

## Central School of Ballet - Access and participation plan 2026-27 to 2029-30.

### Introduction and strategic aims

Central is a small specialist institution, with students from across the UK and 40-50% international students. This unique family-like environment enables students to feel known, seen and supported. The student experience is highly personalised, providing an excellent focused teaching and learning environment as well as a personal approach to student wellbeing. Based in The Countess of Wessex Studios on the South Bank, Central offers vocational degree courses in dance at undergraduate and postgraduate level, validated by the University of Kent, to approximately 125 higher education (HE) students. Most students join Central aged 16 and complete a Foundation and BA Hons Top up in Professional Dance and Performance aged 19. Central School of Ballet's root strength lies in its progressive, performance-driven approach to training, established in 1982 by Ann Stannard and Christopher Gable. The launch of Ballet Central (1984), the touring company for Year 3, provided students with vital stage experience. Today it continues to adapt to industry demands, ensuring our graduates are versatile, expressive, and well-equipped for a diverse professional career. In addition to our higher education programme, Central runs a thriving hub of activity including recreational weekly classes for children and adults, Associate and Junior Associate Programmes for young people aiming for professional dance training, holiday courses and partnership programmes. Thus, creating opportunities for a much wider range of individuals, communities, and Southwark residents to engage with the joy of dance.

The principles of quality, access and inclusion are foundational at Central School of Ballet and are embedded in our outreach, pre-16 training programmes and partnerships. Our commitment to Widening Participation is demonstrated in the way we create pathways into higher education, encouraging individuals with passion and talent to develop the skills required for a professional career in dance, regardless of background.

**Our vision** is creating careers in dance, **Our Mission** is to prepare dancers for a diverse and evolving industry, through a personalised training in technical excellence and artistic expression and the experience of professional performance in Ballet Central. Our **Values** are Excellence & Professionalism; Inclusivity & Accessibility; Innovation & Versatility; Community & Support. Our strategic priorities are Quality; Access and Inclusion; Healthy Organisational Culture and Sustainability.

We are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and to creating a culture of belonging for all. We recognise the wider systemic structures that contribute to inequity and are dedicated to doing the vital work and having the conversations that support the change necessary for Central to progress. Race equity and representation continue to be a priority; as does building an inclusive culture for all. Our EDI priorities are at the heart of the organisation and are embedded into our Whole Provider Approach. The EDI committee and working group, steer and monitor this work to ensure the priorities and long-term progress that this plan supports is achieved. We recognise our collective responsibility to ensure that the world of classical Ballet moves forward and makes quicker progress and will use our sphere of influence to contribute to this change.

Our Access and Participation Plan (APP) has been developed in line with Central School of Ballet's strategic priorities, with a focus on supporting access to higher education for those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, people of global majority heritage and male identifying dancers. Our aim is to increase access to Central school of Ballet for each targeted group over the duration of the

plan and beyond, whilst addressing the most relevant barriers and risks to the equality of opportunity. The progress of all activities will be monitored and evaluated throughout the life cycle of this plan and adjusted where necessary to achieve projected outcomes.

## **2. Risks to equality of opportunity**

After conducting our assessment of performance (see Annex A) and reviewing the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR), we have identified the key risks to equality of opportunity that will be addressed through our APP. In determining which risk areas to focus on in this Plan, we have considered our specialism in Classical Ballet and the influence of wider structural challenges and complex intersections that influence equity of access to the performing arts and specifically Ballet. We have identified some risks to equality of opportunity at the Central School of Ballet (CSB) at the Access phase of the student lifecycle. As a small provider, the data we have drawn upon is small cohort data, which means that analysis of data and statistical significance is limited. This also limits our ability to make valid assessments and interpretations, particularly in exploring disaggregated data and intersections of characteristics. We have explored and provided assessment where we considered it meaningful.

**2.1 Risk 1** – There is inequitable access to preparatory dance training, information and guidance that is needed to support the skills and development required for access to Central School of Ballet, particularly for students from the most deprived areas and for students from of Global Majority Heritage. (Related to EORR risks Access 1-4; knowledge and skills; information and guidance; perception of HE; application success rate, and EORR risks Success 8 & 10; financial costs and mental health).

We have identified two indicators of risk that suggest the risks noted above may be occurring:

Indicator 1 (IMD):

- In the six years from 2017-18 to 2022-23, there has been limited data available for participants from IMD Quintiles 1 & 2 at the Central School of Ballet due to low numbers resulting in data suppression. IMD Q5 has consistently had the highest percentage of participants.
- An area of concern is the increase of IMD Q5 entrants from 2018-19 to 2022-23 by 4.7 percentage points. This increase is counter to the decrease seen in the sector for IMD Q5 (-2.3 percentage points) entrants.
- The data indicates a persistent pattern of students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds being underrepresented, while those from the least disadvantaged backgrounds maintain higher entry rates. This disparity between IMD Q1&Q2 and IMD Q5 participation suggests an ongoing gap that requires attention.

Surveyed students in London face the highest average rent in the UK, at £812 per month – almost £150 more than any other region. We know at the pre-enrolment stage of the application process that accommodation costs influence acceptance rates for HE courses. (Save the Students, 2025)

We know through our evaluation of the impact of financial support at Central, using the OfS tool kit, recipients of financial support identified the bursaries as being a crucial factor in enabling them to continue their studies, pay for essential living and educational costs, and thereby lower levels of anxiety and stress which they would have experienced without financial support. Ensuring students from our identified groups understand the financial and wellbeing support available before application, is vital for supporting pre-HE access at Central. This risk is therefore a concern both in the

pre-and post-application parts of the student journey, and we must adopt financial support strategies that relieve financial pressures on our prospective and enrolled students.

We know that to meet the entry requirements at Central, students generally need to embark on dance training at least 8 years prior to their audition. Those who do not have the financial means to attend extra-curricular activities to supplement the level of dance required to access HE specialist programs, are at a disadvantage. Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and areas of multiple deprivation encounter significantly less exposure to creative subjects before reaching university compared to their more affluent counterparts. Ashton and Ashton (2022) discuss the stark disparity in access to creative subjects between students in private schools and those in state-funded schools. This risk is an area of concern for us because in our observations, students from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to have experience of the high-quality dance training required to gain entry to specialist dance institutions, and equally may be unaware of the financial, and mental health support that is on offer to students during their training. Our intervention strategies will provide targeted access to specialist pre-HE dance training and information and guidance for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. We have also included intervention strategies at the oncourse stage to ensure the access commitments to targeted groups are honoured and delivered.

Indicator 2 (Global Majority Heritage):

- Over the last 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23), Central has evidenced a high proportion of white students (90.3%) above the sector average by 24.7 percentage points.
- Annual data for all ethnicities and some specific ethnic groups is suppressed due to the small cohort numbers and therefore granular analysis is difficult and not reportable.
- Over a 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23), we note the low enrolment of Asian students at 3.5%, significantly below the sector enrolment rate of 15.4%.
- Mixed heritage students, with 4.4% enrolment rate over a 4-year aggregate, (2019-20 to 2022-23), have higher rates at the Central School of Ballet than the population parity (2.9%) and slightly lower than the 5.5% sector rate over the same period.
- Despite the limited data we know the low intake of students of Global Majority Heritage (GMH) at Central mirrors the lack of representation in Ballet in higher education institutions and the wider professional sector.

Delivering a long-term plan to address systemic barriers that impact access to ballet remains an area of focus for our intervention strategies.

We recognise the value of taking a whole-lifecycle approach to addressing this area. The sense of belonging and fit at the pre-enrolment stage can influence the choices of study, particularly in environments where GMH representation in the student body and staff workforce is limited.

We know that early intervention is needed to support young people to view dance as a viable option for their career pathway, including information on the support available such as finance, mental health, and wellbeing. Creative HE subjects are often connected with perceptions of elitism and inaccessibility. These perceptions are deeply connected to learner identity and the extent to which they feel they 'fit' within higher education environments. Learners of Global Majority Heritage and from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to select HE courses which they see as offering more stable and lucrative career paths. When viewing the top 10 A level subject choices by KS5 pupils by ethnic groups, the absence of arts subjects and prevalence of STEM Subjects is evident (FFT Datalab, 2023). Additionally, HESA 2023/24 data show that 80% of all undergraduate students

who studied design and creative and performing arts of known ethnicity, were white, compared to an 18% combined total of Black Asian Mixed and Other.

**2.2 Risk 2** – There is inequitable access to the preparatory dance training, information and guidance that is needed to support the skills and development required for access to Central School of Ballet, and perceptions of higher education that may deter access, particularly for male identifying students (Related to EORR risks 1-3: knowledge and skills; information and guidance; perception of HE).

Indicators of this risk are:

- Data at the Central School of Ballet shows that female identifying students consistently have a higher access rate than male identifying students, which follows the sector wide trend.
- There has been an increase in female identifying students from 57.7% in 2017-18 to 73.5% 2022-23 and a decrease in male identifying students from 42.3% in 2017-18 to 26.5% in 2022-23.
- Over the 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23), male identifying learners at the Central School of Ballet fell below the sector average: 29.8% vs. 43.1%, while the enrolment gap with female identifying learners at Central is 40.4 percentage points (pp) higher than the sector gap of 13.8 percentage points (pp) over the same period.

The issue of access and participation of male identifying students in Central's discipline area of dance is an institutional and industry concern, with risks relating to the perception of dance, access to training, information and guidance, and lack of male role models. Therefore, Central considers the male characteristic as relevant to access and participation. In terms of language, we chose to use the term 'Gender' as the target descriptor rather than the OFS target descriptor of 'Sex', as we believe that this term is more appropriate and inclusive. However, in Annex A the term 'Sex' appears as it refers to information from the OfS data dashboard. To address male identifying student engagement in dance, early intervention would be valuable given the specialist nature of this field and its requirement for early training. Providing opportunities for male identifying dancers to access activities designed specifically for them in safe spaces with other male identifying dancers and facilitators is vital to supporting belonging and confidence. It is also important to provide clear information on the nature of vocational dance training and the support available – both financial and in terms of health and wellbeing.

### **Additional risks**

The key risks for Central School of Ballet focus on Access. However as noted above, addressing EORR risks 8 Mental Health, and 10 Cost pressures are both key components to students' success and progression once on the course. The data we have does not currently indicate that these areas are causes for concern at the success (on course outcomes) or progression stages, but as we diversify the student cohort through our access intervention strategies, we need to guarantee that we have in place the necessary financial and mental health support to assure their success, enabling students to successfully engage in their training. They may also have impact on access as students consider higher education choices and receive information about wellbeing and financial support. As indicated above, it is important for students in our target groups to be aware of the support that is available to them once studying at Central, as perceived concerns about their ability to thrive on the course may be an obstacle to applying.

Through conducting our assessment of performance, we identified other risks to equality of opportunity, which will not be addressed through this APP due to our size, capacity, and resource. These decisions have been carefully considered, and we will continue to monitor these performance areas annually and consider them through our whole provider approach.

### 3.Objectives

Through our assessment of performance, we have identified several indications of risks. Our APP will address three targets mapped to six indications of risks to equality of opportunity through 5 intervention strategies.

Target Reference (Table 5d, Annex C)	Objective	Intervention strategy
PTA 1	To reduce the gap in the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from the most deprived neighbourhoods (IMD Q1&2), compared to those from the least (IMD Q5), reaching a gap of less than 10 percentage points (pp) by 2035-36.	IS1/ IS3/ IS4/ IS5
PTA2	To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from Global Majority Heritage backgrounds, to reach 35% by 2035-36.	IS1/IS3 /IS4 /IS5
PTA3	To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are male identifying dancers, to reach 42% by 2035-36.	IS2/IS5

### 4. Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

#### Intervention Strategy [IS1]: Partnership and Access programme

The Partnership and Access programme aims to support the attainment and skills development required for access to Central School of Ballet pre-HE and HE programmes, through bespoke partnerships with organisations that support our mission to provide high quality dance training and relevant experiences and pathways to students who face barriers to accessing ballet.

**Objectives and targets:** To reduce the gap in the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from the most deprived neighbourhoods (IMD Q1&2), compared to those from the least (IMD Q5), reaching a gap of less than 10 percentage points (pp) by 2035-36. To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from Global Majority Heritage backgrounds, to reach 35% by 2035-36.

**Targets:** PTA 1 IMD; PTA 2 Global Majority Heritage See Table 5d, Annex C.

**Risks to equality of opportunity:** knowledge and skills (EORR Risk 1); information and guidance (EORR Risk 2); perception of HE (EORR Risk 3); acceptance to HE (EORR Risk 4).

### **Summary of evidence base and rationale**

Evidence on the outreach effects of partnering with pre-HE education organisations indicates that partnerships with schools, colleges, and community organisations, helps us to understand and respond to the diversity of needs and barriers to accessing HE through: engaging groups of learners outside the organisations reach; increasing outreach efficiency through collaboration and learning from partners and extending the reach of small and specialist HE providers.

Partnerships can positively impact the aspirations and attainment of underrepresented students. TASO's (n.d) evidence toolkit on pre-entry aspiration raising, showed that supporting students at Key Stage 4 to acquire the skills and qualifications necessary to progress to HE (minimum of five GCSEs), is especially important for students from our target groups (Global Majority Heritage) who are less likely to consider and apply to study creative subjects in HE. (Comunian, et al., 2023). Research by Brilliant Club (2019) highlights that effective partnerships with schools and universities are vital for access and should include the following: engaging students early; aligning activities with the priorities of the partner; and minimising partner costs and logistical barriers. This approach has been adopted into the partnership pathways programme and co-production has been embedded into all the partnerships at Central to ensure they are fit for purpose for each organisation. Collaborative partnerships enable HE providers to engage prospective students in various outreach activities, from summer schools and campus visits to mentoring programmes, performances, HE information events and bespoke events. (Martikke, Church & Hart, 2015). Targeted work with each partnership enables us to reach students who would not ordinarily be aware of Central School of Ballet. Our 2023-25 work with AkomaAsa Arts Academy evidenced this: "This collaboration has created genuine opportunities for children and young people of African and Caribbean heritage to engage meaningfully with ballet. It has shared new skills, perceptions, and resources, opening up a world of possibilities for our students." *Akosua Boakye BEM Director*. Through our partnership work, we will: target students from our chosen groups to facilitate their access and transition into HE at CSB and other providers; promote engagement with dance; and provide information about studying dance in HE. See Annex B, for further information.

**Evaluation:** We will evaluate the activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and 2 standards, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being met, with findings published as outlined in Section 4. Table (5e) outlines how we will evaluate each activity within this strategy.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross IS
IS1 Activity Partnership and Access programme	<p>Partnership with specialist organisations and Southwark organisations supporting equity of access in ballet. Focus on GMH dancers from traditionally underrepresented groups (African Diaspora, Caribbean, South Asian and Southeast Asian heritage). Example partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artistry Youth Dance</li> <li>• Southwark College</li> <li>• English National Ballet- Ballet Futures</li> <li>• Theatre Peckham</li> <li>• AkomaAsa Arts Academy</li> </ul> <p>Each partnership has a bespoke co-produced offer of events, incorporating activities to support dance training; understanding vocational pathways; supporting knowledge and guidance for families and increasing access to dance performances. Each organisation lead collaborates with CSB to ensure “best fit” is achieved. This activity is already existing and first developed with 3 partners in 2023-24 and 2 more in 2024-25. Participants numbers vary across the individual partnerships from 5-85.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership activities: £8,000.</li> <li>• Partnership bursaries: £11,000.</li> <li>• Work experience placement / induction /safeguarding &amp; health and safety training: £4,000.</li> <li>• Evaluation and monitoring of all activities and co production of activities for stakeholders: £11,000.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes for young people:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge and awareness of CSB.</li> <li>• Positive experience of classical ballet and CSB.</li> <li>• Increased knowledge about CSB access support for prevocational and vocational pathways.</li> <li>• Increased skills and confidence in classical ballet.</li> </ul> <p><b>Longer term outcomes for young people:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people continue classical dance e.g. enrolling on CSB prevocational programmes.</li> <li>• Young people apply, are successful at and enrol at CSB.</li> </ul>	IS3 IS4 IS5

**Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy 1 across the 4-years of this Plan is £57,000.**

## **Intervention Strategy [IS2]: Male Identifying collaborative dance project.**

A multi-institution collaborative project focusing on widening young male-identifying dancers' perceptions of dance at HE, helping dancers and their supporters to make informed choices about dance pathways. To be delivered through a series of events in targeted regions to support specialist dance providers to reach young male-identifying dancers effectively. Aim is for collaborative partnerships to enhance the inclusivity of our outreach and the learning experience for male-identifying (prospective) students.

**Objective and targets:** To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are male identifying dancers, to reach 42% by 2035-36.

**Targets:** PTA 3 See Table 5d, Annex C

**Risks to equality of opportunity:** This intervention strategy will address knowledge and skills (EORR Risk 1); information and guidance (EORR Risk 2); perception of HE (EORR Risk 3); acceptance to HE (EORR Risk 4).

### **Evidence base and rationale:**

Evidence indicates that there are structural barriers (such as lack of belonging, representation, and role models), that male-identifying students can face in accessing dance education pre-HE activities such as dance-related outreach, and admissions activities to study dance in HE. In addition to this, students and their parents and guardians can perceive dance, especially ballet, as elitist, impenetrable, non-masculine, and financially risky to pursue for HE studies and a career (Prichard, 2024). These perceptions translate into lower rates of such students applying and enrolling to study dance in HE. Having opportunities to engage with creative subjects like dance at secondary school is important for students from our target group, 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 (Jones, 2017; Cultural Learning Alliance, 2017). Rinsler (2009) affirms this by stating that "research continues to indicate that participation in Western European dance remains a culturally suspect endeavour for male adolescents and young adults." Research by Holdsworth (2013) also shows that dance is often presented in some environments as sporty, competitive, physical, and masculine to first attract those new to dance and challenge their perceptions.

Providing opportunities for male identifying dancers to be taught together during their formative years and explore a range of styles, expression and themes could help them view dance as an enjoyable and legitimate career pathway. Our own student consultations have revealed that male identifying students at Central experienced varied pathways into dance. A multi-institution approach supports this variation and can show the breadth of training available. Central's pre-16 classes support dancers to explore ballet e.g. Junior school and Associate classes for male identifying students, offer a haven for students to explore their craft with a dynamic role model with shared lived experience, providing a community for those that attend. Understanding this lived experience is crucial for the wellbeing of the dancers. Williams (2003), in exploring key themes that impacted Male dancers, discovered that dancers experienced social isolation, have unmet needs and persevere in studying dance despite navigating several challenges. Rinsler (2009) added that that the most current research on boys' emotional and psychological needs reports that boys are not receiving the level and quality of emotional attachment they actually say they need.

This intervention strategy provides opportunities for male identifying dancers to access activities designed specifically for them in safe spaces with other male identifying dancers and facilitators

through a collaborative specialist provider approach. We know through our consultations with male identifying dancers that when they experience these opportunities they can access and create support networks, be exposed to role models, be encouraged to continue and be inspired by others. Rinsler (2009) also speaks of “overwhelming courage necessary for our male students to pursue dance study and consider a career in dance.” We know that many experienced empowerment and freedom, whilst others experienced less freedom pursuing their interest in silence compartmentalizing their dance identity.

As part of this intervention, we will explore the themes raised through research and student consultation. Our collaborative partnerships will aim to enhance the inclusivity of our outreach activities and the learning experience for male-identifying (prospective) students. See Annex B, Intervention Strategy 2 for further information.

## **Evaluation**

We will evaluate the activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and 2 standards, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being met, with findings published as outlined in Section 4. Table (5e) outlines how we will evaluate each activity within this strategy.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross IS
<b>IS2 Male Identifying collaborative dance project</b>	<p>Male identifying dancers’ collaboration project to support the attainment, access, and pathways to dance for male identifying dancers. Collaborative project with the following providers:</p> <p>Central School of Ballet, London Contemporary Dance School, London Studio Centre, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance &amp; Northern School of Contemporary Dance.</p> <p>Four collaborative events will take place in regions across the UK. Each institution will provide the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variety of practical workshops exploring a range of dance styles</li> <li>• Access to role models and alumni panels</li> <li>• IAG on the benefits of each institution and how to get involved bey delivered through a non-competitive lens</li> <li>• IAG for parents and care givers</li> <li>• Opportunities for participants to meet other male identify dancers and build networks</li> <li>• Pastoral/wellbeing themed workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artistic and WP staff time: £10k</li> <li>• Administration, materials and resources, evaluation, and monitoring: £14k</li> <li>• Travel costs and Student Ambassador costs £2k</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes for young people:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants attend specific event(s)</li> <li>• Participants have increased confidence, knowledge of dance HE courses and awareness of the benefits of enrolling at partner dance providers</li> <li>• Participants have increased knowledge of the career opportunities of completing a HE dance course</li> <li>• Participants feel like they would be happy and fit in if they were to enrol on a HE dance course</li> <li>• Participants book and attend open day (s) or other further events delivered by partner HE providers</li> </ul> <p><b>Longer term outcomes for young people:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants apply and enrol at one of the partner providers</li> </ul>	IS5.1

**Total cost of activities and evaluation for Intervention Strategy 2 across the 4-years of this Plan is £26,000.**

### **Intervention Strategy [IS3]: Inclusive admissions**

Inclusive admissions strategy provides an umbrella of support to scaffold the application process for targeted groups. The aim is to provide young people from under-represented groups with access to high-quality dance training while making sure information, advice and guidance is available for applying to HE dance institutions. This strategy includes the following: Contextual Admissions Framework to support equity of access to our courses and The Assisted Application Scheme to assist applicants from our target groups throughout the application cycle. We seek to review and develop each mechanism of support to ensure it remains fit for purpose for the students for whom it is designed.

**Objectives and targets:** To reduce the gap in the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from the most deprived neighbourhoods (IMD Q1&2), compared to those from the least (IMD Q5), reaching a gap of less than 10 percentage points (pp) by 2035-36. To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from Global Majority Heritage backgrounds, to reach 35% by 2035-36.

**Targets:** PTA\_1, PTA\_2, PTA\_3. See Table 5d, Annex C.

**Risks to equality of opportunity:** knowledge and skills (EORR Risk 1); information and guidance (EORR Risk 2); perception of HE (EORR Risk 3); acceptance to HE (EORR Risk 4); Financial costs (EORR Risk 10) Mental Health (EORR Risk 8).

#### **Evidence base and rationale:**

Evidence shows that providing prospective applicants with support, information and advice on preparing to apply to HE, including financial support for admissions costs, has a positive impact, and benefits disadvantaged students in terms of preparation and rate of success at HE (Comunian, et al., 2023). Providing targeted application support enhances the access of underrepresented students to HE, including to highly selective HE providers (Barkat, 2019). 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 (Herbaut & Geven, 2020). Evidence also shows that providing fee waivers for outreach related activities, auditions, and travel bursaries, improves HE access for disadvantaged students to study creative subjects (Leeds Conservatoire, 2024). Whilst continuation is not a concern or focus at Central, sector evidence shows the receipt of financial support (grants, bursaries, scholarships, and fee-waivers) increases continuation and completion (TASO, 2023) and can help close continuation gaps for disadvantaged students. (OfS, 2020). Ensuring we have the mechanisms in place to support an increasing diverse student population is essential to achieving our ambitions during and beyond this plan.

As part of this process, we will continue to develop the Assisted Application Scheme which was launched in 2023 and was modelled on the Guildhall School of Music's Supported Application scheme launched in 2019. Central's Evaluation report for 2023-24 evidenced a positive start to supporting eligible students, making a considerable positive difference to applicants, both in terms of breaking down knowledge barriers to navigating the CSB audition process, but also in terms of financial and attitudinal barriers to professional dance. In terms of offer data, 8% of those who applied through assisted admissions (2023-24) were successful at final audition. In terms of those who were offered a place through the assisted applications process and then enrolled at CSB, this equates to 66.6%. This is above the conversion rate for all applicants at 54% for the same entry year (September 2024). Providing nurture and support throughout the application process is a key ingredient to the scheme, ensuring applicants have access to financial resources and people "in the know" and a valuable opportunity to build familiarity and belonging with Central. Reflecting on 5 years of the

Supported Application Scheme at Guildhall, Ashleigh Hall states, “There has been a demonstrable change in application outcomes when compared to the preceding application fee waivers” and the “Scheme’s greatest strength has been its reactivity and flexibility over the years, and I encourage colleagues across the sector to be open to change”.

Our aim is to continue to develop the Assisted Application Scheme yearly and implement evaluation recommendations.

We seek to consider how opportunities for peer learning could be built into the scheme. We know from the evidence, how invaluable it can be for applicants to meet current students, especially those from more diverse backgrounds. We will continue to consult with other providers with similar models and build more robust data to measure the impact on enrolment outcomes.

We will also review the Contextual Admissions Framework, Admission and Appeals Policy and consider the use of a variety of data in the application of the admissions process. We will also introduce contextualised student groupings for auditions and for teaching and learning, review the bursary process, including applications, allocations, the panel, and support to students and provide staff training and support on the contextual admissions process.

Evidence around the design and implementation of contextual admissions indicates that: they mitigate inequalities and biases related to the ability to demonstrate and assess talent during admissions to studying creative subjects in HE, (Boliver & Powell, 2020), and they are a recommended approach to enhancing access to HE for our target groups. (Boliver, et al., 2021). Reviewing our policy, framework and approach is essential to ascertain the effectiveness of contextual admissions at Central. (Gorard, et al., 2018). Further evidence on contextual admissions is available in Annex B.

## **Evaluation**

We will evaluate the activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and 2 standards, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being met, with findings published as outlined in Section 4. Table (5e) outlines how we will evaluate each activity within this strategy.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross IS
<p>IS3. Inclusive admissions - Assisted Application Scheme and Contextual admissions.</p>	<p>The Assisted Applications Scheme removes barriers to applying to CSB by providing support throughout the application process. This includes application fee waiver, travel bursaries, dance day access, personal statement support, pre audition and audition support resources. The programme connects applicants with people who can support their journey and fill in any knowledge gaps they may have.</p> <p>The Contextual Admission framework aims to assess potential and ensure equity of access through the audition process. We will undertake the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of CA Framework and Admissions policy</li> <li>• Creation of benchmark for holistic review</li> <li>• Contextualised and inclusive ways to group students in audition and studio/classrooms</li> <li>• Provide staff training and support on the contextual admissions process.</li> </ul>	<p>Administration of scheme applications, fee waivers and travel bursaries: £35k</p> <p>Materials and resources, WP and Artistic staff time and Evaluation: £11k</p>	<p><b>Immediate outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students feel supported and valued by CSB</li> <li>• Students from under-represented groups feel more confident in the likely success of their application</li> <li>• More students from underrepresented groups consider applying to CSB</li> <li>• All staff have a deep understanding and are well equipped to represent CSB throughout application process</li> </ul> <p><b>Longer term outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A greater proportion of students from under-represented groups apply to CSB and are successful during the application and audition process</li> <li>• A greater proportion of students from under-represented groups accept their offer of a place and enrol at CSB</li> <li>• Staff further apply principles of contextual admissions to wider learning and teaching practice</li> </ul>	<p>IS1 IS2 IS4</p>

<p><b>IS3.2 Inclusive admissions-finance support</b></p>	<p>Review of bursary/grant/waiver /scholarship process, including applications, allocations, the panel, and support to students. Ensure that all processes are fit for purpose and reaching the students most in need through implementing necessary changes/ development emerging from the review.</p>	<p>£10,800.</p>	<p><b>Immediate Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased attainment in classical ballet</li> <li>• Increased confidence in their ability to progress onto HE level dance</li> <li>• Increased confidence that CSB is somewhere they would fit in and be happy. Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to financial security</li> <li>• Students are able to participate in various academic and social facets of university life (positively impacting sense of belonging)</li> <li>• Job/income pressure, and stress / anxiety is decreased</li> <li>• Reduction in injuries</li> </ul> <p><b>Longer term Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased applications and enrolments for CSB vocational courses</li> <li>• Increased continuation and attainment rates for target students</li> </ul>	<p>IS1 IS2 IS4</p>
--	---	-----------------	---	--------------------

**The total cost of activities and evaluation for Intervention Strategy 3 across the 4-years of this Plan is £47,000.**

## **Intervention Strategy [IS4]: Transitions and Induction**

Transition and Induction Programme is a cohesive selection of support activities aimed at helping students navigate pre-enrolment, enrolment, and post-enrolment at CSB and develop a sense of belonging to the CSB community. Supporting learners to transition into Central will focus on the following: supporting higher education academic transition; higher education non-academic transition and belonging; and supporting help seeking behaviours.

**Objectives and targets:** To reduce the gap in the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from the most deprived neighbourhoods (IMD Q1&2), compared to those from the least (IMD Q5), reaching a gap of less than 10 percentage points (pp) by 2035-36. To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from Global Majority Heritage backgrounds, to reach 35% by 2035-36.

**Targets:** PTA\_1, PTA\_2, PTA\_3. See Table 5d, Annex C.

**Risks to equality of opportunity:** knowledge and skills (EORR Risk 1); information and guidance (EORR Risk 2); perception of HE (EORR Risk 3); acceptance to HE (EORR Risk 4).

### **Evidence base and rationale**

Evidence related to support activities before, during, and post-enrolment to HE, shows that residential or online pre-enrolment programmes covering orientation, information, and advice on higher education, can positively impact the aspirations and motivation for studying in HE of prospective applicants and increase access to HE. Induction programmes boost the development of peer capital and self-advocacy skills by disadvantaged students (e.g. first-in-the-family; low family income), which impacts on the integration of students in HE.

**Induction support for academic skills development:** We know that not all students will embark on the higher education journey from the same starting point. At Central students may (and mostly will) start at the age of 16. Some are less equipped to manage the academic requirements of the course than others. This can impact on the student's self-efficacy and sense of belonging. (Osterman, 2000). This can also impact a learner's sense of belonging related to engagement with academic process (Trowler, 2010.) Successful transition through university depends on feelings of belonging and engagement with studies. Our transition programme will maximise opportunities to develop this by supporting students to access workshops, information and knowledge sessions that assist positive academic transition. Providing detailed guidance about support provision, academic requirements, assessment schedules and expectations is important to set the context for students (Pitkethly & Prosser, 2001). Bringing the hidden curriculum into view, explaining terminology, and using student consultation to inform and design resources shared at the pre-enrolment stage is vital.

**Supporting HE non-academic transition and belonging:** Supporting students to develop a positive learner identity is essential. The lens of how they view themselves can influence how easy a student finds it to adapt to HE across all domains including non-academic. The learner identity of students who are first in family to access higher education is different to those with a background of higher education experiences (Leese, 2010). Through consultations with students and alumni we know that students without former HE experiences or who are first to pursue ballet in their family, have other skills and knowledge and lived experiences to draw from. When we consider the nuances of dance training, we know that students often develop resilience and use their own networks of support external to HE institutions to navigate their experiences. Students draw on their own experiences and resources to navigate higher education (James, et al., 2015). We also learned through consultation that some students experience not "fitting in" at the start of the course and expressed the need for more support to build connections with others. The development of effective social networks can be crucial in supporting integration and a sense of fit (McFarlane 2018). During consultations students

cited the importance of the relationships they formed with peers across the student life cycle at various stages of transition. For example, male identifying students spoke of the community of support from older peers in the school, which is evidenced by Osterman (2000). Cage et al. (2021) indicate that transitions can have a negative impact on student mental health, highlighting the need for providers to prioritise the induction period. We know that these challenges are further exacerbated for students experiencing social deprivation. Additionally, those who have an intersectional experience of disadvantage are also impacted. Our student and staff consultations identified similar themes related to transitions. Students of Global Majority Heritage must manage the impact and stress of hypervisibility in predominately White spaces as part of transitioning into a new educational environment. Keels (2019) explores the experiences of Black and Latinx students attending five Historically White Universities, where these students are forced to navigate a range of obstacles including bias, tokenism, microaggressions, racism and exclusion, alongside managing the economic pressures of university. Keels (2019) argues the need for 'counter spaces', micro communities that provide students with the support and affinity, identity affirming safe spaces that enable students to be themselves.

Therefore, considering the specific needs of students during transition and induction is vital and is addressed in our intervention strategy. Our induction and transition activities will provide a foundation of support that addresses the academic and non-academic needs of our cohort and enhance student sense of belonging and social capital. Further detail can be found in Annex B.

## **Evaluation**

We will evaluate the activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and 2 standards, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being met, with findings published as outlined in Section 4. Table [5e] outlines how we will evaluate each activity within this strategy.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross IS
<b>IS4. Transitions and Induction</b>	<p>Range of activities prior to enrolment, upon enrolment and settling-in and into the first term, focused on supporting students to navigate HE and building a sense of community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of online and in person activities (supporting financial literacy, independence, academic readiness, belonging, course information, study skills, wellbeing, and social cohesion)</li> <li>• Online communication channel and self-paced digital resources.</li> </ul>	<p>Workshop and resource design, administration/ student co production: £14k</p> <p>WP and artistic staff time, evaluation, and monitoring: £21k</p>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge and awareness about HE and what to expect during their time at CSB</li> <li>• Improved sense of belonging</li> <li>• Improved connections and engagement between students and with the institution, particularly amongst diverse groups</li> </ul> <p><b>Longer term outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved continuation rates for target students</li> <li>• Improved attainment rates for target students.</li> </ul>	<p>IS1 IS2 IS3</p>

**The total cost of activities and evaluation for Intervention Strategy 4 across the 4-years of this Plan is £35,000.**

## **Intervention Strategy [IS5]: Finance and Mental Health support**

Pre- and post-entry financial support that includes means tested access and participation bursaries allocated based on specified eligibility criteria, as well as talent-linked Leverhulme scholarships for attending pre-HE and HE courses at CSB. The aim is to provide financial support to enable young people to access pre-HE courses as well as financial support to enable young people to access HE courses and mitigate against the mental health vulnerability that financial burden can cause. To provide targeted psychological interventions to support student mental health and enable young people to thrive.

**Objectives and targets:** To reduce the gap in the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from the most deprived neighbourhoods (IMD Q1&2), compared to those from the least (IMD Q5), reaching a gap of less than 10 percentage points (pp) by 2035-36. To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from Global Majority Heritage backgrounds, to reach 35% by 2035-36.

**Targets:** PTA\_1, PTA\_2, PTA\_3. See Table 5d, Annex C

**Risks to equality of opportunity:** Financial cost (EORR Risk 10); Mental Health (EORR Risk 8).

### **Evidence base and rationale:**

Evidence on pre-entry and post-entry financial support shows that structural barriers such as discrimination, lack of belonging, representation, and role models, cost of equipment, participation, and admissions negatively impact students from specific groups in accessing dance education at a variety of levels. This includes pre-HE dance-related outreach and admissions activities to study dance. (Golden, 2018; Donnelly, et al., 2019). In addition to these barriers, perceptions of dance and ballet, as elitist, impenetrable, and financially risky to pursue for HE study or as a career (Prichard, 2024), alongside a belief HE is generally too expensive, resulting into lower rates of such students applying and enrolling to study dance in HE (ICM Ltd., 2019). Evidence shows that pre-HE entry financial support, in terms of offering on-course bursaries towards tuition fees and subsistence, can have a small positive effect on disadvantaged students deciding to pursue higher education. Also, that provision of financial support to cover unmet needs in relation to participation in HE outreach, admissions, and the cost of study, does have a positive effect on participation (Herbaut & Geven, 2020; Office for Fair Access, 2017).

Financially supporting students to mitigate against mental health caused by financial worry is essential. Various sources (Pollard, et al., 2021; Lewis & Stiebahl, 2025) report that worries about debt and being able to afford food and accommodation can lead to mental health issues for students. We also know that providing targeted professional mental health support is the proven method to support those who require it. Onsite specialist provision ensures the cohort have access to the care they need, in addition to referrals to off-site experts. In the National Student Survey 2023, CSB students identified the area of mental health support as one to improve at Central. In response, Central set up on-site counselling provision, complementing the external referral service already in operation. Central also recognises the need to support students in their transition across the life cycle, helping them manage change and the demands they experience, as it is known this is a potential risk to mental health. Specifically, CKS NICE (2025) identified the following themes associated with higher risk of mental health conditions such as moving away from home and coping with independent living; the absence of familiar social and emotional support networks and loneliness; developing a new social identity; and managing workload pressure and financial pressures including managing own finances for first time. They also identified an increased risk for students with lower self-efficacy. Save the Student's

National Student Money Survey (2024) found that 74% of students arrived at university with less financial education than they would have liked and as identified in student APP consultation activities, supporting the financial literacy of students is included in our transition and induction intervention activities, where students will co-produce and facilitate some of the content. Adopting an effective method for identifying students at a greater risk and therefore in greater need of financial support is necessary for the overall effectiveness of the financial support provision. (Kaye, 2021). Our proposed provision plans for financial support aim to offer students a multiprong approach to delivering targeted financial support pre-HE access and HE application to on-course studies.

## **Evaluation**

We will evaluate the activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and 2 standards, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being met, with findings published as outlined in Section 4. Table (5e) outlines how we will evaluate each activity within this strategy.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross IS
<b>IS5.1 Financial support for pre-HE access</b>	<p>Leverhulme scholarships will support a total of 33 students, cover tuition, travel, and uniform costs. Scholarships are offered to young people from under-represented groups who show the potential to progress onto a HE dance course. This enables them to access CSB delivered pre-vocational courses and experience what it is like to embark on a dance HE course.</p>	<p>Management and monitoring of allocated financial support / Staff time / administration and evaluation: Pre-HE 139K</p>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased attainment in classical ballet</li> <li>• Increased knowledge and awareness of what CSB has to offer</li> <li>• Increased confidence in their ability to progress onto HE level dance</li> <li>• Increased confidence that CSB is somewhere they would fit in and be happy</li> </ul> <p><b>Longer term outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased applications and enrolments for CSB vocational courses</li> </ul>	<p>IS1 IS2 IS3 IS4</p>
<b>IS5.2 Financial support for HE access</b>	<p>6 Leverhulme Arts Scholarship. This scholarship provides a student with £7,000 a year for the two years of the Foundation Degree course, to help assist towards living costs. If on successful completion of the Foundation Degree, the student is offered a place on the BA (Hons) in Professional Dance and Performance, the scholarship of £7,000 will be for a further year.</p> <p>Gillian Fleet Scholarship includes the following: A tuition fee discount of £4,500 &amp; cash bursary of £9,000 paid in instalments.</p> <p>Means Tested Bursary for students who meet the income threshold for a £2,000 cash bursary or fee waiver.</p> <p>Further funds -financial support for students during term time to support individual financial need; open to all twice a year and reviewed by a panel. Supported by external sources.</p>	<p>Management and monitoring of allocated financial support / Staff time / administration and evaluation: HE 556k</p>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to financial security.</li> <li>• Students are able to participate in various academic and social facets of university life (positively impacting sense of belonging).</li> <li>• Job/income pressure is decreased.</li> <li>• Reduction in injuries and stress/ anxiety.</li> </ul> <p><b>Long-term outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased continuation, completion and attainment rates for target students.</li> </ul>	<p>IS1 IS2 IS3 IS4</p>

**The estimated cost of activities and evaluation for Intervention Strategy 5 across the 4-years of this Plan is £695,00**

5. Evaluation (Table 5e)		
Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Standards of Evaluation denoted as T1, T2, T3
Partnership Programme	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes for young people:</b> Increased knowledge and awareness of CSB Positive experience of classical ballet and CSB and increased knowledge about CSB access support for prevocational and vocational pathways. Increased skills and confidence in classical ballet.</p> <p><b>Longer term outcomes for young people</b></p> <p>Young people continue classical dance e.g. enrolling on CSB prevocational programmes</p> <p>Young people apply, are successful at and enrol at CSB</p> <p><b>Intermediate outcomes for the sector:</b></p> <p>Increased awareness, knowledge, and skills in classical dance, including in the teaching of classical dance. Increase knowledge within the sector on how different organisations can effectively work together to support increased applications to HE dance programmes.</p> <p><b>Longer term outcomes for the sector:</b> Increased number of young people from under-represented groups successfully progressing onto HE dances courses</p>	<p><b>Process Evaluation</b></p> <p>Data analysis: Number and % of young people attending activities with target characteristics (T1)</p> <p>Annual end-of-year partners/practitioner survey exploring experiences of activities and perceived impact (T2)</p> <p>End of activity survey where appropriate (T2)</p> <p>Output analysis: the number of activities delivered (T1) Post-activity polls gathering stakeholder (practitioner and students) experiences and perceptions and inclusion of creative approaches like graffiti walls and 3,2,1 activity (T2) 2-3 student focus groups per annum to explore key themes from surveys (T2)</p> <p><b>Impact Evaluation</b></p> <p>Annual end-of-year partner /practitioner survey exploring:</p> <p>(a) perceptions of achievement of interim outcomes for students; and</p> <p>(b) interim outcomes for partners where appropriate (T2)</p> <p>End of activity survey where appropriate (T2)</p> <p>Data analysis: Number and % of participants applying to HE and enrolling (T2) 2-3 student focus groups per annum (T2)</p>

<p>Male Identifying project</p>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes:</b></p> <p>Participants attend specific event(s)</p> <p>Participants have increased confidence, knowledge of dance HE courses and awareness of the benefits of enrolling at partner dance providers</p> <p>Participants have increased knowledge of the career opportunities on completing a HE dance course.</p> <p>Participants feel they would be happy and fit in if they were to enrol on a HE dance course.</p> <p>Participants book and attend open day(s) or other further events delivered by partner HE providers</p> <p><b>Longer term outcomes</b></p> <p>Participants apply and enrol at one of the partner providers</p>	<p><b>Process evaluation:</b></p> <p>Data Analysis: Number of boys to engage with events and number of events delivered (T1)</p> <p>Data Analysis: Tracking of participants to understand whether they book and attend any further events delivered by the partner HE providers (T1)</p> <p>Data Analysis: Tracking of participants to understand whether they apply and enrol at any partner provider (T1)</p> <p><b>Impact evaluation</b></p> <p>Pre and post participant surveys to measure changes to confidence, knowledge, and awareness of the benefits of HE dance courses and what partner providers offer. This will also measure knowledge of opportunities in the dance sector and sense of belonging and fitting in (T2).</p>
---------------------------------	---	--

<p>Inclusive admissions</p>	<p><b>Immediate outcomes</b>  Students feel supported and valued by CSB  Students from under-represented groups feel more confident in the likely success of their application  More students from underrepresented groups consider applying to CSB  All staff have a deep understanding and are well equipped to represent CSB throughout application process</p> <p><b>Longer term outcomes</b>  A greater proportion of students from under-represented groups apply to CSB and are successful during the application and audition process  A greater proportion of students from under-represented groups accept their offer of a place and enrol at CSB  Staff further apply principles of contextual admissions to wider learning and teaching practice</p>	<p><b>Process evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Output analysis: Number of students being considered under the inclusive admissions scheme, courses, demographics of students (T1).</li> <li>• Brief survey asking students who came through the scheme how the scheme helped them (T2).</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data analysis: Analysis of applications and outcomes for those considered under the scheme (T1)  Comparison of data with historical outcomes data, especially for different demographic groups (T2).</li> <li>• Brief student survey (T2).</li> </ul>
<p>Transitions and Induction</p>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes</b>  Increased knowledge and awareness about HE and what to expect during their time at CSB  Improved sense of belonging  Improved connections and engagement between students and with the institution, particularly amongst diverse groups</p> <p><b>Longer term outcomes</b>  Improved continuation rates for target students</p>	<p><b>Process evaluation:</b></p> <p>Output analysis: Number of activities delivered and number of students attending induction activities (T1).</p> <p>Brief survey asking students how they found the induction activities (T2).</p> <p><b>Impact evaluation:</b></p> <p>Data analysis: Analysis of rates of continuation, Comparison of data with historical outcomes data, especially for different demographic groups (T2). Brief student survey (T2).</p>

<p>Finance and Mental health Pre-HE</p>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes:</b></p> <p>Increased attainment in classical ballet</p> <p>Increased knowledge and awareness of what CSB has to offer</p> <p>Increased confidence in their ability to progress onto HE level dance</p> <p>Increased confidence that CSB is somewhere they would fit in and be happy</p> <p><b>Longer term outcomes:</b></p> <p>Increased applications and enrolments for CSB vocational courses</p>	<p><b>Process evaluation:</b></p> <p>Data analysis: Number and % of young people receiving bursaries broken down by relevant characteristics (T1)</p> <p>Young person survey (T2)</p> <p>Dance practitioner survey for those delivering the activities (T2)</p> <p><b>Impact evaluation:</b></p> <p>Data analysis: Longitudinal tracking of those who receive financial support to understand whether they access any further CSB activities or/and apply to join a CSB vocational course.</p> <p>Young person survey (T2)</p> <p>Dance practitioner survey for those delivering the activities (T2)</p>
<p>Finance and Mental Health HE</p>	<p><b>Intermediate outcomes</b></p> <p>Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to financial security.</p> <p>Students are able to participate in various academic and social facets of university life (positively impacting sense of belonging).</p> <p>Job/income pressure is decreased</p> <p>Reduction in injuries</p> <p><b>Long-term outcomes</b></p> <p>Increased continuation and completion rates for target students</p> <p>Increased attainment rates for target students</p>	<p><b>Process and impact evaluation:</b></p> <p>Data analysis: Number and % of students receiving bursaries broken down by relevant characteristics (T1)</p> <p>Application of the SEER Financial Support Toolkit which is an adapted version OfS Financial Support Toolkit tailored to smaller providers. This toolkit consists of a student survey and focus groups or interviews delivered by SEER (T2)</p>

Format of Findings	When findings will be shared
<p>We will produce an annual summary progress and review report, which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities in this Strategy based on the achievement of intended outcomes.</li> <li>• Capture learning and insights that inform practice improvements and any appropriate changes and developments.</li> <li>• Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website.</li> </ul>	<p>Progress ‘highlights’ will be shared annually</p>
<p>We will produce an ‘Evaluation To Date’ or an ‘End of Project’ Report (whichever is relevant) capturing evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website, and via channels mentioned below where appropriate.</p>	<p>4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2028) and/or at the conclusion of projects, whichever is relevant.</p>
<p>We will also contribute at conferences and through workshops and events hosted by networks such as, but not limited to, SEER and our local UniConnect partnerships.</p>	<p>At a minimum every 2 years, starting from 2025-26.</p>
<p>We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO.</p>	<p>As they arise, anticipated contributions at minimum every 2 years.</p>

### Whole provider approach

The targets we have set throughout our specific interventions will benefit students who have been traditionally excluded from HE environments in the ballet/ dance world, with these interventions being predominantly aimed at the Access stage for prospective and new students. However, we are acutely aware that those interventions are not the sole responsibility of a few staff, nor are the interventions independent from wider student success and progression. It takes a village, a community of stakeholders, the communities we serve and the industry we are a part of, to ensure all students thrive at Central, and therefore we must take a whole provider approach across the school that propels these interventions forward.

In the last years, we have made considerable change and progress related to our governance. By establishing the Access and Participation Committee (APC) as part of our formal Academic Structure, which feeds into the Board of Governors, the access and participation agenda is not considered an add-on but rather the thread that runs through and steers all our initiatives. Additionally, the APC reviews and monitors our access and participation endeavours across the school. Furthermore, this plan was developed through top down and bottom up, with cross consultation that stretched beyond the school. Our aim is to continue effective dialogue and pro-active engagement related to access

and participation at all levels, so it becomes fully embedded in everything we do. To that end, we collectively have identified areas where we can, and should, go further beyond the current intervention strategies.

The Enabling Environment Diagram (Thomas, 2024) illustrated in figure 1 below, illustrates a whole institutional approach facilitated in partnership with students to widening access and success. We have used this to inform our approach and start the journey towards organisation transformation by embedding widening participation across the institution.



In 2024, Central staff participated in the Whole Provider Approach (WPA) support programme led by Liz Thomas. This programme, along with the reflections gathered through the WPA enabling environment tool kit, has informed our whole provider approach. Our process follows the structure displayed in the enabling environment graphic above, namely that by intentionally and explicitly enabling the environment, setting up the relevant structures, having a culture that empowers and embeds EDI and prioritises our targets and interventions, driven by data, we will be able to have an optimal student experience across the full lifecycle. Therefore, our objectives are to:

- continue to provide an enabling environment, at an institutional and senior leadership level, Central is committed to prioritising, facilitating widening access and student success. The Board of Trustees are dedicated to supporting the school to ensure this mission remains completely aligned with the strategic plan for Central. The success of the Leverhulme commitment is an example of this alignment across the senior and leadership team.
- enhance participation and engagement across the whole lifecycle to increase student belonging. We have identified Access to Central rightfully as an area of focus, as our previous sections have clearly identified this need. But without working towards active inclusion across all lifecycle points (i.e. that support progression and positive outcomes) for individuals and groups from traditionally excluded backgrounds, our students will not be able to thrive. Therefore, we aim to work in a contextualised manner beyond admissions, and ensure we contextualise our learning, teaching and assessment practice in such a way that students can see themselves represented and included in the curriculum that also challenges the traditions and colonial past of ballet. We aim to include more psychosocial and cognitive skills development in our contextual studies programme so our students are fully prepared for an industry that may present individual and structural barriers and challenges.

- review our strategic and operational structures, including our connected policies so they are relevant, transparent and have inclusion and belonging at the heart of what they are established to do. We aim to do this, for instance, by flipping practice in Academic Board and Learning and Teaching Committee to ensure that we discuss and problem solve ‘hot topics’ through an intersectional lens with our members and then write policy in a user-friendly manner. We also aim to reconsider the function and format of our Diversity and Inclusion Forum that is open to all staff and students, where the aim is to have regular and ongoing dialogue that informs decision making across the school. Our aim is also to review our Support through Studies framework, which will clearly outline how we support physical and student mental health, what policies and practices we have in place, and how we hope to work more pro-actively rather than reactively with and for students. Our current data (September 2024 to April 2025) shows that students are accessing the mental health provision that has been enhanced over the last few years: 28 students (8 first year, 12 second year and 8 third year) have accessed 94 sessions of our in-house counselling service. A further 7 students from across all 3 years were referred to external clinics or via our mandatory health insurance package. We want to ensure that we not only continue to signpost to the relevant support mechanisms in place but also consider what trauma informed practice and help seeking behaviours we can introduce at Central and/or through our partners.
- empower our student and staff to continue ongoing dialogue and action that is both challenging and supportive, in line with our strategic aims and commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and represented in our EDI action plan. While we have offered various training and professional development initiatives on EDI related topics, we must now connect our learnings and apply them in a way to drive forward continual conversations so we can break down barriers, continue to be curious, and apply creativity to solutions we produce jointly.
- experiment with our Timetable to ensure that the programme’s academic and vocational requirements are met while being understanding of the stressors and demands on our students, particularly those from marginalised backgrounds.
- provide more in-house paid opportunities for our students so they can act as co-creators of the overall student experience across the lifecycle. We currently already offer this opportunity to Widening Participation Ambassadors and junior school paid dance teacher assistants and have committed to introducing student transition roles in Intervention Strategy 3. Not only will this alleviate some financial burden, but we will be able to offer opportunities to more students and give more ownership to students of their experience while becoming more deeply familiar with their School and gaining more skills to be prepared for industry.
- explore more meaningful use of data. We have taken great strides with the development of our in-house Demi Pointe and On Pointe data systems. We must now take our learnings and reflections from having relevant and timely data to ensure we carry out effective analysis across our services and programmes. We also commit to introducing more ways of hearing the student voice of traditionally excluded students in a qualitative way, as this will provide deep and rich narratives that otherwise get lost in quantitative data collection and analysis. As we have low student numbers, we must pay particular attention to students whose demographic is not highly represented to understand and address their needs appropriately and positively.
- be more intentional of the way we support and involve our alumni to help create positive student outcomes. We have already devised an alumni engagement plan which involves alumni becoming mentors to new students, being involved in our community as assessors, guest tutors and choreographers, and panel members. We are confident that the more diverse

our current and future cohorts are, the more our alumni will be able to shape and support our future students and the industry.

- continue the work with [Southwark Schools](#) that contributes to our commitments to EDI and to the Southwark 2030 strategy that aims for local partners to work together to build a fair, green, and safe Southwark where everyone can live a good life as part of a strong community. Key principles are empowering people, investing in prevention, and reducing inequalities. Reducing health inequalities is everyone's business, and working in partnership with the school improvement team, we want to get young people moving and enjoying dance. We know this also supports the development of soft skills that pupils acquire through participating in dance activities which translate into the classroom. Southwark's Annual Public Health Report for 2024, spoke of a "A Fairer Future", and we want to part of a story where all children can access dance in school. We will support Southwark teachers to deliver high quality dance via our Southwark Schools Move teaching platform and provide access to quality outreach activities delivered by Central staff. Since 2023, 25 Southwark schools have engaged with our outreach offer. We will continue to develop this work through our whole provider approach.

### **Student consultation**

Central values the voices of students that contribute across all our endeavours across the year. As we are a small School with small undergraduate cohorts, it means we empower our students to speak directly, one to one, to a variety of front facing and executive staff but also have formalised measures in place via our student reps through our regular forums and committees: Student Voice Forum [SVF]- 6 per year; Diversity and Inclusion Forum [DIF]- 3 per year; EDI Committee- 3 per year; and Academic Board-3 per year. We also have surveys for students to provide feedback and solutions anonymously. These initiatives enable us to make transparent decisions and for our students to be co-creators in the overall student experience in a swift manner. As Central does not have a Students' Union, we took responsibility for ensuring there were proactive and high levels of student consultation and meaning-making.

For the purpose of the APP, we took a holistic approach to our student consultation. We used a range of (re)sources at our disposal that were directly and indirectly related to target groups and our interventions, both qualitative and quantitative in measure, so current students and graduates were able to reflect on their experience at Central. Indirect sources of data and information came from reviewing 2 years' worth of in-module, end of module, end of year surveys, our 'Tell us about it' form entries, EDI workshop evaluations, non-academic misconduct cases and complaints, and SVF and DIF minutes. The SVF and DIF minutes and 'Tell us about it' form feed into each other and all notes and actions are shared with all undergraduate Central students and staff and are tracked in a transparent manner so our HE community can view any progress 'live'.

Direct student consultation, i.e. where there was involvement in bringing together ideas and the plan's development, was carried out in a variety of ways. We hosted focus groups with our Widening Participation student ambassadors and male-identifying dancers, which yielded rich and in-depth feedback on their experiences and potential solutions and approaches for our interventions. As our undergraduate cohorts are very small, and representation of the target groups is very low, we wanted to include alumni who had lived experience of being at Central while embodying one (or more) of the characteristics we aim to focus on. We also invited all students to take part in a survey on the APP, as devised by SEER. Particularly related to IS3 and 4, students have taken and will continue to take part in co-creation workshops on contextual admissions practice and transition programmes, which we embedded in their curriculum.

Key insights from consultations:

### **IS2:**

- Male identifying dancers valued the space with other dancers and male identifying teachers to reflect collectively.
- Recognise variation of pathways to dance for male dancers
- Importance of male networks, peers, and role models
- Impact of choosing to dance and the variation of lived experiences e.g. empowerment and freedom, bullying and isolation
- Include opportunities for male identifying dancers to share lived experience as learning opportunity during outreach activities
- Consider marketing and curation of events for male identifying dancers to ensure it is inclusive for LGBTQIA+ dancers

### **IS3:**

- Students do not have equal access to pre-HE activities
- Students need support to navigate the application process and the support available, (particularly for those first in family to study ballet)
- Students do not fully understand which financial assistance they could apply for throughout the year or may not have the social capital or confidence to apply for it

### **IS4:**

- Students felt they were missing a social transition into the school that would aide their sense of belonging, particularly in the first few weeks of term.
- The summer task that has previously been set was not conducive to their academic transition and caused confusion and anxiety.
- Students did not feel equipped to handle financial and nutritional planning, and skills for independent living at their age (16+) coming into Central.

Central aims to continue to engage with students and alumni to evaluate our continual progress and adjust or review what we may need to over the years to come. We are confident that the structures we have in place to amplify the student voice in general, but particularly related to APP activity, are strong. In addition, our IS4 and whole provider approach introduces the addition of more paid student staff related to transition and other activity, meaning the students will have a voice in how we design, devise, and evaluate transition activities and programmes.

## **7. Evaluation of the plan**

Working in partnership with the Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER) service, we will be engaged in an ongoing evaluation of our intervention strategies and will continuously respond to the evaluation findings to improve and develop our practices.

### **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 are continuing 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 the evaluation and research expertise we need 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 as well as learning and sharing 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 and 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. With the help of SEER, 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 ToC 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, particularly as our context as a small and specialist provider means that we are likely to be dealing with small cohorts. 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 we 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 (schools, colleges, community groups, specialist service

providers) in our Intervention Strategies, we wish to note that some flexibility and development may be required as our collaborations take shape, allowing for input and advice from partners.

We have also considered our creative arts context and, where appropriate, will trial more creative evaluation instruments (as methods in surveying, focus groups and interviews). This may help to mitigate the issue of survey fatigue, which is a significant issue for effective evaluation and is compounded in small cohorts where the same students are more likely to be subjects of multiple evaluation and research projects. We will continue to be cognisant of this in collection of feedback and have aligned our evaluation and measures across our activities to enable us to minimise the number of collection points, where possible and appropriate.

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 comprehensive understanding of how our activities are working. We will explore, with SEER, further research projects in relation to our activities and our ambition to better understand the experiences and challenges of target students and issues 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, supported by our learning analytics activity, 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. We will be guided by our school, college and community partners, and our students in respect of effective implementation of the plan. Our evaluation process will comply with CSB policies and complies with all legal requirements relating to data protection, following ethical, safeguarding, legal and risk considerations.

As noted above, we have become 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. SEER incorporate and draw on TASO guidance on best practices for evaluations with small cohorts (small n). Further, such collaborations may provide us access to tools that would otherwise be unaffordable. For example, in respect of our access activity, we have noted the possibility of implementing tracking, which will be explored via SEER. As a practice network, we are also able to participate in peer review of practice and evaluation and share practice and findings.

As a smaller provider we are also well placed to respond with agility to interim findings and emerging data. We are able to 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 stronger and an 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 HE and we will submit evaluation outputs to OfS's 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.

Our SEER membership provides us with access to academic experts in evaluation, including in the access and participation space and broader teaching and learning arena. These staff are involved in design, delivery and analysis.

Further details about how we will evaluate our intervention strategies is included in Section 4.

## **7.6 Governance arrangements**

As stated in our introduction, Central is fully committed to this plan, and all Executive and Senior managers are and continue to be fully engaged and responsible for leading all access and participation work.

This work is monitored through EMT biweekly meeting, EMT/SMT biweekly meeting where APP and EDI-related matters are regularly discussed (and have a standing item on the agenda).

- Central's senior leaders collectively have lived experience of our target areas. Furthermore, they bring together a wealth of experience from the dance industry and higher education sector to lead on this work. While we acknowledge that people may not stay in their roles, we actively seek staff with an understanding of and experience in EDI/APP related work through our interview processes.
- The Director of Higher Education and Head of Widening Participation (WP) work collaboratively to lead the APP work at Central and collectively bring a wealth of HE, WP, social justice/EDI, and specialist dance knowledge to inform and implement the vision for this plan.
- The Director of Higher Education is responsible for designing, implementing and evaluating an effective in-house staff CPD framework that supports all Central staff's development, understanding and confidence in leading dialogue and actualising actions related to our APP. Our staff also independently seek out the attendance of conferences and sources related to our target groups and intervention strategies.
- The Head of Widening Participation and Access 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. The Head of Widening Participation and Access reports directly into the Executive Director and serves on the Senior Management Team.
- The Director of Higher Education and Head of Widening Participation work collaboratively to lead the APP work at Central and collectively bring a wealth of HE, WP, social justice/EDI, and specialist dance knowledge to inform and implement the vision for this plan.

As part of the monitoring and reporting process there is an Access and Participation Committee chaired by the Executive Director, which reports to the Academic Board, which in turn reports to The Board of Governors. The APC meets 3 times per year (once per term). Membership of the Committee

includes the Executive Director, Head of WP & Access, Director of Higher Education, Director of Finance and Operations, Associate School Manager, Registry and Admissions Manager, Data Manager, and representatives of SEER. The group oversees the implementation, monitoring, review, and evaluation of the APP, advise on research, and make reports and recommendations to the Academic board, 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 or is going backwards, it may recommend to the Board of Governors to increase investment levels.

### **Provision of information to students**

All information on fees and financial support available to prospective and current students can be found on our website <https://www.centralschoolofballet.co.uk/>. Additionally, we provide information about financial support, for which students may be eligible, via email to prospective and new students each time applications for funds and bursaries open.

On the same website there is a section on HE-specific policies, guidance, and procedures related to (non) academic misconduct, admissions, attendance and engagement, assessment and feedback, complaints, course information, casting, code of conduct, fees and refunds, health and safety, photo and video content and consent, sexual misconduct, support through studies framework, freedom of speech, etc.

Any changes to policies or procedures are approved by the Academic Board and communicated to students by our Registry department via their Central School of Ballet email address, usually after a year-specific or full- school assembly has taken place to inform students that changes are coming.

Any other internal documents are visible to staff and students via our VLE and/or are emailed directly to students via their Central School of Ballet email address.

All our online documents are produced in the same font and size, and in ways that are accessible to all our students. Central aims to facilitate an infographic and workshops with staff and students on our APP and associated action plan over the course of the 2025/2026 academic year, as part of our whole provider approach.

## Financial support provision

Award	Purpose	Criteria for Eligibility	Number of Awards	Level of Support	Level of Support in Subsequent Years of Study
Means Tested Bursaries	To support access to HE courses for low-income students	Household income threshold of £26,000 (and closest to the threshold at the time)	TBC based on number of eligible students	£2,000 annually per student (fee waiver or cash bursary). Estimated £26,000 for whole cohort across each year of the Foundation Degree and BA (Hons) Top-Up.	Across each year of the Foundation Degree and BA (Hons) Top-Up.
Further Financial support	To support individual student need during termtime.	Applications are open twice per year and respond to individual need.	TBC based on needs of students	Non specified amount as depends on external contributions	
Pre-HE Leverhulme	Support access to pre-vocational training and support pipeline to HE dance courses.	Scholarships are offered to young people from under-represented groups who show the potential to progress onto a HE dance course.	33	Tuition fees, travel costs for student and parent/guardian and uniform costs. £15,446.24per year	
HE Leverhulme	Support access to HE courses at Central.	Scholarships are offered to dancers from under-represented groups who are successful at Audition.	6	£7,000 per yr of Foundation course	£7,000
The Gillian Fleet scholarship	To support talented dancers access training	Scholarships are to support those with exceptional talent	1	A tuition fee discount of £4,500.00 and £9,000 (paid in instalments)	

## **Annex A: Further information and analysis relating to the identification and prioritisation of key risks to equality of opportunity**

### **Assessment of performance**

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 1-2	TUNDRA	Global Majority (Black and Asian learners)	Disabled	Mature learners (21 & over)	ABCS	FSM-eligible learners	Sex
Access	Priority PTA_1 (Quintile 1 and 2)	Very small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	Priority PTA_2 (Black and Asian learners)	Very small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.		Very small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	Very small cohorts. Recommend monitoring.	Priority PTA_3 (male)
Continuation								
Completion								
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 (Black and Asian students in particular).
3. Enrolment of males.

**1. ANALYSIS - ACCESS**

We have identified some risks to equality of opportunity at the Central School of Ballet (CSB) 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, the Central School of Ballet has had a steady intake of 30 students per year from 2018-19 to 2022-23, except for in 2020-21 where the intake was too small to be publicly reported on as the denominator for this year was greater than 2 but smaller than 23. The 2-year aggregate (2021-22 to 2022-23) represents 60 students while the 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) represents 110 students.

Our low cohorts remained small and for that reason, where possible, we have used aggregate data over the last four years (2019-20 to 2022-23) and/or last two years (2021-22 to 2022-23) of the six-year period covered by the OfS data.

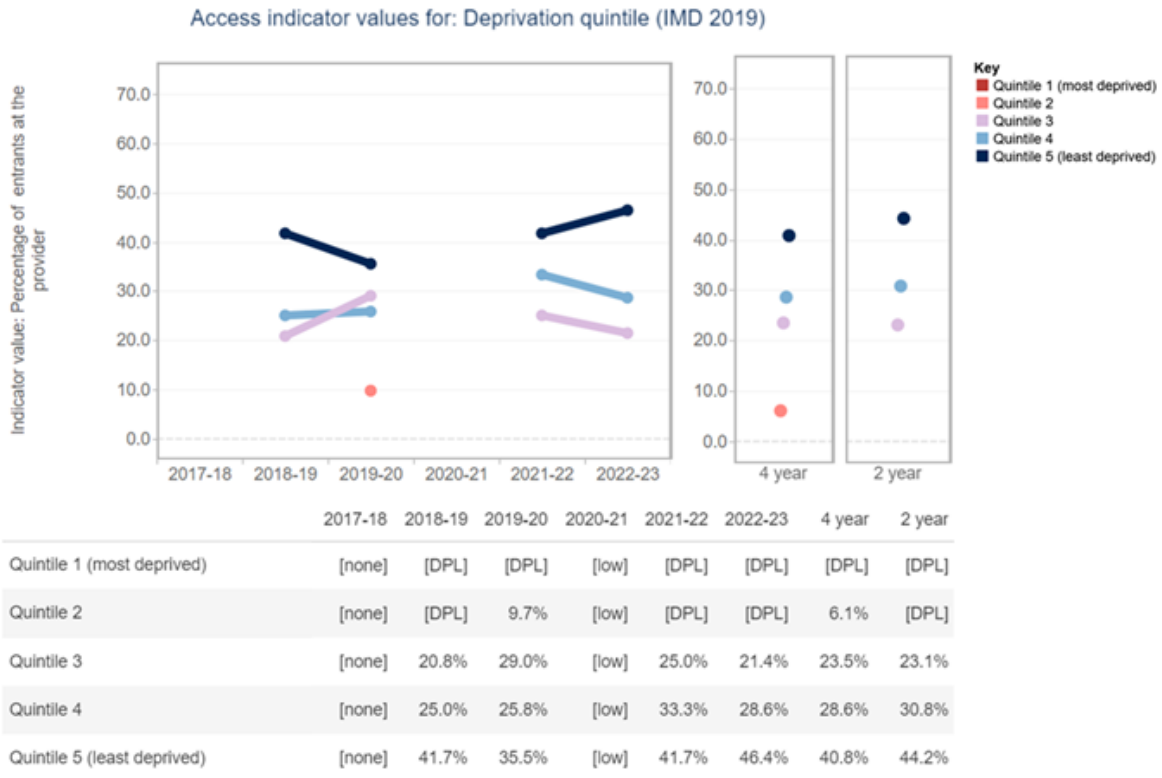
### **INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION (IMD) 2019**

In the six years from 2017-18 to 2022-23, there has been limited data available for the Central School of Ballet due to low numbers resulting in data suppression. The Q1 and Q2 data is suppressed due to 2 or fewer individuals in these quintiles (Fig.1).

As a result, it is not possible to fully understand the difference in percentage enrolment rates between IMD Quintile 1 students and their comparator group – the IMD Quintile 5 students who are the least disadvantaged. Q5 has consistently had the highest percentage of participants and entrants have also increased from 2018-19 to 2022-23 by 4.7 percentage points. This increase is counter to the decrease seen in the sector for Q5 (-2.3 percentage points) entrants.

The data indicates a persistent pattern of students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds (Q1) are consistently underrepresented, while those from the least disadvantaged backgrounds (Q5) maintain higher entry rates. While Q1 data is limited, this disparity between Q1 and Q5 participation suggests an ongoing gap.

Fig.1



Given this assessment, IMD 2019 forms one of our priority targets for Access.

**TUNDRA (LOW PARTICIPATION NEIGHBOURHOODS)**

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

Over the latest 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23), the enrolment rate of Quintile 1 students is 9.2% and 10.7% for 2022-23 (Fig.2). For comparison, the sector rate of enrolment of TUNDRA Quintile 1 students is 12.2% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

The Central School of Ballet enrolment gap between Quintile 1 and 5 students is 19.4pp (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23), in favour of Quintile 5 students (Fig.4). The sector gap is slightly lower at 18pp (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

Fig.2

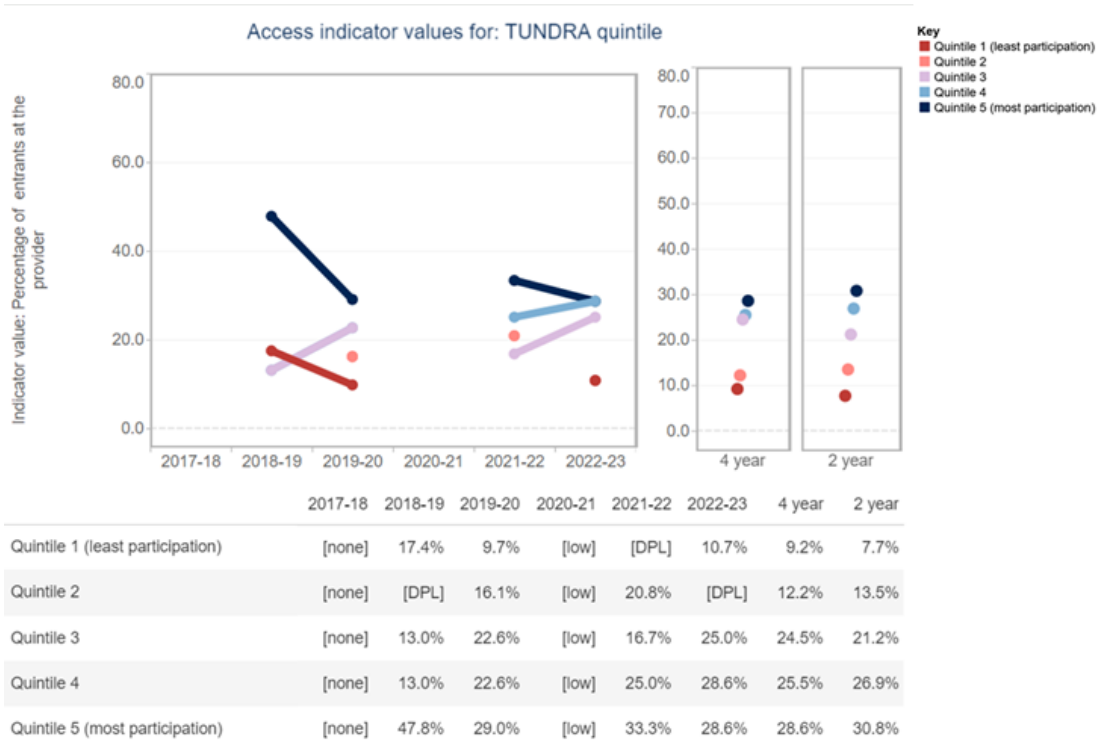
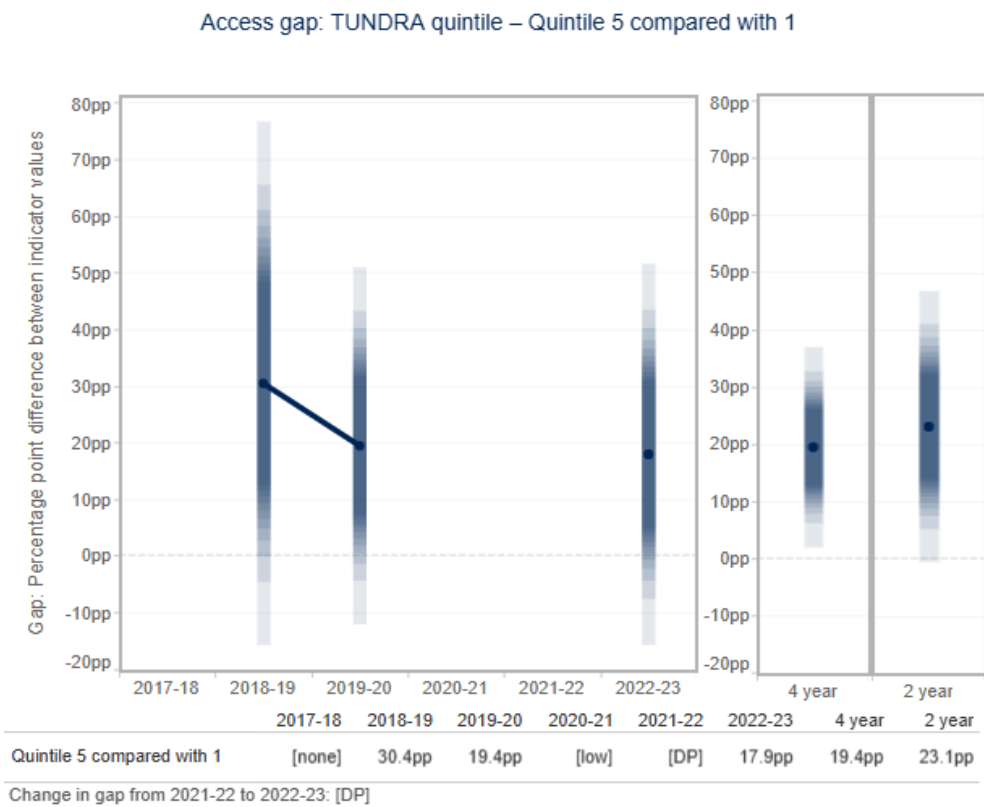


Fig.3



Given this assessment, TUNDRA will not be including them as a priority target area for Access but will continue to be monitored.

## STUDENTS FROM THE GLOBAL MAJORITY

There is limited data available for all ethnicities from 2018-19 to 2022-23 due to low numbers resulting in data suppression with only the data for Mixed and White entrants available. This also hold true for the aggregated data with the 4-year aggregate also including Asian students (Fig.4).

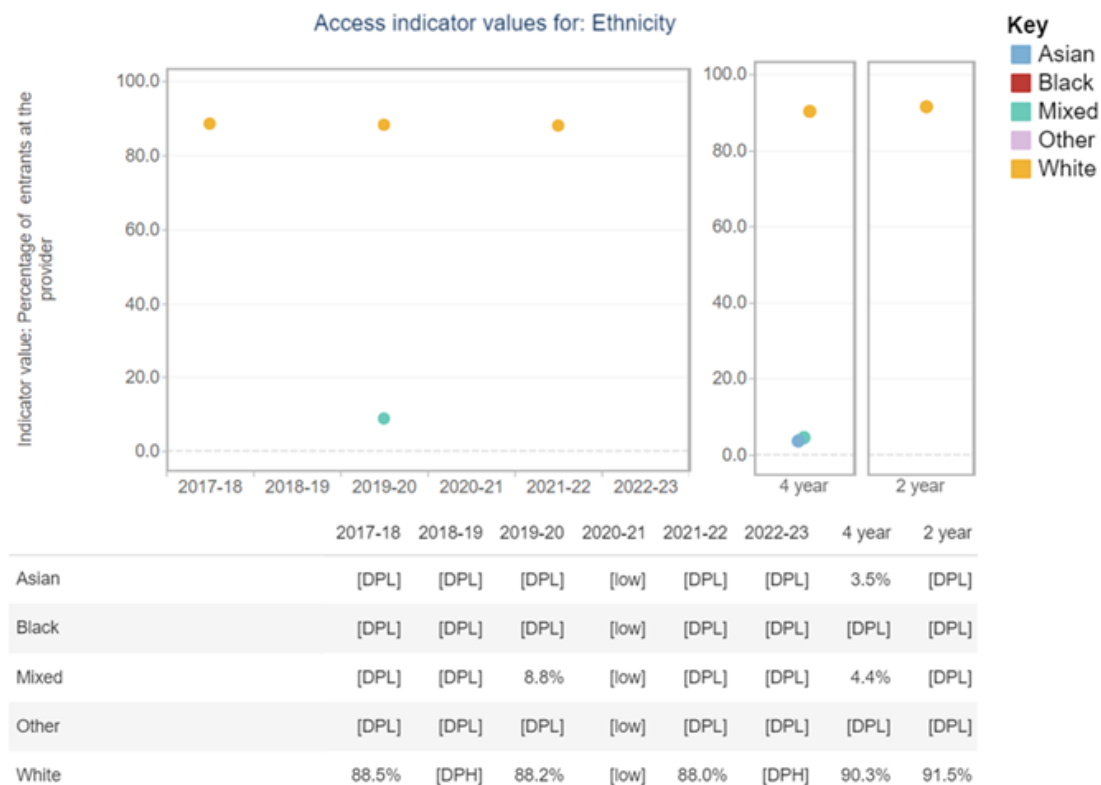
The enrolment rate of Asian students is at 3.5% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23), which is below population parity<sup>1</sup> (9.3%) and significantly below the sector enrolment rate of 15.4% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

Only Mixed heritage students, with 4.4% enrolment rate (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23), have higher rates at the Central School of Ballet than the population parity (2.9%) and slightly lower than the 5.5% sector rate (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

For Black students, due limited data available, we are unable to make any comparisons to population rates or sector enrolment rates.

The 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) shows the Central School of Ballet having 90.3% White students, which is above the sector average by 24.7 percentage points.

Fig.4



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

## DISABLED STUDENTS

Over the latest 4-year average (2019-20 to 2022-23), the enrolment rates of disabled students at the Central School of Ballet were lower than the sector rate (14.9% vs. 17.4%) (Fig.5). In addition, this has declined from 14.9% for the four year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) to 8.3% for the two year aggregate (21-22 to 2022-23).

Data disaggregated by type of disability are very small, the data is only available for entrants with reported cognitive or learning difficulties, which make analysis difficult. Low number data suppression also impacts the 2-year (2021-22 to 2022-23) and 4-year (2019-20 to 2022-23) aggregates with only the 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) including entrants who reported multiple impairments (Fig.6). That said, for the 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23), the Central School of Ballet has a higher percentage of students who report cognitive or learning difficulties (4.8 percentage points) than the sector average. There is a lower percentage of students who report multiple impairments than the sector (0.7 percentage points).

Fig.5

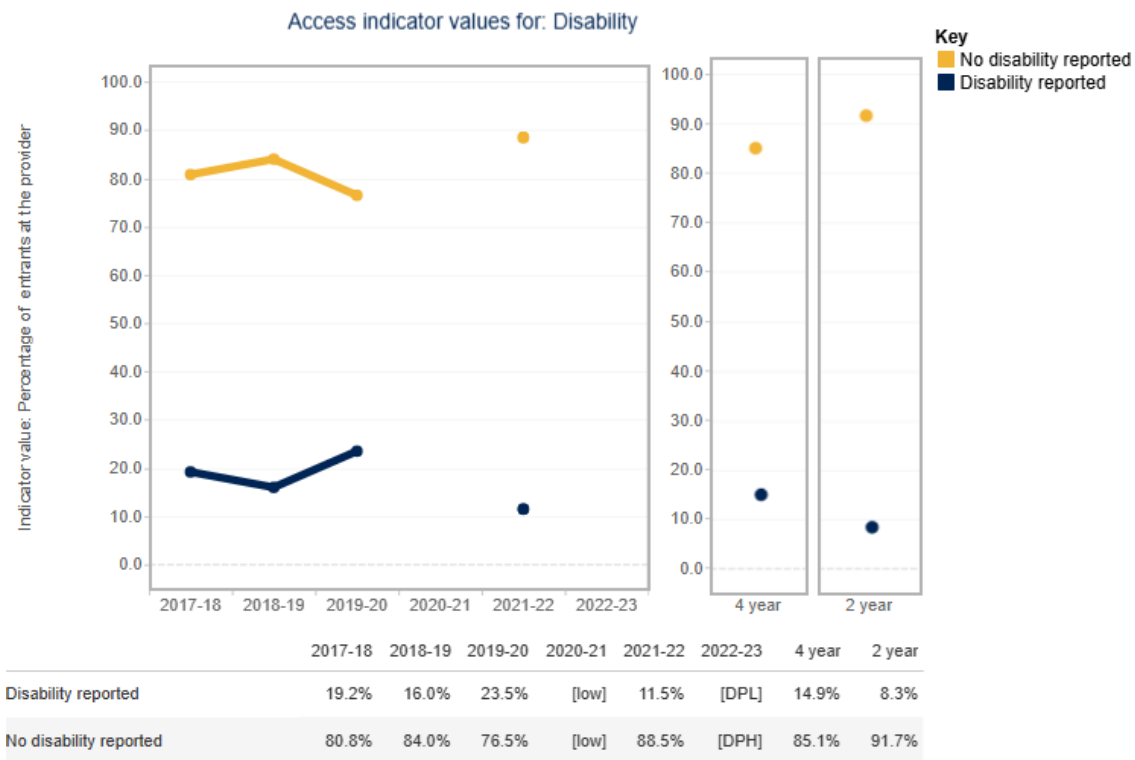
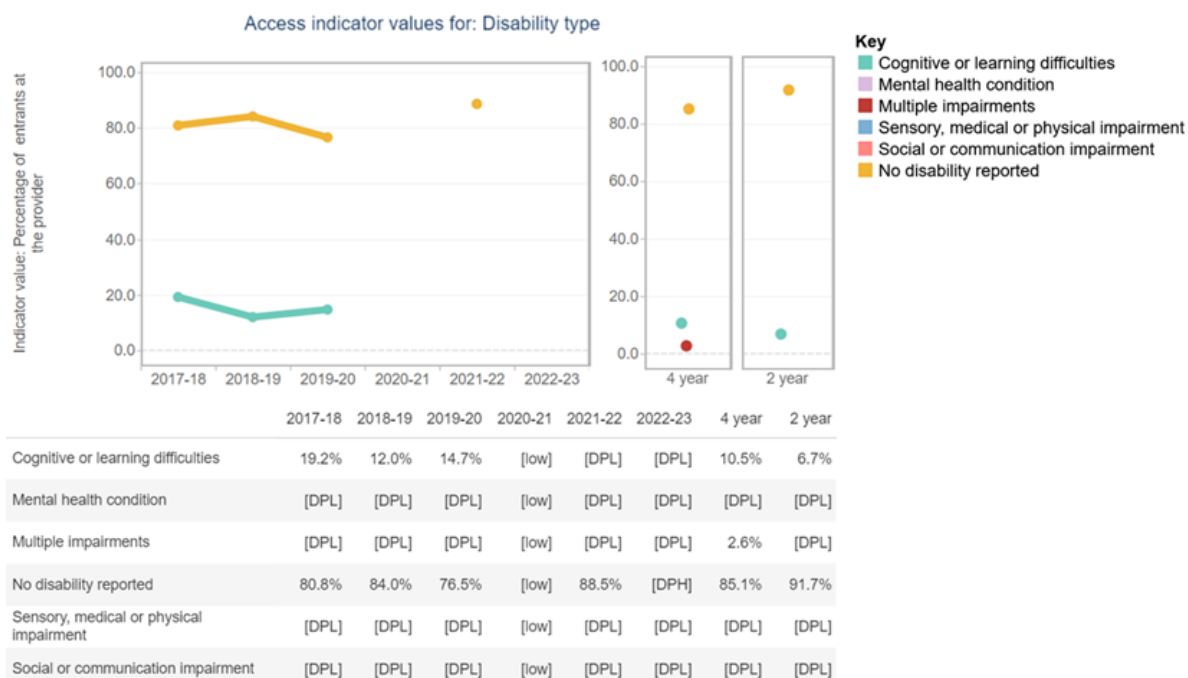


Fig.6



Due to limited data, particularly when disaggregated, we need to carefully consider the reliability of our findings. While the sector has seen an increase in students disclosing disabilities, especially mental health conditions (which is identified as a national risk area in the OfS' Equality of Opportunity Risk Register), our current data sample is too small to draw meaningful conclusions.

We will continue to monitor our performance in this area, but have not included disabled students as a priority target for Access.

### MATURE LEARNERS (21 YEARS AND OVER)

There is no data available for access of students from different age groupings due to low number data suppression. In addition, due to the nature of this specialist subject area, the necessity for training from an early age naturally results in a higher proportion of young students compared to mature students. Mature learners are not a strategic priority as there are significant challenges to access for mature learners for the courses the Central School of Ballet offer. As a result, it is challenging to meaningfully evaluate access rates for mature students at the HE level.

For this reason, this risk indicator is not of concern and will not be including them as a priority target area for Access.

### CARE LEAVERS

The Central School of Ballet 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 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.

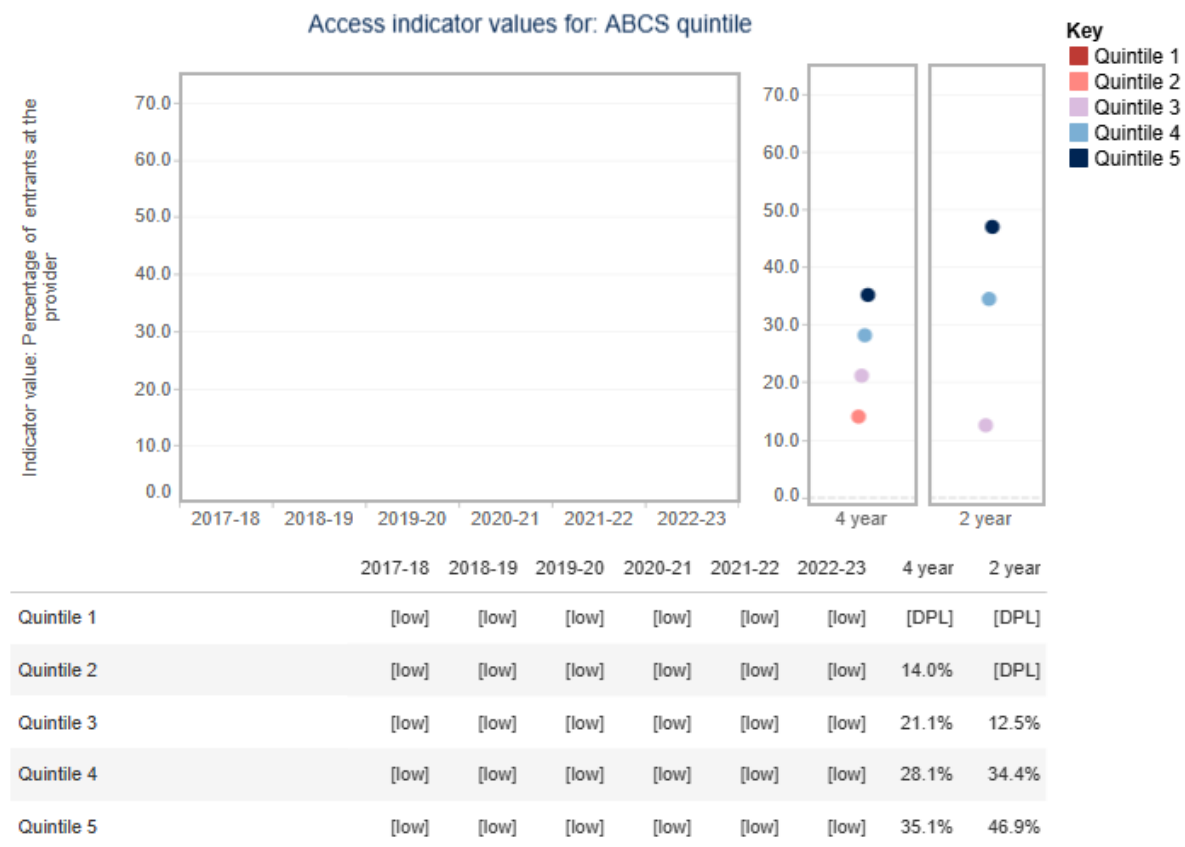
While this risk indicator is not included in our priority target areas for Access we will continue to monitor our internal data on care leaver enrolment.

## 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.

In the six years between 2017-18 and 2022-23, there has been limited data available for the Central School of Ballet due to low numbers resulting in data suppression. For the 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23), there is data available for all quintiles apart from the Q1 where the data is suppressed (Fig.7). As a result, it is not possible to fully understand the difference in percentage enrolment rates between ABCS Quintile 1 students and their comparator group – the ABCS Quintile 5 students who are the least disadvantaged.

Fig.7



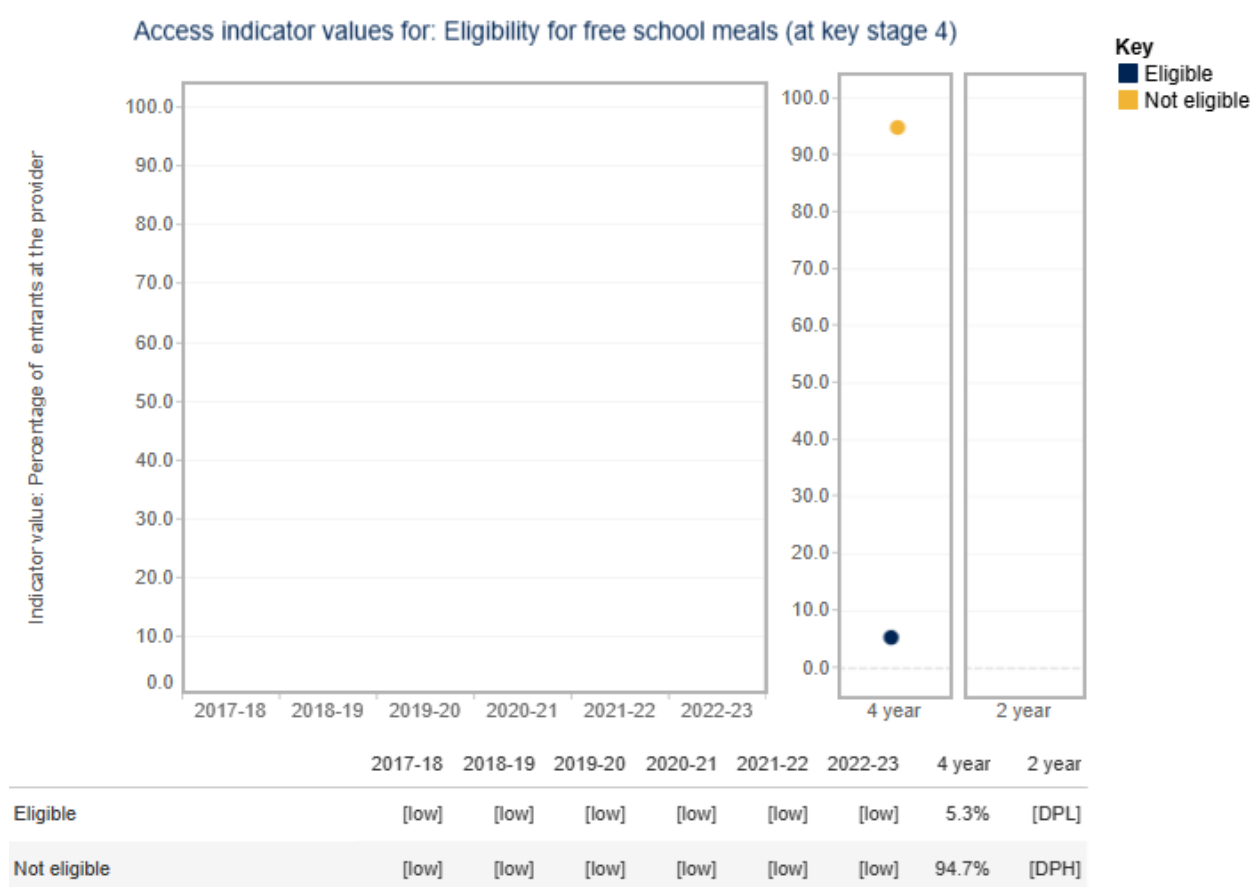
Based on our performance, the newness of the measure, and our small datasets, we will not be designating this risk indicator a priority target area for Access, although we will continue to monitor it closely.

## 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.

In the six years between 2017-18 and 2022-23, there has been limited data available for the Central School of Ballet due to low numbers resulting in data suppression and meaning we only have sufficient data for the 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) (Fig.8). Enrolment of FSM eligible learners at the Central School of Ballet falls below the sector average: 5.3% vs. 18.8% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

Fig.8



Given the limited data available particularly our intake of FSM eligible students, we have not included FSM as a priority target for Access, although we will continue to monitor it closely.

## SEX

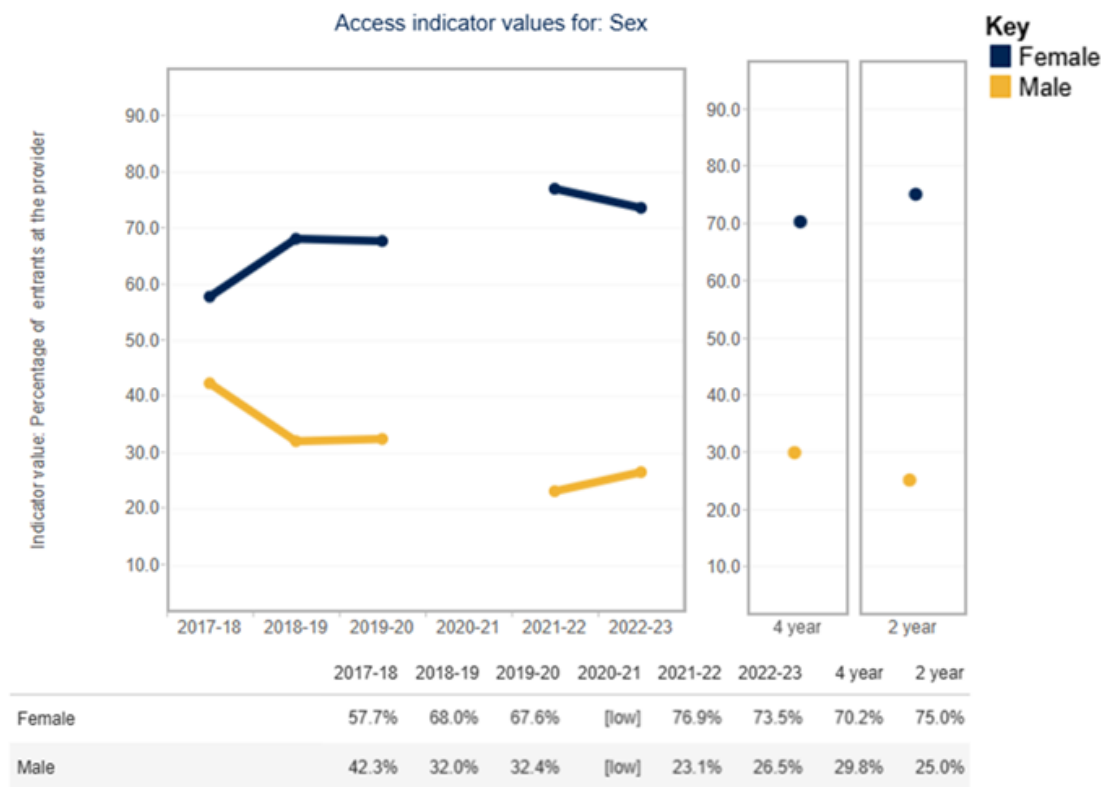
While not a discrete target group for the national equality of opportunity agenda, the issue of access and participation of male students in our discipline area of dance is an institutional and industry concern, with risks relating to the perception of the discipline, stigma, access to training and lack of

role models. Therefore, we consider the male characteristic as relevant in our context for access and participation.

The data at the Central School of Ballet shows that female students consistently have a higher access rate than male students, which follows the sector wide trend. There has been an increase in female students from 57.7% in 2017-18 to 73.5% 2022-23 and a decrease in male students from 42.3% in 2017-18 to 26.5% in 2022-23. The 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23), male learners at the Central School of Ballet falls below the sector average: 29.8% vs. 43.1%, while the enrolment gap with female learners at the Central School of Ballet is 40.4pp – higher than the sector gap of 13.8pp over the same period.

To address male student engagement in dance, early intervention would be valuable given the specialist nature of this field and its requirement for early training. While working with young male students may not immediately impact our Access data, engaging with this group during their early years could help them view dance as an enjoyable and legitimate career pathway. We therefore propose exploring targeted initiatives for male students at the pre-HE level.

Fig.9



Given this assessment, 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 HE study 1 year and 15 days post-enrolment or completing study and leaving with a HE qualification.

Overall, continuation at the Central School of Ballet is only available for 2018-19 and 2019-2020 due to low number data suppression. Here there is a rise in continuation from 88.0% to 91.2%. The 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) shows a continuation rate of 92.4%, which is above the sector rate of 89.3% for the same period.

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.

## **COMPLETION**

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

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

Overall, the Central School of Ballet has completion data available for three individual years: 2014-2015, 2015-16, and 2018-19. There is a rise from 2014-15 to 2015-16 from 82.1% to 88.5%. There is then a slight decrease in 2018-19 by 1 percentage point (87.5%). The 2-year (2021-22 to 2022-23) and 4-year (2019-20 to 2022-23) aggregate both show a continuation rate of 91.8%, which are both higher than the sector average completion rates of 87.4% and 87.5% respectively in the same periods.

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.

## **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 (1<sup>st</sup>) or a 2:1 degree outcome.

Overall, attainment at the Central School of Ballet stands at 89.9% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23) - much higher than the sector rate of 80.5% in the same period.

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.

## **PROGRESSION**

This section provides our performance in relation to the progression of students from the OfS key target groups.

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 the Central School of Ballet progression is 56.5% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23), which lags 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. Through our programmes, our students graduate as successful artists or technical professionals, and in line with our ambitions, equipped to pursue a variety of career paths while maintaining their passion for performing arts.

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, 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 the dance sector and creative industries. We have not set any targets for Progression but will continue to monitor our data.

## **2. 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. Enrolment of students from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (IMD 2019 Quintiles 1 & 2).
2. Enrolment of students from the Global Majority (Black and Asian students in particular).
3. Enrolment of male students

### **CONTINUATION**

No targets are included in this area.

### **COMPLETION**

No targets are included in this area.

### **ATTAINMENT**

No targets are included in this area.

### **PROGRESSION**

No targets are included in this area.

### **AREAS FOR CONTINUED MONITORING**

The priority areas for continued monitoring are:

1. Enrolment: ABCS Quintile 1 (with ABCS Quintile 5)

2. Enrolment: TUNDRA Quintile 1 (with Quintile 5)
3. Enrolment: Disability
4. Enrolment: Care Leavers
5. Enrolment: Students eligible for FSM.

## **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 with particular characteristics.

### **ACCESS (PRE-ENROLMENT)**

The first five (5) Risks on the EORR relate to the Access (pre-enrolment) area, and we note that all 5 risks are generally more likely to have impact on outcomes for the target groups we have identified in relation to enrolment outcomes (disadvantaged students, measured by IMD and students from the Global Majority).

We have therefore considered all 5 Risks in relation to our context at Central School of Ballet and in consultation with our community of staff and students. We have also considered Risk 10 – Cost pressures.

The following summarises our context in relation to each risk, considerations of whether it is occurring, and potentially the cause of the indicators of risk (i.e. poor performance) we have identified. Further information can also be found in the main Access and Participation Plan, and in Annex B.

### **RISK 1 – KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

Our review of the literature indicates that applicants from our target groups often have fewer opportunities to develop the necessary skills and knowledge for HE and specialised performing arts programs in particular. The competitive nature and the experience and expertise required to demonstrate in applications mean that many young people from underrepresented backgrounds face significant challenges stemming from lack of engagement opportunity and support with relevant skills development in the performance arts at school and college. In addition, our student body is diverse in terms of education background with some students entering the institution without having completed A-Levels while others have. Some of our students enter higher education at a younger age than typical, sometimes as young as 16, and may face challenges adjusting due to skipping some years of traditional schooling, resulting in knowledge and skills gaps that would need to be addressed.

Literature highlights the systemic undervaluing of creative subjects in state-funded compulsory education and its varying provision of extracurricular opportunities. Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds encounter significantly less exposure to creative subjects before reaching university compared to their more affluent counterparts. Ashton and Ashton (2022)<sup>2</sup> discuss the stark disparity in access to creative subjects between students in private schools and those in state-funded schools. This disparity is reflected in our observations that students' preparedness varies, with many students showing different levels of prior experience despite meeting the minimum entry requirements. Their

learner identity and sense of belonging in HEIs influenced by previous educational experiences, which may impact their confidence and ability to fully engage with the curriculum.

This risk is an area of concern for us because in our observations students from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to have experience of high-quality dance training, e.g., through school visits, and cultural capital related to knowing about dramaturgy, staging, costumes, lighting, etc. In addition, there can also be varying levels of assessment literacy, where students with limited prior experience may struggle to understand various assessment methods used once at university. This can impact their performance and ability to demonstrate their skills effectively.

Our own students often claim that their interest in pursuing performing arts at university came about by chance, and that exposure to the theatre and dance at school would be a significant contributor to pursuing it in tertiary education and as a career. The effectiveness of navigating the admissions process itself varies based on an individual's familiarity with admissions systems, which can often be influenced by family background. Students from households where family members lack experience with higher education, particularly specialised institutions may face additional challenges in understanding and successfully completing application procedures.

In recognition of that, we must dedicate our outreach work to improving access and attainment and aspiration raising through targeted outreach activities, including:

- developing partnerships with schools and colleges to influence curricular and extracurricular exposure of learners to high-quality dance training, and
- supporting learners with information, guidance, and skills development towards studying performance arts in higher education.

## **RISK 2 – INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE**

Information, advice, and guidance 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)<sup>3</sup>.

In the context of performing arts and creative industries, this includes also being aware of the various training opportunities, dispelling negative myths about career prospects and earning potential, and understanding of the variety of job roles in the creative industry and of the unique aspects of applying to study performing arts in higher education, and in particular applying to do so at a specialist HE like Central School of Ballet. This guidance gap is particularly evident when examining student expectations about their programmes. There is a need to map the student lifecycle to determine optimal timing for providing useful information, preventing students from becoming overwhelmed by excessive information and unfamiliar terminology. Our student consultations reveal that branding that highlights CSB's unique aspects and offerings has been valuable, and open days have received favourable feedback from students.

The specific knowledge of what specialist providers such as CSB look for to demonstrate in auditions is often missing, as compulsory education typically focuses on standard application processes for

higher education. While there are exceptions, the disparity in the provision of information, guidance, and support at school with preparation to audition for performance arts university degree is likely to disadvantage the already disadvantaged learners most (Thompson, 2019)<sup>4</sup>. This disparity is further complicated by varying levels of understanding about how degree programmes relate to career ambitions. CSB's learning journey showcases various career options available to students, with alumni involvement contributing significantly to this understanding.

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and underrepresented groups are particularly exposed to negative impacts on their aspirations, awareness, attainment, and decision-making. 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 HE and specialised performing arts training.

Providing support with the preparation for auditions and interviews, including by removing associated fees and funding applicant travel to the place of audition and interview, makes the application process more equitable for disadvantaged and underrepresented applicants. In addition, our review indicates a need for transparency and explicitly communicate any hidden costs associated with programmes, so students know how to access support if they need financial assistance.

This risk has implications also for student transition and on-course performance. Lack of opportunities to engage with and learn about creative subjects before university is a highly likely contributing factor to the persistent gaps in outcomes between disadvantaged learners and their more advantaged peers (EPI, 2020)<sup>5</sup>. Students from IMD Q1/Q2, for example, may have had less exposure to performing arts education and extracurricular opportunities, affecting their preparedness and confidence. The risk is therefore another area of concern for us. We know from applicant data that our students value personalised information and guidance about courses, study at university generally, and graduate prospects, and support with navigating our application process.

Our intervention strategies must therefore include provision of robust information and guidance opportunities for applicants, teachers/advisors, and parents/guardians, as well as targeted support around preparation to apply.

We must also consider strategies for curricular and extracurricular academic support, e.g., for student from IMD Q1/Q2 and Global Majority background students, that may include embedding inclusive practices into our modules and courses to address information gaps and different learning experiences. For example, providing additional practical skill-building opportunities for students (Campaign for the Arts, 2023)<sup>6</sup>.

### **RISK 3 – PERCEPTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

HE in creative subjects associates with perceptions of elitism and inaccessibility to learners from less affluent backgrounds. These perceptions are deeply connected to learner identity and the extent to which they feel they 'fit' within HE environments.

Learners from the Global Majority and from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to hold such perceptions and as a result choose to pursue HE courses they see as offering more stable and lucrative career paths. This is evidenced through demographic data on the creative industries workforce from Arts Council England (2023)<sup>7</sup>. Early positive interactions with higher education, and the performing arts as a viable higher education pursuit, are vital for fostering a positive perception of university as accessible, welcoming, and beneficial.

Our students' consultations have revealed open days play an important role in changing perceptions about accessibility. These events provide opportunities for prospective students to directly experience the environment and culture at CSB, helping to demystify specialised higher education. Introducing prospective students to what CSB offers, both in terms of our courses and student productions, can significantly enhance this perception and increase the likelihood of applying. So can engaging learners in productive and enjoyable activities that help them develop experience and skills in our subjects and prepare them to apply to these subjects. In addition, CSB's summer programme helps bridge the gap between application and program start, allowing prospective students to begin developing a sense of belonging before they formally begin their studies. This is particularly important given that many students are transitioning into higher education and independent living at a young age, sometimes as young as 16.

To achieve this, we need to incorporate mentorship and role modelling by current CSB students into our outreach activities in order to demonstrate how diverse our student body and learning opportunities are, and therefore that all learners from any background would fit in and feel they belong at Central. We already employ diverse audition and interview panels, and now need to work on diversifying our staff and show our diversity of people, ideas, and cultural output to prospective students.

#### **RISK 4 – APPLICATION SUCCESS RATES**

Our admissions decisions are heavily weighted towards our auditions. The varying levels of prior experience among students can impact application success rates. While all students meet the minimum requirements for their entry level, some have more experience that aligns with the curriculum demands, giving them an advantage during auditions. The Assisted Application Scheme helps to identify students who might require additional support, but more can be done to level the playing field during the application process.

Young people from IMD Q1/Q2 and the Global Majority backgrounds are likely to have fewer opportunities to gain the skills, experiences, and support to excel at the auditions and interview stage, which has a significant impact on their application outcomes. The effectiveness of navigating the admissions process varies significantly based on an individual's familiarity with such systems and is often influenced by the student's family background and the guidance they can provide. Students from households where family members lack experience with higher education admissions processes face additional challenges in understanding and successfully completing these procedures, which can directly affect the application success rate.

Our access performance for IMD Q1/Q2 and Global Majority students significantly lags behind national application rates. Applications UCAS data (2024)<sup>8</sup> shows national application rates of 13% for POLAR Quintile 1 and 16% for Quintile 2 students. In contrast, our 4-year aggregate data (2019-20 to 2022-23) shows only 6.1% for Q2 students, with limited data available for Q1, indicating persistent underrepresentation of students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. This pattern of underrepresentation is also evident among Global Majority students. While national UCAS data (2024)<sup>9</sup> shows application rates of 16% for Asian applicants and 10% for Black applicants, our institutional data over the same 4-year period shows just 3.5% for Asian applicants, with limited data available for Black students.

We have already put measures in place to support applicants through e.g. contextual admissions and fee waivers for auditions and interviews. For example, we consider contextually applicants based on age, disability, or care leaver experience, and can make offers at a lower tariff or no tariff at all, subject to application and performance in the audition. Our Assisted Application Scheme helps identify students who might require additional support, but there's room for improvement in how we target and support underrepresented groups.

We recognise however that there is still more we could do to support positive outcomes for disadvantaged students and have outlined our intentions in this area in our Intervention strategies.

### **RISK 5 – LIMITED CHOICE OF COURSE TYPE AND DELIVERY MODE**

We are limited due to our size and our delivery model in terms of the flexibility of provision we can offer. Our courses replicate aspects of the performance industry, including by gearing taught modules towards engaging students in staging and delivering live events and performances. This makes, for example, offering part-time undergraduate study difficult, as all our subject areas intertwine in the preparation for and delivery of live events and performances, it is therefore tricky for us to offer courses in a part time capacity. The learning journey incorporated into our training program showcases various career options available to students, with alumni involvement contributing to this experience. This industry focused approach, while limiting flexibility in delivery modes, provides valuable preparation to students.

As we map the student lifecycle to determine optimal timing for providing specific information, we can consider whether additional flexibility might benefit specific student groups. The induction process provided at the beginning of our programs delivers important information to new students and helps them adjust to our delivery model. Our summer support for students helps prepare them for their studies and bridges the gap between application and programme start. This can potentially ease transition into our full-time programs for students. In addition, CSB provides a supportive environment that helps students navigate the challenges of our intensive training programmes. This includes on-site support from medical and wellbeing teams, strength and conditioning which are incorporated into our curriculum. We will continue to monitor the flexibility aspect of our provision.

### **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)<sup>10</sup>. The 2024 Student Academic Experience Survey delivered by Advance HE and HEPI<sup>11</sup> 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. This picture matches our own observations and data on students at the Central School of Ballet.

Cost of living pressures on student finances and term-time work, which has been the most common approach to take to relieve those pressures, are exacerbated further by the demands in terms of time and focus on learning that are required of students on performing arts degrees. Students on our courses, for example, often are required to be in the studio six days a week, which makes it particularly challenging for students to work alongside their studies. We have a limited number of students in part-time employment which is likely to be due to the intensive nature of our training

programmes. This creates an inherent tension between the financial need to work, and the time demands of our programmes.

National data and our own observations indicate that there is a significant pressure on students, including our own, to balance course requirements with the financial necessity of paid work. The pressure is particularly evident for students from our target groups: IMD Quintiles 1 and 2, and students from Global Majority Heritage backgrounds.

Cost pressures do not apply only to the on-course part of the student life cycle at CSB and other specialist HEs. For many disadvantaged learners, the cost of preparing to apply, including by attending outreach activities, preparing for auditions and interviews, and attending their audition, may be prohibitive. There are some barriers to applying for financial support, including lack of social capital, time, capacity, and confidence. These barriers disproportionately affect students from disadvantaged backgrounds who may not have the knowledge to navigate financial support systems. There's an opportunity to address these barriers and better support students who need financial assistance.

This risk is therefore a concern for us both in the pre-and post-application parts of the student journey, and we must adopt financial support strategies that relieve financial pressures on our prospective and enrolled students through e.g., fee waivers for participation in our outreach activities and the application process, travel bursaries for attending auditions and interviews, and on-course financial support in the form of bursaries and hardship funds.

## **ON-COURSE (STUDENT SUCCESS)**

The remaining Risks on the EORR relate to the on-course and progression areas.

Although there is limited data on our on-course and progression data are generally positive, we will continue to monitor these areas carefully to identify any emerging concerns.

We have identified the 'access' Risk 2 and 'on-course' Risks 6,7, 8, and 10, as most relevant in our context, which leaves out 'on-course' Risks 9 ('Ongoing impact of coronavirus') and 11 ('Capacity issues') and the 'progression' related Risk 12 ('Progression from higher education').

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

Due to our small cohort sizes and our delivery model, our students receive small group teaching. Personal tutoring and peer support at CSB are not universally embedded.

Setting up peer-learning and learning communities is an effective approach to fostering academic integration that has the potential to narrow equity gaps for disadvantaged, disabled, and Global Majority students (e.g., Johnson et al., 2020)<sup>12</sup>. Personal tutoring links to increases in sense of belonging and satisfaction through students feeling more connected (Palmer et al., 2009)<sup>13</sup>, which is particularly important in the First Year of undergraduate study, during their transition to higher education (Thomas, 2006; Reinheimer & McKenzie, 2014)<sup>14,15</sup>.

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; Ahn & Horward, 2023)<sup>16,17</sup>.

Providing targeted academic and personal support early on during transitioning is especially effective for e.g., IMD Q1/Q2 and Global Majority students (Safer et al., 2020)<sup>18</sup>.

Risks 6 and 7 are therefore of relevance to us and we must address them through implementation of support structures, activities, and staff training that help identify who needs what support and enable us to provide the support effectively.

### **RISK 8 – MENTAL HEALTH**

The Central School of Ballet's proportion of students declaring a disability (14.9%) falls below the sector's 4-year aggregate of 17.4%. Given the sector-wide trend of increasing disability disclosures, particularly mental health conditions, this will need to be monitored.

Given the current 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.

In our context, many students, and disabled students with a mental health condition in particular, experience heightened levels of anxiety related to general financial and study pressures and work long hours when preparing live events and performances. Both can add to stress and worsening of wellbeing. Given the deteriorated capacity of the NHS mental health services, our students also struggle to access professional support for their mental health, which exacerbates further negative effects on their studies and wellbeing.

This risk is therefore of a significant concern, and we must embed into our offer information and support with self-advocacy and declaration, therapeutic activities aimed at mitigating stress, and 24/7 access to specialist mental health support.

### **Annex B: Further information that sets out the rationale, assumptions and evidence base for each intervention strategy that is included in the access and participation plan**

Intervention Strategy 1 Partnerships and Access programme: co-created support programme tailored to each partner organisation that may include on-site and off-site ballet teaching, curriculum access, pre-vocational courses and scholarships, taster days and performances, audition support, professional development for staff, higher education guidance for families, cross-partnership visits, and a framework for collaboration and communication across all partner organisations.

Objectives and targets: To reduce the gap in the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from the most deprived neighbourhoods (IMD Q1&2), compared to those from the least (IMD Q5), reaching a gap of less than 10 percentage points (pp) by 2035-36. To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from Global Majority Heritage backgrounds, to reach 35% by 2035-36

Working with partnership organisations: like Artistry Youth Dance, AkomaAsa Arts Academy, English National Ballet- Ballet Futures, Theatre Peckham, and Southwark College.

Activities: onsite delivery, work experience placements, taster days, live performances, staff CPD, and access to bursaries for associate programmes, short courses or term time classes.

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
<p>Evidence around the outreach effects of partnering with pre-HE education organisations indicates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• partnerships with schools, colleges, and community organisations helps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ understand and respond to diversity of needs and barriers to accessing HE,</li> <li>○ increase outreach efficiency through collaboration and learning from partners, and</li> <li>○ extend the reach of small and specialist HE providers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• partnerships can positively impact the aspirations<sup>2</sup> and attainment<sup>3</sup> of underrepresented students at, e.g., GCSE level, including the achievement of sufficient grades in the minimum of five GCSEs required for accessing HE<sup>4,5</sup>; this is especially important for students from our target groups (Global Majority) who are less likely to consider and apply to study creative subjects in HE<sup>6</sup>.</li> <li>• UniConnect partnerships in particular can increase participants' likelihood of achieving a place in HE regardless of how engaged they have been<sup>7</sup>, although that effect tends to be smaller for underrepresented participants<sup>8</sup>.</li> <li>• building effective outreach partnerships requires engaging schools and colleges with high proportion of our target students<sup>9,10</sup>.</li> <li>• effective partnerships engage students early, align activities with the priorities of the partner, and minimise partner costs and logistical barriers to involvement in the partnership<sup>9,10</sup>.</li> <li>• the partnerships enable HE providers to engage prospective students in various outreach activities, from summer schools and campus visits to mentoring</li> </ul>	<p><sup>1</sup>CFE Research. 2023. The benefits of and barriers to collaborative access activity by higher education providers. Report for the OfS. <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3ad6de14-b501-4b3e-be63-d77e23e9fffa/benefits-and-barriers-to-collaborative-access-activity-by-higher-education-providers.pdf">https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3ad6de14-b501-4b3e-be63-d77e23e9fffa/benefits-and-barriers-to-collaborative-access-activity-by-higher-education-providers.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>2</sup>TASO evidence toolkit, on pre-entry aspiration raising: <a href="https://taso.org.uk/intervention/aspiration-raising-interventions-pre-entry/">https://taso.org.uk/intervention/aspiration-raising-interventions-pre-entry/</a></p> <p><sup>3</sup>TASO evidence toolkit, on pre-entry study and soft skills support: <a href="https://taso.org.uk/intervention/study-and-soft-skills-support-pre-entry/">https://taso.org.uk/intervention/study-and-soft-skills-support-pre-entry/</a></p> <p><sup>4</sup>Universities UK. 2017. Raising Attainment Through University- School Partnerships. <a href="https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/30504/1/Raising-attainment-through-university-school-partnerships.pdf">https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/30504/1/Raising-attainment-through-university-school-partnerships.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>5</sup>TASO. 2021. Summary report: An investigation into the relationship between outreach participation and KS4 attainment/ HE progression. <a href="https://s33320.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/relationship-outreach-attainment-progression.pdf">https://s33320.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/relationship-outreach-attainment-progression.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>6</sup>Comunian, R., Dent, T., O'Brien, D., Read, T. &amp; 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.</p>

<p>programmes, projects and project portfolios, and HE information events<sup>9,10</sup>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• students from our target group (Global Majority) who have opportunities to engage in creative activities at school are three times more likely to access HE and are likelier to get graduate employment if they study creative subjects<sup>11</sup>.</li> <li>• engagement with creative subjects pre-HE can enhance students' academic performance, verbal skills, and empathy, which in turn contributes to attainment raising<sup>12</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>Through our partnership work, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• target students from our chosen groups to facilitate their access and transition into HE at CSB.</li> <li>• promote engagement with dance, information about studying it in HE, and positive continuation outcomes on-course for our target student groups through bespoke and targeted pre-enrolment, enrolment, and post-enrolment activities.</li> <li>• create opportunities for local communities and pupils from local schools to engage with dance.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education">https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education</a></p> <p><sup>7</sup>Burgess, A. P., M. S. Horton &amp; E. Moores. 2021. Optimising the impact of a multi-intervention outreach programme on progression to higher education: recommendations for future practice and research. <i>Heliyon</i>, Vol. 7(7), <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07518">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07518</a></p> <p><sup>8</sup>CFE. 2023. The impact of Uni Connect on intermediate outcomes for learners. <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/931324a7-ef78-442d-bfc5-9d3c6bb42062/uc_wave-2-survey-findings_final_for_web.pdf">https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/931324a7-ef78-442d-bfc5-9d3c6bb42062/uc_wave-2-survey-findings_final_for_web.pdf</a></p> <p>Brilliant Club. 2019. Barriers to Access: Five lessons for creating effective school-university partnerships. <a href="https://thebrilliantclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Impact-Case-Study-Barriers-to-Access.pdf">https://thebrilliantclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Impact-Case-Study-Barriers-to-Access.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>10</sup>Martikke, S., A. Church &amp; A. Hart. 2015. Greater than the sum of its parts: What works in sustaining community-university partnerships. Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation.</p> <p><sup>11</sup>Cultural Learning Alliance. 2017. The Case for Cultural Learning: Key Research Findings. <a href="https://culturalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CLA-key-findings-2017.pdf">https://culturalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CLA-key-findings-2017.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>12</sup>Winner, E., T. Goldstein &amp; S. Vincent-Lancrin. 2013. Art for Art's Sake?: The Impact of Arts Education, Educational Research and Innovation, OECD Publishing. <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264180789-en">http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264180789-en</a></p>
--	--

Intervention Strategy 2 HE collaborative Activities for male-identifying dancers: supporting the attainment raising and access to dance study in HE (and CSB) of male-identifying students as part of partnership collaboration with other specialist providers of dance HE (NSCD, LSCD, and Rambert School of Ballet).

Objectives and targets: To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are male identifying dancers, to reach 42% by 2035-36. .

Activity: Collaborative activities for male-identifying young people.

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
<p>Evidence indicates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural barriers such as lack of belonging, representation, and role models, that male-identifying students can 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, especially ballet, 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<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>.</li> <li>having opportunities to engage with creative subjects like dance at secondary school is important for students from our target group, 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<sup>6,7</sup>.</li> <li>student integration into higher education, institution, and course, is</li> </ul>	<p><sup>1</sup>Prichard, R. R. 2024. Privilege in Dance Education: A Discussion for Students and Teachers. <i>Journal of Dance Education</i>, 1–6. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2024.2321150">https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2024.2321150</a></p> <p><sup>2</sup>ICM Ltd. 2019. Perceptions of Higher Education Outreach and Access Activity. Office for Students. <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3905/perceptions-of-higher-education-outreach-and-access-activity.pdf">https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3905/perceptions-of-higher-education-outreach-and-access-activity.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>3</sup>Clegg, H., H. Owton &amp; J. Allen-Collinson. 2017. Challenging conceptions of gender: UK dance teachers’ perceptions of boys and girls in the ballet studio. <i>Research in Dance Education</i>, 19(2), 128–139. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2017.1391194">https://doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2017.1391194</a></p> <p><sup>4</sup>Holdsworth, N. 2013. ‘Boys don’t do dance, do they?’ <i>Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance</i>, 18(2), 168–178. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/13569783.2013.787255">https://doi.org/10.1080/13569783.2013.787255</a></p> <p><sup>5</sup>Watson, B. &amp; D.S. Risner, eds. 2022. <i>Masculinity, Intersectionality and Identity: Why Boys (Don’t) Dance</i>. 1st ed. Cham: Springer International Publishing. <a href="https://discovered.ed.ac.uk/discovery/fulldisplay?vid=44UOE_INST:44UOE_VU2&amp;tab=Everything&amp;ocid=alma9924770150802466&amp;lang=en&amp;context=L&amp;query=sub_exact,%20Social%20sciences%20--">https://discovered.ed.ac.uk/discovery/fulldisplay?vid=44UOE_INST:44UOE_VU2&amp;tab=Everything&amp;ocid=alma9924770150802466&amp;lang=en&amp;context=L&amp;query=sub_exact,%20Social%20sciences%20--</a></p>

central to transition and continuation<sup>8,9</sup>.

- belonging to a learning community correlates positively with aspirations and motivation for learning, expectations of oneself, and academic achievement<sup>10,11</sup>.

Our collaborative partnerships will aim to enhance the inclusivity of our outreach and on-course environments and the learning experience for male-identifying (prospective) students.

[%20Research,AND&sortby=rank&mode=advanced&offset=40](#)

<sup>6</sup>Jones, R. 2017. Entry to Arts Subjects at Key Stage 4. Education Policy Institute. <https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/EPI-Entries-to-arts-KS4-1.pdf>

<sup>7</sup>Cultural Learning Alliance. 2017. The Case for Cultural Learning: Key Research Findings. <https://culturalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CLA-key-findings-2017.pdf>

<sup>8</sup>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](https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED576756&site=ehost-live)

<sup>9</sup>Myhill, D. 2020. Addressing Barriers to Student Success: Final report to the Office for Students. OfS. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/f65a2a58-da6b-4b37-8130-62b161f17638/abss-transforming-transitions-exeter-report.pdf>

<sup>10</sup>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>

<sup>11</sup>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>

**Intervention Strategy 3 Inclusive admissions:** a package of support for prospective students from our target groups applying to CSB, which may include an application fee waiver, assistance with preparing personal statements, and pre-audition and audition support resources.

**Objectives and targets:** To reduce the gap in the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from the most deprived neighbourhoods (IMD Q1&2), compared to those from the least (IMD Q5), reaching a gap of less than 10 percentage points (pp) by 2035-36. To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from Global Majority Heritage backgrounds, to reach 35% by 2035-36

**Activity:** Assisted Application Scheme

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
<p>Evidence around the providing prospective applicants with support and advice on preparing to apply, including financial support with meeting admissions costs, indicates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting disadvantaged students with preparing for the application process (e.g., putting together application portfolios, attending interviews) benefits them both in terms of preparation and rate of success<sup>1</sup>.</li> <li>• including advice and guidance on, preparation for, and financial support with the application process within a programme of targeted application support enhances the access of underrepresented students to HE, including to highly selective HE providers<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>• receipt of financial support (grants, bursaries, scholarships, and fee-waivers) increases continuation and completion<sup>3</sup> and can help close continuation gaps for disadvantaged students<sup>4</sup>.</li> <li>• positive effect of financial support on attainment (good degree outcome) is less evident<sup>3</sup>.</li> <li>• receipt of financial support also:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o increases recipient capacity to focus on their studies<sup>5</sup>.</li> <li>o Improves social life<sup>5</sup>.</li> <li>o helps build a social network<sup>5</sup>.</li> <li>o Increases recipient’s self-esteem<sup>5</sup>.</li> <li>o reduces the need for working in term time<sup>6</sup>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><sup>1</sup>Comunian, R., Dent, T., O’Brien, D., Read, T. &amp; 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.  <a href="https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education">https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education</a></p> <p><sup>2</sup>Barkat, S. 2019. Evaluating the impact of the Academic Enrichment Programme on widening access to selective universities: Application of the Theory of Change framework. Br Educ Res J, 45, pp. 1160-1185.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3556">https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3556</a></p> <p><sup>3</sup>TASO. 2023. Financial support (post-entry).  <a href="https://taso.org.uk/intervention/financial-support-post-entry/">https://taso.org.uk/intervention/financial-support-post-entry/</a></p> <p><sup>4</sup>OfS. 2020. Understanding the impact of the financial support evaluation toolkit: Analysis and findings.  <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/474c9580-e99a-4d24-a490-3474e85ae199/financial-support-evaluation-report-2016-17-2017-18.pdf">https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/474c9580-e99a-4d24-a490-3474e85ae199/financial-support-evaluation-report-2016-17-2017-18.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>5</sup>Harrison, N., S. Davies, R. Harris &amp; R. Waller. 2018. Access, participation and capabilities: theorising the contribution of university</p>

- o increases sense of belonging and mattering<sup>7,8</sup>.
- means-based financial support is more effective than merit-based support, particularly for disadvantaged students<sup>9</sup>.
- bursaries especially help increase continuation of disadvantaged students<sup>10</sup>.
- students eligible for means-based support may not receive it because their household income has not been officially assessed (meaning they miss out also on a maintenance grant) and/or because they find navigating the bursary application process difficult to navigate; that increases their risk of dropping out<sup>11,12</sup>.
- adopting an effective method for identifying students at a greater risk and therefore in greater need of financial support is necessary for the overall effectiveness of the financial support provision<sup>13</sup>.
- pre-HE entry financial support, in terms of offering on-course bursaries towards tuition fees and subsistence, can have a small positive effect on disadvantaged students deciding to pursue higher education<sup>14</sup>.
- 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<sup>15</sup>.
- fee waivers for outreach related activities<sup>16</sup>, as well as admissions activities like auditions and interviews<sup>17</sup> and support with travelling to attend them, improve HE access for disadvantaged students into tertiary study of creative subjects<sup>18</sup>.
- 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<sup>19</sup>.

Our application support programme aims to assist applicants from our target groups with:

bursaries to students' wellbeing, flourishing and success. Cambridge Journal of Education. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2017.1401586>

<sup>6</sup>Hordosy, R., T. Clark & D. Vickers. 2018. Lower income students and the 'double deficit' of part-time work: Undergraduate experiences of finance, studying, and employability. Journal of Education and Work 31(4), pp. 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2018.1498068>

<sup>7</sup>Thomas, L. 2012. Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: a summary of findings and recommendations from the What Works? Student Retention & Success programme Summary Report. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. <https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-Summary-report.pdf>

<sup>8</sup>Clark, T., & R. Hordósy, 2019. Social Identification, Widening Participation and Higher Education: Experiencing Similarity and Difference in an English Red Brick University. Sociological Research Online, 24(3), 353–369. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780418811971>

<sup>9</sup>Herbaut, E. & K. M. Geven. 2019. What Works to Reduce Inequalities in Higher Education? A Systematic Review of the (Quasi)Experimental Literature on Outreach and Financial Aid Policy Research Working Papers. <https://doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-8802>

<sup>10</sup>Murphy, R. & G. Wyness. 2015. Testing Means-Tested Aid. CEP Discussion Paper No 1396, Centre for Economic Performance. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/35438856.pdf>

<sup>11</sup>Harrison, N. & R. Waller. 2017. Success and Impact in Widening Participation Policy: What Works and How Do We Know? Higher Education Policy 30(2), pp. 141-160.

- preparing for the formal application process.
- meeting the costs of our admissions process.

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1057/s41307-016-0020-x.pdf>

<sup>12</sup>Moores, E. & A P. Burgess. 2023. Financial support differentially aids retention of students from households with lower incomes: a UK case study, *Studies in Higher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2022.2125950>

<sup>13</sup>Kaye, N. 2021. Evaluating the role of bursaries in widening participation in higher education: a review of the literature and evidence, *Educational Review*, 73:6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2020.1787954>

<sup>14</sup>Taso. 2025. Financial Support (Pre-Entry). Evidence Toolkit: Student access, success, and progression. <https://taso.org.uk/intervention/financial-support-pre-entry/>

<sup>15</sup>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>.

<sup>16</sup>TLCMD. 2023. Consultation Lesson Fees. <https://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/study/how-toapply/music-applications/music-auditions/consultation-lessons>

<sup>17</sup>Leeds Conservatoire. 2024. Audition Fees at the Leeds Conservatoire. <https://www.leedsconservatoire.ac.uk/course/s/apply-audition-fees/audition-information/>

<sup>18</sup>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.

	<p>KCL.  <a href="https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education">https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education</a></p> <p><sup>19</sup>Robinson, D. &amp; V. Salvestrini. 2020. The impact of interventions for widening participation to higher education. A review of the evidence. Education Policy Institute.  <a href="https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020-1.pdf">https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020-1.pdf</a></p>
--	--

Activity: Contextual Admission Scheme - an admissions policy that serves our EDI strategic aims of assessing potential and ensuring equality of access through an auditions process.

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
<p>Evidence around the design and implementation of contextual admissions indicates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they mitigate inequalities and biases related to the ability to demonstrate and assess talent during admissions to studying creative subjects in HE<sup>1,2</sup>.</li> <li>• they are a recommended approach to enhancing access to HE for our target groups<sup>3,4</sup>.</li> <li>• the effectiveness of contextual admissions at enabling demonstration, and assessing talent, depends on<sup>5,6</sup>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o using indicators of disadvantage, intersectional data and, in the case of composite indicators (e.g., TUNDRA; school ratings), cautiously.</li> <li>o avoiding attachment of conditions to contextual offer.</li> <li>o lowering entry tariff to e.g., BCC (which predicts 80% completion and 50% attainment rates).</li> <li>o the transparency of eligibility criteria.</li> <li>o signposting of the eligibility criteria in pre-entry CIAG activities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>1Comunian, R., Dent, T., O’Brien, D., Read, T. &amp; 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.  <a href="https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education">https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education</a></p> <p>2Boliver, V. &amp; M. Powell. 2020. Fair admission to universities in England: improving policy and practice. Nuffield Foundation.  <a href="https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Fair-admission-to-universities-in-England.pdf">https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Fair-admission-to-universities-in-England.pdf</a></p> <p>3OfS. 2019. Contextual admissions: Promoting fairness and rethinking merit.  <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/bf84aeda-21c6-4b55-b9f8-3386b21b7b3b/insight-3-contextual-admissions.pdf">https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/bf84aeda-21c6-4b55-b9f8-3386b21b7b3b/insight-3-contextual-admissions.pdf</a></p> <p>4Boliver, V., S. Gorard &amp; N.Siddiqui. 2021. Using contextual data to widen access to higher education, Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education, 25(1), pp.7-13.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o lowering or removing prior attainment thresholds for participation in outreach activities.</li> <li>o increasing the intake of disadvantaged students / students with lower prior attainment into a Foundation Year.</li> <li>o factoring applicant backgrounds into admissions decisions.</li> </ul> <p>In a Contextual Admissions policy, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explore the right mix for us of evidence-based components that will help improve direct the access through our admissions system of students from our target groups.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/13603108.2019.1678076">https://doi.org/10.1080/13603108.2019.1678076</a></p> <p>5Boliver, V., C. Crawford, M. Powell &amp; W. Craige. 2017. Admissions in Context: The use of contextual information by leading universities. The Sutton Trust. <a href="https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Admissions-in-Context-Final_V2.pdf">https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Admissions-in-Context-Final_V2.pdf</a></p> <p>6Gorard, S., V. Boliver &amp; N. Siddiqui. 2018. How Can Contextualised Admissions Widen Participation? In: Shah, M., McKay, J. (eds) Achieving Equity and Quality in Higher Education. Palgrave Studies in Excellence and Equity in Global Education. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78316-1_14">https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78316-1_14</a></p>
--	---

Intervention Strategy 4 Transition and Induction Programme: support activities aimed at helping students navigate pre-enrolment, enrolment, and post-enrolment at CSB and develop a sense of belonging to the CSB community.

Objectives and targets: To reduce the gap in the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from the most deprived neighbourhoods (IMD Q1&2), compared to those from the least (IMD Q5), reaching a gap of less than 10 percentage points (pp) by 2035-36. To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from Global Majority Heritage backgrounds, to reach 35% by 2035-36

Activities: Pre-Enrolment and Settling-In Activities

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
<p>Evidence related to support activities before, during, and post-enrolment to HE shows that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• residential or online pre-enrolment programmes covering orientation, information, and advice on higher education, can impact positively the aspirations and motivation for studying in HE of prospective applicants<sup>1</sup> and increase access to HE for, e.g., first-in-the-family students<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul>	<p><sup>1</sup>TASO. 2023. Evidence Toolkit. <a href="https://taso.org.uk/evidence/toolkit/">https://taso.org.uk/evidence/toolkit/</a></p> <p><sup>2</sup>Frauke P., C. Spiess, C. Katharina &amp; V. Zambre. 2018. Informing Students about College: An Efficient Way to Decrease the Socio-Economic Gap in Enrolment: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment. DIW Berlin Discussion Paper No. 1770, Available at SSRN:</p>

- pre-enrolment activities aiming to provide information and advice, as well as activities for developing relevant academic skills, can enhance the learning and performance, and the sense of belonging and social capital of entrants during their first year of study in HE<sup>3,4</sup>.
- induction programmes boost the development of peer capital and self-advocacy skills by disadvantaged students (e.g., first-in-the-family; low family income)<sup>5,6</sup>, which impacts on the integration of students in HE.
- student integration into HE, their institution, and course, is central to their transition and continuation<sup>7,8</sup>.
- mapping the student journey around key transition points and across target student groups can help optimise the student experience and support their transition<sup>9,10</sup>.
- using different communication channels, e.g., phone calls, to check in on students can help re-engaged them; peer-to-peer supportive phone call interventions have been shown to work, and multiple call interventions over an academic year appear to work better than single call ones<sup>11</sup>.

Our induction and transition activities will aim to:

- set up a programme of student support from pre-enrolment to the end of the first year that may comprise checking with students at touchpoints, monitoring risk to help allocate targeted support, engaging students in social, extracurricular, and other activities as part of an extended induction.
- enhance student sense of belonging and social capital.

<https://ssrn.com/abstract=3287800> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3287800>

<sup>3</sup>van Lamoen, P. M., M. Meeuwisse, A.M.F. Hiemstra, L.R. Arends & S.E. Severiens, S. 2024. Supporting students' transition to higher education: the effects of a pre-academic programme on sense of belonging, academic self-efficacy, and academic achievement. *European Journal of Higher Education*, pp.1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2024.2331122>

<sup>4</sup>Beard, L.M., K. Schilt & P. Jagoda. 2023, *Divergent Pathways: How Pre-Orientation Programs Can Shape the Transition to College for First-Generation, Low-Income Students*. *Sociol Forum*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12923>

<sup>5</sup>Perrine, R. M. & J. W. Spain. 2008. Impact of a Pre-Semester College Orientation Program: Hidden Benefits? *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 10(2), pp.155–169. <https://doi.org/10.2190/CS.10.2.c>

<sup>6</sup>Austen, L., R. Hodgson, C. Heaton, N. Pickering & J. Donaldson. 2021. Access, retention, attainment and progression: an integrative review of demonstrable impact on student outcomes. *Advance HE*. <https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/10204>

<sup>7</sup>Scottish Framework for Fair Access. 2024. *Extended Induction*. <https://www.fairaccess.scot/intervention/extended-induction/>

<sup>8</sup>Tinto, Vincent. "Stages of Student Departure: Reflections on the Longitudinal Character of Student Leaving." *The Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 59, no. 4, 1988, pp. 438–55. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1981920>

	<p><sup>9</sup>Rains, JP. 2017. <u>Defining student journey mapping in higher education: The ‘how-to’ guide for implementation on campus.</u> <i>Journal of Education Advancement &amp; Marketing</i>, 2(2), pp.106-119.  <a href="https://www.henrystewartpublications.com/sites/default/files/EAM2.2_DefiningstudentjourneymappinginhighereducationThehowtoguideforimplementationoncampus.pdf">https://www.henrystewartpublications.com/sites/default/files/EAM2.2_DefiningstudentjourneymappinginhighereducationThehowtoguideforimplementationoncampus.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>10</sup>Young, A., L. Dawes &amp; B. Senadji. 2023. Using journey maps as a holistic, reflective approach to capture student engineering identity experiences. <i>European Journal of Engineering Education</i>, 49(1), pp.22–44.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2023.2268023">https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2023.2268023</a></p> <p><sup>11</sup>Gilani, D., R. Parke &amp; N. Wilson. 2022. <u>Peer-to-Peer Phone Calls as a Method of Providing Proactive and Personalised Support to Enhance Student Engagement.</u> <i>Student Engagement in Higher Education Journal</i>, 4(2), pp. 82–104.  <a href="https://sehej.raise-network.com/raise/article/view/1068">https://sehej.raise-network.com/raise/article/view/1068</a></p>
--	---

Intervention Strategy 5 Financial and Mental health support: pre- and post-entry financial support that includes means tested access and participation bursaries allocated based on specified eligibility criteria, as well as talent-linked Leverhulme scholarships for attending pre-higher education and higher education courses at CSB.

Objectives and target: To reduce the gap in the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from the most deprived neighbourhoods (IMD Q1&2), compared to those from the least (IMD Q5), reaching a gap of less than 10 percentage points (pp) by 2035-36. To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants who are from Global Majority Heritage backgrounds, to reach 35% by 2035-36

Activity: Pre-enrolment and settling-in activities

Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity	Evidence (reference / links)
<p>Evidence on pre-entry and post-entry financial support shows that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural barriers such as discrimination; lack of belonging, representation, and role models; cost of</li> </ul>	<p><sup>1</sup>Golden, E. 2018. <u>From Tropes to Troupes: Misty Copeland and the Hyper-Whiteness of Ballet. The Cupola: Scholarship at the Gettysburg College.</u> Student Publications.  <a href="https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/student_scholarship/700/">https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/student_scholarship/700/</a></p>

<p>equipment, participation, and admissions, etc., that disadvantaged students (e.g., students from low-income families, first-in-the-family in HE, Global Majority Heritage, 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, especially ballet, 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 <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pre-HE entry financial support, in terms of offering on-course bursaries towards tuition fees and subsistence, can have a small positive effect on disadvantaged students deciding to pursue higher education<sup>6</sup>.</li> <li>• 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<sup>7</sup>.</li> <li>• 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<sup>8</sup>.</li> <li>• means-tested or “free” participation in outreach</li> </ul>	<p><sup>2</sup>Donnelly, M., P. Lažetić, A. Sandoval-Hernandez, K. Kumar &amp; S. Whewall. 2019. An Unequal Playing Field: Extra-Curricular Activities, Soft Skills and Social Mobility. University of Bath. Social Mobility Commission. <a href="https://socialmobility.independent-commission.uk/app/uploads/2024/07/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf">https://socialmobility.independent-commission.uk/app/uploads/2024/07/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>3</sup>Johnson, O. 2017. The Black Sheep is the Black Dancer. Dance Major Journal, 5. <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.5070/D551036259">http://dx.doi.org/10.5070/D551036259</a> Retrieved from <a href="https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7003g023">https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7003g023</a></p> <p><sup>4</sup>Prichard, R. R. 2024. Privilege in Dance Education: A Discussion for Students and Teachers. Journal of Dance Education, 1–6. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2024.2321150">https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2024.2321150</a></p> <p><sup>5</sup>ICM Ltd. 2019. Perceptions of Higher Education Outreach and Access Activity. Office for Students. <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3905/perceptions-of-higher-education-outreach-and-access-activity.pdf">https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3905/perceptions-of-higher-education-outreach-and-access-activity.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>6</sup>Taso. 2025. Financial Support (Pre-Entry). Evidence Toolkit: Student access, success, and progression. <a href="https://taso.org.uk/intervention/financial-support-pre-entry/">https://taso.org.uk/intervention/financial-support-pre-entry/</a></p> <p><sup>7</sup>Herbaut, E. &amp; 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, <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2019.100442">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2019.100442</a></p> <p><sup>8</sup>Robinson, D. &amp; V. Salvestrini. 2020. The impact of interventions for widening participation to higher education. A review of the evidence. Education Policy Institute. <a href="https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020-1.pdf">https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020-1.pdf</a></p>
---	--

<p>activities and partnerships like AimHigher<sup>9</sup> and UniConnect helps target financial and related support directly at disadvantaged students, increase participation, and promote application and enrolment in HE<sup>10,11</sup>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• receipt of financial support (grants, bursaries, scholarships, and fee-waivers) increases continuation and completion<sup>12</sup> and can close continuation gaps for disadvantaged students<sup>13</sup>.</li> <li>• receipt of on-course financial support benefits recipients in a variety of ways, including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o increasing their capacity to focus on studies<sup>14</sup>.</li> <li>o improving their social life<sup>14</sup>.</li> <li>o helping them build a social network<sup>14</sup>.</li> <li>o increasing their self-esteem<sup>14</sup>.</li> <li>o reducing their need to work in term time<sup>15</sup>.</li> <li>o increasing their sense of belonging and mattering<sup>16,17</sup>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• means-based financial support is more effective than merit-based support, particularly for disadvantaged students<sup>18</sup>.</li> <li>• adopting an effective method for identifying students at a greater risk and therefore in greater need of financial support is necessary for the overall effectiveness of the financial support provision<sup>19</sup>.</li> <li>• providing multipronged on-course financial support is especially important during the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and</li> </ul>	<p><sup>9</sup>Gorard, S., Smith, E., Thomas, E., May, H., Admett, N., &amp; Slack, K. 2006. Review of widening participation research: addressing the barriers to participation in higher education. HEFCE. <a href="https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/6204/1/barriers.pdf">https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/6204/1/barriers.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>10</sup>Office for Fair Access. 2017. Understanding the impact of outreach on access to higher education for disadvantaged adult learners. Office for Fair Access. <a href="https://oro.open.ac.uk/50339/">https://oro.open.ac.uk/50339/</a></p> <p><sup>11</sup>Torgerson, C., Gascoine, L., Heaps, C., Menzies, V. &amp; Younger, K. 2014, Higher education access: evidence of effectiveness of university access strategies and approaches, Sutton Trust. <a href="http://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Higher-Education-Access-Report.pdf">http://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Higher-Education-Access-Report.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>12</sup>TASO. 2023. Financial support (post-entry). <a href="https://taso.org.uk/intervention/financial-support-post-entry/">https://taso.org.uk/intervention/financial-support-post-entry/</a></p> <p><sup>13</sup>OfS. 2020. Understanding the impact of the financial support evaluation toolkit: Analysis and findings. <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/474c9580-e99a-4d24-a490-3474e85ae199/financial-support-evaluation-report-2016-17-2017-18.pdf">https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/474c9580-e99a-4d24-a490-3474e85ae199/financial-support-evaluation-report-2016-17-2017-18.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>14</sup>Harrison, N., S. Davies, R. Harris &amp; R. Waller. 2018. Access, participation and capabilities: theorising the contribution of university bursaries to students’ wellbeing, flourishing and success. Cambridge Journal of Education. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2017.1401586">https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2017.1401586</a></p> <p><sup>15</sup>Hordosy, R., T. Clark &amp; D. Vickers. 2018. Lower income students and the ‘double deficit’ of part-time work: Undergraduate experiences of finance, studying, and employability. Journal of Education and Work 31(4), pp. 1-13. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2018.1498068">https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2018.1498068</a></p> <p><sup>16</sup>Thomas, L. 2012. Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: a summary of findings and recommendations from the</p>
---	--

<p>the reported negative effects it has on students' mental health and wellbeing, academic performance, social capital, food security, financial stability, and accommodation<sup>20</sup>.</p> <p>Our proposed provision plans for financial support aim to offer students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a multiprong approach to delivering targeted financial support from application to on-course studies.</li> </ul>	<p>What Works? Student Retention &amp; Success programme Summary Report. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. <a href="https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-Summary-report.pdf">https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-Summary-report.pdf</a></p> <p><sup>17</sup>Clark, T., &amp; R. Hordósy, 2019. Social Identification, Widening Participation and Higher Education: Experiencing Similarity and Difference in an English Red Brick University. <i>Sociological Research Online</i>, 24(3), 353–369. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780418811971">https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780418811971</a></p> <p><sup>18</sup>Herbaut, E. &amp; K. M. Geven. 2019. What Works to Reduce Inequalities in Higher Education? A Systematic Review of the (Quasi)Experimental Literature on Outreach and Financial Aid Policy Research Working Papers. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-8802">https://doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-8802</a></p> <p><sup>19</sup>Kaye, N. 2021. Evaluating the role of bursaries in widening participation in higher education: a review of the literature and evidence, <i>Educational Review</i>, 73:6. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2020.1787954">https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2020.1787954</a></p> <p><sup>20</sup>Russell Group Students' Unions. 2023. <i>Student Cost of Living Report</i>. Students' Union UCL. <a href="https://ellipse-pug-zat6.squarespace.com/s/Cost-of-Living-Report-March-2023.pdf">https://ellipse-pug-zat6.squarespace.com/s/Cost-of-Living-Report-March-2023.pdf</a></p>
--	---

### Annex C: Targets, investment and fees

The OfS will append the information from the fees, investment and targets document when an access and participation plan is published.

### References

Ashton, H. & Ashton, D. (2022) *Creativity and the curriculum: educational apartheid in 21st Century England, a European outlier?* *International Journal of Cultural Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2022.2058497>

- Barkat, S. (2019) *Evaluating the impact of the Academic Enrichment Programme on widening access to selective universities: Application of the Theory of Change framework*. British Educational Research Journal, 45 (6), pp. 1160-1185. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3556>
- Boliver, V. & Powell, M. (2020) *Fair admission to universities in England: Improving policy and practice*. Nuffield Foundation. Available at <https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Fair-admission-to-universities-in-England.pdf>
- Boliver, V., Gorard, S. & Siddiqui, N. (2021) *Using contextual data to widen access to higher education*. Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education, 25(1), pp.7-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603108.2019.1678076>
- Brilliant Club (2019) *Barriers to Access: Five lessons for creating effective school-university partnerships*. Available at <https://thebrilliantclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Impact-Case-Study-Barriers-to-Access.pdf>
- Cage, E., Jones, E. Ryan, G. Hughes, G. and Spanner, L. (2021) *Student Mental Health and Transitions Into, Through and Out of University: Student and Staff Perspectives*. Journal of Further and Higher Education 1–14.
- 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*. Kings College London. Available at <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education>
- Cultural Learning Alliance (2017) *The case for Cultural Learning: Key Research Findings*. Available at <https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/key-research-findings-the-case-for-cultural-learning/>
- Donnelly, M., Lažetić, P., Sandoval-Hernandez, A., Kumar, K. & Whewall, S. (2019) *An Unequal Playing Field: Extra-Curricular Activities, Soft Skills and Social Mobility*. University of Bath. Social Mobility Commission. Available at [https://socialmobility.independent-commission.uk/app/uploads/2024/07/An\\_Unequal\\_Playing\\_Field\\_report.pdf](https://socialmobility.independent-commission.uk/app/uploads/2024/07/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf)
- FFT Education Data Lab (2023) *GCSE results 2023: The main trends in grades and entries* Available at <https://ffteducationdatalab.org.uk/2023/08/gcse-results-2023-the-main-trends-in-grades-and-entries/>
- Golden, E. (2018) *From Tropes to Troupes: Misty Copeland and the Hyper-Whiteness of Ballet*. The Cupola: Scholarship at the Gettysburg College. Student Publications. Available at [https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/student\\_scholarship/700/](https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/student_scholarship/700/)
- Gorard, S., Boliver, V. & Siddiqui, N. (2018) *How Can Contextualised Admissions Widen Participation?* In: Shah, M., McKay, J. (eds) *Achieving Equity and Quality in Higher Education*. Palgrave Studies in Excellence and Equity in Global Education. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78316-1\\_14](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78316-1_14)
- Harrison, N., Davies, S., Harris, R. and Waller, R. (2018) *Access, participation and capabilities: theorising the contribution of university bursaries to students' well-being, flourishing and success*. Cambridge Journal of Education, 48(6), pp.677–695

- 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 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2019.100442>.
- HESA (2025) *What do HE students study?: Personal characteristics*. Available at <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/what-study/characteristics>
- Holdsworth, N. (2013) 'Boys don't do dance, do they?' *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 18(2), 168–178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569783.2013.787255>
- Hope, A. (2024) *What we learnt: Guildhall School of Music & Drama's Supported Application Scheme*. Available at <https://heprofessional.co.uk/edition/supported-application-scheme>
- ICM Unlimited (2019) *Perceptions of Higher Education Outreach and Access Activity*. Report to the Office for Students. Available at <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3905/perceptions-of-higher-education-outreach-and-access-activity.pdf>
- James, N., Busher, H., & Suttill, B. (2015) *Using habitus and field to explore access to higher education students' learning identities*. Studies in the Education of Adults, 47(1), 4–20.
- Jones, R. (2017) *Entry to Arts Subjects at Key Stage 4*. Education Policy Institute. Available at <https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/EPI-Entries-to-arts-KS4-1.pdf>
- Kaye, N. (2021) *Evaluating the role of bursaries in widening participation in higher education: a review of the literature and evidence*. Educational Review, 73:6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2020.1787954>
- Keels, M. (2019) *Campus Counterspaces: Black and Latinx Students' Search for Community at Historically White Universities*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Leese, M. (2010) *Bridging the gap: Supporting student transitions into higher education*. Journal of further and Higher Education, 34(2), 239-251.
- Lewis, J. and Stiebahl, S. (2025) *Student Mental Health in England: Statistics, policy, and guidance*. Available at <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8593/CBP-8593.pdf>
- MacFarlane, K. (2018) *Higher education learner identity for successful student transitions*. Higher Education Research & Development, 37(6), 1201-1215.
- Martikke, S., A. Church & A. Hart (2015) *Greater than the sum of its parts: What works in sustaining community-university partnerships*. Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation.
- Meehan, C. and Howells, K. (2018). "What Really Matters to Freshers?": *Evaluation of First Year Student Experience of Transition into University*. Journal of Further and Higher Education 42(7) pp. 893–907.
- Murphy, R. and Wyness, G. (2014) *Testing Means-Tested Aid*. Available at <https://www.scopus.com/record/display.uri?eid=2-s2.0-85174235027&origin=inward&txGid=f08513b155dca802b9a0f9fbf5b76089>
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2025) *Mental Health in Students: What are the risk Factors?* Available at <https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/mental-health-in-students/background-information/risk-factors/>

- O'Brien, D., Brook, O. and Taylor, M. (2024) *The role of higher education in class inequalities in the cultural and creative industries*. Available at <https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/The-role-of-higher-education-in-class-inequalities-in-the-cultural-and-creative-industries-1.pdf>
- Office for Fair Access (2017) *Understanding the impact of outreach on access to higher education for disadvantaged adult learners*. Available at <https://oro.open.ac.uk/50339/>
- Office for Students (2021) *Understanding the impact of the financial support evaluation toolkit: Analysis and Findings*. Available at <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/4231/financial-support-evaluation-report-2016-17-2017-18.pdf>
- Osterman, K.F. (2000) *Students' need for belonging in the school community*. Review of Educational Research, 70 (3): 323-367
- Pitkethly, A. & Prosser, M. (2001) *The first year experience project: a model for university-wide change*. Higher Education Research and Development, 20(2), pp. 185–98
- Pollard, E., Vanderlayden, J., Alexander, K., Borkin, H., O'Mahony, J. (2021) *Student mental health and wellbeing: Insights from higher education providers and sector experts*. Available at [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60d47d55e90e0743a210e05e/Survey\\_of\\_HE\\_Providers\\_Student\\_Mental\\_Health.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60d47d55e90e0743a210e05e/Survey_of_HE_Providers_Student_Mental_Health.pdf)
- 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>
- Risnler, D. (2009) *What we know about boys who dance: The limitations of contemporary masculinity and dance education*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195386691.003.0003>
- Save the Student (2024) *Student Money Survey 2024- Results*. Available at <https://www.savethestudent.org/money/surveys/student-money-survey-2024-results.html>
- Save the Student (2025) *National Student Accommodation Survey 2025- Results*. Available at <https://www.savethestudent.org/money/surveys/national-student-accommodation-survey-2025.html#rent>
- Student Minds (2023) *We need to do more to support student mental health- latest research*. Available at <https://www.studentminds.org.uk/latestnews/we-need-to-do-more-to-support-student-mental-health-latest-research>
- TASO (n.d) *Evidence toolkit: Aspiration-raising interventions (pre-entry)*. Available at <https://taso.org.uk/intervention/aspiration-raising-interventions-pre-entry/>
- Thomas, L. (2024) *What is a whole provider approach to widening access and student success?* WonkHE
- Trowler, V. (2010) *Student engagement literature review* (Report for the Higher Education Academy). Available at <https://advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/student-engagement-literature-review>
- Williams, D. (2003) *Examining psychosocial issues of adolescent male dancers*. PhD dissertation, Marywood University, UMI 2090242

# Fees, investments and targets

## 2026-27 to 2029-30

Provider name: Central School of Ballet Charitable Trust Ltd

Provider UKPRN: 10001264

### 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	£21,000	£21,000	£22,000	£22,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£34,000	£34,000	£34,000	£34,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000

#### 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 (£)	£15,000	£15,000	£16,000	£16,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£6,000	£6,000	£6,000	£6,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>Access activity investment</b>	<b>Total access investment (£)</b>	<b>£21,000</b>	<b>£21,000</b>	<b>£22,000</b>	<b>£22,000</b>
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment (as % of HFI)</i>	9.7%	10.9%	10.8%	10.8%
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment funded from HFI (£)</i>	£21,000	£19,000	£22,000	£20,000
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)</i>	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£31,000	£31,000	£31,000	£31,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>Financial support investment</b>	<b>Total financial support investment (£)</b>	<b>£34,000</b>	<b>£34,000</b>	<b>£34,000</b>	<b>£34,000</b>
Financial support investment	<i>Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)</i>	15.7%	17.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000
Research and evaluation investment	<i>Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)</i>	6.5%	7.3%	6.9%	6.9%



