activity, we will explore how groups of activity within the strategy contribute towards achieving the desired outcomes and, where appropriate, the overall objective. The strategy will begin from 2026-27, with findings published as outlined in our publication plan. The table below outlines how we will evaluate each activity with this intervention strategy.

[8] Golden, E. 2018. From Tropes to Troupes: Misty Copeland and the Hyper-Whiteness of Ballet. The Cupola: Scholarship at the Gettysburg College. Student Publications. https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/student_scholarship/700/

[9] Donnelly, M., P. Lažetić, A. Sandoval-Hernandez, K. Kumar & S. Whewall. 2019. An Unequal Playing Field: Extra-Curricular Activities, Soft Skills and Social Mobility. University of Bath. Social Mobility Commission. https://socialmobility.independent-commission.uk/app/uploads/2024/07/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf

[10] Johnson, O. 2017. The Black Sheep is the Black Dancer. Dance Major Journal, 5. http://dx.doi.org/10.5070/D551036259 Retrieved from https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7003g023

[11] Prichard, R. R. 2024. Privilege in Dance Education: A Discussion for Students and Teachers. Journal of Dance Education, 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2024.2321150

[12] ICM Ltd. 2019. Perceptions of Higher Education Outreach and Access Activity. Office for Students. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3905/perceptions-of-higher-education-outreach-and-access-activity.pdf

[13] TASO evidence toolkit, on information, advice, and guidance: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/information-advice-and-guidance/

[14] TASO evidence toolkit on multi-intervention outreach: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/multi-intervention-outreach/

[15] TASO evidence toolkit on pre-entry study and soft-skills support: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/study-and-soft-skills-support-pre-entry/

[16] Robinson, D. & V. Salvestrini. 2020. The impact of interventions for widening participation to higher education. A review of the evidence. Education Policy Institute. https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020-1.pdf

[17] Austen, L., R. Hodgson, C. Heaton, N. Pickering & J. Dickinson. 2021. Access, retention, attainment and progression: an integrative review of demonstrable impact on student outcomes. Advance HE. http://shura.shu.ac.uk/29312/

[18] Hallam, S. & S. Burns. 2017. Progression in instrumental music making for learners from disadvantaged communities: A Literature Review. Arts Council England. https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/In_harmony_Literature_review.pdf

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation (Standards of evidence denoted at T1, T2, and T3)
Schools and youth dance outreach work Activities include: - **INSPIRE**: 6-week KS3/4 schools project with campus visit for participants and families. - **Student Placements**: Undergraduate students delivering work related to studies in schools and venues with high numbers of targeted pupils/members. - **Access Tour**: 1-off workshops and progression talks across the UK for potential undergraduate applicants.	Access and Participation Manager NSCD Advocates Administration and resource NSCD building and theatre space NSCD theatre technician NSCD Teaching Staff Students choosing the Teaching Dance module Participating placement venues T shirts Flyers	**Intermediate outcomes**: - Increased number of targeted participants involved in the project. - Increased number of participants from target groups visiting NSCD's facilities for the first time. - Increase of confidence, knowledge of NSCD and awareness of NSCD for participants and families (IAG). - Increased number of participants engaging with another NSCD programme post-intervention. - Increased knowledge base of dance career opportunities for local participants. - Increased number of targeted dancers attending NSCD Undergraduate Experience Days and/or Open Days. - Positive relationships built with dance practitioners across the country who can advocate for NSCD (strategic relationship development). **Long-term outcomes**: - Increased number of targeted applications and enrolments to NSCD undergraduate courses. - Increased number of new entrants from target groups at NSCD.	**Process Evaluation**: - Data Analysis: number and % of participants with target characteristics (T1). - Track participants who engage in NSCD activity post intervention (T1). - Output analysis: Number of activities delivered(T1) - Data Analysis: number and % of participants with targeted characteristics at Undergraduate Experience Day and Open Day (T1). - Data Analysis: number and % of UG applicants and enrolments with target characteristics (T1). - Data Analysis: number and % of UG new entrants with target characteristics (T1). **Impact Evaluation**: - Pre- and post- participant surveys to measure changes to confidence, knowledge and awareness of NSCD (T2). - Tracking future engagement with schools who took part in INSPIRE (T2). - Tracking future engagement with venue staff who engaged in the Access Tour (T2).

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation (Standards of evidence denoted at T1, T2, and T3)

Supporting targeted individuals/groups to NSCD
 	
Activities include:
 	
• **Open Day Travel Bursary**: For one youth dance/school group to attend an NSCD undergraduate open day.
 	
• **Open Rehearsals**: Schools invited to NSCD for campus tour, workshop, talk and observe classes.
 	
• Supporting Centre for Advanced Training (CAT) students: Host **CAT Audition Toolkit** inviting all national CAT students to NSCD for day of workshops and audition preparation.
	Access and Participation Manager
	
	Learning & Participation staff members
	
	NSCD Teaching Staff
	
	NSCD building and theatre space.
	
	NSCD CAT Manager
	
	NSCD Student Demonstrators
	
	Student rehearsal
	
	Administration and Resource
	
	Marketing materials
		Intermediate outcomes:
		
		• Continued positive relationship with the youth dance organisations across the UK.
		• Increased number of participants from underrepresented groups visiting NSCD.
		• Increased number of participants engaging with an NSCD programme post-intervention.
		• Dancers from target groups feel that NSCD is inclusive.
		• Participants are engaged and enthused to find out more about NSCD.
		• Participants feel confident that they would fit in at NSCD.
		• Participants gain knowledge and see dance training as a viable pathway.
		
		Long-term outcomes:
		• Increased number of pupils from target groups applying for NSCD undergraduate courses.
		• Increased number of targeted new entrants at NSCD.
			Process Evaluation:
			
			• Data Analysis: number and % of participants with target characteristics (T1).
			• Data Analysis: number and % of participants from different areas of the UK. (T1)
			• Track participants who engage in NSCD activity post intervention (T1).
			• Data Analysis: number and % of UG applicants and enrolments with target characteristics (T1).
			
			Impact Evaluation:
			
			• Survey with group leaders to:
			  - Understand participants' impressions of NSCD and studying dance at HE (T2).
			  - Understand group leaders' future plans to signpost participants to NSCD (T2).
			  - Measure which participants were planning to attend Open Day independently of intervention (T2).
			  - Measure participants engagement in intervention (T2)
			  - Measure participants intentions to find out more about NSCD (T2).
			  - Understanding of NSCD's application process (T2)

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation (Standards of evidence denoted at T1, T2, and T3)
			• Short participant survey to measure students' perceptions of NSCD before and after activity.
Collaborative male-identifying activities Activities include: • **Kick Off Boys Project (KO):** Partnership project offering weekly dance classes for male-identifying young dancers with performance opportunities. • **Collaborative Male-identifying Project:** Partnership project with other dance conservatoires offering male-identifying young dancers the opportunity to find out more about dance at HE through 1-off experience day.	Learning and Participation Co-ordinator Access and Participation Manager NSCD advocate NSCD Student Demonstrator Studio space (KO - provided by partner) Studio space – on campus & off site Teaching assistant (provided by partner) Administration and resource Tickets for performance Costumes T shirts Positive relationship with local dance organisations. Positive relationship with other dance conservatoires COLLIDE Dance Co.	**Intermediate outcomes**: • Improved technical and creative skills of participants. • Male-identifying dancers feel supported and comfortable to participate in dance training. • Male-identifying dancers feel a sense of belonging in a dance environment. • Male-identifying dancers identify that there are options for studying dance at HE. • KO Participants continuing training on NSCD CAT Scheme as a precursor to HE training. • Increased numbers of male-identifying dancers applying for HE dance courses. • Male-identifying applicants receive offers to undergraduate courses. **Long-term outcomes**: • Increased number of male-identifying dancers pursuing dance at higher education. • Increased number of male-identifying new entrants at NSCD. • Increased gender diversity in the dance ecology.	**Process Evaluation**: • Track participants who engage in NSCDs CAT Scheme post intervention (T1). • Track participants who progress onto study dance in HE (T1). • Data Analysis: number and % of male-identifying UG applicants (T1) • Data Analysis: number and % of male-identifying UG students across sector (T1) • Data Analysis: number and % of male-identifying NSCD UG new entrants (T2). **Impact Evaluation**: • A post programme survey for delivery staff to measure the improved technical and creative skills of participants (T2). • A post programme survey for participants to measure their sense of belonging and intentions to study dance at HE (T2). • Start and end of programme surveys to measure the change in participants re-knowledge and confidence (T2).

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation (Standards of evidence denoted at T1, T2, and T3)
Teachers / School Careers Advisors event Event to bring dance teachers and school careers advisors to NSCD to inform about NSCD offer and admissions process.	Studio space Catering Tickets to a performance at Riley Theatre Access & Participation Manager Learning & Participation staff. Head of Undergraduate Studies. NSCD teaching staff. Positive relationship with alumni and schools	**Intermediate outcomes**: • Engaged with new dance teachers and school careers advisors. • Participants learn new information about NSCD's offer & admissions process. • Participants feel inspired and informed after event. • Participants use information gained at event to inform their young dancers at their own venues. **Long-term outcomes**: • Improved relationship with schools / youth dance organisations. • Increased signposting directly from schools / youth dance organisations to young potential applicants.	**Process Evaluation**: • Track participants who engage in event (T1). • Track interactions with venues partners came from post-event (T1). • Track applicants / participants at NSCD access activities from participants' venues (T1). **Impact Evaluation**: • Post-event survey of knowledge, confidence and behaviour (T2). • Follow-up survey to measure how knowledge has been used (T2).
Support with direct application and audition process. Activities include: • **Information and Guidance**: on application/audition process and financial support. • **Application Support Package**: application fee	Access & Participation Manager NSCD Advocates Advocate training Digital resources Administration and resource Training of NSCD advocates Student Finance Co-ordinator NSCD studio space NSCD teaching artists	**Intermediate outcomes**: • Applicants feel confident when completing their application. • Increased number of targeted applicants. • Targeted applicants understand what financial support is available to them. • Cost of applying is not a barrier for potential applicants with low household incomes. • Applicants feel comfortable and confident when auditioning at NSCD. • In-person auditions accessible to all. • Targeted applicants audition for NSCD undergraduate courses.	**Process Evaluation**: • Data Analysis: number and % of UG applicants from target groups (T1). • Data Analysis: number and % of UG applicants attending audition from target groups (T1). • Data Analysis: number and % of UG applicants receiving an offer from target groups (T1). • Data Analysis: number and % of UG new entrants from target groups (T1). • Tracking where participants are located (T1).

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation (Standards of evidence denoted at T1, T2, and T3)
waivers, audition preparation workshops, audition travel bursaries, 1-2-1 support • **Inclusive audition structure**	Admissions Manager Admissions Officer Student demonstrators Access to online meeting platform Bursaries Pre-recorded movement material available to learn in advance.	• Targeted applicants receive offers for NSCD undergraduate courses. • Applicants with disabilities or non-traditional training backgrounds feel comfortable with the audition process. • Applicants can audition regardless of their location. • Applicants can confidently demonstrate their skills to the best of their ability at NSCD auditions. **Long-term outcomes**: • Increase in targeted new entrants at NSCD. • Increasing numbers of applicants from targeted backgrounds receive an offer for NSCD undergraduate courses. • More targeted students on NSCD undergraduate courses.	**Impact Evaluation**: • Start and end of activity surveys to measure change in confidence at recruitment events (T2). • Data analysis: number and % of students enrolling who received an application fee waiver (T1). • Focus groups with youth dance leaders to understand potential barriers for applicants (T2). • Focus group at the end of audition to measure how participants felt during the process (T2).

Approximate cost of Intervention Strategy 1 over the four years of this plan: £193,000

4.2 INTERVENTION STRATEGY 2: TO BUILD KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR APPLICANTS FROM UNDER RESOURCED BACKGROUNDS

This intervention strategy is designed to support target groups to develop their knowledge and skills over a longer period, in order help them to receive an offer at a NSCD audition.

Objective: To increase the proportion of students from IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 2 areas enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 26.0% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 30% by 2035-36.

Target: PTA_1 – See Annex C, Table 5b.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Knowledge and skills (EORR Risk 1).

Evidence Base and Rationale: We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, plus a range of other research and best practice references.

The research suggests that prospective students from our target groups face social capital and cost-related challenges around preparing to apply to study creative subjects in HE[19]. Supporting them with preparing for the application process (e.g., putting together application portfolios, or attending auditions or interviews) is beneficial but may itself be prohibitively expensive when it requires attendance on campus and involves a consultation fee.

Pre-HE entry financial support is most successful when it is easy to understand and apply for, the eligibility criteria are clearly communicated and targeted at prospective beneficiaries[20]

Embedding mental health and wellbeing into curricular and co-curricular activities achieve a wide range of impacts, from improved mental health, general wellbeing literacy, and development of coping mechanisms and awareness of the available support and how to access it, to increased self-reporting and seeking support by student groups that generally are less likely to report and seek help[21]

Evaluation - We will evaluate the activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and 2 standards of evidence, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being met. As well as evaluating each individual activity, we will explore how groups of activity within the strategy contribute towards achieving the desired outcomes and, where appropriate, the overall objective. The strategy will begin from 2026-27, with findings published as outlined in our publication plan. The table below outlines how we will evaluate each activity with this intervention strategy.

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[19] Comunian, R., Dent, T., O'Brien, D., Read, T. & Wreyford, N. 2023. Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category. KCL. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

[20] Robinson, D. & V. Salvestrini. 2020. The impact of interventions for widening participation to higher education. A review of the evidence. Education Policy Institute. https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020-1.pdf

[21] Wavehill. 2022. What Works in Supporting Student Mental Health. Final Report to the Office for Students. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/7584/evaluation-of-the-mhcc-what-works.pdf

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
ELEVATE Long term audition preparation programme to upskill targeted applicants.	NSCD teaching staff NSCD advocates NSCD student demonstrators Access and Participation Manager Studio & classroom space Administration and resource Tickets to student performances Arts Award – workbook / assessment / certificates. T-shirts	**Intermediate outcomes**: • Participants make an informed decision about continuing their dance training. • Participants audition for CertHE Dance course. • Participants have the knowledge and skills they require to be offered a place on a NSCD undergraduate course. **Long-term outcomes**: • Participants enrol onto a NSCD undergraduate course. • Increased number of targeted new entrants at NSCD.	**Process Evaluation:** • Tracking how many participants audition for CertHE Dance at NSCD (T1). • Track how many participants receive an offer for CertHE Dance (T1). • Track how many participants enrol onto NSCD UG courses (T1). • Data Analysis: number and % of UG new entrants with target characteristics (T1). **Impact Evaluation**: • Start and end of programme surveys to measure change in knowledge, confidence and behaviour (T2).
Access Bursaries Bursaries for young people to access pre-vocational youth dance training at a reduced rate.	Financial resource Leverhulme Under-18s Arts Scholarships Administration NSCD Learning & Participation Children's Saturday School offer NSCD Learning & Participation's Youth Programme	**Intermediate outcomes**: • Targeted participants can access high quality dance training. • Recipients can increase their technical and creative dance skills. • Recipients progress through NSCD training programmes, as appropriate. **Long-term outcome**: • Recipients apply for NSCD undergraduate courses.	**Process Evaluation**: • Data Analysis: Demographics of bursary recipients (T1). • Tracking activities offered to bursary recipients (T1). • Tracking which NSCD activities bursary recipients progress onto (T1). • Track number of recipients who apply for NSCD UG courses (T1).

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
	NSCD Summer School NSCD's VERVE Easter Course Head of Learning and Participation Learning and Participation Co-ordinator Access and Participation Manager	• Recipients receive an offer for an NSCD undergraduate course.	• Track number of recipients who receive an offer for NSCD UG courses (T1). **Impact Evaluation:** • After intervention survey to measure impact on the participants' ability to access provision which increases technical and creative dance skills (T2).
Supporting Centre for Advanced Training (CAT) students Providing health and wellbeing support for dancers on NSCD's CAT scheme.	Administration and resource Student Support & Wellbeing Manager CAT Manager	**Intermediate outcomes:** • Targeted participants are more likely to continue on the CAT Scheme. • Targeted participants develop their knowledge and skills in resilience and self-efficacy. • Targeted participants receive offers for NSCD undergraduate courses. **Long-term outcome:** • Increase number of targeted new entrants at NSCD.	**Process Evaluation:** • Tracking number of targeted CAT students who leave the scheme across years (T1). • Data Analysis: number and % of UG new entrants with target characteristics (T1). **Impact Evaluation:** • End of year participant surveys to measure participants' knowledge and skills in resilience and self-efficacy (T2).

Approximate cost of Intervention Strategy 2 over the four years of this plan: £66,000

4.3 INTERVENTION STRATEGY 3: TO ENCOURAGE APPLICANTS FROM THE GLOBAL MAJORITY AND THOSE WHO IDENTIFY AS MALE TO ENROL ONTO NSCD'S UNDERGRADUATE COURSES.

This intervention strategy is designed to raise the profile of dancers from target groups to help potential applicants feel a sense of belonging in the dance community and at NSCD.

Objectives:

To increase the proportion of students from the Global Majority enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 21.3% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 25% by 2035-36.

To increase the proportion of students who identify as male enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 20.4% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 23% by 2035-36.

Targets: PTA_2, PTA_3– See Annex C, Table 5b.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Perceptions of higher education (EORR Risk 3).

Evidence Base and Rationale: We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, plus a range of other research and best practice references.

The research suggests that creating opportunities for engagement with creative subjects early, at Key Stages 3-4, motivates Global Majority students to engage with such subjects as much as White students, who are the comparator group[22].

Belonging to a learning community correlates positively with aspirations and motivation for learning, expectations of oneself, and academic achievement[23][24]

Lack of inclusivity, e.g. in the curriculum in terms of belonging and representation, associates with gaps in continuation, completion, and attainment for, e.g., Global Majority students, care experienced students, first-in-the-family students, and students from lower socio-economic ('working-class') backgrounds[25][26]

Role-modelling and coaching by staff who 'look', 'speak', and have similar backgrounds as disadvantaged and underrepresented student groups[27] can positively affect student transition to HE, belonging, continuation, motivation, and self-efficacy[28]; perceived competence, similarity to students, and attainability of the role-model's success may be determining factors for the effectiveness of role-modelling for target groups[29].

[22] Mak H.W. & D. Fancourt. 2021. Do socio-demographic factors predict children's engagement in arts and culture? Comparisons of in-school and out-of-school participation in the Taking Part Survey. PLOS ONE 16(2): e0246936. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0246936

[23] Tinto, V. 1997. Classrooms as communities: Exploring the educational character of student persistence. The Journal of Higher Education, 68(6), pp. 599–623. https://doi.org/10.2307/2959965

[24] Tinto, V. 2003. Learning Better Together: The Impact of Learning Communities on Student Success. Higher Education Monograph Series. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780429279355-3/learning-better-together-vincent-tinto

[25] Arshad-Snyder, S. 2017. The Role of Faculty Validation in Influencing Online Students' Intent to Persist. Dissertation/thesis. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest LLC. search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED576756&site=ehost-live

[26] Hall, M. M., R.E. Worsham, & G. Reavis. 2021. 'The Effects of Offering Proactive Student-Success Coaching on Community College Students' Academic Performance and Persistence', Community College Review, 49 (2): 202-237. http://doi.org/10.1177/0091552120982030

[27] Darby University. 2024. Role Models and Allies. https://www.derby.ac.uk/about/equality-and-diversity/role-models-allies/

[28] Lunsford, L., G. Crisp, E. Dolan & B. Wuetherick. 2017. Mentoring in Higher Education. SAGE Publications Ltd. https://tinyurl.com/4ne83h72

[29] Gladstone, J.R. & A. Cimpian. 2021. Which role models are effective for which students? A systematic review and four recommendations for maximizing the effectiveness of role models in STEM. IJ STEM, Ed 8(59). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40594-021-00315-x

Evaluation - We will evaluate the activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and 2 standards of evidence, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being met. As well as evaluating each individual activity, we will explore how groups of activity within the strategy contribute towards achieving the desired outcomes and, where appropriate, the overall objective. The strategy will begin from 2026-27, with findings published as outlined in Section 4.1. The table below outlines how we will evaluate each activity with this intervention strategy.

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
Raising the profile of work which supports and advocates for People of Global Majority (PoGM). Including: • Celebrating PoGM Patrons • Northern Colour • Programming work of PoGM artists in Riley Theatre • Diverse dance styles on curriculum • Diverse dance styles on offer as enrichment activity • PoGM Staff / guest teachers • CEO on networks • Diversity Working Group • Partnership work • PoGM alumni advocates delivering access activity. • Celebrating the diversity of the current student body. • Diversifying images used in NSCD print – ensuring they are authentic and up to date.	Administration and resource Theatre space Visiting companies Whole school commitment	**Intermediate outcomes**: • Community experience Global Majority led performance work. • NSCD builds and strengthens reputation for supporting and championing Global Majority artists **Long-term outcome**: • Global Majority applicants choose to study undergraduate courses at NSCD.	**Process Evaluation**: • Tracking audience numbers of Global Majority led performance work (T1). • Data Analysis: number and % of UG new entrants from the Global Majority (T1). **Impact Evaluation**: • Focus group with Diversity Working Group to understand students' perceptions of NSCD (T2).
Raising the profile of work which supports and advocates for male-identifying dancers Including: • COLLIDE Dance Co • Kick Off Boys Dance Project	Administration and resource Print Digital assets	**Intermediate outcomes**: • Increase engagement on all NSCD activities for male-identifying dancers • Male-identifying applicants choose to study at NSCD	**Process Evaluation**: • Track numbers of male identifying dancers on all NSCD activities (T1).

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
- Diversifying images used in NSCD print – ensuring they are authentic and up to date. - Collaborative conversations (Northern Dance Get Together) - Collaborating with regional partners to help deliver male-identifying specific activity and awareness. - Careers advice in school for boys – school partnerships	Whole school commitment	**Long-term outcome**: Reputation of supporting and championing male-identifying artists is strengthened.	- Data Analysis: number and % of male-identifying UG applicants (T1). **Impact Evaluation**: - Focus group with Diversity Working Group to understand students' perceptions of NSCD (T2).

Approximate cost of Intervention Strategy 3 over the four years of this plan: £361,000.

5. NSCD WHOLE PROVIDER APPROACH

We take a whole provider approach (WPA) to access and participation, which we have considered under this Plan via participation in emerging research on the WPA, working with our SEER colleagues and led by Professor Liz Thomas. We have evaluated our current WPA context and identified areas where we can go further, as part of the commitments in this Plan. The following provides a summary against the key domains in the WPA approach.

OUR INSTITUTIONAL JOURNEY

Since becoming independently registered with the OfS in September 2022, NSCD have focused our widening access and student success work specifically on our context. This shift marks a significant departure from the previous partnership model under Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (CDD), allowing NSCD to adopt a more granular approach tailored to the needs of a small and specialist dance conservatoire in the North of England. Since CDD, we have implemented new data capturing strategies, specifically looking at our own internal data and built process to utilise this, enabling a student-centred approach. This aligns with the 2022-30 Strategic Plan which runs alongside this APP and is monitored every year across all school departments. Each year, future commitments are identified and published to ensure continuous improvement and accountability. If we are successful in our ambition to have Full Degree Awarding Powers, we will be able to build connections and collaborations with other institutions.

By investing in an Access and Participation Manager, we have been able to identify new ways to increase Access provision and understand how existing support for students can be strengthened and utilised to ensure that at risk groups are being targeted, reducing the attainment gap. NSCD have succeeded in removing attainment gaps for underrepresented students. The five areas of student support are a particular highlight, with 92% of students agreeing that there is sufficient provision of welfare and student support services to meet any needs, in our Student Experience Survey 2023-24.

In 2023, NSCD revised the structure of its Student Union and a Student Union Council was established of 10 course representatives, 5 diversity representatives, a President and a Vice President with all roles paid. Student representatives sit on NSCD high and mid-level committees which contribute to the governance of the institution, including Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EEDI), Access and Participation Committee (APC), Learning Teaching Quality Assurance Committee (LTQAC), Senate and Board of Governors.

OUR INSTITUTIONAL AND SENIOR LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

Embedded through our current strategic plan is an ongoing commitment to EEDI. Within our four strategic development strands (*shaping who we are, building our foundation, building our visibility and profile,* and *shaping our future*), EEDI is critical to both our successful development and our institutional values. NSCD sees corporate social responsibility as crucial to facilitate our aims of enabling sustainable growth, ensuring financial stability and continuing to develop institutional resilience. NSCD also has a responsibility in how we present ourselves and consider the principles of EEDI in how we build relationships, communities and make a difference through the experiences of our audiences, staff and students. By embracing EEDI in this way it can be a key driver in shaping NSCD's future, giving a clear focus and rationale to take meaningful action.

The senior leadership team and heads of departments chair and participate in all NSCD committees, fostering a collaborative vision across departments and ensuring the Widening Participation (WP) agenda is fully embedded. This commitment extends beyond the institution, with staff actively contributing to external boards and networks, including Conservatoires UK's EDI Committee, SEER, GuildHE, Leeds33 (cultural education partnership), Leeds Learning Alliance (city wide inclusion outcomes for young people), the Safe, Just, Inclusion Programme and the National Centre for Advanced Training in Dance. NSCD also works with Leeds Trinity University, contributing to networks, conferences, and ongoing

conversations focused on challenging issues of diversity, race, equity, and social justice in higher education across the North. NSCD staff across the organisation sit on multiple sub-committees which support student success, such as Financial Assistance Panel and Student Review Board. By utilising the improved internal data dashboards, we take a pro-active approach to supporting students and often seek them out to ensure they are aware of available support. All NSCD staff are required to complete mandatory Equality and Diversity training on a regular basis. This training is also made available to the Governing Body, the Student Council and the Advocates trained to represent NSCD in the community. Alongside this, the EEDI Committee implement and monitor staff training which has included Social Inclusion Training, Resilience Training and specific EEDI training tailored based on staff feedback. As NSCD works with many guest tutors, the EEDI Committee have been updating the Guest Tutor Handbook to outline protocols and expectations for engaging respectfully and inclusively with underrepresented groups.

Through NSCD's Fundraising Working Group, we work cross-departmentally to delegate funding, specifically looking at increasing student financial support, and supporting the access provision interventions.

The Access and Participation Manager is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this Plan, monitoring under-represented groups in our student population, ensuring commitments are delivered, and embedding access and participation across the institution. As part of the monitoring and reporting process we have an Access and Participation Committee, reporting to the EEDI Committee and Senate, which in turn reports to the Board of Governors. The group oversees the implementation, monitoring, review, and evaluation of the APP, advise on research, and make reports and recommendations to EEDI and Senate, including highlighting risk and making any necessary changes to the APP. If the group finds that progress towards objectives set out in the APP is not being achieved, it may recommend to EEDI and Senate to increase investment levels.

OUR WPA STUDENT EXPERIENCE: WORKING ACROSS THE STUDENT LIFECYCLE AND EXPERIENCE FOR ALL STUDENTS

As a small specialist institution, we have the advantage of knowing our students very well. Through our improved data collections and our process in place to collect student voice, NSCD have a pro-active approach to supporting students. NSCD aim to support students from first point of contact through to progression into the industry. We apply the same methods and support to all users, including those on Children's Saturday School, Youth Classes, NSCD's Centre for Advanced Training (CAT) programme, undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Providing dance training opportunities from age 4 onwards, enables us to engage with our community and provide training and progression routes for all.

Access and Outreach

NSCD's Learning and Participation department offers affordable weekly dance classes, intensive courses for young dancers, and community performances at the on-site Riley Theatre.

We collaborate with youth dance organisations across England and Wales and support professional development through the Children and Young People's Dance Network North and their status as a National Portfolio Organisation.

NSCD also partners with schools and colleges through tailored programmes like NSCD+, careers events, and work placements to raise attainment through dance.

The Centre for Advanced Training (CAT) scheme, funded by the Department for Education, delivers outreach and audition support to prepare young people from diverse areas for professional dance training.

Transition into HE

As mentioned in intervention strategy one, NSCD provide support for individuals at risk of not having equality of opportunity, to support their transition into HE. In addition, NSCD also has:

- Open Days
- The Framework for Contextual Admissions and Programme Design which supports NSCD to ensure that those at risk of not having equality of opportunity, are provided with opportunities to help them to succeed, at both audition and throughout their studies.

Financial Support

- A cross-departmental Fundraising Working Group has been established to identify financial needs within the student body, and to support NSCD's ambitious outreach activity.
- A Financial Assistance Panel meets three times a year to allocate student support funds to students.
- Alongside the NSCD Bursary, an annual bursary of £1,000 is awarded to students who are care leavers, estranged or have a refugee status.

Supporting Students with Cost of Living

NSCD students have many contact hours which can impair their ability to find part-time employment to support their studies. To address this, we offer a range of support, including paid roles on campus, information on Individual Student Funding and signposting to a range of job opportunities.

Health & Wellbeing Support

- Wellbeing support is primarily provided through face-to-face individual student appointments. Students are generally seen for an initial assessment within a few days, with the option to access weekly counselling support within 2 weeks. Emergency and drop-in appointments are always available throughout the week.
- Online resources and ways to access external support are provided for students on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to access support outside of school hours.
- NSCD provide on-site physiotherapy and sports massage provision. This is supplemented by subsidised Osteopathy appointments at The Good Health Centre when student demand cannot be met by the on-site physio team.

Learner support

Learner support is offered to all students, across all programmes. All new students are invited to complete a Quickscan assessment which can provide some indicators for the Learner Support Tutor to further investigate with the student. Students can book 1-2-1 tutorials with the Learner Support Tutor, if in need of help with written assignments.

English Language Support

Although English Language Support is often accessed by our overseas students, it is open to anyone who does not have English as a first language.

Academic Support

- Academic tutorials, scheduled into curriculum time.

- Alternative assessment: NSCD's curriculum is inclusive in design, from content and delivery through to assessment, where students will have multiple ways to present and share their learning in a way that suits them.

Careers support

- Embedded into curriculum: We provide opportunities for students to work in collaboration with other arts organisations and professional settings, and for students to engage with different audiences at different stages of their professional training.
- Guest artists: In 2023-24, there were 82 guest artists invited to work with NSCD's undergraduate students, 39 of these were NSCD alumni. This commitment to collaboration with employers and the industry will continue over the life of this plan.
- Intensive Opportunities: NSCD work in partnership with organisations such as Hofesh Shechter Company and Stopgap Dance Company who, amongst others, offer students opportunities to work on short intensives.
- Opportunities on Moodle: on NSCD's virtual learning environment (VLE), information is shared on careers, as well as up-to-date opportunities on offer to students internally and externally. This is updated weekly.
- Careers Week: NSCDs annual Careers Weeks offer tools and guidance for final year BA students as they prepare to enter the profession, provided by a diverse range of guest practitioners.

Alumni / Professional support

- NSCD alumni are invited to attend the annual Careers Weeks. They are also invited to join the NSCD alumni mailing list, who will highlight their work and opportunities to its network.
- Advocates: paid positions where alumni receive training from NSCD teaching and access staff, to then deliver workshops and talks to support the Access agenda including the Access Tour, Undergraduate Experience Days, ELEVATE and INSPIRE.
- Northern Colour: as mentioned in intervention strategy three, Northern Colour supports artists of the global majority with a vision to develop their work, increase their visibility and enhance their creative voice within the sector and across the North of England.

Student Voice

- Student Union Council is responsible for gathering student voice from the rest of the student body and ensuring that their views are expressed within the appropriate committees, the planning of student events, and the running of student societies.
- Diversity Working Group: The Student Diversity Representatives meet with the Access and Participation Manager twice a term where actions from EEDI and APC can be discussed and moved forward. There is an open invitation for staff to attend these meetings.
- The Student Voice Forum meets termly to ensure formal mechanisms of student voice are embedded within the school governance.

HEP STRUCTURES THAT PRIORITISE AND FACILITATE WIDENING ACCESS AND STUDENT SUCCESS

All policies are designed within a comprehensive framework to reflect the institution's commitment to fairness, inclusivity, and academic excellence. Policies have been developed in line with the regulatory framework and in the context of sector best practice. Input is gathered from a range of stakeholders, including students, staff, and external partners, to ensure policies address varied needs and foster a culture of inclusion and collaboration.

Key policies to support our access priorities are the EEDI policy, commitments, and action strategy which have all been aligned to the school's strategic plan. The admissions policy and processes are further supported by the Framework for Contextual Admissions and Programme Design which has been developed to support a greater strength in our provision from recruitment through to graduation.

A key facet therefore of the school's approach is that the principles applied during the recruitment process should also be embedded in programme design and delivery, to establish a holistic thread running through the full student life cycle with a view to maximize students' potential achievement and success.

Our Student Engagement & Supporting Students through Studies Policy further supports this commitment by ensuring every student can have tailored support to succeed at the school with a planned approach to student support and alternative assessments where required. Our size and specialism enable us to operate this in a bespoke and highly personalized way.

All school policies and processes are routinely reviewed to ensure alignment with changing legal, social, and academic contexts; this is monitored by Senate and the Board of Governors.

By ensuring these policies and processes are interconnected and well-communicated, helps us to create a cohesive environment that upholds our values while fostering student and staff success.

OUR USE OF DATA AND EVIDENCE

Through our improved data gathering processes we can use this data to improve our work. Data is monitored and analysed and fed into evaluations to improve process. Through our APC, we have embedded a culture of evaluating all interventions and sharing the findings to reflect and improve our offer. With the help of SEER, NSCD have been able to engage with other similar institutions to share practice to ensure that our students are benefiting from our investment into this area.

NSCD hold an annual conference, where guests are invited to share learning and create a culture of collaboration.

As mentioned in Annex A, our datasets are extremely small, which is why NSCD has been improving its internal data capturing processes. We are committed to continue to improve this, with Access and Progression data being an area we would like to develop. NSCD are investigating the possibilities of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to address this.

6. STUDENT CONSULTATION

6.1 STUDENT UNION MODEL

The first enabler on our 2023-30 strategic plan is *Shaping Who We Are*; we aim to Engage, Inspire and Educate. Enabling opportunities to gather student voice is pivotal to this ambition, as it helps us to ensure that student voices influence long-term strategic decisions at NSCD.

The 5 members of the Student Union Council who are Diversity Reps, make up our Diversity Working Group along with the SU President, SU Vice President and Access and Participation Manager. This has an open invitation for all members of staff to attend. This group was formed to ensure that students are inputting on all items concerned with the Equality Equity Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EEDI) and Access and Participation Committee (APC), and to input and feedback on the writing of this Access and Participation Plan.

6.2 COLLABORATION ON THE APP

When writing this APP, NSCD staff worked with the Student Council to discuss ideas which would help our identified at-risk groups access NSCD. Students gave multiple ideas on how to improve our current

outreach work and to make NSCD's offer accessible and attractive to our at-risk groups. Suggestions such as ensuring that case studies of students, alumni and staff who are members of our at-risk groups are spotlighted, highlighting that NSCD entry requirements are not high as the audition is the focus, and reducing 'elitist' language from pre-entry activities have already been implemented. This consultation also helped us to develop the ELEVATE project, ensuring that opportunities to watch professional performances, engaging with families of applicants over zoom, and developing applicants' skills in talking about dance to prepare them for auditions, have all been included. The student diversity representatives, president and vice-president have played the largest role in this, attending Diversity Working Group six times a year to continue to generate new ideas, and reflect on what has taken place.

Student input which has shaped this plan includes:
- Introduction of the Open Day travel bursary.
- Ensuring a school commitment to using diverse NSCD Advocates to deliver Access Tour workshops.
- Utilising current students on Access Interventions when appropriate.
- Programming interventions so they do not conflict with participants' exam periods.

6.3 FUTURE PLANS

The Student Council model introduced in 2023 has been very successful in authentically embedding student voice into NSCD's governing processes and improving the feedback loop so NSCD can learn from their students, implement change, and feedback to them on changes taking place. This model will continue over the life of this plan and be evaluated at regular intervals. All students are regularly invited to apply to be part of the SEER Student Advisory Panel, a group which NSCD can also learn from. NSCD's Access and Participation Manager is also a member of the Leeds33 Youth Voice Pod, where good practice is shared to develop better working practice across Leeds arts organisations and schools.

7. EVALUATION OF THE PLAN

7.1 STRATEGIC CONTEXT FOR EVALUATION

Evaluation and research are part of our 'whole institution' approach to access and participation. Our academic, professional and leadership teams contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of targets, intervention strategies and activities in this plan through supporting and inputting on the range of evaluation measures. Our data team have skills in ensuring data capture is appropriate for the required monitoring and evaluation outputs, including designing new reports and processes to capture, collate and extract data for various evaluation and research questions. We also draw on the skills of staff responsible for the delivery of the Activities in this Plan, and our student representatives, to effectively incorporate evaluation.

In our assessment of our current context for evaluation, using the OfS evaluation self-assessment tool, we are 'emerging' across all areas. We have some foundations in place, but need to develop our practices, including embedding evaluation into activity design and delivery and ensuring feedback cycles into improving practice. Therefore, as we continue to build our cross-institution capacities for effective evaluation and the application of findings to improve practice, staff and student representatives will be supported with relevant training in Theory of Change and evaluation methods, provided through our SEER membership. Students are important in this work, and we will work in partnership with students on the design and implementation of evaluation and research, particularly where this pertains to current students. SEER provides us with additional and specialist evaluation and research expertise to deliver our commitments in these areas. We will actively participate in this network, which provides us with opportunities to be part of collaborative research and evaluation projects and learn and share practice with other members and external stakeholders. SEER host an annual Symposium and regular workshops, roundtables and 'learning lunches' throughout the year, as well as providing us with opportunities to

showcase our practice and insights. We will also engage with TASO and other relevant organisations in calls for evidence, conferences, events, and training.

7.2 ACTIVITY DESIGN

As detailed in the Strategic Measures section of this Plan, evaluation has been established at the start. We have built effective evaluation practice into our Strategies by establishing a range of evaluation attached to the individual activities that contribute towards the overall objective of each Strategy. We can therefore build up an understanding of which activities are 'working' and which are not. We have taken a Theory of Change approach to the development of our Intervention Strategies, identifying clear intended outcomes (intermediate and end) and a supporting evidence base that has informed our activity development and challenged assumptions. We will continue to review, develop and strengthen our Theories of Change (ToC), adding to our evidence base as our evaluation findings emerge and developing enhanced activity-level ToCs where required.

7.3 EVALUATION DESIGN

We have collaborated with SEER and drawn from OfS and TASO toolkits and guidance on effective evaluation approaches. We have considered how the outcomes of activities can be evaluated credibly. Employing mixed method approaches is particularly important, as we will need to rely on qualitative data to support our understanding, or fill gaps, in quantitative data. We will triangulate findings where possible and seek to deepen our insights through qualitative methods. Given the developmental stage of our evaluation practice, the majority of our evaluations are type 1 (narrative), and type 2 (empirical enquiry) of the OfS 'Standards of Evidence'. We have however noted that we will explore and consider where type 3 evaluation could be implemented in future.

Our evaluation approach has also considered the context and scale of the activities and, as we have proposed working with strategic partners in our Intervention Strategies, we wish to note that some flexibility and development may be required as our collaborations take shape, allowing for input, support and advice from partners. Our evaluation approach, data collection and analysis have been formulated on the intended outcomes and objectives of our activities. Where appropriate and possible, we will consider and employ validated scales to our evaluation practices. We have also considered evaluation that spans (a) process and (b) impact, to provide a comprehensive understanding of how our activities are working. We will explore further research projects in relation to our activities and our ambition to better understand the experiences and challenges of target students and issues 48 of equality of opportunity. For example, consultation with students as part of the development of this Plan supports the identification of risks relating to insufficient to personalised academic and non-academic support; however, we consider that there is further research that would add insight to this area.

7.4 IMPLEMENTING OUR EVALUATION PLAN

We will collaborate internally across our team and with our strategic partners to deliver our evaluation plan. Our evaluation process will comply with institutional policies and complies with all legal requirements relating to data protection, following ethical, safeguarding, legal and risk considerations. As noted above, we are members of the Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER) service, with whom we will work in partnership to deliver our evaluation plan. A Data Sharing Agreement has also been established. SEER provides us with opportunities to collaborate on various evaluation and research items, including for example the evaluation of the impact of financial support, using the OfS toolkit. The design of our evaluation has also been heavily informed by intended and projected standardised outcomes being adopted by SEER across its membership base, which not only increases efficiencies but provides opportunities to increase the sample size and evaluation, helping to mitigate the issue of small datasets where these occur. SEER incorporate and draw on TASO guidance on best practices for evaluations. As a practice network, we are also able to participate in peer review of practice and evaluation and share practice and findings. We are also well-placed to respond with agility to interim

findings and emerging data. We can be responsive in flexing our activity accordingly to help to keep us on track to achieve our objectives and targets and continuously improve our practice.

7.5 LEARNING FROM AND DISSEMINATING FINDINGS

We are committed to sharing our learning and findings internally, with our partners, within our close networks and with the broader sector, to develop a stronger and increased volume of evidence about what works and what can be improved. We are pleased to help to grow the evidence base for equality of opportunity in higher education and we will submit evaluation outputs to OfS' repository of evidence as appropriate. In Section 4, we have set out our publishing plan, which includes publishing findings on interim and longer-term outcomes through a range of channels. In developing the format of our communications, we will consider creative and visual methods, and different audiences/purposes. We will ensure that our findings are open access.

We are a member of SEER, GuildHE, the West Yorkshire Boys Impact Hub and Leeds33 Youth Voice Pod, at which we can share and present findings. It is anticipated that we will actively contribute to conferences, network events and publications. Where appropriate we will draw on existing networks to collaborate and engage with similar organisations.

Shared practice across the institution allows for review and feedback on evaluation findings and reports, and discussion regarding the improvements that could be made. More broadly, evaluation findings related to access and participation work will inform other agendas and practice, such as programme review and revalidation, communications and recruitment strategies and community engagement. We will publish the findings of our evaluation activities on our website and with sector bodies as appropriate. Further details about how we will evaluate our intervention strategies is included in Section 4.

8. PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO STUDENTS

8.1 PROSPECTIVE STUDENT COMMUNICATION

Information about fees charged is available to prospective students on NSCD's website. The Admissions team encourage prospective students to get in touch with all concerns where they can also relay this information. NSCD Advocates and staff who deliver outreach and recruitment activity are trained to be able to give accurate information on current fees to all who engage. Course fees information is shared with the Student Loans Company (SLC) in November for the following academic year. The Student Services team also run an online Financial Support Discussion for all new starters and their parents/carers to inform and answer questions on fees, financial support and living costs.

8.2 CURRENT STUDENT COMMUNICATION

To ensure that all students can access financial support, information is published on the website and on the student intranet *Moodle*. All returning and new students are emailed in June, encouraging them to complete the financial support application before the beginning of term. The financial assistance panel then distribute awards in September, whilst encouraging anyone who didn't apply in round one, to do so. Round two of applications are awarded in October. The financial assistance panel also use the internal student dashboard to identify anyone who would be eligible for financial support but who has not applied.

The Student Finance Co-ordinator also uses information shared on the SLC portal to encourage those with a declared annual household income who meet the criteria, to apply for additional financial support. Financial support awarded to NSCD UK-domicile undergraduate students:

Name of award	Eligibility	Amount	Bursary or fee discount?	Automatic or Application	No. available per year
NSCD Bursary	UK undergraduate students with household income £0-25,000	£1,000 per year of course	Cash bursary – in 3 instalments	Automatic	Unlimited
	UK undergraduate students with household income £25,001-35,000	£750 per year of course	Cash bursary – in 3 instalments	Automatic	Unlimited
	UK undergraduate students with household income £35,001-42,875	£500 per year of course	Cash bursary – in 3 instalments	Automatic	Unlimited
Care Leaver & Estranged Students Bursary*	Students who are Care Leaver or Estranged – formal assessment through NSCD	£1,000 per year of course	Cash bursary – in 3 instalments	Automatic	Unlimited
Refugee Bursary*	Have one of the following legal statuses: -Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILD) holders -Humanitarian Protection holders -Refugees, i.e. those granted official 'refugee' status and the related leave to remain as evident from a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) confirmatory letter	£1,000 per year of course	Cash bursary – in 3 instalments	Automatic	Unlimited
Leverhulme Arts Scholarship**	New entrants to the following courses: - BA (hons) Dance (Contemporary) - MA Contemporary Dance Performance	£5,000 per year of course	Cash bursary – in 3 instalments per year	Application	4
Nadine Senior Legacy Fund*	Underrepresented groups	One or more of the following: - Lunch for less - Termly Payments	Lunch for less deducted daily. Termly payments - cash bursary.	Application	Variable

 *Available to all students.   **Funding available 2025-26 to 2027-28

8.3 ENSURING INFORMATION IS ACCESSIBLE

In 2023, working with SEER, NSCD used the OfS Toolkit for Evaluation of Financial Support to ensure that the financial assistance offer was meeting the expectations of our students. NSCD will repeat this in-depth evaluation process every 3 years, which aligns with the expected change in our funding (Leverhulme Arts Scholarship).

Although NSCD has made every effort to ensure that students can access information on Financial Support, we accept that some may not be able to process this information from digital and printed mediums. The Student Services Officer and Student Finance Co-ordinator actively reach out to students who they have identified as not having applied for financial support when they are eligible, including returning students who received financial support in the previous year. The Student Support and Wellbeing Manager also sit on the Financial Assistance Panel, as they have a deeper understanding of individual students' circumstances and can help to ensure that students do not miss opportunities to receive financial support.

ANNEX A – NORTHERN SCHOOL OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE

APP PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

We have conducted a thorough performance assessment based on the latest OfS APP data release (July 2024) which covers up to the 2022-23 monitoring year. We have supplemented this with internal data where relevant and possible, to provide additional insights particularly where datasets are small. From this analysis, we have determined our key Indicators of Risk, which we have explored further using supplementary information, data and evidence from internal and local sources; and, from the wider sector and sector bodies.

We considered performance across all APP measures, at each stage of the lifecycle:
- Access – enrolment
- Continuation – continuing students measured at 1 year and 15 days post initial enrolment
- Completion – students completing their course, up to 6 years after beginning their studies
- Attainment – achievement of a First or 2:1 degree outcome
- Progression – progression into highly skilled employment or further post-graduate study

This assessment presents only the identified indicators of risk areas from our full analysis.

ANALYSIS PROCESS

1. The first layer of analysis explored the whole OfS APP dataset, identifying the Indicators of Risk for further consideration and inclusion in this Annex, as part of our Access and Participation Plan (APP) performance assessment and determination of target areas.
2. Supplementary data (internal and external) and questions are then added to further understand the context for the indicator of risk and the possible occurrence of risks to equality of opportunity.
3. Commentary on our consideration of the risks in the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR), and whether they are occurring in our context, is then provided.

SUMMARY OF INDICATORS OF RISK AND TARGET AREAS

The following table highlights all the indicators of risk we have identified from the full initial data analysis.

Table 1: Summary of Indicators of Risk and Priorities

Metric /Student Group	IMD Quintile 1	TUNDRA	Global Majority	Disabled	Mature learners (21 & over)	ABCS	FSM-eligible learners	Sex
Access	Priority PTA_1		Priority PTA_2		Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	Recommend monitoring using IMD Q1 as proxy	Priority PTA_3
Continuation							Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	
Completion	Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.		Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.			Gap is present. Small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	
Attainment								
Progression								

PRIORITY TARGET AREAS

We have determined that the following priority areas will be of concern under our APP, with associated targets and milestones.

1. Enrolment of students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 & 2).
2. Enrolment of students from the Global Majority.
3. Enrolment of male students.

ANALYSIS - ACCESS

We have identified some risks to equality of opportunity at NSCD at the Access phase of the student lifecycle. Risks are likely the result of multiple factors and complex intersections, including for example, access to pre-entry knowledge and skills, and perceptions of our specialist subject area – dance – as elitist and challenging in terms of career prospects.

Overall, NSCD has had a relatively steady intake of students of around 50-60 students per annum from 2017-18 to 2022-23, except for 2018-19 which had 40 entrants.

INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION (IMD) 2019

In the six years between 2017-18 and 2022-23, NSCD enrolment of students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds (IMD Quintile 1) have fluctuated considerably, from a high of 31.4% in 2018-19, to a low of 9.8% in 2019-20 (Fig. 1) with recent years below the population (20%) and sector (23.6%) levels, averaging 11.4% in our 4- and 2-year data aggregates (Fig.1). Notably, recruitment of students from IMD Quintile 2 is also low, averaging 8.4% in our 4- and 2-year aggregates.

The difference in percentage enrolment rates between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students indicate a considerable enrolment gap, favouring Quintile 5. Although over the latest 4-year average (2019-20 to 2022-23), the gap was 21.7pp (Fig.2) and has reduced to 18.5pp over the 2-year average (2021-22 to 2022-23), this gap is still considerable when compared with the sector. The sector gap is inverse, indicating higher enrolment rates for IMD Quintile 1 students by -2.8pp (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23), increasing to -3.8pp (2-year aggregate, 2021-22 to 2022-23).

Access indicator values for: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019)

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (most deprived)	16.3%	31.4%	9.8%	9.1%	11.5%	12.5%	10.8%	12.0%
Quintile 2	11.6%	8.6%	13.7%	9.1%	7.7%	7.1%	9.4%	7.4%
Quintile 3	18.6%	[DPL]	35.3%	22.7%	19.2%	23.2%	25.1%	21.3%
Quintile 4	23.3%	17.1%	9.8%	20.5%	28.8%	28.6%	22.2%	28.7%
Quintile 5 (least deprived)	30.2%	37.1%	31.4%	38.6%	32.7%	28.6%	32.5%	30.6%

Key
- Quintile 1 (most deprived)
- Quintile 2
- Quintile 3
- Quintile 4
- Quintile 5 (least deprived)

Figure 1

34
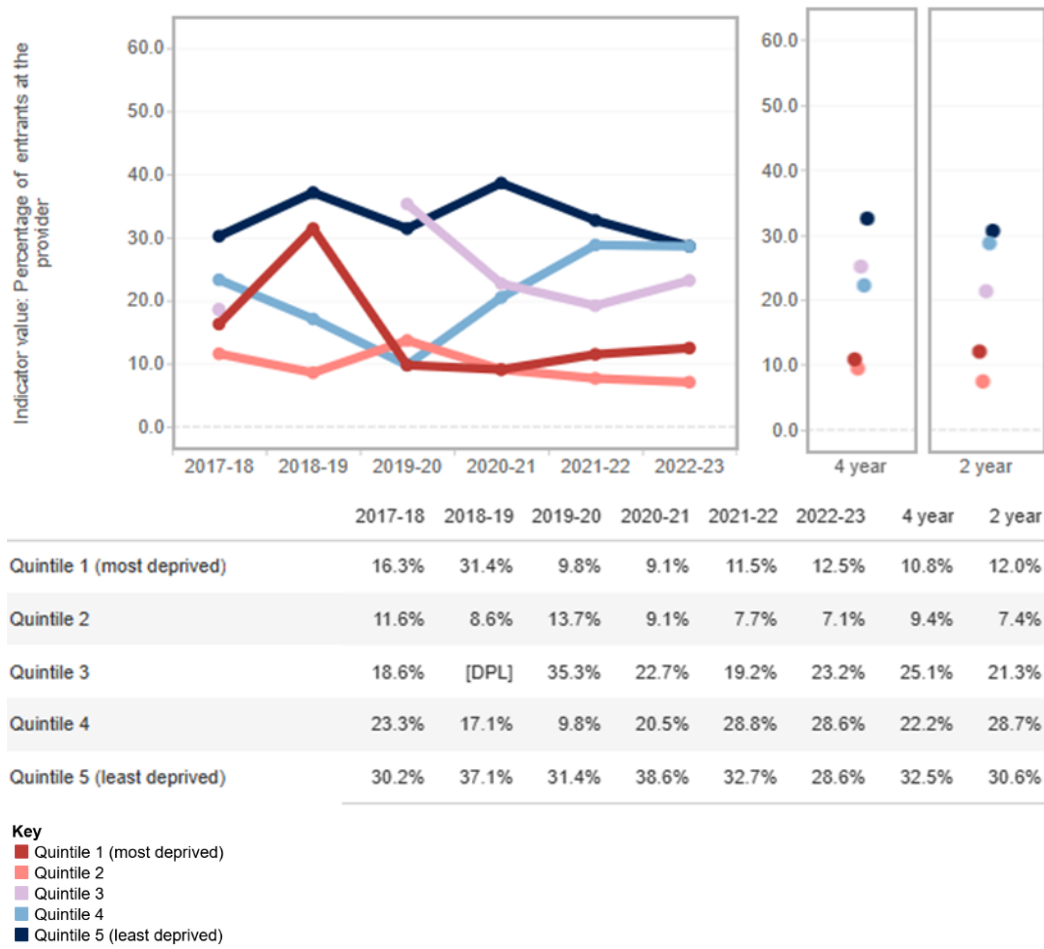
Access gap: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) – Quintile 5 compared with 1

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	14.0pp	5.7pp	21.6pp	29.5pp	21.2pp	16.1pp	21.7pp	18.5pp

Change in gap from 2021-22 to 2022-23: -5.1pp
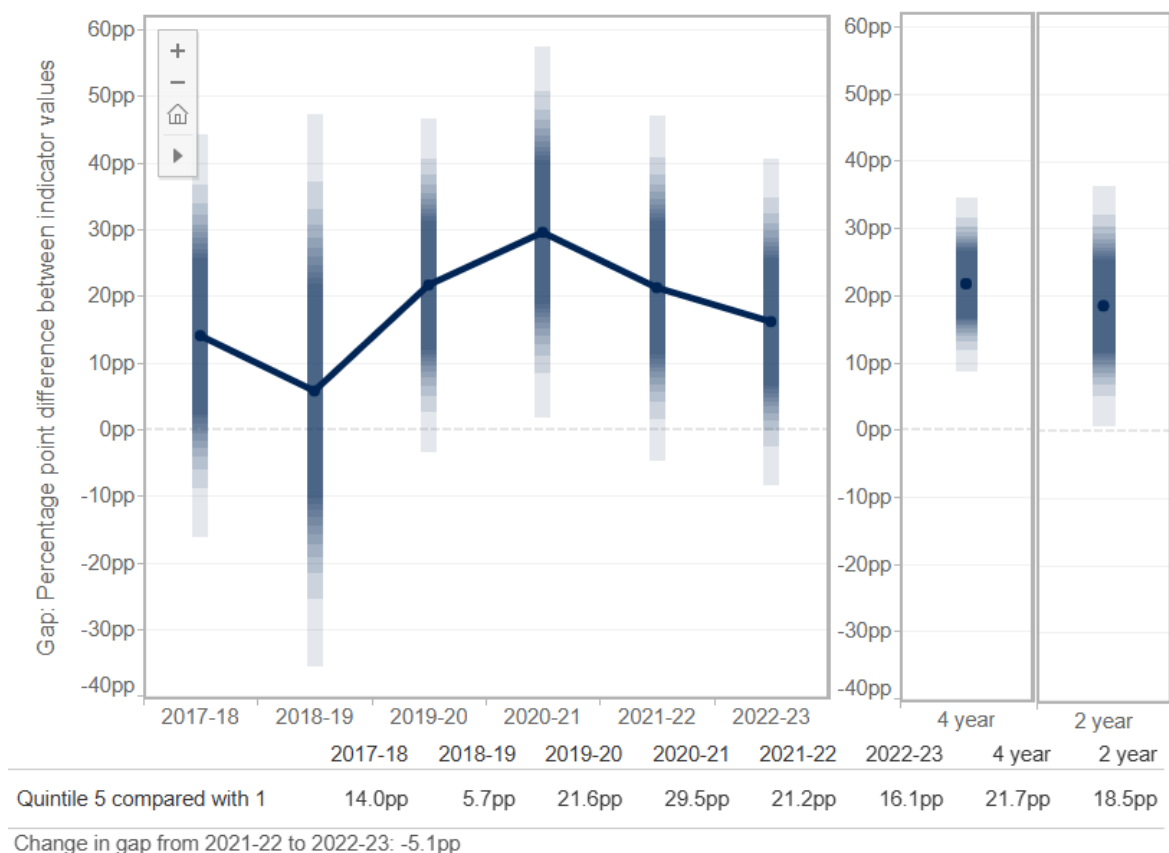
Figure 2

We have also conducted an analysis of our internal application data relating to the same 4-year aggregate group of students (2019-20 to 2022-23). 23% of overall applicants were from IMD Quintiles 1 &2, with 34% of the applicants receiving an offer. By contrast, 42% applicants from IMD Quintiles 3, 4 and 5 received an offer. This suggests that students from IMD Quintiles 1 and 2 may be less successful at navigating the audition/interview process compared to their more advantaged peers.

Given this assessment and our large gap in enrolment between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students, IMD forms one of our priority targets for Access.

TUNDRA (LOW PARTICIPATION NEIGHBOURHOODS)

NSCD has performed comparably to the sector on this Quintile-based risk indicator of participation in higher education by geographical area, where Quintiles 1 and 5 include students from areas with respectively the lowest and highest participation.

Our average enrolment rate of Quintile 1 students is 14.1% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23) and 18.2% in 2022-23 the latest aggregate year, both below population (20%) (Fig.3). For comparison, the sector rate of enrolment of TUNDRA Quintile 1 students is 12.2% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

The NSCD enrolment gap between TUNDRA Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students is 18.2pp (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23), in favour of Quintile 5 students, and decreased to 14.5pp in 2022-23 (Fig.4). The sector gap is similar with 18.0pp (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

Access indicator values for: TUNDRA quintile

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1 (least participation)	17.1%	14.3%	8.0%	11.6%	18.0%	18.2%	14.1%	18.1%
Quintile 2	9.8%	11.4%	20.0%	16.3%	16.0%	21.8%	18.7%	19.0%
Quintile 3	19.5%	25.7%	22.0%	20.9%	16.0%	9.1%	16.7%	12.4%
Quintile 4	26.8%	17.1%	28.0%	14.0%	12.0%	18.2%	18.2%	15.2%
Quintile 5 (most participation)	26.8%	31.4%	22.0%	37.2%	38.0%	32.7%	32.3%	35.2%

Key
- Quintile 1 (least participation)
- Quintile 2
- Quintile 3
- Quintile 4
- Quintile 5 (most participation)

Figure 3

Access gap: TUNDRA quintile – Quintile 5 compared with 1

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 5 compared with 1	9.8pp	17.1pp	14.0pp	25.6pp	20.0pp	14.5pp	18.2pp	17.1pp

Change in gap from 2021-22 to 2022-23: -5.5pp
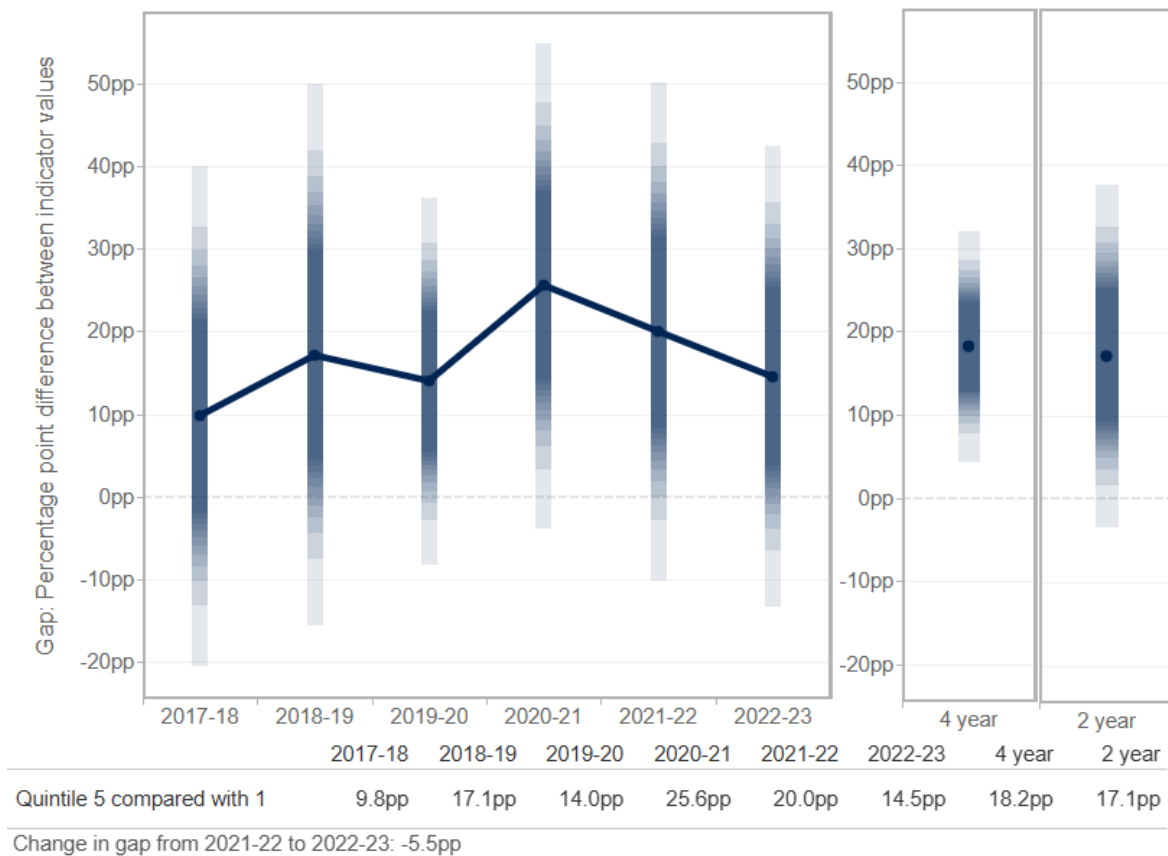
Figure 4

Given our small datasets, and the fact that the latest year gap indicates a positive trend that brings us below the sector average, and given our considered focus on the IMD measure, which is somewhat congruous, we are not proposing this as one of our priority targets for Access.

STUDENTS FROM THE GLOBAL MAJORITY

The data across ethnic groups is limited with some data points suppressed due to low numbers. NSCD has a 17.2% enrolment rate for Global Majority students in the 4-year aggregate (2019-2020 to 2022-23) which is lower than the sector rate of 33.3% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23) (Fig.5).

The enrolment rate of Asian students is particularly low, at 1.4% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23), which is below population parity[30] (9.3%) and significantly below the sector enrolment rate of 15.4% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

Black student enrolments, at 2.7% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23) of all NSCD entrants, are below the population parity (4%) and the sector enrolment rate of 10.6% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

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[30] Population figures as per 2021 census data:
https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenglandandwales/census2021

Only Mixed heritage students, with 8.1% enrolment rate (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23), have higher rates at NSCD than both the population parity (2.9%) and the 5.5% sector rate (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

Access indicator values for: Ethnicity

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Asian	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	1.4%	[DPL]
Black	8.3%	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	2.7%	2.6%
Mixed	6.3%	9.5%	8.8%	[DPL]	5.2%	13.6%	8.1%	9.4%
Other	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]
White	81.3%	78.6%	89.5%	89.6%	93.1%	76.3%	86.9%	84.6%

Key
- Asian
- Black
- Mixed
- Other
- White
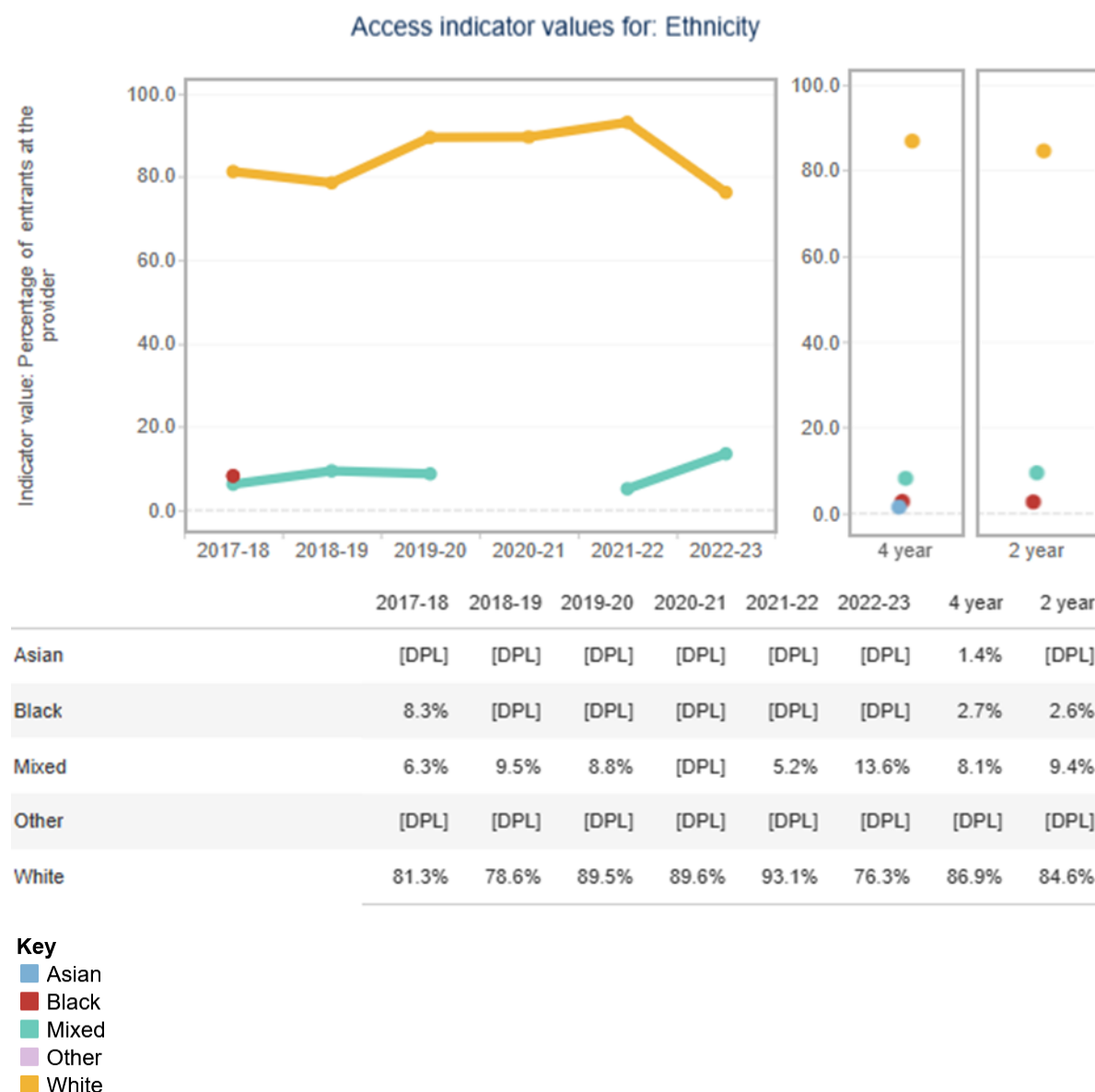
Figure 5

We have also conducted an analysis of our internal application data relating to the same 4-year aggregate group of students (2019-20 to 2022-23). 13% of overall applicants are from the Global Majority, with 37.5% of those who received an offer, accepting it. In comparison to white applicants, where 50% of those who receive an offer accept it. We are aware of that our enrolment of Global Majority students is below the sector 4-year average and population parity.

Given our low intake of students from the Global Majority, we have included Ethnicity as a priority target area for Access.

MATURE LEARNERS (21 YEARS AND OVER)

There is limited access to data available for individual years. The intake of mature learners at NSCD averages 3.6% in the 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) and reduced to 2.5% in the 2-year aggregate 2021-22 to 2022-23 (Fig.8). For comparison, the sector average enrolment of mature learners over the same 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) is 28.5%.

Access indicator values for: Age

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Mature (21 and over)	6.3%	7.1%	5.3%	[DPL]	[DPL]	[DPL]	3.6%	2.5%
Young (under 21)	93.8%	90.5%	94.7%	[DPH]	[DPH]	[DPH]	96.4%	97.5%
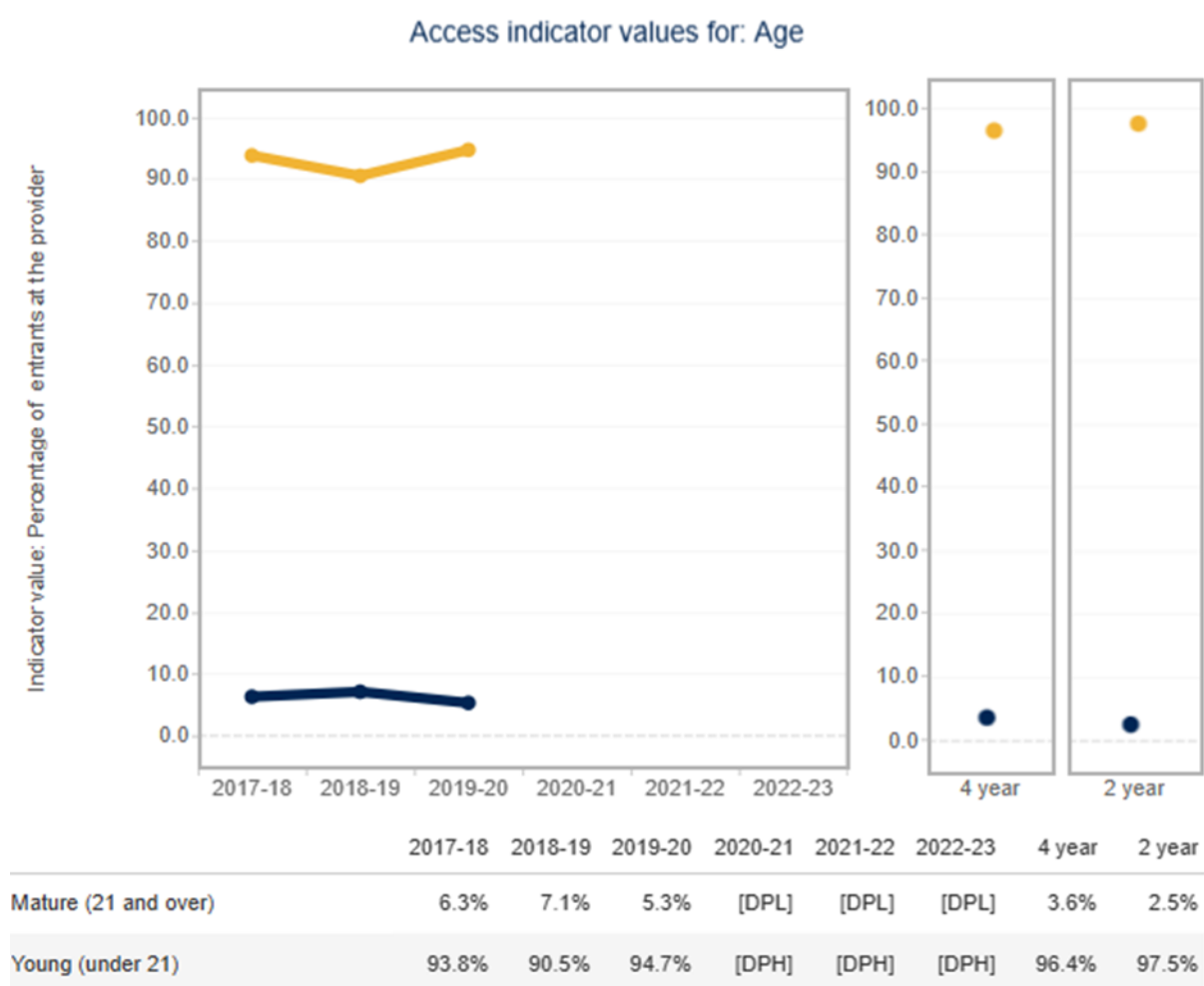
Key
- Mature (21 and over)
- Young (under 21)

Figure 6

While this is a concern, mature learners are not a strategic priority as there are significant wider structural challenges for mature students accessing dance courses, such as those offered by NSCD. We will continue to monitor the enrolment of mature students but will not be including them as a priority target area for Access.

CARE LEAVERS

NSCD enrolled few students categorised or self-declaring as care leavers and care experienced between 2019-20 and 2022-23. As such, our data for Care leavers are suppressed for GDPR reasons. While our intake of students from this target group are is low, we are cognisant that students who are care leavers, estranged from families and refugees often face significant challenges in higher education, including lower continuation and attainment rates compared to their peers.

While this risk indicator is not included in our priority target areas for Access we will continue to monitor our internal data on care leaver enrolment.

ABCS

The new ABCS (Associations Between Characteristics of Students) measure considers multiple student characteristics including ethnicity, free school meal (FSM) eligibility, gender, income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI) index of multiple deprivation (IMD) and TUNDRA. It is a quintile measure, with ABCS Quintile 1 representing the most disadvantaged.

There is limited access to data available for ABCS Quintile 1 students. Where there is data, the percentage of ABCS Quintile 1 students has fluctuated at NSCD from a high of 17.2% in 2018-19 to a low of 7.5% in 2022-23. Our average enrolment over the 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) is 5.5%, which is slightly below the sector rate of 7.4% for the same period (Fig. 7).

The NSCD gap in enrolment between ABCS Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 is 28.7pp (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23), which is comparable to the 27.2pp gap (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23) in the sector (Fig.8).

Access indicator values for: ABCS quintile

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Quintile 1	[DPL]	17.2%	9.3%	[DPL]	[DPL]	7.5%	5.5%	3.6%
Quintile 2	17.1%	20.7%	11.6%	18.4%	11.6%	12.5%	13.4%	12.0%
Quintile 3	11.4%	10.3%	14.0%	15.8%	16.3%	30.0%	18.9%	22.9%
Quintile 4	34.3%	13.8%	30.2%	28.9%	25.6%	27.5%	28.0%	26.5%
Quintile 5	31.4%	37.9%	34.9%	31.6%	46.5%	22.5%	34.1%	34.9%

Key
■ Quintile 1
■ Quintile 2
■ Quintile 3
■ Quintile 4
■ Quintile 5
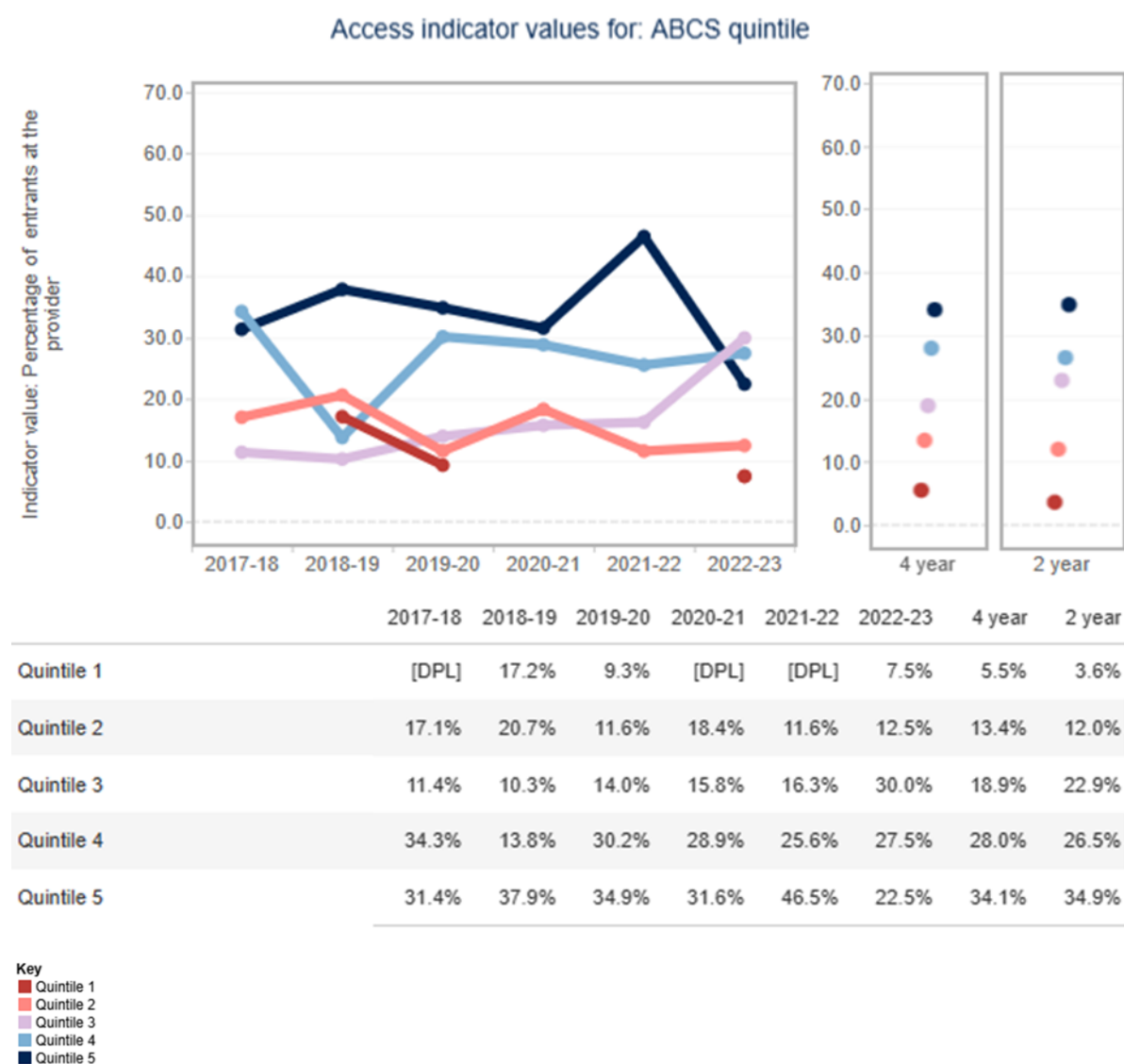
Figure 7

Access gap: ABCS quintile – Quintile 5 compared with 1

Quintile 5 compared with 1	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
	[DP]	20.7pp	25.6pp	[DP]	[DP]	15.0pp	28.7pp	31.3pp

Change in gap from 2021-22 to 2022-23: [DP]
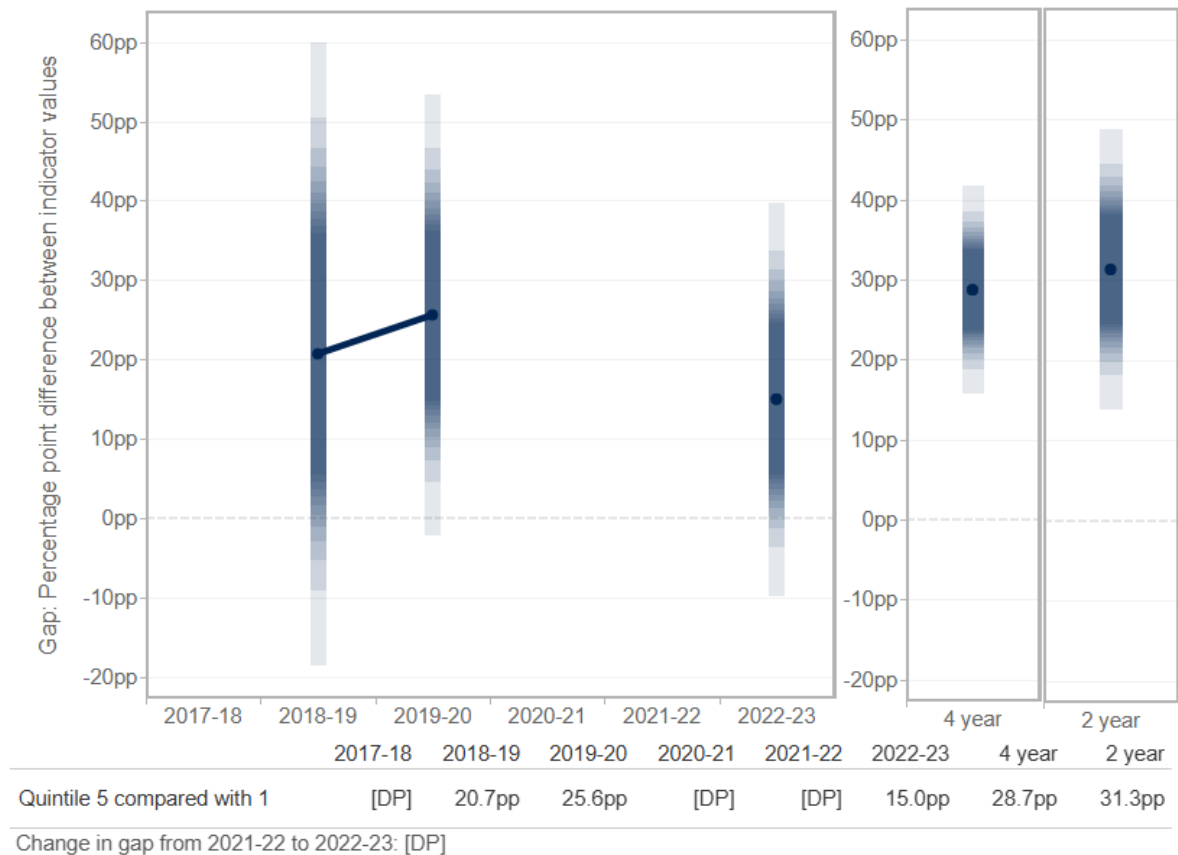
Figure 8

Based on our performance, the newness of the measure, and our small datasets, we are not proposing setting a target for this group at this time for Access, although we will continue to monitor it closely.

STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM) AT KEY STAGE 4

This measure explores access rates for students who have been eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4.

Enrolment of FSM eligible learners at NSCD is 15.0% in 2022-23, which is our highest enrolment rate, and is only slightly lower than the sector rate of 17.7% for the same year (Fig.9). However, despite this, the enrolment of FSM eligible learners at NSCD is below the national percentage of students who are eligible for FSM, which is 24.6% as of January 2024[31].

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[31] As per the data realise from the Department for Education
https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics

Access indicator values for: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4)

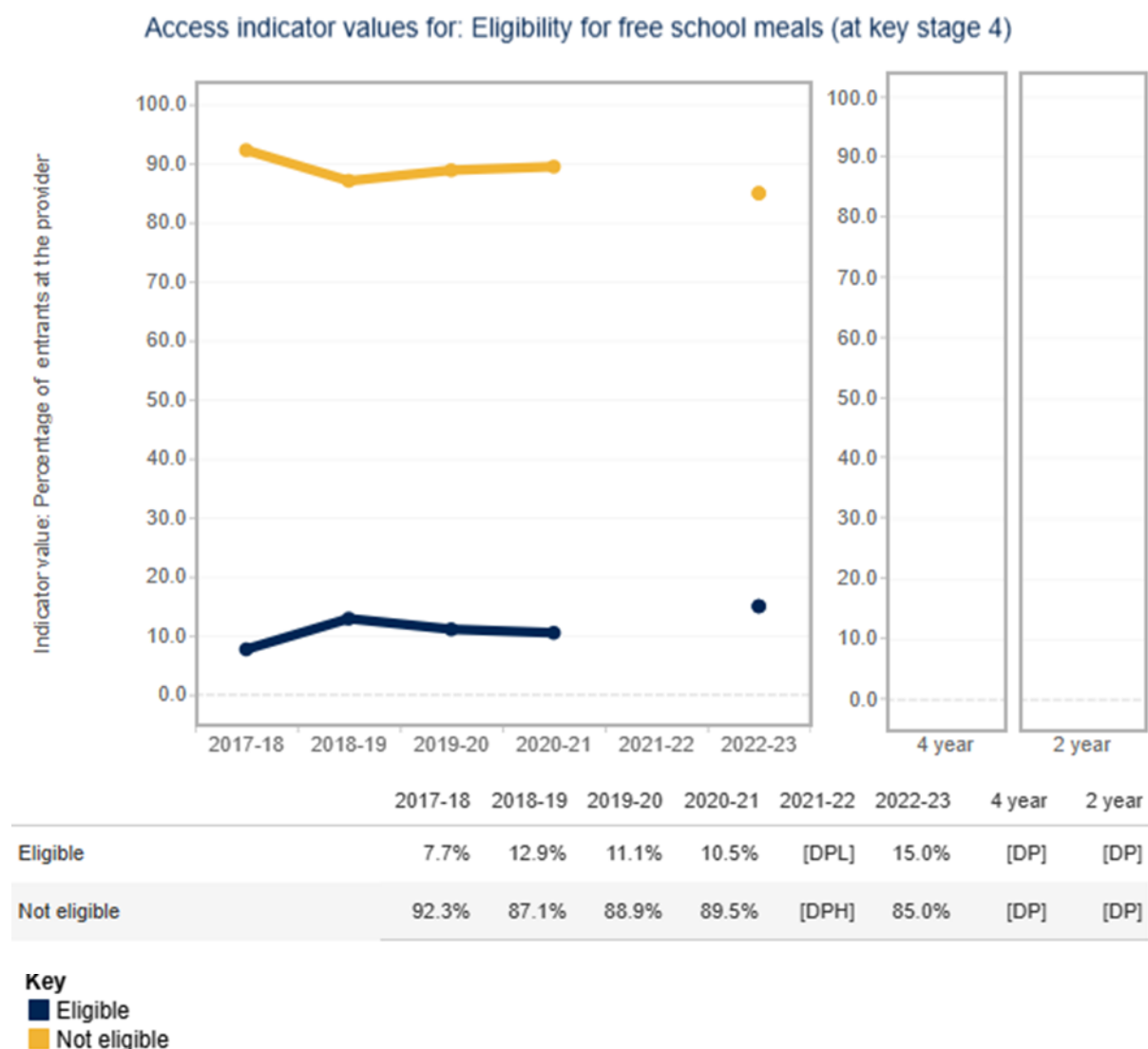|	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Eligible	7.7%	12.9%	11.1%	10.5%	[DPL]	15.0%	[DP]	[DP]
Not eligible	92.3%	87.1%	88.9%	89.5%	[DPH]	85.0%	[DP]	[DP]

Key
■ Eligible
■ Not eligible

Figure 9

While this area is of concern, as an additional proxy for disadvantage (for which we have already identified IMD), we are not proposing to set a specific FSM target in this Plan. We will however closely monitor this group in the future alongside out target to increase entrants from the most disadvantaged backgrounds using IMD 2019 measures.

SEX

While not a discrete target group for the national equality of opportunity agenda, the issue of access and participation of male students in our discipline area of dance is an institutional and industry concern, with risks relating to the perception of the discipline, stigma, access to training and lack of positive role models. Therefore, we consider the male characteristic as relevant in our context for access and participation.

The intake of male learners at NSCD averages 24.4% in the 4-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2022-23 and reduces to 18.8% in the 2-year aggregate 2021-22 to 2022-23 (Fig.10). For comparison, the sector average enrolment of male learners over the same 4-year aggregate is 43.1%.

Access indicator values for: Sex

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	4 year	2 year
Female	68.8%	57.1%	66.1%	72.9%	87.9%	74.6%	75.6%	81.2%
Male	31.3%	42.9%	33.9%	27.1%	12.1%	25.4%	24.4%	18.8%

Key
■ Female
■ Male
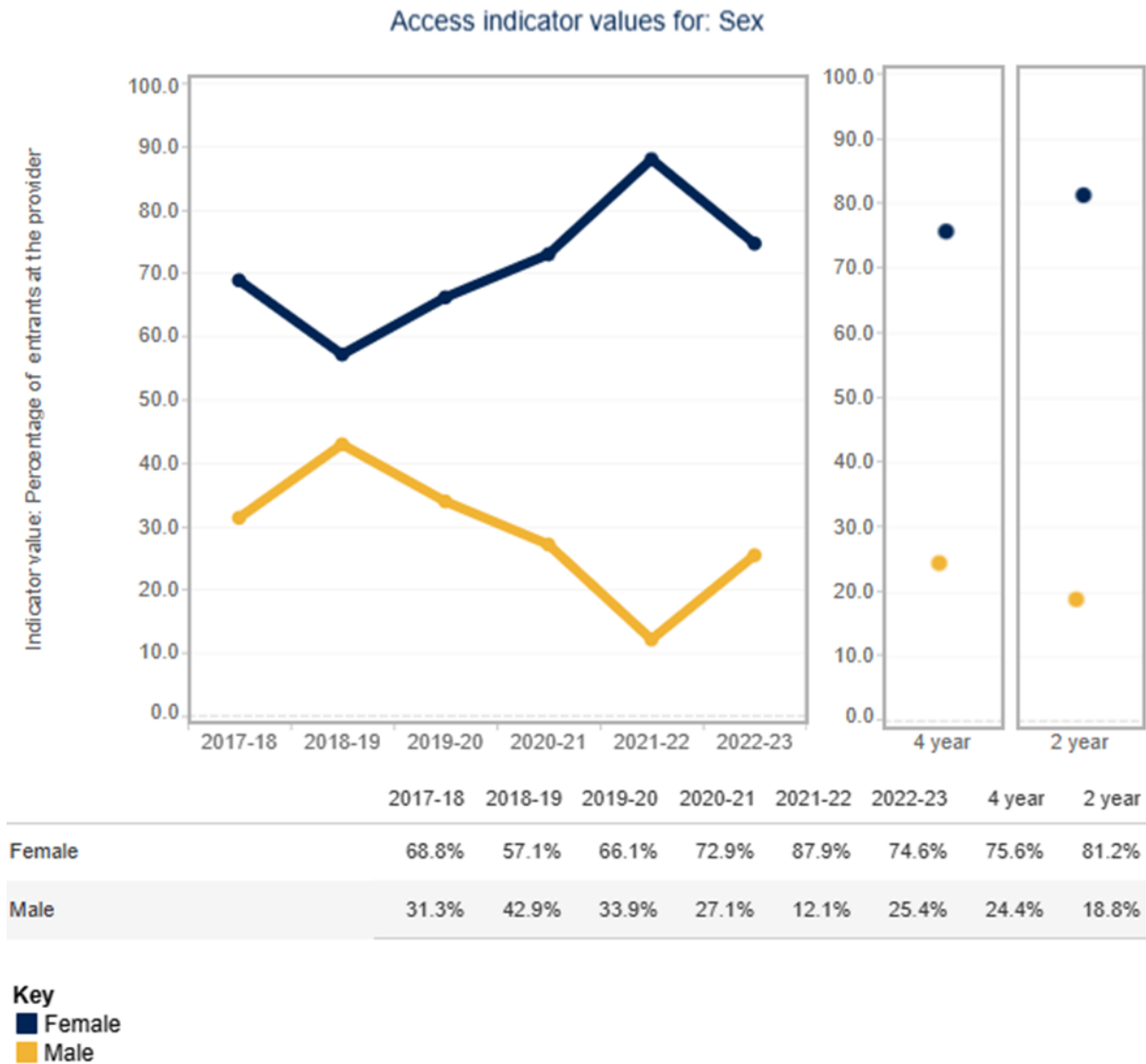
Figure 10

We have also conducted an analysis of our internal application data relating to the same 4-year aggregate group of students (2019-20 to 2022-23). While male applicants make up 19% of our overall applications, 57% receive an offer to attend NSCD, and 44.8% of those who receive an offer, accept a place onto our undergraduate provision. This compares to 50.3% of female applicants who received an offer, accepted their place onto our undergraduate provision.

Given our low intake of male students, we have included Sex as a priority target area for Access.

CONTINUATION

This section provides our performance on student continuation for identified key risk indicators.

Continuation is measured as the proportion of enrolled students continuing into a second year of higher education study 1 year and 15 days post-enrolment or completing study and leaving with a higher education qualification.

Overall, continuation in the 4-year aggregate (2018-19 to 2021-22) was 97.0% at NSCD, above the sector rate of 89.3%. When students do not continue at NSCD, they have varied personal reasons for leaving with no specific trends identified. NSCD has supported students to transfer to other universities and transfer credits earned at NSCD. Exit awards are offered (e.g., Cert HE, Dip HE) to ensure that if a student leaves at the end of a stage, they are awarded for the credits achieved.

There is limited data available for each risk to equality of opportunity due to small data sets. As such, we will continue to monitor our data but not set any targets for Continuation.

STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM) AT KEY STAGE 4

Due to small numbers, our data for continuation and FSM eligible students are suppressed over the entire six-year period and aggregates of OfS data. Our individual institutionalised APP data is also suppressed for GDPR reasons.

While this risk indicator is not included in our priority target areas for Continuation we will continue to monitor our internal data on FSM eligible student continuation.

COMPLETION

This section provides our performance in student completion for the OfS key risk indicators and target groups.

Completion is measured by as the proportion of students completing their course within 6-years from enrolment.

Overall, NSCD students complete their studies at a rate of 94.0% (4-year aggregate, 2015-16 to 2018-19), which is higher than the sector average completion rate of 87.5% in the same period. NSCD track interim, within-level attainment every half term in our Student Review Board where teaching staff flag the failure trajectory of certain students, who are then followed up in different ways, e.g., academic support plan, alternative timetable. This is also done informally in the teaching team if someone is not achieving to ensure we support students to succeed in completing their degrees.

There is limited data available for each risk to equality of opportunity due to small data sets. As such, we will continue to monitor our data but not set any targets for Completion.

INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION (IMD) 2019

Due to small numbers, our data for completion and IMD Quintile 1, students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, are suppressed over the entire six-year period and aggregates of OfS data. Our individual institutionalised APP data shows the NSCD IMD Quintile 1 students have a completion rate of 85.3% (4-year aggregate, 2015-16 to 2018-19) which is higher than the sector rate of 81.6% in the same period. The gap between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students at NSCD, however, is 11.7pp in the 4-year aggregate (2015-16 to 2018-19) which is larger than the sector gap of 10.8pp in the same period.

Due to small numbers, we will not be designating this risk indicator a priority target area for Completion in our plan. We will continue to monitor our data.

TUNDRA (LOW PARTICIPATION NEIGHBOURHOODS)

Small student numbers per TUNDRA Quintile mean much of our annual performance data are suppressed across the entire six-year period and aggregates of OfS data. Our individual institutionalised APP data is also suppressed for GDPR reasons.

Due to small numbers, we will not be designating this risk indicator a priority target area for Completion in our plan. We will continue to monitor our data.

DISABLED STUDENTS

There is limited data available for the annual completion rate of disabled students. Completion of disabled learners at NSCD is 88.3% (4-year aggregate, 2015-16 to 2018-19), compared to the 85.7% in the sector for the same period. The completion gap with the comparator group of students without declared disability is 8.9pp in the 4-year aggregate (2015-16 to 2018-19), which is more than double the sector gap of 2.1pp in the same period. However, this is based on extremely small cohort sizes.

Our data by disability type are very small, with fewer than 10 students per type and academic year and are therefore supressed over the six-year period and aggregates of OfS data.

Due to small numbers, we will not assign completion of disabled students as a priority target area for Completion in our plan. We will continue to monitor our data.

STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM) AT KEY STAGE 4

There is limited data available for completion for FSM eligible students due to low number data suppression over the entire six-year period and aggregates of OfS data. Our individual institutionalised APP data is also suppressed for GDPR reasons.

We will not therefore be assigning this risk indicator as a priority target area for Completion in our plan. We will continue to monitor our performance data.

ATTAINMENT

This section provides our performance with respect to the attainment of our students from key target groups.

Attainment is measured as the proportion of students who achieve a 'good degree', i.e., a First (1st) or a 2:1 degree outcome.

Overall, attainment at NSCD stands at 97.2% (4-year aggregate, 2019-2020 to 2022-23) – much higher than the sector rate of 80.5% in the same period. High attainment rates are in part due to NSCD's admissions process as the audition helps to assess a student's suitability to the courses. NSCD continually look at students' progress as modules are continually assessed. NSCD also has a *Student Engagement & Support Through Studies Policy* that is designed to support the needs of students and provide them with the best opportunity to succeed on their course through active engagement with all aspects of the course. Additionally, NSCD offer a range of assessment methods to all students in addition to the inbuilt approach to inclusive assessments. These alternative assessments enable students to engage with the programme and demonstrate learning in several different ways. With our protocols at NSCD, and being a small specialist institute, students have good results in their interim and final outcomes.

There is limited data available for each risk to equality of opportunity due to small data sets. As such, we will continue to monitor our data but not set any targets for Attainment.

TUNDRA (LOW PARTICIPATION NEIGHBOURHOODS)

Small student numbers per TUNDRA Quintile mean much of our annual performance data are suppressed across the entire six-year period and aggregates of OfS data. Our individual institutionalised APP data is also suppressed for GDPR reasons.

Due to small numbers, we will not be designating this risk indicator a priority target area for Attainment in our plan. We will continue to monitor our data.

PROGRESSION

Progression is measured in terms of graduate destinations into the labour market or elsewhere that include being employed in a highly skilled professional or managerial job, or undertaking further study, or another positive outcome.

At NSCD, progression is 68.4% (4-year aggregate, 2019-2020 to 2022-23), which slightly lags below the sector rate of 72.4%.

Due to the nature of the industries in which our students work, Graduate Outcomes data may not be a reliable source to the extent of their success. NSCD students leave as successful artists or technical professionals, and, in line with ambitions, may pursue a variety of careers whilst carrying performing arts as a valuable and enriching part of their lives.

Given this and the very limited data we have on progression outcomes, we consider that analysis and determination of any indicators of risk in this area are not meaningful. However, we will endeavour to collaborate with peer institutions to bolster the data and to establish a more helpful definition of graduate success for those pursuing careers in our sector. We have not set any targets for Progression but will continue to monitor our data.

SUMMARY OF TARGET AREAS

We have used the initial performance assessment above and the emerging indicators of risk (i.e. measures where our performance is weak) to signpost to the priority areas for further investigation and/or including as target areas in the new Access and Participation Plan (APP). In summary, these areas are:

ACCESS

1. IMD 2019
2. Global Majority, particularly Black and Asian students
3. Male Students

CONTINUATION, COMPLETION, ATTAINMENT, PROGRESSION

No targets are included in these areas.

RISKS TO EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

We have considered the identified indicators of risk against the national Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR). This highlights 12 risks that are of national concern, and which are more likely to affect students within our target groups (disadvantaged students, measured by IMD; students from the Global Majority; and male students).

ACCESS (PRE-ENROLMENT)

Risks 1 to 5 listed in the EORR relate to 'Access' (pre-entry) stage, and we note that these risks are generally more likely to have negative impacts on the target groups we have identified in relation to enrolment outcomes, i.e., disadvantaged students measured by IMD, Global Majority students, and male students.

We have considered all 5 risks in relation to our context at NSCD in consultation with our community of staff and students and found Risks 1 – Knowledge and Skills and 3 – Perceptions of Higher Education to be of most concern for our students. We also acknowledge that Risk 10 – Cost Pressure will also impact applicants as well as students on-course.

The following summarises our context in relation to each EORR Risk, considerations of occurrence, and the potential cause of the indicators of risk (i.e., poor performance) identified. Further information can also be found in the main APP and in Annex B.

RISK 1 – KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Literary review indicates that applicants from our target groups have fewer opportunities to develop the necessary skills and knowledge for higher education and specialised dance programmes.

The competitive application process and the high level of experience required at audition present significant barriers for young people from underrepresented backgrounds, who often lack access to opportunities and support for developing relevant performing arts skills in school and college. We have noticed that for target groups such as IMD Quintiles 1 and 2 there is a significant skills gap. These groups tend to receive fewer offers than their peers as at the point of audition, they cannot demonstrate the required skills to progress onto an NSCD undergraduate course.

Literature highlights the systemic undervaluing of creative subjects in state-funded compulsory education and its varying provision of extracurricular opportunities. There has been a 50% decline in the uptake of dance at GCSE and A-level since 2008 as noted by One Dance UK (2021)[32]. Aston and Aston (2022)[33] discuss the stark disparity in access to creative subjects between students in private schools and those in state-funded schools.

The Campaign for the Arts (2023)[34] highlights evidence of a concerning reduction in children's access to creative subjects since 2010, with primary schools experiencing a decrease of up to 48% and secondary schools 23%. With the government focusing on STEM subjects, coupled with the regular use of derogatory language by the Government and media when describing creative subjects as 'low value', 'non-priority' and 'dead end', fewer young dancers are getting the exposure to dance within a school setting. The infrastructure of youth dance in England has also diminished in recent years. In 2015, One Dance UK was launched because of 4 organisations merging (Association of Dance of the African Diaspora (ADAD), Dance UK, National Dance Teachers Association (NDTA) and Youth Dance England). This meant that the national youth dance hubs were disbanded and therefore any future facing strategy for children's and young people's dance was lost. The undervaluing of dance in mainstream education

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[32] One Dance UK (2021). Everything we loved about dance was taken. https://www.onedanceuk.org/media/yb0p2wcl/dance-in-education-report.pdf
[33] Ashton, H. & D. Ashton. 2022. Creativity and the curriculum: educational apartheid in 21st Century England, a European outlier? International Journal of Cultural Policy, 29(4), 484–499. https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2022.2058497
[34] Campaign for the Arts (2023). Campaign for the Arts and Cultural Learning Alliance: Joint representation to the Spring Budget 2023. https://www.campaignforthearts.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/CFTA-CLA-Spring-Budget-2023-representation.pdf

affects applications across the board, with NSCD experiencing a 41% decrease in applications in the last 4 years.

In a 2023 search of UCAS, there were just three dance teaching courses available in the UK contributing to the diminishing dance ecology and workforce development. This has the knock-on effect of excluding young dancers from under-resourced backgrounds to participate dance within schools. The nationally deteriorating education context for dance also negatively effects the acquisition and development of relevant knowledge and skills in the lead up to higher education.

Through NSCD's pre-vocational training programme, we have recognised that career advice in schools is lacking and therefore are not adequately supporting young people to explore creative options. This has been recognised by Employment & Skills Leeds, who have created Leeds Creative Skills Festival to plug this gap. The national initiative *Discover! Creative Careers*[35], also demonstrates the national need to support careers in the arts. NSCD applicants are not able to access high quality training within a school setting and are therefore missing out on the essential skills building they need to succeed at audition.

Therefore, Risk 1 – Knowledge and Skills is an acute area of concern observing students from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to have experience of dance. At NSCD, we take this into account by offering a range of activities to prepare applicants to succeed at audition.

RISK 2 – INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

Information, advice and guidance (IAG) have diminished in supply and quality since the career education reforms of 2012 and the resultant loss of Career Education, Information, Advice, and Guidance (CEIAG) advisors at many schools (Education Committee, 2023)[36].

In the context of dance, effective information, advice, and guidance also involves raising awareness of available training pathways, challenging misconceptions about creative careers and earning potential, and increasing understanding of the diverse roles within the performing arts industry—alongside demystifying the unique application processes for specialist higher education providers like NSCD.

Specific knowledge about what skills NSCD look for in applications to demonstrate in auditions is often missing, as compulsory education typically focuses on standard application processes for higher education (UCAS) with a focus on non-vocational subjects. While there are exceptions, the disparity in the provision of IAG and support in terms of preparation of auditioning at specialist HE dance institutions is likely to disadvantage the already disadvantaged learners the most (Tompson, 2019)[37].

As NSCD's application process is direct, and not part of UCAS or UCAS Conservatoires, schools, colleges, parents and carers often are lacking in information to advise potential applicants. These same stakeholders often cannot advise potential applicants about the audition process and can make assumptions which are outdated and off-putting to applicants, such as assuming that study at a conservatoire is more expensive than at a university.

Providing relevant information to young people before the age of 16 enables them to make informed post-16 choices and to better understand the pathways to higher education and specialised dance training. Providing support with preparation for auditions/applications such as by removing associated application fees and funding applicant travel to the place of audition and interview, makes the application process more equitable for disadvantaged and underrepresented applicants.

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[35] https://discovercreative.careers/
[36] Education Committee (2023). Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance. https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/40610/documents/198034/default/
[37] Thompson, R. 2019. Education, Inequality and Social Class. Expansion and Stratification in Educational Opportunity. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315141749

Our intervention strategies must therefore include provision of robust IAG opportunities for applicants, teachers/advisors, and parents/carers, as well as targeted support around preparation to apply. At NSCD, we provide information about the admissions process in a range of outreach activities as well as on our website. Additionally, students in APP target groups can access an application support package that provides access to the audition preparation workshop, 1-2-1 support, and a travel bursary to attend an in-person audition.

There is also a lack of understanding of what career opportunities are available to those who study a dance degree, as the rhetoric is often that a job in the arts doesn't pay well, or is just a hobby, not a career. We recognise that at application, students might have a narrow understanding of career paths and that their ambition might be about being in a company or about curiosity rather than a career. NSCD capture alumni stories digitally and publish them on the website, social media and embed these digital assess through presentations with potential applicants to help them and parents/carers to understand the breadth of career opportunities a NSCD undergraduate course could create. Once students are on-course, NSCD show a breadth of possibilities to help widen their ambitions and provide a bespoke journey for career development.

RISK 3 – PERCEPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The perception that arts degrees are reserved for those from elite and affluent backgrounds remains strong. NSCD's target groups can not only be at risk of having a negative perception of higher education, but also of studying dance at higher education.

Perceptions of dance providing a lack of career opportunities, as well as a time-limited one, can discourage applicants from Global Majority or low socioeconomic backgrounds from studying an undergraduate course which they do not feel would result in an opportunity for them to change their financial circumstances. This view is reinforced in research conducted by the University College London Centre for Longitudinal Studies (Adamecz-Volgyi et al. 2022[38]) focusing on first-generation students. The study found that compared to those with graduate parents, first-generation students were more likely to choose subjects that offered moderately good labour market prospects but are not overly competitive, rather than subjects associated with high levels of competition or very low wage returns.

Polling by Savanta ComRes for Universities UK (Universities UK 2023[39]) showed growing anxiety for students in the cost-of-living crisis. Disadvantaged students are much less likely to feel confident about managing their finances over the next 12 months – 68% of those from the most disadvantaged groups feel confident compared to 77% for more advantaged groups. This mirrored analysis conducted by UCAS in 2022[40]. For example, in this mixed methods study, 73% of prospective applicants stated that they have financial concerns about progressing to university (up 4pp on year before). In addition, cost of living was indicated to be the most common consideration that impacted university choice, moving from 6th most important consideration in the year before to the top one.

[38] Adamecz-Volgyi, A. Henderson, M. Shure, N. (2022). *'First in family': higher education choices and labour market outcomes.* Nuffield Foundation. Accessed here: First-in-family-higher-education-choices-and-labour-market-outcomes.pdf (ucl.ac.uk) (10.12.2023).

[39] Universities UK (2023). How is the cost of living crisis affecting students? https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/what-we-do/policy-and-research/publications/cost-living-crisis-impact-university
[40] UCAS. (2022). Cost of living influence on student decision making. https://www.ucas.com/file/709791/download?token=HQTMWo4-

The One Dance UK report *Taking it higher: Dance in HE* (2023[41]) report states that respondents believe that the negative rhetoric used to discuss dance and other creative subjects publicly has led to a reduction in student applications and an increased pressure from parents for young people to follow a more 'valuable' or 'academic' career path.

We know that family and close relations are often key influencers in a person's decision to attend university, therefore, for those who are first in family to go to university, they are likely to miss out on first-hand experience from family on this matter (Gofen 2009[42], O'Shea 2015[43]). Polling by Public First commissioned by the Brilliant Club (Brilliant Club, 2023[44]) of 1,005 parents on their attitudes to university showed that 55% did not think a university degree was worth pursuing if it does not lead to employment.

The One Dance UK report *Everything we Loved about Dance was Taken*[45] 2023 poses that it is the pressures of the EBacc accountability measure and nationwide focus on subjects that are perceived to be 'more academic' and of 'more value' to students' future careers that are causing this detrimental effect on dance in education. It also evidences that dance is not valued in the same way as other subjects, even other creative and arts-based subjects.

We know that male-identifying potential applicants often face bullying and discrimination by peers and wider-society as dance is not perceived as an acceptable activity for males by many.

People of Global Majority Heritage tend to view dance as a hobby, rather than an activity to study at higher education. The progression data of NSCD's CAT scheme's PoGM graduates is too small to report but typically many PoGM CAT graduates choose commercial dance routes over contemporary dance.

Early positive engagement with higher education is essential in helping young people view university as accessible, welcoming, and worthwhile. By introducing them to NSCD's facilities and showcasing positive role models—including staff, students, and alumni—we can challenge negative stereotypes and promote a sense of belonging. To support this, NSCD's outreach work must prioritise mentorship and role modelling from current students and recent graduates, highlighting the diversity of our community and the inclusivity of our learning environment. Young people from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds often have fewer opportunities to develop dance skills or connect with professionals in the creative industries—barriers we aim to address through targeted outreach interventions.

RISK 4 – APPLICATION SUCCESS RATES

Our admissions decisions are heavily weighted towards our auditions and interviews. Every person that submits an undergraduate application to NSCD is invited to audition. Auditions are a practical test of skills that are designed to showcase an applicant's potential, while still accepting that they may not have experience in all areas. The audition panel are trained to make sure the process is consistent with fair criteria used. Auditions are also an opportunity to gauge the applicants' passion for the subject with all auditions either in-person at NSCD or online.

[41] One Dance UK (2023). Taking it higher: Dance in HE. https://www.onedanceuk.org/media/rz1hw55k/he-report-2023.pdf

[42] Gofen, A. (2009). Family capital: How first-generation higher education students break the intergenerational cycle. Family Relations: *An Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Family Studies,* 58(1), 104–120. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2008.00538.x

[43] O'Shea, S. (2015). Filling up the silences – First in family students and university talk in the home. *International Journal of Lifelong Learning Education*, 34, 139–155. Filling up silences-first in family students, capital and university talk in the home (core.ac.uk) (10.12.2023)

[44] Brilliant Club (2023). Poll results: Parents' attitudes towards university. https://www.publicfirst.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Public_First_Poll_for_Brilliant_Club-1.pdf

[45] One Dance UK (2021). Everything we loved about dance was taken. https://www.onedanceuk.org/media/yb0p2wcl/dance-in-education-report.pdf

Young people from IMD Quintiles 1-2, male-identifying students and Global Majority students are likely to have had fewer opportunities to gain the skills, experience, and support to excel at the auditions and interview stage, which has a significant impact on their application outcomes. The audition panel at NSCD are informed if an applicant is from an APP target group or part of the broader widening participation target groups (e.g., TUNDRA Q1 or Q2, HHI below £42,875, Disabled, Care leaver, and/or estranged). In some cases, threshold scores for auditions are reduced to account for the lack of opportunity for students from these backgrounds.

NSCD have put measures in place to support applicants, for example, by practicing contextual admissions to advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and fee waivers for auditions.

RISK 5 – LIMITED CHOICE OF COURSE TYPE AND DELIVERY MODE

NSCD are limited due to our size and our delivery mode in terms of flexibility of provision it can offer.

The undergraduate courses offer on-campus instruction 5 days a week for 30 weeks of the year, in line with other dance conservatoires as it is a practical subject, and students choose to study at a conservatoire because of the high contact hours. Due to the intensity of the course and high contact hours it makes offering part-time undergraduate study difficult.

NSCD offers a 1-year Certificate of Higher Education course which provides students with an access route into Higher Education. NSCD is introducing a new BA (hons) Dance (Choreography, Production and Teaching) course which will have less contact hours and will provide students with more opportunities to balance part-time work and family commitments alongside their study. NSCD are also investigating having the same 'free' periods all year so students can arrange part-time work and other commitments around them.

With most of our students falling in the 'young' (<21 y.o.) group, we do not consider this risk a priority. We will continue to monitor the flexibility aspect of our provision, not just at degree and award levels, but also in terms of delivery.

RISK 10 – COST PRESSURES (PRE- AND POST-ENTRY)

Over the last two years 9 in 10 HE students report experiencing a rise in their cost of living, more than 9 in 10 worry about that, nearly 50% feel they are in a financial difficulty, 60% of those who receive a student loan consider it insufficient to cover their cost of living, 30% have taken on more debt, and nearly 80% worry about the impact of the financial squeeze on their learning (Johnson & Westwood, 2023)[46].

The 2024 Student Academic Experience Survey delivered by Advance HE and HEPI[47] flags up the continuing rise of students who take term-time employment (56% in the 2024 edition of the survey vs. 55% in 2023) that went up by more than 10% since 2022.

The rising cost of living will undoubtably be putting pressure on applicants, especially those target students from IMD Quintiles 1 and 2, to ensure that their choice of results is a profitable career, as mentioned in Risk 2. However, NSCD have no evidence to support the theory that the more recent cost of living increases has negatively affected applications. This is likely due to the investment into financial support for those with low household income at the access stage including audition fee waivers,

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[46] [46] Johnston, C. & A. Westwood. 2023. Cost of living and higher education students, England: 30 January to 13 February 2023. Office for National Statistics. https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/educationandchildcare/bulletins/costoflivingandhighereducationstudentsengland/30januaryto13february2023

[47] Student Academic Experience Survey 2024. Advance HE. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/10746

bursaries for dancers to attend NSCD's Youth Provision, audition travel bursaries and acceptance fee waivers. NSCD's own observations and discussions with students show that NSCD's undergraduate courses are also perceived as good value for money because of the number of contact hours students receive in comparison to other universities.

Cost of living pressures on student finances and term-time work, which has been the most common approach students have taken to relieve those pressures, are exacerbated by the demands of doing a performing arts degree, which requires high-contact time with teachers and time spent in the studio. The added intensity of the courses makes finding paid work whilst studying more challenging. An internal survey of students notes that 80% work either in term or during the holidays, with 72.3% wanting to work more. Further, NSCD students are on average spending five hours a day in physical activity in the form of dance technique, creative work or body conditioning, and when students are not in class they must rest and recuperate to be in a fit state for the next session. NSCD offer students paid work within the campus, including front of house at Riley Theatre, working in the library and in the café, to support those who wish to do part-time work.

National data and our own observations indicate that there is significant pressure on students, including our own, to balance course requirements with the financial necessity of paid work. The pressure is particularly evident for our target groups.

ON-COURSE (STUDENT SUCCESS) & PROGRESSION (POST-GRADUATION)

The remaining Risks on the EORR relate to the on-course and progression areas. Our on-course and progression data are generally positive, with gaps below or around the sector average where gaps exist. There are areas we intended to monitor closely:

- Continuation of FSM eligible students
- Completion of IMD Quintile 1 students
- Completion of TUNDRA Quintile 1 students
- Completion of disabled students
- Completion of FSM eligible students

We have looked at 'On-course' Risks 6 to 11 and Risk 12 – Progression from Higher Education. Further information can be found in references in the main APP and in Annex B.

RISK 6 – INSUFFICIENT ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND RISK 7 – INSUFFICIENT PERSONAL SUPPORT

The benefit of having such small cohort sizes and high contact delivery model is that NSCD students receive individualised tailored guidance, academic and pastoral support.

NSCD offers five areas of personal support including personal tutorials, learner support, English language support, injury support and health and wellbeing support. All students entering a course at NSCD are invited to be assessed for dyslexia and dyspraxia to identify those who may require support to gain equal access to the curriculum, and those who qualify for Disabled Students Allowance. Learner Tutorials can be one-to-one or group sessions, which can be booked by any student. Providing targeted academic and pastoral support early on during the transition period from school to university is especially effective e.g. for disabled students (Safer et al., 2020)[48].

All NSCD students receive the opportunity to have Academic Tutorials with the module leaders to receive feedback and help prepare them for assessment and progression. NSCD students can book additional

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[48] Safer, A., L. Farmer & B. Song. 2020. Quantifying Difficulties of University Students with Disabilities. Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, v33, n1, pp. 5-21. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1273641.pdf

academic tutorials with any member of academic staff throughout the year. Academically, all staff are kept abreast of student needs and know any protocols or support measures in place.

NSCD include a dedicated terminology section on the assessment page of Moodle (the student intranet) to help students understand aspects of the hidden curriculum. They also include induction sessions to prepare students for study such as: course and module introductions, library induction, wellbeing and student services, introduction to heads of faculty, safeguarding, and learning culture.

NSCD have an excellent record of providing personal support, with 98% of students rating NSCDs mental health and wellbeing facilities as positive in the National Student Survey. NSCD have an extremely short wait list for health and wellbeing support, with students being seen for an initial appointment within 2 weeks. All students can book an appointment, and they receive authorized absences to miss classes if in a counselling session. NSCD recognise that the high intensity of the courses and that the subject, dance, requires active involvement, constantly looking at oneself and can be exposing, which can accelerate anxiety. NSCD aim to offer a range of wellbeing support to support students' personal health journeys and our internal data shows that over 50% of our student body access support each academic year.

Belonging, which is determined by how successfully students integrate academically and socially, appears to be a major determinant of student continuation, completion, and attainment, particularly for disadvantaged and non-traditional student groups (Pedler et al., 2022[49]; Ahn & Howard, 2023[50]).

Risks 6 and 7 are relevant to our context and we will continue to work to address them through implementation of support structures and more staff training. This helps us identify who needs what support and enables us to provide support effectively.

RISK 8 – MENTAL HEALTH

NSCD has an above average proportion of students declaring a disability (38.4% vs 17.4% in the sector); 7.1% of whom report mental health conditions (vs 4.9% in the sector) (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

NSCD recognises that the rigor of conservatoire dance training can be challenging to both physical and mental health as dance training is both physically and mentally demanding. We recognise that we have a duty of care to support students which is why the mental health support (mentioned in Risks 6 and 7) plays an integral role; in the NSS our mental and wellbeing services rate 98%. In Induction week, NSCD have timetabled wellbeing sessions for all students. Without this offer, we could envision more students having to withdraw or intermit from their studies. Currently, there are no groups at risk of poor retention because of poor mental health.

Given the cost-of-living situation in the UK, students who would normally not consider themselves to have a mental health condition are also experiencing high levels of stress and worry. We recognise that this is a growing area which can impact student success outcomes. NSCD has embedded for students the offer of relevant information and support throughout the health and wellbeing services offers we provide.

RISK 9 – ONGOING IMPACTS OF CORONAVIRUS

[49] Pedler, M. L., R. Willis & J. E. Nieuwoudt. 2022. A sense of belonging at university: student retention, motivation and enjoyment, Journal of Further and Higher Education, 46:3, 397-408. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1955844

[50] Ahn, M. Y. & H. Davis. 2023. Students' sense of belonging and their socio-economic status in higher education: a quantitative approach. Teaching in Higher Education, 28(1), 136-149. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2020.1778664

Students joining NSCD over the next few years are likely to have experience disjointed and disrupted educational experience prior to enrolment that will have impacted students in a multitude of ways. For example, students may have had less classroom hours to practice as timetabled dance teaching hours have reduced 13.5 per week to 11.7 (One Dance, 2021)[51]. NSCD has also seen an increase in uptake of its mental health and wellbeing support since 2020 and have responded to this by ensuring that the staffing resource meets the demand.

RISK 11 – CAPACITY ISSUES

NSCD students do not usually struggle to secure suitable accommodation as NSCD have long standing positive relationships with local landlords who prioritize NSCD students. Student numbers have remained steady over the last 4 years, helping NSCD to ensure that resources match the student cohort.

NSCD do not feel Risk 11 is a priority risk area, but we will continue to monitor the impact and address if and where necessary, especially as we introduce new courses.

RISK 12 – PROGRESSION FROM HIGHER EDUCATION

Currently NSCD does not have enough data to support an argument for their being groups at risk of not progressing from higher education. We are aware that postgraduate study can be unaffordable for students from IMD Quintile 1 and 2. The dance sector often does not show positive returns within 18 months; however, it can be lucrative over a longer period. NSCD programmes careers activity and support throughout the courses, especially in the final year of the BA course, including a careers week, where recent alumni are invited to participate. There are also optional Professional Placement modules in BA3 which students can access which allow them to complete professional engagements which gaining credit to count towards the completion of their qualification.

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[51] One Dance UK (2021). Everything we loved about dance was taken.
https://www.onedanceuk.org/media/yb0p2wcl/dance-in-education-report.pdf

INTERVENTION STRATEGY 1 To demystify the perception of higher education and NSCD for applicants from underrepresented groups.

Objectives and targets: IS1 will contribute towards meeting the following objectives.

- To maintain the proportion of students from IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 2 areas enrolling on our courses, at 26.7%.
- To increase the proportion of students from the Global Majority enrolling on our courses, to 20% of our intake by 2029-30.
- To maintain the proportion of students who identify as male enrolling on our courses, at 17.4%.

Reaching targets PTA_1, PTA_2, PTA_3.

ACTIVITY: SCHOOL AND YOUTH DANCE OUTREACH WORK SUCH AS INSPIRE, STUDENT PLACEMENTS, ACCESS TOUR

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
The evidence on the impact of outreach activities like our INSPIRE, 'Kick Off Boys', and 'Collaborative Male-identifying' programmes and projects; offering open rehearsals and student placements; suggests that: - acting as an 'anchor' for local schools and colleges through sponsorship and provision of expertise, facilities and resources, professional development, and involvement in the governance, can help HE providers raise aspirations for studying in HE[1]. - partnerships with schools and colleges have been a very effective approach to widening participation into creative subjects in HE[2]. - long term engagement with schools supports building local knowledge of student needs and facilitates cultural change across the partnership, benefitting students from our target groups in particular[3]. - workshops, subject tasters, and campus visits[4,5,6,7,8] that integrate information, advice, and guidance (IAG) on accessing HE are all likely to have small, positive effects on student attitudes and aspirations related to HE, confidence in the ability to achieve sufficient entry qualifications for, and a sense of belonging to HE. - such programmatic activities may be particularly effective for Global Majority students[9] – one of our target groups for outreach. - combining different activities into a 'black box' intervention (our Intervention Strategy 1) may also have a positive effect on the rates of application to HE by the participants[10].	[1]Universities UK. 2017. Raising attainment through school-university partnerships. DERA. https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/30504/1/Raising-attainment-through-university-school-partnerships.pdf [2]Comunian, R., Dent, T., O'Brien, D., Read, T. & Wreyford, N. 2023. Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category. KCL. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education [3]Continuum. 2013. The value of school engagement and school partnership working: review of the literature. Continuum. https://repository.uel.ac.uk/item/85xxy [4]TASO evidence toolkit, on information, advice, and guidance: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/information-advice-and-guidance/ [5]TASO evidence toolkit on multi-intervention outreach: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/multi-intervention-outreach/

• attainment raising and preparation for applying to HE through support with the application process may be crucial for the likelihood that our target group will apply[2].	[6]TASO evidence toolkit on pre-entry study and soft-skills support: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/study-and-soft-skills-support-pre-entry/
Our outreach activities have been selected and designed to help: • disseminate information and guidance on HE. • support prospective applicants with attainment raising in the creative subjects. • facilitate development of relevant skills. • prepare for applying to study a creative subject in HE. support learners with accessing HE in a creative subject through outbound and inbound practical skill-building workshops, subject-specific taster days, and information on how to prepare an application.	[7]Robinson, D. & V. Salvestrini. 2020. The impact of interventions for widening participation to higher education. A review of the evidence. Education Policy Institute. https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020-1.pdf [8]Austen, L., R. Hodgson, C. Heaton, N. Pickering & J. Dickinson. 2021. Access, retention, attainment and progression: an integrative review of demonstrable impact on student outcomes. Advance HE. http://shura.shu.ac.uk/29312/ [9]McCabe, C., K. Keast & M.S. Kaya. 2022. Barriers and facilitators to university access in disadvantaged UK adolescents by ethnicity: a qualitative study. Journal of Further and Higher Education, 46(10), pp. 1434-1446. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2022.2086037 [10]Younger, K., L. Gascoine, V. Menzies & C. Torgerson. 2018. A systematic review of evidence on the effectiveness of interventions and strategies for widening participation in higher education. Journal of Further and Higher Education, 43(6), 742–773. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2017.1404558

ACTIVITY: SUPPORTING TARGETS INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS TO NSCD, SUCH AS OUR OPEN DAY TRAVEL BURSARY, OPEN REHEARSALS, AND SUPPORT FOR THE CENTRE FOR ADVANCED TRAINING (CAT) STUDENTS.

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
The evidence on pre-entry financial support, from funding participation in outreach activities to admissions related activities, shows that: • structural barriers such as discrimination; lack of belonging, representation, and role models; cost of equipment, participation, and	[1]Golden, E. 2018. From Tropes to Troupes: Misty Copeland and the Hyper-Whiteness of Ballet. The Cupola: Scholarship at the Gettysburg College. Student Publications. https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/student_scholarship/700/

admissions, etc., that disadvantaged students (e.g., students from low-income families, first-in-the-family in HE, Global Majority, disabled, etc. students) face in accessing dance education pre-HE (outside of the curriculum), dance-related outreach, and admissions activities to study dance in HE, combine with perceptions among such students and their parents of dance, as elitist, impenetrable, and financially risky to pursue for HE study and a career, and of HE generally as too expensive, which translates into lower rates of such students applying and enrolling to study dance in HE [1,2,3,4,5].

- provision of financial support to cover unmet needs in relation to participation in higher education outreach, admissions, and the cost of study, does have a positive effect on participation[6].
- fee waivers for outreach related activities[7], as well as admissions activities like auditions and interviews[8] and support with travelling to attend them, improve HE access for disadvantaged students into tertiary study of creative subjects[9].
- means-tested, "free" participation in outreach activities and partnerships like AimHigher[11] helps target financial and related support directly at disadvantaged students, increase participation, and promote application and enrolment in HE[12,13].

Our planned pre-entry provision of financial support towards participating in outreach should help:

- channel available support with outreach attendance fees at our target student groups.

[2]Donnelly, M., P. Lažetić, A. Sandoval-Hernandez, K. Kumar & S. Whewall. 2019. An Unequal Playing Field: Extra-Curricular Activities, Soft Skills and Social Mobility. University of Bath. Social Mobility Commission. https://socialmobility.independent-commission.uk/app/uploads/2024/07/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf

[3]Johnson, O. 2017. The Black Sheep is the Black Dancer. Dance Major Journal, 5. http://dx.doi.org/10.5070/D551036259 Retrieved from https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7003g023

[4]Prichard, R. R. 2024. Privilege in Dance Education: A Discussion for Students and Teachers. Journal of Dance Education, 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2024.2321150

[5]ICM Ltd. 2019. Perceptions of Higher Education Outreach and Access Activity. Office for Students. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3905/perceptions-of-higher-education-outreach-and-access-activity.pdf

[6]Herbaut, E. & K. Geven. 2020. What works to reduce inequalities in higher education? A systematic review of the (quasi-)experimental literature on outreach and financial aid. Research in Social Stratification and Mobility, 65, 100442, ISSN 0276-5624, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2019.100442.

[7]TLCMD. 2023. Consultation Lesson Fees. https://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/music-auditions/

[8]Leeds Conservatoire. 2024. Audition Fees at the Leeds Conservatoire. https://www.leedsconservatoire.ac.uk/courses/apply-audition-fees/audition-information/

[9]Comunian, R., Dent, T., O'Brien, D., Read, T. & Wreyford, N. 2023. Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support

	diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category. KCL. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education
	[10]Robinson, D. & V. Salvestrini. 2020. The impact of interventions for widening participation to higher education. A review of the evidence. Education Policy Institute. https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020-1.pdf
	[11]Gorard, S., Smith, E., Thomas, E., May, H., Admett, N., & Slack, K. 2006. Review of widening participation research: addressing the barriers to participation in higher education. HEFCE. https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/6204/1/barriers.pdf
	[12]Office for Fair Access. 2017. Understanding the impact of outreach on access to higher education for disadvantaged adult learners. Office for Fair Access. https://oro.open.ac.uk/50339/
	[13]Torgerson, C., Gascoine, L., Heaps, C., Menzies, V. & Younger, K. 2014, Higher education access: evidence of effectiveness of university access strategies and approaches, Sutton Trust. https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Higher-Education-Access-Report-1.pdf

ACTIVITY: COLLABORATIVE MALE-IDENTIFYING ACTIVITIES SUCH AS KICK OFF BOYS PROJECT AND THE COLLABORATIVE MALE-IDENTIFYING PROJECT.

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
The evidence on the impact of outreach activities like our 'Kick Off Boys', and 'Collaborative Male-identifying' programmes and projects, suggests that: • acting as an 'anchor' for local schools and colleges through sponsorship and provision of expertise, facilities and resources, professional	[1]Universities UK. 2017. Raising attainment through school-university partnerships. DERA. https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/30504/1/Raising-attainment-through-university-school-partnerships.pdf

development, and involvement in the governance, can help HE providers raise aspirations for studying in HE[1].

- partnerships with schools and colleges have been a very effective approach to widening participation into creative subjects in HE[2].
- long term engagement with schools supports building local knowledge of student needs and facilitates cultural change across the partnership, benefitting students from our target groups in particular[3].
- workshops, subject tasters, and campus visits[4,5,6,7,8] that integrate information, advice, and guidance (IAG) on accessing HE are all likely to have small, positive effects on student attitudes and aspirations related to HE, confidence in the ability to achieve sufficient entry qualifications for, and a sense of belonging to HE.
- such programmatic activities may be particularly effective for Global Majority students[9] – one of our target groups for outreach.
- combining different activities into a 'black box' intervention (our Intervention Strategy 1) may also have a positive effect on the rates of application to HE by the participants[10].
- attainment raising and preparation for applying to HE through support with the application process may be crucial for the likelihood that our target group will apply[2].

Our outreach activities have been selected and designed to help:

- disseminate information and guidance on HE.
- support prospective applicants with attainment raising in the creative subjects.
- facilitate development of relevant skills.
- prepare for applying to study a creative subject in HE.

support learners with accessing HE in a creative subject through outbound and inbound practical skill-building workshops, subject-specific taster days, and information on how to prepare an application.

[2]Comunian, R., Dent, T., O'Brien, D., Read, T. & Wreyford, N. 2023. Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category. KCL. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

[3]Continuum. 2013. The value of school engagement and school partnership working: review of the literature. Continuum. https://repository.uel.ac.uk/item/85xxy

[4]TASO evidence toolkit, on information, advice, and guidance: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/information-advice-and-guidance/

[5]TASO evidence toolkit on multi-intervention outreach: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/multi-intervention-outreach/

[6]TASO evidence toolkit on pre-entry study and soft-skills support: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/study-and-soft-skills-support-pre-entry/

[7]Robinson, D. & V. Salvestrini. 2020. The impact of interventions for widening participation to higher education. A review of the evidence. Education Policy Institute. https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020-1.pdf

[8]Austen, L., R. Hodgson, C. Heaton, N. Pickering & J. Dickinson. 2021. Access, retention, attainment and progression: an integrative review of demonstrable impact on student outcomes. Advance HE. http://shura.shu.ac.uk/29312/

[9]McCabe, C., K. Keast & M.S. Kaya. 2022. Barriers and facilitators to university access in disadvantaged UK adolescents by ethnicity: a

	qualitative study. Journal of Further and Higher Education, 46(10), pp. 1434-1446. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2022.2086037
	[10]Younger, K., L. Gascoine, V. Menzies & C. Torgerson. 2018. A systematic review of evidence on the effectiveness of interventions and strategies for widening participation in higher education. Journal of Further and Higher Education, 43(6), 742–773. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2017.1404558

ACTIVITY: TEACHERS/SCHOOL CAREERS ADVICE EVENT

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)

Evidence around supporting the professional development of pre-HE educators, in schools, colleges, and community organisations, suggests that:
 	
• providing teachers from partners organisations with networking and professional development opportunities can improve their ability to provide to their students:
   o guidance of students on applying to HE,
   o guidance on careers linked to HE,
   o skills needed to transition into HE[1].
• teacher training and CPD can have a significant effect on student attainment[2,3].
• for the creative subjects, helping teachers enhance their pedagogic skills increases their students' engagement and aspirations for studying it in HE. This is especially applicable to Global Majority students[4].
 	
This activity will aim to:
 	
• provide developmental support with teaching creative subjects, and with advising learners on applying to study a creative subject (dance, specifically) in HE.
	[1]Causeway Education. 2019. Access Champions: Interim Evaluation Report. Causeway Education.
	
	[2]OfS. 2022. Schools, attainment and the role of higher education. Insights. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/schools-attainment-and-the-role-of-higher-education/
	
	[3]The Sutton Trust. 2014. What makes great teaching? https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/great-teaching/
	
	[4]Hallam, S. & S. Burns. 2017. Progression in instrumental music making for learners from disadvantaged communities: A Literature Review. Arts Council England. https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/In_harmony_Literature_review.pdf

ACTIVITY: SUPPORT WITH DIRECT APPLICATIONS AND AUDITION PROCESS, SUCH AS WITH INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, THE APPLICATION SUPPORT PACKAGE, AND INCLUSIVE AUDITION STRUCTURE.

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
Evidence on the provision of targeted student support, including in the pre-entry to HE, outreach phase, suggests that: • embedding mental health and wellbeing into curricular and co-curricular activities achieve a wide range of impacts, from improved mental health, general wellbeing literacy, and development of coping mechanisms and awareness of the available support and how to access it, to increased self-reporting and seeking support by student groups that generally are less likely to report and seek help[1]. • sector-wide frameworks, e.g., the Mental Wellbeing Embeddedness Framework[2], and established toolkits for reviewing and embedding wellbeing into curricular-based activities[3] and the wider learner experience help guide development of an integrative and cohesive approach[4,5]. This activity will aim to: • help applicants to prepare for their auditions and ensure all applicants have an equitable experience at audition	[1]Wavehill. 2022. What Works in Supporting Student Mental Health. Final Report to the Office for Students. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/7584/evaluation-of-the-mhcc-what-works.pdf [2]Lister, K. & Z. Allman. 2024. Embedding mental wellbeing in the curriculum: a collaborative definition and suite of examples in practice. Front. Educ. 8:1157614. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1157614 [3]Thomson, LJ. & H.J. Chaterjee. 2013. UCL Creative Wellbeing Measures. UCL. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/biosciences/culture-nature-health-research/ucl-creative-wellbeing-measures [4]Allman, Z. 2022. What good looks like in embedding mental health support across HE. WonkHE. https://wonkhe.com/blogs/what-good-looks-like-in-embedding-mental-health-support-across-he/ [5]Van Villet, E. & S. Hockley. 2024. Development and Continual Improvement Report: Sharing and celebrating the development of the University Mental Health Charter 2024. Student Minds. https://hub.studentminds.org.uk/university-mental-health-charter/umhc-reports-package-2024/#devel&improvmentreport

INTERVENTION STRATEGY 2 To build knowledge and skills for applicants from under resourced backgrounds.

Objectives and targets: IS2 will contribute towards meeting the following objective;

• To maintain the proportion of students from IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 2 areas enrolling on our courses, at 26.7%.; reaching target PTA_1.

ACTIVITY: ELEVATE

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
Evidence indicates that: • prospective students from our target groups face social capital and cost-related challenges around preparing to apply to study creative subjects in HE[1]. • supporting them with preparing for the application process (e.g., putting together application portfolios, or attending auditions or interviews) is beneficial but may itself be prohibitively expensive when it requires attendance on campus and involves a consultation fee[1]. This activity will aim to: • deliver targeted support with preparing for our auditions.	[1] Comunian, R., Dent, T., O'Brien, D., Read, T. & Wreyford, N. 2023. Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category. KCL. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education

ACTIVITY: ACCESS BURSARIES

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
Evidence on providing financial support with outreach, application and admissions related expenses suggests that: • pre-HE entry financial support is most successful when it is easy to understand and apply for, the eligibility criteria are clearly communicated and targeted at prospective beneficiaries[1]. • provision of financial support to cover unmet needs in relation to participation in higher education outreach, admissions, and the cost of study, does have a positive effect on participation[2]. • fee waivers for outreach related activities[3] improve HE access for disadvantaged students into tertiary study of creative subjects[4]. This activity will aim to: • help us identify and allocate appropriate financial support to students from our target groups to enable their participation in our attainment raising and skills development related outreach.	[1]Robinson, D. & V. Salvestrini. 2020. The impact of interventions for widening participation to higher education. A review of the evidence. Education Policy Institute. https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020-1.pdf [2]Herbaut, E. & K. Geven. 2020. What works to reduce inequalities in higher education? A systematic review of the (quasi-)experimental literature on outreach and financial aid. Research in Social Stratification and Mobility, 65, 100442, ISSN 0276-5624, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2019.100442. [3]TLCMD. 2023. Consultation Lesson Fees. https://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/music-auditions/ [4]Comunian, R., Dent, T., O'Brien, D., Read, T. & Wreyford, N. 2023. Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for

	Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category. KCL. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education [5]TLCMD. 2023. Consultation Lesson Fees.https://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/music-auditions/

ACTIVITY: SUPPORTING CENTRE FOR ADVANCED TRAINING (CAT) STUDENTS

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
Evidence on the provision of targeted student support, including in the pre-entry to HE, outreach phase, suggests that: • embedding mental health and wellbeing into curricular and co-curricular activities achieve a wide range of impacts, from improved mental health, general wellbeing literacy, and development of coping mechanisms and awareness of the available support and how to access it, to increased self-reporting and seeking support by student groups that generally are less likely to report and seek help[1]. • sector-wide frameworks, e.g., the Mental Wellbeing Embeddedness Framework[2], and established toolkits for reviewing and embedding wellbeing into curricular-based activities[3] and the wider learner experience help guide development of an integrative and cohesive approach[4,5]. • provision of needs-based, targeted, and specialised healthcare services to dancers is important for risk assessment, injury management, and injury reduction[6]. • similarly, screening of dancers' physical and psychological attributes, prior injuries, and current and planned dance activity helps identify areas where support is needed and prevent injury[6,7]. • providing nutrition advice to dancers adds to the overall care and support aimed at injury	[1]Wavehill. 2022. What Works in Supporting Student Mental Health. Final Report to the Office for Students. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/7584/evaluation-of-the-mhcc-what-works.pdf [2]Lister, K. & Z. Allman. 2024. Embedding mental wellbeing in the curriculum: a collaborative definition and suite of examples in practice. Front. Educ. 8:1157614. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1157614 [3]Thomson, LJ. & H.J. Chaterjee. 2013. UCL Creative Wellbeing Measures. UCL. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/biosciences/culture-nature-health-research/ucl-creative-wellbeing-measures [4]Allman, Z. 2022. What good looks like in embedding mental health support across HE. WonkHE. https://wonkhe.com/blogs/what-good-looks-like-in-embedding-mental-health-support-across-he/ [5]Van Villet, E. & S. Hockley. 2024. Development and Continual Improvement Report: Sharing and

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
prevention and timely and appropriate treatment[6]. This activity will aim to: • help improve our support related to health and wellbeing on the outreach, vocational programmes we offer.	celebrating the development of the University Mental Health Charter 2024. Student Minds. https://hub.studentminds.org.uk/university-mental-health-charter/umhc-reports-package-2024/#devel&improvmentreport [6]Russell, J.A. 2013. Preventing dance injuries: current perspectives. Open Access J Sports Med, 4:199-210. doi: 10.2147/OAJSM.S36529. PMID: 24379726; PMCID: PMC3871955. [7]Nicholas, J,. & S. Grafenauer. 2023. Investigating pre-professional dancer health status and preventative health knowledge. Front Nutr., 10:1271362. doi: 10.3389/fnut.2023.1271362. PMID: 38130445; PMCID: PMC10733861

INTERVENTION STRATEGY 3 To encourage applicants from the Global Majority and those who identify as male to enrol onto NSCD's undergraduate courses.

Objectives and targets: IS3 will contribute towards meeting the following objectives;

- To increase the proportion of students from the Global Majority enrolling on our courses, to 20% of our intake by 2029-30.
- To maintain the proportion of students who identify as male enrolling on our courses, at 17.4%.

Reaching targets PTA_2 and PTA_3.

ACTIVITY: RAISING THE PROFILE OF WORK WHICH SUPPORTS AND ADVOCATES FOR PEOPLE OF GLOBAL MAJORITY (POGM) AND MALE-IDENTIFYING STUDENTS.

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
Evidence on the engagement of Global Majority- and male-identifying learners with dance, and studying dance in HE, suggests that: • while dance is a compulsory activity within the physical education curriculum at Key Stages 1-3 (ages 5-14), its provision, and the inclusiveness of that provision, are patchy and the subject of a 'postcode lottery'[1]. • take up of dance at GCSE and A levels or equivalent pre-HE qualifications has decreased by 50% since 2008, likely influenced by reductions in timetabled teaching hours for dance, and of the number of qualified dance teachers[1]. • in addition to decreasing access to dance education at school, engagement with dance outside of the curriculum, in extracurricular settings, is prohibitively costly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds[1].	[1]One Dance UK. 2023. Everything we loved about dance was taken. The Place of dance in UK education. https://www.onedanceuk.org/media/yb0p2wcl/dance-in-education-report.pdf [2]Golden, E. 2018. From Tropes to Troupes: Misty Copeland and the Hyper-Whiteness of Ballet. The Cupola: Scholarship at the Gettysburg College. Student Publications. https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/student_scholarship/700/ [3]Donnelly, M., P. Lažetić, A. Sandoval-Hernandez, K. Kumar & S. Whewall. 2019. An Unequal Playing Field: Extra-Curricular Activities, Soft Skills and

- structural barriers such as discrimination; lack of belonging, representation, and role models; cost of equipment, participation, and admissions, etc., that disadvantaged students (e.g., students from low-income families, students who are first-in-the-family in HE, and Global Majority, disabled, and male-identifying students, etc.) face in accessing dance education pre-HE (outside of the curriculum), dance-related outreach, and admissions activities to study dance in HE, combine with perceptions among such students and their parents of dance as elitist, impenetrable, non-masculine, and financially risky to pursue for HE study and a career, and of HE generally as too expensive, which translates into lower rates of such students applying and enrolling to study dance in HE [2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9].
- creating opportunities for engagement with creative subjects early, at Key Stages 3-4, motivates Global Majority students to engage with such subjects as much as White students, who are the comparator group[10].
- having opportunities to engage with creative subjects at secondary school is important for students from our target groups, given they are less likely to consider and apply to study creative subjects in HE, and dance in particular, but having had experience and engagement with creative subjects triples their likelihood of considering and applying to study these subjects in HE, and increases the likelihood of getting graduate employment after studying these subjects[11,12].
- student integration into higher education, institution, and course, is central to transition and continuation[13,14].
- belonging to a learning community correlates positively with aspirations and motivation for learning, expectations of oneself, and academic achievement[15,16].
- pedagogic and other approaches (e.g., academic induction, personal tutoring, peer-mentoring and coaching, collaborative learning) to enhancing student interactions with staff, peers, and the campus that make students feel 'seen', 'known', and valued, have a demonstrably positive effect on belonging[17].
- curriculum inclusivity encompasses all teaching, learning, and assessment dimensions and is about anticipating and considering students' entitlement to accessing and participating in a course[18].
- inclusivity relates not only to curricula and learning, teaching, and assessment, but also to

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[10]Mak H.W. & D. Fancourt. 2021. Do socio-demographic factors predict children's

institutional policy, resources and funding, and staff development, practice, and leadership[19].

- lack of inclusivity, e.g., in the curriculum in terms of belonging and representation, associates with gaps in continuation, completion, and attainment for, e.g., Global Majority students, care experienced students, first-in-the-family students, and students from lower socio-economic ('working-class') backgrounds[20,21].
- role-modelling and coaching by staff who 'look', 'speak', and have similar backgrounds as disadvantaged and underrepresented student groups[22] can positively affect student transition to HE, belonging, continuation, motivation, and self-efficacy[23]; perceived competence, similarity to students, and attainability of the role-model's success may be determining factors for the effectiveness of role-modelling for target groups[24].

Both activities aim to enhance the inclusivity of our outreach and on-course environments and the learning experience for our Global Majority and male-identifying (prospective) students.

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Fees, investments and targets

2026-27 to 2029-30

Provider name: Northern School of Contemporary Dance

Provider UKPRN: 10008816

Investment summary

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

Notes about the data:

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

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

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

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

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

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£74,000	£82,000	£82,000	£83,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£72,000	£82,000	£82,000	£85,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£20,000	£23,000	£23,000	£23,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£17,000	£19,000	£19,000	£19,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£49,000	£55,000	£55,000	£56,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000
Access activity investment	**Total access investment (£)**	**£74,000**	**£82,000**	**£82,000**	**£83,000**
Access activity investment	*Total access investment (as % of HFI)*	**11.1%**	**10.9%**	**10.9%**	**10.8%**
Access activity investment	*Total access investment funded from HFI (£)*	**£74,000**	**£82,000**	**£82,000**	**£83,000**
Access activity investment	*Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)*	**£0**	**£0**	**£0**	**£0**
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£71,000	£80,000	£80,000	£82,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£1,000	£2,000	£2,000	£3,000
Financial support investment	**Total financial support investment (£)**	**£72,000**	**£82,000**	**£82,000**	**£85,000**
Financial support investment	*Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)*	**10.8%**	**10.9%**	**10.9%**	**11.0%**
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£20,000	£23,000	£23,000	£23,000
Research and evaluation investment	*Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)*	3.0%	3.1%	3.1%	3.0%

Fees, investments and targets

2026-27 to 2029-30

Provider name: Northern School of Contemporary Dance

Provider UKPRN: 10008816

Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim [500 characters maximum]	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone	2029-30 milestone
To increase the proportion of students from IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 2 areas enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 26.0% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 30% by 2035-36.	PTA_1	Access	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5	We consistnetly recruit low numbers of students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds. We are using 2-year aggregate data. (2021-22 to 2022-23)	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage	17.6%	20.3%	22.1%	24.0%	26.0%
To increase the proportion of students from Global Majority enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 21.3% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 25% by 2035-36.	PTA_2	Access	Ethnicity	Not specified (please give detail in description)		We consistently recruit low numbers of students from the Global Majority. As our data is so small, we aim to increase the numbers of all Global Majority entrants. We are using 2-year aggregate data. (2021-22 to 2022-23)	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage	15.1%	18.2%	19.0%	20.0%	21.3%
To increase the proportion of students who identify as male enrolling on our courses, to a 2-year aggregate of 20.4% by 2029-30. We aim to reach 23% by 2035-36.	PTA_3	Access	Sex	Male	Female	We consistently recruit low numbers of male-identifying students. We are using 2-year aggregate data. (2021-22 to 2022-23)	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage	18.5%	18.7%	19.0%	19.0%	20.4%
	PTA_4														
	PTA_5														
	PTA_6														
	PTA_7														
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone	2029-30 milestone
	PTS_1														
	PTS_2														
	PTS_3														
	PTS_4														
	PTS_5														
	PTS_6														
	PTS_7														
	PTS_8														
	PTS_9														
	PTS_10														
	PTS_11														
	PTS_12														

Table 5e: Progression targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone	2029-30 milestone
	PTP_1														
	PTP_2														
	PTP_3														
	PTP_4														
	PTP_5														
	PTP_6														

	PTP_7													
	PTP_8													
	PTP_9													
	PTP_10													
	PTP_11													
	PTP_12													