

1. Assessment of performance

The School believes in the “unique artistic voice and the transformative power of the artist within society” developed through “a learning and teaching environment enriched by a diverse creative community”¹. Since a diverse creative community is fundamental to its core strategic objectives, the School seeks to recruit, educate and train students from all walks of life both nationally and globally. The School has an open admissions policy²; regardless of previous qualifications, all who apply are auditioned, interviewed or have their portfolio considered by teaching staff. For those unable to meet the minimum entrance qualifications³ there is an alternative non-standard entry procedure. The School has a good track record of making offers to applicants from under-represented groups as a proportion of all applications but its success in terms of the diversity of new entrants is limited by the relatively low numbers of applicants from these groups.

There has been an ongoing decline in arts education in the UK state school system, particularly in music, for a number of decades. This decline has been more acute recently, with the number of A-level music entries in 2018 some 25.4% lower than in 2014 (against a 2.6% decline over the same period for A-level entries overall): higher-grade achievement has also been lower (20% of pupils achieved A*-A grades in music compared with 26.4% for all subjects)⁴. Similarly, there has been a decline in the uptake of music at GCSE level, with a decline of 22% in the number of music GCSE entries between 2010 and 2018 and a 15.1% decrease since 2016⁵. Similar decline has been noted in entries for GCSE design and technology and performing and expressive arts, including drama. The pandemic has further exacerbated this decline, with 68% of primary school and 39% of secondary school teachers stating that music provision is being reduced as a direct result of Covid-19⁶. ABRSM research in November 2021 found that whilst 86% of children are actively making music in some way, 15% fewer children are playing musical instruments than in 2014, and 11% fewer are taking instrument lessons⁷. This decline impacts the School’s potential pool of applicants, particularly from state schools.

The School has sought to address this decline through committed action. Not only does it provide significant alternative under-eighteen arts education in partnership with music hubs, host schools and funding bodies via the Guildhall Young Artist provision (noted later), the School and its close neighbours the Barbican Centre and the London Symphony Orchestra, fellow cultural organisations within the City of London Corporation, are strong advocates for arts education.

Note on data analysis below (mostly undertaken during the development of the first iteration of this Plan in 2019): The School is very small and its total new entrant UK domiciled undergraduate population has not been more than 160 in any of the last five years in the data supplied by the OfS. This makes any analysis very difficult for two reasons: (i) the data provided by HESA to the OfS and then to the School has been rounded up or down (3s have become 5s and 2s have become 0s) and it is difficult to see the actual performance in some years for some categories, and (ii) with very small numbers as the starting point when the data is then sub-divided (e.g. BAME subdivided into Asian, Black or Mixed) statistical analysis is not always possible or meaningful. This also makes analysis across multiple characteristics problematic. However, this difficulty emphasises the need for the School to

¹ Guildhall School of Music & Drama: A Conservatoire for the 21st Century – see <https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/about-guildhall/corporate-documents/policies>

² <https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/about-guildhall/corporate-documents/policies>

³ Two E grades at A level or equivalent

⁴ <https://www.ism.org/news/a-level-results-day-further-decline-in-music-uptake-1>

⁵ <https://www.ism.org/news/gcse-results-day-2018-uptake-of-music-down-by>

⁶ https://www.ism.org/images/files/ISM_UK-Music-Teachers-survey-report_Dec-2020_A4_ONLINE-2.pdf

⁷ [https://gb.abrsm.org/en/about-us/news/articles/?abrsm\[newsId\]=92806](https://gb.abrsm.org/en/about-us/news/articles/?abrsm[newsId]=92806)

make progress in recruiting students from under-represented groups as the priority. It should also be noted that, at undergraduate level, the School only offers full-time degree programmes and has no part-time provision; all data referenced is, therefore, for “all undergraduate” full-time.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status⁸

1.1.1 Access

(i) *Low participation neighbourhoods (2019)*

The School continues to struggle to attract UK domiciled students from low participation neighbourhoods. Its HESA performance indicator for POLAR 3⁹ shows improvement from 2016/17 to 2017/18 but a performance still significantly below benchmark (5% against a location adjusted benchmark of 8.8%). The POLAR 4 data¹⁰ shows that the ratio amongst new entrants of students from quintiles 3 to 5 versus quintiles 1 & 2 has not improved over the five year period to 2017/18 (despite an improvement in year 3). The gap¹¹ between quintile 5 and quintile 1 is statistically significant ranging from 34.7% (2015/16) to 47.4% (2013/14); the gap for 2017/18 was 41.5% compared with a sector average of 18.3%.

(ii) *Indices of multiple deprivation (2022)*

The School has only recently gained access to this data as part of the preparation for the new transparency return. The data shows that for 2018/19 entry 25.7% of the School’s English applicants came from a postcode within the lower two quintiles for multiple indices of deprivation, and 27.5% of new entrants (a good conversion). Up to 2020/21, five year data suggests more success in the School’s recruitment of students from the lower four deciles of IMD 2019 data than of the lower two quintiles of the POLAR 4 data; the OfS data dashboard¹² clearly denotes a higher percentage each year (although a drop in 2020/21). The 2020/21 monitoring showed 17.6% of new entrants had a home postcode which was decile 1-4 on the IMD dataset, compared to just 10.6% for POLAR 4 quintiles 1 & 2; combined, this figure was 25.4%, which is more reflective of the increasing diversity of the new entrant population. It is also worth noting that IMD is a more compatible postcode indicator when viewed alongside our ethnicity target – the most recent data showed that 41.7% of BAME new entrants had a decile 1-4 postcode, compared to just 4.2% with a POLAR 4 quintile 1 or 2 postcode. The School will continue to monitor the data and utilise both postcode datasets as eligibility for activity and indicators to monitor, though will not set a specific target before the end of this Plan.

1.1.2 Success

1.1.2 (i) *Continuation (2019)*

The School performed better than its benchmark¹³ for the continuation of all undergraduate UK domiciled new entrants in 2016/17. For POLAR 4¹⁰, students from quintiles 1 & 2 have outperformed students from quintiles 3 to 5 in three of the last five years (2013/14 to 2015/16), and had a better continuation rate than the national average for each of the last four years. The average gap over 5 years was zero. There is no data in the OfS data set for the School’s gap between quintile 5 and quintile 1 due to small numbers¹⁴. The sector gap average over five years between quintile 5 and quintile 1 is 4.7.

⁸ Note – each section header indicates the year that analysis was undertaken, to ensure clarity following the 2022 variation exercise, where some year three commitments were addressed. Analysis from the 2019 iteration of this Plan is retained in order to ensure transparency.

⁹ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/07-02-2019/widening-participation-tables>

¹⁰ OfS data set

¹¹ OfS Key Performance Measure (KPM); KPM 1

¹² <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/>

¹³ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/07-03-2019/non-continuation-tables>

¹⁴ KPM 3

1.1.2 (ii) Attainment (2019)

In the OfS data set there is no data for the gap between quintile 5 and quintile 1. The gap between quintiles 3-5 and quintiles 1 & 2 was 10.9 in 2016/17 (year 4) and 0.9 in 2017/18 (year 5); there is no data available for the other years. Absolute performance for POLAR 4 quintiles 1 & 2 recorded 85.7% and 92.9% respectively for achievement of the higher degree classifications.

Whilst the gaps in year 4 and 5 were not considered statistically significant, the gap in year 4 was more pronounced and the School needs to achieve a more consistent performance. However, in both years 4 and 5 the School's performance for quintiles 1 & 2 was significantly better than the national performance (75.2% and 76.4% respectively).

1.1.3 Progression to employment or further study (2019)

Available POLAR 4 data over the five-year period is limited. However, for 2016/17 there is data for both quintile groups 1 & 2 and 3 to 5. With above average DLHE response rates for both groups, performance in terms of progression to further study or employment was significantly higher in absolute terms than the national performance rate, with an 84.6% progression rate for quintiles 1 & 2 and 87.8% for quintiles 3 to 5, but with the same performance gap (3.2) as the sector.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

1.2.1 Access (2022)

The proportion of new entrants from BAME communities was above target in 2017/18 and 2018/19¹⁵ (as set out in the School's earlier Access Agreements) at 18.2% and 14.6% respectively. There is a good correlation for the School as a whole between the proportion of new entrants and the proportion of applicants from BAME communities (14.7% and 14.1% of UK domiciled applicants for 2017 and 2018 entry respectively¹⁶) with 2017/18 showing a particularly strong conversion rate (in both years there is a higher proportion of BAME entrants than applicants). However, in absolute terms when using the OfS data set this performance was significantly below the sector average, which has seen circa 30% of new entrants from BAME communities over the last few years. An analysis of new entrant performance at programme level indicates a mixed performance across the disciplines.

In the OfS data, the average gap over the five-year period was 72.78 compared with a sector average over the same period of 41.78. In 2017/18 the ratio of white new entrants to BAME new entrants was 4.5:1; when this is subdivided the ratio was 9.3:1 for black new entrants and 130:1 for Asian students.¹⁷ The School recognises the need to make progress in respect of Asian students and will align its access activities towards this end. However, given the very small numbers, for the immediate future the School will focus on recruitment targets for the broader BAME group. During the variation process in 2022, data from 2018-2021 was considered, to determine whether a target specific to Asian new entrants would be appropriate, as per the commitment set out in the first iteration of this Plan. The number of students recruited from Asian backgrounds continues to be too small to report on, and so a target in this area would not be possible to determine, particularly when considering the decreasing proportion of Asian students progressing to Design, and Creative and Performing Arts subjects in the UK overall (3.4% in 2019/20, and 3.1% in 2020/21¹⁸). We will continue to work with Asian prospective students via our Access activity, and report on new entrants via aggregated ethnicity to ensure GDPR compliance.

¹⁵ School data sets have been used as 2018/19 entry data was not returned in HESA at first iteration.

¹⁶ School data sets have been used as the School is not part of UCAS.

¹⁷ "Asian" is a broad term and includes students identifying as Asian or Asian British – Indian, Asian or Asian British – Pakistani, Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi, Chinese and other Asian background

¹⁸ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/what-study/characteristics>

1.2.2 Success

1.2.2 (i) Continuation (2022)

In the OfS data set, there is a small gap between the non-continuation rate of white students and the non-continuation rate of BAME students but it is not statistically significant. There is no data for the gap in performance between white and BAME students for 2 of the 5 years, and where there is data the highest gap was 7.6 and the lowest gap was 3.5 (compared with sector performance in those years of 1.7 and 2.7 respectively). The School's gap for the latest OfS data year, 2016/17, was 4.7. In two of the three reporting years, where there is data, the School's continuation rate for BAME students was higher than the sector average for BAME, including the latest data year. However, there have been fluctuations in the absolute performance of BAME students and the School needs to achieve a more consistent performance.

Continuation rates from year 1 to 2 of study were monitored in 2021, and disaggregated by ethnicity group. Absolute numbers of Asian students remain too small to effectively monitor or report on a target, but it is of note that all Asian students did continue with their programme in this year, and BAME students overall were proportionally more likely to continue (95.8% compared to 94.2% of white students).

1.2.2 (ii) Attainment (2022)

There is only comparative data in the OfS data set for years 4 and 5, showing there is a small gap in year 4 (2016/17) between the attainment rate of white students and the attainment rate of BAME students and a larger gap in year 5 (2017/18) but they are not statistically significant; with gaps of 2.2 and 13.2 for years 4 and year 5 respectively (compared with sector performance for those years 13.8 and 13.2 respectively). Again, numbers are too small to disaggregate and there is no OfS data for the gap between white students and black students only¹⁹. The attainment in absolute terms of the School's BAME students has been significantly better than the sector performance in both 2016/17 and 2017/18, and in 2016/17 performance was significantly better than the sector average for white students. The gap in performance in year 5 (2017/18), whilst not statistically significant, is a potential area of concern. Attainment performance by ethnicity was monitored in 2021. Actual numbers of students continue to be too small to disaggregate by ethnicity type. The monitoring showed that white students were more likely than their BAME peers to achieve a higher-level degree (96.3% achieving an upper second or first class honours, compared to 82.6%). However, for both white and BAME students, the number awarded a lower second class honours or below was in reality fewer than five, and in fact BAME students were more likely to be awarded first class honours, with 52.2% awarded this classification, compared to 48.5% of white students. The School will therefore not set a target in this area for 2023/24, but will consider links between ethnicity and attainment in the development of the next Plan, should this remain a priority for the sector.

1.2.3 Progression to employment or further study (2019)

There is only OfS data for all groups for year 5 (2016/17). The progression of BAME students to employment or further study was better (at 92.9%) than it was for white students (at 85.4%). Both rates are significantly above the sector average. The School gap in 2016/17 was -7.5, comparing positively to the sector gap of 3.9.

1.3 Mature students

1.3.1 Access (2022)

The School's undergraduate new entrants are predominantly under 21, and the OfS data shows that the proportion of new entrants over 21 years of age on entry is less than the sector average, ranging from 8.5% to 13.4% in the last five years, with 11.3% in 2017/18 against a sector performance of 27.8% for full-time students. The gap is considered significant with a five-year

¹⁹ KPM 4

average of 76.6 compared with the sector average of 46.74. When the over 21 years on entry age group is broken down further, the students are predominantly under 31 years of age. However, since 2018-19, the Office for Students Access and Participation data dashboard²⁰ indicates a slight upward trend of mature new entrants (at 11%, 13% and 18% for the last three years, respectively).

Whilst the School encourages and supports any mature student wishing to study here, and through the Access Bursary has made special provision to support “independent” students, the undergraduate programme offer is by its nature less likely to be attractive to the older age group who are more likely to have competing commitments. “Drive time” and the ability to live at home are factors for mature applicants²¹ and, additionally, mature applicants are typically drawn to a smaller range of degree courses, predominantly subjects allied to medicine (including nursing) and education (although Creative Arts & Design subjects are very slightly more popular amongst mature applicants than some subjects).

- (a) The School’s conservatoire model of training for the professions is intensive and only full-time at undergraduate level. Whether studying music, production arts or acting, all the programmes are intensive and currently extend over 36 weeks of term-time (moving to a 34-week model from autumn 2023). There is a strong ensemble ethos and students work together on projects from the outset (from small-scale chamber music projects, to jazz bands, to large drama productions and full-size orchestra rehearsals). The School does not have the space resources to replicate these programmes or projects on an economic scale to run them at half speed for twice the length of time for a part-time, or other alternate, mode (nor is it likely that there would be sufficient interest for academic or financial viability to fill the programmes even if the space was available). HESA data shows²² that within Creative Arts & Design subjects where part-time is offered, mature students comprise over 87% of the total UK student body compared with 36% of the full-time student body.
- (b) The School has an open admissions policy and will consider non-standard entry for those without formal qualifications at taught postgraduate level as well as undergraduate. For instance, an established musician without formal qualification could find a place on the extended Guildhall Artist Masters programme with recognition of prior experiential learning, rather than starting their musical journey from scratch on the BMus.

Whilst the School will do its utmost to support mature entrants, setting a target does not seem appropriate in the context of the School’s offer, and in light of the recent increased mature new entrants.

1.3.2 Success

1.3.2.2 (i) Continuation (2022)

OfS data is not available for all years for mature students and numbers are too small to break down the mature student group further. For the three years that OfS data is available, mature students have underperformed when compared against those under 21 years on entry but the gap is not considered significant (small numbers again). For those years where there is data, the School’s mature students performed in concrete terms better than the sector in two years and the same as the sector in the third year. However, the gap has been mixed, with gaps of 1.9, 8.9 and 11.8 compared with sector gaps of 6.8, 7.1 7.4 for the same years. In 2020/21, the School surpassed the target set for the continuation of mature students from year 1 to 2, achieving an 87% continuation rate (with the actual number of non-continuing students fewer than five).

²⁰ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/>

²¹ UCAS: Admissions patterns for mature applicants 2017 cycle [June 2018] see <https://www.ucas.com/file/175936/download?token=UVSBJLVD>

²² <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/whos-in-he/characteristics>

1.3.2.2 (ii) Attainment (2019)

OfS data on attainment is only available for the years 2016/17 and 2017/18. In 2016/17 the performance of mature students was better than the under 21s on entry with this positive performance gap being of statistical significance. The gap was not considered significant in 2017/18 (a 7% gap for the School and 10.3% for the sector), and absolute performance of the School's mature students far exceeded the sector average for young or mature students in both 2016/17 and 2017/18.

1.3.3 Progression to employment or further study (2019)

There is only OfS progression data for year 1 (2012/13). This shows that a greater proportion of those aged 21 or over on entry progressed to employment or further study when compared with the under 21 years on entry. (A gap between young and mature of minus 6.1). Both age groups performed worse than the sector average. TEF 3 metrics show that the School performed above benchmark for high skilled employment or further study for under 21 years of age on entry and with no negative indicators for the mature age group.

1.4 Disabled students

1.4.1. Access (2022)

The OfS data in 2019 showed that the proportion of new entrants declaring a disability had declined over the last five years (2013/14 to 2017/18), with the ratio of new entrants with no disability to new entrants with a disability changing from 2.5:1 to 6.6:1. In years 1 to 4 the School's performance was better than the sector average but in year 5 it was worse. The average gap over the five years was 63.92 comparing favourably against the sector performance of 73.84 over the same period. In absolute terms, the number of new entrants reporting a Sensory, Medical or Physical disability, and those reporting a Social or Communication disability are very small. In 2017 there were only six new entrants in receipt of Disabled Students Allowance (DSA), due to the change in the rules for DSA: too small a number for further analysis.

However, the School has more generally seen an increase in both students accessing disability support and accessing mental health services, including those who did not declare a disability on application. Internal data shows that 24.5% of the student body requested counselling in 2017/18 up from 18.7% in 2012/13. The School will endeavour to ensure that students seeking disability support also self-declare. In 2020/21, the School substantially surpassed the target set in respect of new entrants declaring a disability, with 30.3% self-declaring (just over 3x the proportion of the baseline year), and with 2.8% declaring a Sensory, Medical or Physical disability, denoting some success in this endeavour.

1.4.2 Success

1.4.2 (i) Continuation into year 2 of studies (2019)

The performance of those students declaring a disability and those with no known disability was the same, higher than the sector average in Year 1 of the OfS data (2012/13) and fluctuating over the following four years, with a better performance for those declaring a disability in Years 3 and 4. The average gap over the five-year period was 3.8 for the School and 1.14 for the sector. The School's gap for 2016/17 was its highest at 14.1. The School's own data indicates that for 2017/18 entrants declaring a disability, 95.5% started year 2 compared with 96.6% for all UK domiciled entrants. Numbers are too small to subdivide the data for meaningful analysis.

1.4.2 (ii) Attainment - the award of a higher classification (2022)

The relative performance of those students declaring a disability and those with no known disability has, in four out of five years of the OfS dataset, been lower than for those with no known disability. The exception year was 2014/15. The gap between those students with no known disability and those with a declared disability has ranged from -3.3% to 10.3%; the latter in

2017/18 is a particular concern.²³ The OfS dataset indicates there is no statistical significance (probably due to the small numbers involved). Over the five-year period, actual performance has ranged from 91.7% to 97.5% for students with no disability, and 84.6% to 95% for students declaring a disability, with 84.6% recorded for 2017/18. The comparable sector data shows a range of 74.2% to 78.7% for those students without a disability, and 70.7% to 75.9% for those declaring a disability. Given the sector concerns about grade inflation, which the School is actively considering, a 97.5% attainment rate would not necessarily be the School's target for either group but the School is committed to improving the attainment rate for those declaring a disability (target viii) and thereby closing the gap. In 2020/21, attainment data did demonstrate a closing gap, with 93.1% of students with a disability achieving a higher-level degree classification, compared to 94.1% of their non-disabled peers. The School continues to deliver targeted attainment-focused activity for students with a disability, and offers a wide range of learning support to all students.

1.4.3 Progression to employment or further study (2019)

In year 1 of the OfS dataset (2012/13), those students declaring a disability performed better than those with no known disability in terms of progression to employment or further study but performed less well in the following 4 years with a particularly concerning performance in 2014/15. The response rate for those declaring a disability is also consistently and noticeably lower than for those with no known disability, with a particularly low response rate in the year of worst performance (2014/15).

The average gap over 5 years was 10.68 compared against a sector gap of 1.64. The OfS dataset indicates there is no statistical significance in the gap in performance (again probably due to small numbers) but this does not alter the need to look at this going forward. The School gap for the latest OfS data year, 2016/17, was 7.4.

1.5 Care leavers & estranged students (2019)

The NNECL²⁴ "Moving on up" report highlights the particular difficulties of care leavers entering and staying at university. They may have had disrupted schooling which has limited their opportunities, they are more likely to have a special educational need, they are more likely to enter university at an older age, and feel more isolated when they get there. Maintaining sustained musical training during a disrupted education is also a significant additional challenge.

In addition to care leavers being able to access GYA assisted places support (see section 3 below) and guaranteed places on Access and Participation projects, the School makes special provision for care leavers²⁵ which includes identified staff to provide support at application and beyond and the Access Bursary (which it intends to continue under this Access & Participation Plan). Those with a learning disability or in need of mental health support can also access the School's extensive support services.

Whilst the School does have care leavers within its undergraduate population, numbers are too small for any sort of analysis. The School will continue to encourage and support care leavers, and will work with the Care Leavers Covenant and arts organisations who specialise in working with this group of individuals. The Access Bursary also makes special provision for estranged students and similar support is available to them.

Data about care leaver and estranged student status is given voluntarily as part of the application for the Access Bursary. Numbers are far too small (i.e. less than 5 in total across all years) for any sort of analysis in terms of new entrants. Care leavers' and estranged students' continuation and attainment is monitored as part of the Access Bursary but again as numbers have been less

²³ KPM 5

²⁴ The National Network for the Education of Care Leavers

²⁵ See https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/about_the_school/shared_left_nav/life_at_the_school/care_leavers_looked_after_children/

than five in total across all four years of undergraduate study, data is suppressed to protect the data of individuals. It will be many years before there will be sufficient data to aggregate across years for statistically significant analysis. There is no data in respect of progression and with possibly only one care leaver in a graduating cohort it is highly unlikely that, given the HESA rounding rules, any data will be forthcoming from the HESA Graduate Outcomes collection, even when looking over a five-year period. If qualitative information about graduating care leavers' further study or employment is made available to the School via the alumni service (and we will encourage all those in receipt of an Access bursary to stay in touch), this will be considered but the attainment of such data cannot be guaranteed and any information used for Access & Participation monitoring and evaluation purposes will need to be mindful of privacy requirements.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage (2022)

As noted above, the School's population is small and the total UK domiciled new entrants has not been more than 160 in any one year. Given the small numbers involved, it is not possible to analyse intersections of disadvantage for each group or at each stage of the student life cycle, particularly as we do not have data for all years in many of the larger categories and this again highlights the need to increase the overall representation of these groups within the School.

There will always be difficulties for the School in analysing intersections of disadvantage due to very small numbers and this will not change for some years. Whether we have sufficient data going forward to average across five-years will very much depend upon our success or otherwise in meeting our targets and it will probably be only towards the end of the five-year period, in year 4, that there will be sufficient data that will provide analysis with statistical significance. For instance, if we achieved our September 2023 target on BAME new entrants this would amount to only 35 new entrants in total that year in that category, too few for a more detailed analysis that subdivides the group across the POLAR quintiles for instance, assuming similar progress had been made in POLAR 4 quintile 1 and 2 targets to show significance. We would need at least four years' worth of data at this level to make a start.

The only OfS data available in 2019 for intersectional analysis related to BAME students and POLAR 4 quintiles 3 to 5.

It is also worth re-emphasising that recent monitoring highlights the incompatibility of Access targets for POLAR 4 and BAME new entrants, exacerbated by the overall small number of new entrants. In 2020/21, 93% of the POLAR 4 Quintiles 1 & 2 new entrants were white, whilst 95% of BAME new entrants had home postcodes that were Quintiles 3-5. As a result, programmes that recruited above target numbers of BAME students were unlikely to meet the POLAR 4 criteria, and vice versa.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education (2019)

1.7. **Access:** *State school and state supported new entrants (UK domiciled)*

Given the decline of arts education, and music education in particular, in the state school system (noted earlier in this section), state school and state supported²⁶ new entrants are under-represented in the School and this remains an indicator for the School particularly given its significant sustained training for young people under the age of 18. State school and state supported new entrants for 2017/18 and 2018/19 formed 75% of the School's UK domiciled cohort each year (falling short of targets, 78% and 79% respectively, under its previous Access Agreements).

²⁶ State supported new entrants are those new entrants coming from specialist independent music schools who were supported by the UK government to attend the school under the Music & Dance scheme, see <https://www.gov.uk/music-dance-scheme>.

Whilst not all pupils in state schools will be materially disadvantaged, the decline in music education in state schools is a general disadvantage for all and one that is more pronounced in state schools in areas of economic deprivation where parents do not have the resources to bridge the lacuna in mainstream education. Even where there is free musical instrument loan and discounted music lessons, this can still be too costly for many parents as this has to be sustained over seven to ten years, with sheet music and examinations costs an additional burden.

*Music Education: State of the Nation Report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Music Education, the Incorporated Society of Musicians and the University of Sussex*²⁷ provides information on the respective take up of music education via the graded examination system (an indicator of sustained training) in state school and independent schools, and also how recent government directives in respect of the EBacc have created a negative impact on children and young people's entitlement to a broad and high-quality music education, exacerbating existing inequalities between those attending state schools and those attending independent schools.

This lack of access to high quality musical education is noted in the supporting statement provided by the School's Students' Union. The Guildhall Young Artists (GYA) department is, however, aiming to bridge this gap, providing affordable high-quality training for those that can pay and, for those that cannot, assisted places through the Access & Participation Plan (see below), and other assisted places provided by government funding under the Music & Dance scheme²⁸ and fundraising (e.g. recent Leverhulme and Wolfson Foundation grants). The GYA regional centres in Taunton and Norwich are in government opportunity areas or linked to government opportunity areas and provide a local, high quality option for music education for disadvantaged groups.

A similar disadvantage is also apparent in Production Arts, which struggles to attract state school pupils. As well as the decline in GCSE design and technology and performing and expressive arts (as also noted earlier), not all state secondary schools or colleges have the ability to offer the expressive arts as an extra curricula activity and there is less access to working theatres in schools than is found in the independent school sector.

2 Strategic aims and objectives

All of the School's degree programmes have the same objective, **to train for the professions**, and careers advice and guidance for the professions is embedded in each programme. However, beyond this training the **School's mission** is to empower artists to realise their full potential, and to develop distinctive artistic citizens who enrich the lives of others and make a positive impact in the world. Within its strategic plan²⁹, the School sets out how it values a learning and teaching environment enriched by a diverse creative community, and seeks to create opportunities for all to engage with the arts and the pursuit of life-long creative learning. In response to the Black Lives Matter movement in summer 2020, the School brought in an external consultant in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) to help steer work to address and dismantle any racism in the School. Findings from a series of listen and learn groups, involving staff and students, were presented to senior management and from there, the consultant formed an Anti-Racist Task Force, to develop the findings into a series of actionable recommendations. In February 2021, the School issued a report summarising the work of the Anti-Racist Task Force and the next steps for improving EDI more broadly at the School. This included the formation of five Equality Objectives (in relation to EDI commitments, inclusive culture, repertoire and curriculum, the student body, and retaining a diverse workforce), and the introduction of a new EDI Committee and designated staff lead. Access and Participation is integral to the success of Equality Objective 4: 'To attract under-represented student groups'. The Head of Access and Participation will sit on the EDI committee, advising and

²⁷ <https://www.ism.org/images/images/State-of-the-Nation-Music-Education-WEB.pdf>

²⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/music-dance-scheme>

²⁹ <https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/about-guildhall/corporate-documents>

collaborating with staff across a range of departments to enable the School to meet these objectives. The EDI Committee replaces the Widening Participation Strategy Working Group, and the EDI equality objectives replace the Equality & Diversity Scheme and Action Plan referenced in the earlier version of this five-year Plan. This work has renewed the School's commitment to EDI, and the structured approach to the development has ensured committed engagement from all departments.

2.1 Target groups

Since 2012, the School's Access Agreements have identified the need to diversify the student body, Access has been identified as the primary challenge over and above success and progression. This has been recognised as a fundamental element in the School's strategic plans for some years. Performance towards this objective has fluctuated year on year (as reflected in the OfS data set) making forward projections extremely difficult. Within the context of Music, this challenge has increasingly been compounded by declining music education generally and the more specific decline within state schools (to which section 1 of this Plan refers). In preparing for this Plan, data analysis and the participatory process has confirmed that the direction of travel remains the same, namely that to achieve a diverse creative community, in respect of undergraduate UK domiciled students, the School needs to prioritise access measures to support the recruitment of under-represented groups. However, this back-to-basics scrutiny has also highlighted the need for the School to tailor its access activities in a much more targeted fashion.

The majority of the School's financial commitment under this Access & Participation plan will still go towards Access measures rather than Success and Progression measures and the School intends to continue to commit a significantly high percentage of its additional fee income to this activity. As the School has a long way to go in respect of Access, it will not be able to close the gap in the five-year period of this Plan, but hopes to make significant progress notwithstanding its challenging milestones. In respect of Success and Progression, the School already has parity in some areas (known continuation rates and progression rates for POLAR 4 quintiles, and progression rates for BAME students). In other areas the School is performing better than the sector, although there may be gaps internally, and in some areas the gap is not statistically significant or there is no data available due to small numbers.

The School has always offered a generous scholarships programme, via Guildhall Financial Awards, used both to attract talent, and support those in financial need. The Covid-19 pandemic has led to the scholarship fund becoming increasingly stretched, with fundraising more difficult and more students becoming eligible for means tested awards based on reduced household income, or loss of student earnings as paid part-time work opportunities have reduced. This has already been demonstrated by an increased demand for the Hardship Fund and is likely to impact longer term on the School's relative success in continuation and attainment. To mitigate this situation we will broaden the criteria for the Access Bursary, previously offered to the most vulnerable student groups, and double the investment and awards available. This will alleviate some of the pressure on the School's broader scholarship programme, and ensure that those students most in need of financial support have access to a defined scheme.

With this revision, the School anticipates achieving the milestones identified for Success and Progression by the end of the five-year period but if it is significantly successful at Access this may identify other issues once there is a larger cohort of under-represented groups in the School. For example, given the School's success in the recruitment of students declaring a disability in 2020/21, some funds have already been redirected to activity linked to attainment and progression for this group, with a pilot project determined in consultation with the Neurodiverse student network in 2022. This work, alongside the substantial professional support services offered within the Student Experience Directorate, is integral to ensuring the success of students once they enrol, and is key to future Access and Participation commitments. In terms of Access, the School

anticipates achieving parity across a longer time frame, probably at least over a further five years to 2029/30 as work in the relatively new regional centres (Taunton and Norwich) and other activities outside of London (that seek to address POLAR 4 Quintile 1 and BAME targets), such as the new online GYA provision, need to be established.

The School will be setting targets as follows:

Access

- New entrants from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2
- New entrants from state schools and state-supported in independent schools via Music & Dance Award (MDA) scheme
- New entrants from Black and Minority Ethnic groups, particularly from Asian communities but given small numbers will not be setting a specific target for the latter.
- New entrants declaring a disability, particularly those with a Sensory, Medical or Physical disability and those with a Social or Communication disability
- Activity targets in respect of long term, sustained collaborative activity with GYA.

Success & progression

The School will continue its current level of investment under the Access & Participation Plan in this area both to maintain performance and to try and gain a more consistent performance year on year where there have been notable fluctuations previously. However, the School will be giving particular attention to:

- The continuation of mature students
- The attainment of students declaring a disability
- The progression of students declaring a disability

Please note: as there is no data for the School in respect of the relative non-continuation rates of POLAR 4 quintiles 1 and 5 (KPM3) or in respect of the attainment gap between white and black students (KPM4), the School has not set targets in these areas.

2.2 Aims and objectives

Access (UK domiciled new entrants)

- (i) **To reduce the gap in participation in HE from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR 4 methodology)**

Baseline (ratio quintile 5 and quintile 1)	Reporting year milestone				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Based on data for entry...				
Entry Sept 2017	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022	Sept 2023	Sept 2024
9.4:1	6:1:1 [¥]	5.8:1	5.4:1	5.2:1	5.0:1

[¥] This would bring the School back to its best position in the five-year period 2013/14 to 2017/18

- (ii) **To increase the proportion of new entrants from low participation neighbourhoods in quintiles 1 and 2 (POLAR 4 methodology)**

Baseline (quintiles 1 and 2)	Reporting year milestone				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Based on data for entry...				
Entry Sept 2017	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022	Sept 2023	Sept 2024
12%	16.9%*	18.5%	20.5%	23%	26%

* This would bring the School back to its highest point in the five-year period 2013/14 to 2017/18.

(iii) To increase the proportion of new entrants from UK Black & Minority Ethnic communities

	Reporting year milestone				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Baseline	Based on data for entry...				
Entry Sept 2017	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022	Sept 2023	Sept 2024
18.2%	19%**	20%	21%	22%	23%

** Note proportion of new entrants in 2018/19 was 14.6% so this represents a stretching milestone

(iv) a. To increase the proportion of new entrants declaring a disability

	Reporting year milestone				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Baseline	Based on data for entry...				
Entry Sept 2017	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022	Sept 2023	Sept 2024
13.1%	16%***	17%	20%	22%	25%

*** The School has seen a decline over the five-year period 2013/14 to 2017/18 and needs to rebuild its previous good performance

b. To increase the proportion of new entrants declaring a Sensory, Medical or Physical disability

	Reporting year milestone				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Baseline	Based on data for entry...				
Entry Sept 2017	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022	Sept 2023	Sept 2024
0.6%	2.1%	2.5%	3.0%†	3.5%	4.0%

† The School's peak was 3.1 in 2015/16 so there is some way to go to recover ground.

(v) To increase the proportion of state schools and colleges new entrants and new entrants state-supported at independent school (under the Music & Dance Award scheme)

	Reporting year milestone				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Baseline	Based on data for entry...				
Entry Sept 2017	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022	Sept 2023	Sept 2024
75%‡	81%	82%	83%	84%	85%

‡ The School's target was 78% for 2017 entry and 79% for 2018 entry which it also did not achieve. The targets for reporting years 2020/21, 2021/22, and 2022/23 replicate the targets stated in the 2019 Access & Participation Plan and remain ambitious given the lack of sustained music education in the state school system.

(vi) Access: sustained outreach via Guildhall Young Artists (GYA)

- a) Collaborative activity target: To achieve and maintain an 80% continuation rate at the end of each year of study (including passing of end of year examinations where relevant) for participants in receipt of a Guildhall Young Artist assisted place in years 12 or below (i.e., non-‘graduating’ years).³⁰
- b) Collaborative activity target: To achieve an 80% conversion of Year 13 (and year 14 and gap year students) leavers into university entrants for all participants in receipt of a Guildhall Young Artist assisted place in Year 13 (or Year 14).

Baseline	Reporting year milestone				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Based on data at end of year and previous year’s gap students				
2017/18	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
66% [∞]	70%	73%	75%	80%	80%

[∞] This does not include participants who at the end of 2017/18 decided to take a Gap year in 2018/19. These will be included in the 2018/19 assessment. Given the time-consuming nature of music auditions, it is not uncommon for participants to take a year out to prepare for, and attend, their conservatoire auditions.

Qualitative information about ABRSM grades achieved (or equivalent) and success in national and international competitions will also be collected to inform the impact and evaluation of this activity alongside qualitative information from participants and their parents. Additionally, from 2023 we will pilot a new ‘music opportunities fund’ to remove financial barriers to music examinations and competitions for assisted place recipients, which long-term should provide the School with tangible data to monitor musical attainment.

The School evaluates the broader impact of all GYA activities annually in terms of applications and new entrants to the School’s undergraduate programmes, with particular attention given to state school applicants and new entrants from this source; this supplements the broader evaluation of GYA work submitted in the annual reports to the School’s Academic Board.

Success (UK domiciled)

(vii) To improve the continuation rate of mature undergraduate students

Baseline mature (over 21)	Reporting year milestone				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Based on data for entry ...				
Year of entry	Sept 2018	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022
2016/17					
84.2%	86%	88%	90%	92%	94%

(viii) To improve the attainment rate for students declaring a disability

Baseline	Reporting year milestone				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Based on data for academic year assessment cycle...				
2017/18 cycle	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
84.6%	88%	89%	90%	91%	92%

³⁰ NOTE – the wording of this target has been revised in 2022 to better reflect the training offered by GYA, the data available and how it has been monitored up to now – not all students undertake examinations and each Centre approaches ‘completion’ differently. This updated wording does not impact the target nor the previous years’ monitoring, as the analysis was already undertaken using continuation rates.

Progression (UK domiciled)

(ix) *To improve the progression outcomes of students declaring a disability*

Baseline	Reporting year milestone				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Based on data for graduating cohort in...				
2016/17 cycle	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
80.6%	81%	82%	82.5%	83.5%	84%

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

The School embraced the Theory of Change in developing its Access & Participation Plan in 2019; doing so has helped define the School's long-term goals and has mapped them backward to identify necessary preconditions, drawing upon data analysis and self-evaluation within a participatory process, involving a broad range of staff and students, that has both confirmed and challenged assumptions and has garnered support and enthusiasm. The student consultation is noted below in section 3.2. The staff consultation involved two detailed discussions at the Academic Board, a focused meeting with the Principal, Vice-Principals, Dean of Students, and senior staff involved in under-18 and access activities³¹, and a broad information sharing/consultation session at the "All-Staff" meeting in May which attracted around one hundred members of staff (about 15% of the total establishment and hourly paid staff population). The Dean of Students briefed the Board of Governors at its February meeting about the new approach to Access & Participation Plans but the regulatory advice and guidance had not been issued at that point. In early June, the Board of Governors and senior staff were invited to comment on the almost final draft, and provided with a briefing document on the process. More recently, the Board has been involved with a broader discussion on the Widening Participation Strategy at the Board's away day, and approved the 2019-20 monitoring report.

During the variation process in 2022, numerous consultation activities occurred, including papers for and discussion with current students and the Students' Union, the EDI committee, executive team, the Board of Governors and the Academic Board.

Alignment with other strategies

Overview

These participatory sessions demonstrated that there is considerable enthusiasm for the diversity agenda across the School, with a shared sense of ownership and a willingness to be open to new approaches. This has resulted in new project proposals, opened up networks, and suggested new and additional ways of aligning current work in the School with access and participation objectives. Ideas have come from students and all levels and types of staff (not just from teaching staff) and access, particularly, is seen as a whole School responsibility. Utilising this enthusiasm will increasingly come to the fore as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee begins to implement the equality objectives, which, as noted above, will look at curriculum, repertoire, and staffing issues; there is already proactive engagement with this agenda across the School. The lack of a visibly diverse teaching staff is noticeable to all and was mentioned during the student consultation as one of the barriers for under-represented groups; staff are being proactive in their

³¹ This meeting looked at current performance, and the self-evaluation mapping exercise noted below in section 3.3, and determined the broad direction of travel that would be tested with other staff and students,

recruitment of staff and external specialists (directors, conductors, designers etc.) to try to address these imbalances. The School's overarching strategy, **Guildhall School of Music & Drama: A Conservatoire for the 21st Century**³² (alongside the post pandemic Business Recovery Plan), has much in it to support the Access & Participation agenda. It anticipates new programmes and pathways (subject to additional space being found) which will assist in broadening the reach of the School (Strategic goal one). There is also investment in digital technology (a "cross-cutting" initiative) which was accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, bringing forward technological investment and allowing, through necessity, the School to pilot alternative modes of delivery, from auditions to teaching. It invested in low latency technology, enhancing large ensemble performance opportunities for Music students; it moved teaching and outreach activity online, maintaining creativity; it transitioned auditions and interviews for all programmes to an online model during the period when on-site activity was not possible; and it offered a range of online drama productions, including shows live-streamed from our theatres, and performances pre-recorded by our students from their homes. Though not the preferred method of teaching, performing or auditioning, the School anticipates retaining some of the new approaches, with the blended model offering a wider reach. The Strategy also reasserts the School's commitment to education for young people under the age of 18 (Strategic objective three, and detailed below); also a key strategic objective of the Business Recovery Plan and to leading positive cultural change which impacts on society, industry and the wider world (Strategic objective 4).

Teaching and Learning Enhancement Strategy

The new **Teaching & Learning Enhancement Strategy 2021-26** will expand upon the objectives under Strategic aim one [of Guildhall School of Music & Drama – a conservatoire for the 21st century], namely "We will deliver distinctive degree programmes which enable our artists to be world-class; virtuosi in their field; adaptable, purposeful and responsible artists in society". The Teaching & Learning Enhancement Strategy will include enhancements relating to inclusivity (particularly within programmes), Access and Participation, student wellbeing and support, digital learning (cross-referencing the new digital strategy in development, and positive lessons learned from the pandemic) and student employability within the context of artists in society.

Guildhall Young Artists

The School's commitment to under-18 education via **Guildhall Young Artists** (GYA) deserves particular attention as it goes directly to the heart of countering the decline of arts education in state schools, and **raising attainment of children**. The scale of the School's commitment, both monetary and in terms of senior staff time should not be under-estimated. The School's GYA provision is, in student numbers, on a larger scale than its higher education provision and is one of the largest specialist music education provisions for children and young people in the country. Every Saturday the School, through Junior Guildhall, Centre for Young Musicians in London and regional GYA centres in Norwich, Taunton, and Saffron Walden, provides high quality, sustained training to nearly one and a half thousand young people (mainly in music but some drama). This compares to just over one thousand students in the senior school. Just over 100 students receive a full or partial bursary via Access and Participation funding, with many more receiving bursaries from external funders, including the government's Music and Dance Scheme.

The regional GYA centres involve the partner schools where the activity is based, local music hubs, and other funding partners such as the Department for Education and the Arts Council, with the School's higher education students and teachers providing linked activities. A strong example of this partnership work is with City of Norwich School, the host for GYA Norwich. All pupils at the school have access to masterclasses from professional musicians, recitals and concerts, visits to the School and specially devised projects. The Headteacher of the school confirms, "The partnership with Guildhall School [...] develops talented musicians through education [...] whilst well experienced and well qualified music staff provide excellent opportunities for all students,

³² <https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/about-guildhall/corporate-documents>

building on the work executed by GSMD. Our examination results at KS4 and 5 demonstrate this”³³.

All GYA teaching provision continued online during the pandemic, with the Division transitioning with little disruption to timetabled lessons, and leading the way in this area, providing guidance to Music Hubs nationally who wished to emulate the online model. Given this success, the Division is committed to the development of their new online Centre, in addition to a new in-person GYA centre in King’s Cross³⁴ in 2022/23, creating another host school partnership with Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School. Add to this the development of Music Education Islington³⁵ (a music education hub in partnership with Islington Council, where Guildhall School is the lead delivery partner providing music lessons to primary aged students) and the scale of the School’s commitment for under 18’s is significant. GYA as a whole makes a positive contribution to the School’s state school and state supported new entrants (8.3% for 2017 entry and 4.4% for 2018 entry). Although Year 13 leavers who had been in receipt of an access-assisted place may not have gone onto study at Guildhall School, there has been a good correlation with university entry. Of the Year 13 assisted places recipients in 2017/18, 77% went to university or conservatoire or took a year out to audition, and for 2016/17 100% went to university or took a year out to audition³⁶.

In addition to the direct impact GYA has on musical attainment and progression to university, it likely indirectly influences attainment in other subjects, particularly English and mathematics. Research undertaken in 2016 finds that “playing a musical instrument enhances performance on national examinations at KS4 and progress between KS2 and KS4 and *that the impact is greater the longer a young person has been playing an instrument*”³⁷. In 2020/21, data for access funded assisted place recipients in years 10-13 showed that, on average, they had been training in their instrument for 4.5 years – the higher measure used in the 2016 research, which significantly improved attainment, was 4-5 years. The data analysis in the same research finds that “in every case the instrumentalists outperformed the non-instrumentalists”, and that “playing an instrument made a statistically significant contribution to performance at KS4 across all measures”. At present, the School has no causal evidence of the impact GYA training has on attainment elsewhere, and so over the next five years will collect KS4 and KS5 grades for GYA students, to compare these to the national average for attainment. Over time, and as the dataset grows, we will explore how we can investigate this attainment by region and specific characteristics to enhance our knowledge. The 2016 research goes on to consider the reasons that instrumentalists achieve more highly than non-instrumentalists do. Motivation, aspiration, self-efficacy, conscientiousness and self-regulation are attributes explored in the research, and demonstrated by GYA students through their dedication to their music training and commitment each Saturday when they attend their Centre.

Other community engagement

Guildhall School’s commitment to the social mobility agenda permeates its work at every level, from first interactions with the arts at Key Stage 2 with Guildhall Young Artists, to the Innovation department’s Short Course programme, to research activity and knowledge exchange events. The School is in the process of collating this in a focused Public Engagement Strategy.

In 2019, the School was awarded a grant of nearly a million pounds by the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) for an international consortium, led by the research department, to

³³ <https://www.cns-school.org/The-Guildhall-School-of-Music-and-Drama/>

³⁴ <https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/study-with-guildhall/children-and-young-people/guildhall-young-artists/guildhall-young-artists-kings-cross>

³⁵ https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/youth_adult_learning/music_education_islington/

³⁶ Given the time-consuming nature of music audition it is common for students to take a year out to prepare repertoire and attend auditions.

³⁷ <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/british-journal-of-music-education/article/div-classtitlethe-impact-of-instrumental-music-learning-on-attainment-at-age-16-a-pilot-studydiv/F439F0A77A79858988B66C172FF5CC72>

investigate the social impact of making music. The research is a key part of the School's Institute for Social Impact Research in the Performing Arts³⁸.

The School also now offers a year-round programme of short courses³⁹, which include evening classes over a number of weeks, and intensive weeklong courses each spring and summer. In 2021/22, these will occur both online and on-site, expanding our reach beyond the local area, and a number of participation bursaries are available for eligible courses to those from low-income backgrounds, supporting access for all. Additionally, we run a number of socially engaged projects across the whole School. In recent years, these have included The Messengers⁴⁰, a music making and performance opportunity for Guildhall students and people with lived experience of homelessness; Creative Orchestra, a free opportunity for young musicians at any level; DISRUPT⁴¹, a digital arts festival; and activity with HMP Isis, as part of their Untold initiative⁴². Students on our programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level also have access to electives that involve work with local communities and young people.

Partnerships and alliances

Even within the small and specialist sector, the School is small, but it continues to punch above its weight via its carefully considered alliances and partnerships. Whether formal partnerships such as those noted previously, alliances with organisations working with under-represented groups, or fundraising to support scholarships at junior and senior level there is a lot of activity ensuring that the widest possible audience can benefit from the work of the School.

Alliance organisations include **Open Door**⁴³, who work with young actors in London and the East Midlands, **RADA**, **Theatre Peckham and Young and Talented**, with whom we collaborate on Originate Young Actor training⁴⁴, and **Sage Gateshead**, whose young musicians⁴⁵ benefit from workshops with Guildhall staff and students. Additionally, the School is a key partner in the **National Open Youth Orchestra (NOYO)**⁴⁶, run with **Open Up Music** and the **Barbican**, and we frequently work with schools, colleges and youth training organisations, both locally and nationally, delivering workshops and signposting young people to the work that we do. Given the specialist nature of our undergraduate offer, working with performing arts focused organisations is generally more impactful than working with schools. All of the young people working with these organisations have a declared interest in the performing arts and partake (in their spare time) in activity and training to upskill, as opposed to a school or college where there are far fewer with the interest or potential to progress to our institution. We will continue to work with schools and colleges where we have engagement from teachers; however, our efforts in strengthening partnerships in the future (outside of GYA) will continue to be directed to such training organisations.

Fundraising to support places at both the junior and senior level is year round and ensures that there is a significant scholarship fund (outside of access) to support other assisted places in GYA, and maintenance and fees for senior students (see below). Recent major gifts include those from the Leverhulme Foundation, Wolfson Foundation and some of the City livery companies (e.g., Goldsmiths, Leathersellers, and Fishmongers), and targeted scholarship gifts from other local companies and individuals.

³⁸ <https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/research-engagement-services/research/institute-for-social-impact-research-in-the-performing-arts>

³⁹ <https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/study-with-guildhall/short-courses-summer-schools>

⁴⁰ <https://www.londonlive.co.uk/arts-and-culture/meet-the-messengers-the-band-giving-londons-homeless-a-voice/>

⁴¹ <https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/research-engagement-services/engagement-knowledge-exchange>

⁴² <https://www.untold.org.uk/the-solution>

⁴³ <https://www.opendoor.org.uk/>

⁴⁴ <https://www.theatrepeckham.co.uk/originate-actors-programme/>

⁴⁵ <https://sagegateshead.com/get-involved/make-music/ymf/>

⁴⁶ <https://noyo.org.uk/>

Strategic measures

However, despite all its good works, there has been limited progress in bringing under-represented groups into the higher education provision of the School and access must remain the primary focus until a better mix within the student body has been achieved, along with some targeted, success-focused interventions introduced from 2022. The analysis and consultation has indicated that the School's financial commitment and scope of its **access activities** under the Access & Participation Plan should encompass:

- The continuation of support for sustained long term musical training for children from low income households via assisted places, with the Guildhall Young Artists Division (GYA) best able to supply that training. The assisted places scheme will support musical training from age 11 to 19, with the notable exception of the strings training programme where younger children will be eligible for an assisted place. For Norwich and Taunton, particular attention will be given to attracting new starters in the local government opportunity areas and POLAR 4 quintiles 1 & 2. *[This activity supports targets i, ii, iii, v and vi particularly]*
- The continuation of support to participants from low-income households to attend summer schools and short courses, with additional support to parents and participants to anticipate settling-in issues and to help transition to other activities (see section 3.3). Analysis has shown that there is good correlation between summer school engagement and state school new entrants (9.1% of state new entrants in 2017 and 7% in 2018) *[This broadened activity supports targets i, ii, iii, v and vi particularly]*
- The development of a more extensive programme of degree programme-specific activities building on the success of the Acting workshops. This will link to engaging our students more directly in projects (see section 3.3) and also in developing partnerships that mirror the School's partnership with Open Door.⁴⁷ This builds on the School's existing commitment to Access Partner Schools in its previous agreements and links directly to the supported applications below. As noted elsewhere in this Plan, given the School's specialist status and the high level of commitment and skill needed from applicants, partnerships with performing arts focused organisations and charities – who work with dozens of dedicated young creatives - are typically more fruitful than partnerships with schools or colleges, where there may be only one or two viable applicants. Therefore, the School's work towards Priority B of the 2022 variations, 'Partnerships with schools to raise attainment', will instead focus on enhanced partnerships with such organisations, and extended GYA provision, to specifically raise attainment and aspiration within the performing arts. *[This expanded provision supports targets i to v]*
- The development of a broader "Supported Application Scheme" building on the success of the application fee waiver scheme. For 2018 entry there were 81 application fee waivers processed resulting in 67 full applications, leading to 11 offers and 7 enrolments. For 2019 entry 143 fee waiver requests were processed, leading to 120 full applications with additional support to applicants provided by the Access & Participation Officer; this resulted in 13 offers (+4 reserves) being made and 10 acceptances and enrolments. The School will commit to at least 220 supported applications each year, and provide these supported applicants access to workshops, performances and information sessions, and travel bursary support for auditions where appropriate. Across its first three years, the Supported Application Scheme has supported 375 applicants with 432 applications, with 61 offers made. In September 2021, just under 10% of UK undergraduate new entrants had applied via the Scheme. By 2025, the School will undertake research into the causal impact of the Scheme – we know anecdotally that it removes financial barriers to applying and encourages offer acceptances, but without 5+ years of data to analyse, it is difficult to understand the impact it has on offers, due to the small number of offers made overall. *[This expanded provision supports targets i to v]*

⁴⁷ See <https://www.opendoor.org.uk/>

- Ensuring every individual who engages in an access activity has a sustained involvement with the School in some way (i.e., no one-off engagements). This is in line with OfS research that shows outreach is most effective when delivered as a progressive, sustained programme of activity and engagement over time.⁴⁸ [*This intention supports targets i to vi*]

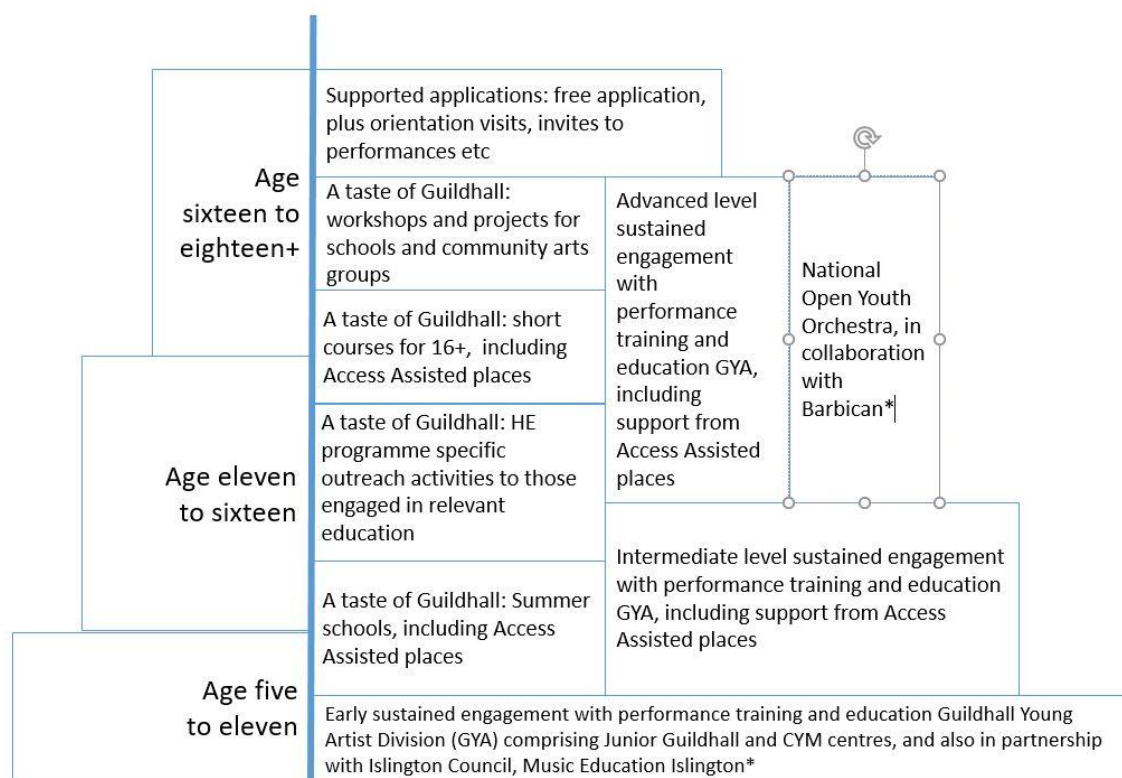
Additionally, the analysis and consultation indicated the need for:

- A reorganisation of the infrastructure supporting Access & Participation to bring into the School a senior, Higher Education focused and experienced, Access practitioner with strong evaluation skills, recruited in 2020. The School's self-reflective process indicated the need for senior staff time to be solely dedicated to this increasingly complex process, to meet the expectations for data analysis and evaluation (including impact assessment), and to provide appropriate steerage to those shaping, delivering and evaluating access and participation activities. As an example, the Evaluation Self-Assessment toolkit highlighted naiveté in some areas about how well staff thought they were planning, shaping and evaluating projects given the lack of impact on the School's targets. [*Supports all targets, access, success and progression*]
- More access activities in the regions in order to work with participants in POLAR 4 quintiles 1 & 2 areas and to work with British Asian communities. Previous Access Agreements have focussed on boroughs in the East of London. Regional work will include the GYA centres (particularly those in or linked to a government opportunity area). However, new regional outreach work will also include the North East, and West and South Yorkshire, with supported applications offered to eligible applicants UK-wide. Activity delivered during the pandemic, necessarily taking place online, supported access for young people UK-wide, from many areas where young people are historically underrepresented in HE. Although returning to in-person outreach activity is a priority for the School, some online provision will remain going forward to retain these important access points. [*Supports targets i, ii, iii and v particularly*]
- During the lifetime of this plan, devise and implement an audition/interview strategy that will reduce the costs of audition, particularly in terms of cost of travel. This second iteration of our plan notes that a working group under the Widening Participation Strategy umbrella met in early September 2019 to start the process and agreed a reduction in acting application fees and alignment with Production Arts. This has been supported by the inclusion of travel bursaries within the Supported Application Scheme, offering participants outside of Greater London fully funded travel for auditions or interviews on all undergraduate programmes. The pandemic necessarily brought about changes to the audition process and the School is using that learning experience to develop its audition process for the future. [*Supports targets i to v*]
- Building on the work of the 2019/20 Access & Participation Plan, the School will continue to look at its mature student new entrants to identify whether there are any patterns in its offer and enrolment that might highlight a barrier (section 1.3.1 refers). Analysis of 2020/21 applications and offers suggests that the main barrier in this area is the degree programme that mature applicants apply to – applicants to the BA Acting programme have a >1% chance of receiving an offer, and 92.3% of applicants aged over 21 applied to this programme (compared to 73.3% of their younger peers). This goes some way to explaining the relatively low conversion of mature application to offer (5.5% compared to 10.8% of younger applicants). However, mature applicants are far more likely to accept an offer, with data in 2020/21 highlighting that 95.5% of mature offer holders accepted, compared to 69.8% of younger applicants. This monitoring will be undertaken annually to determine whether mature applicants will benefit from additional, bespoke, support.
- An institution-wide evaluation and impact framework for use from 2020/21, and fully implemented in 2021/22, which incorporates an assessment of value for money. Use of the Evaluation self-assessment showed a varied interpretation of how well the School was

⁴⁸ OfS; NCOP first annual report, 2018. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/2d64895c-74b8-4993-ac60-6bc65d14fe00/ofs2018_25.pdf

doing, particularly in programme design and evaluation design, and all users found it difficult to map evaluation activities against the evaluation types. -Individual activity evaluations have also failed to address the issue of value in a consistent way and it would be useful internally to devise guidance that looked at type of activity, cost per head and impact.

The School's **anticipated Access activities for 2020/21-2024/25** are presented below (updated in 2022). Starred items (*) are not funded under the Access & Participation Plan (with the exception of the String training programme in GYA) but form a part of the School's overall commitment to widening participation.



In respect of Participation (success - **continuation and attainment**) there are already strong links between those responsible for the Access & Participation Plan and those delivering services to students whether in Registry, Student Affairs, the Library, or in academic departments. These links are utilised in the development of targeted success interventions, such as the work with the Neurodiverse-student network in collaboration with Student Affairs, and for the transition support to which all departments and current students contribute. The School's small size means that it is difficult for students to 'fall through the cracks' – 1:1 teaching and feedback occurs across all programmes, and class sizes are small, allowing staff to get to know students, and their needs, well.

Additional strategic and operational measures, building on existing activity

- Development of strong synergies between the **new Teaching & Learning Enhancement Strategy** and the commitments in this Access & Participation Plan. The new strategy is designed to further enhance the quality of students' learning experiences through initiatives such as the broadening of the Music faculty portfolio (already underway in Jazz and Electronic Music) to attract a wider range of students [*supporting targets (i) to (iv)*], the development of new programmes in participatory and collaborative practice [again

broadening the offer and *supporting targets (i) to (iv)*], internationalising repertoire choices beyond a western classical context [*generally supporting access, success and progression of BAME students*], embedding wellbeing into the curriculum [*supporting targets (vii) and (viii)*], the further development of the digital learning infrastructure with the potential to support access targets (POLAR 4 particularly, if it can aid digital or remote auditioning), as well as supporting the attainment and progression of disabled students [*targets (vii) and (ix)*].

- All administrative managers supporting the HE student experience meet monthly as the Operations Board, chaired by the Dean of Students, and going forward this forum will be used to help shape, and co-ordinate success and progression activities under the Access & Participation Plan and keep staff informed of progress [*supporting targets vii-ix*]
- Additional support for students with disabilities in the form of learning support will continue under the Access & Participation Plan given that students reporting a cognitive or learning disability form the largest proportion of the School's students declaring a disability [*target viii*]. However, the analysis of the data in respect of disability within the home UK domiciled population has highlighted some issues for immediate action; from the mundane (ensuring all those receiving disability support have declared a disability) to the practical (putting in place sessions to help with CVs, applications and interview techniques for final year students who have been in receipt of study skills support). A pilot project in 2021/22 will help us understand the extent to which this activity can work, and is needed, and produce findings that we can take forward. [*target ix*].
- Additional support for students with mental health disabilities is embedded within the general, and extensive, support available from the counselling team and others within the Student Affairs Department [*supporting target (viii)*].
- Student Funding advice and support is also embedded within the Registry department. Given the interest in more transition activities (see student consultation section below), the Student Affairs Department, working with the Access & Participation Team, will look at extending the existing programme [*target vii also refers*]. In July 2022, the School will run the first Access-targeted transitions event, Get Ready for Guildhall, which will provide all offer-holders meeting one or more access criteria an opportunity to visit the School, meet other new students and find out more about the student support services available. This pilot will be evaluated, with findings taken forward for future years.
- Self-evaluation has highlighted the need for more defined data in respect of the School's Student Affairs activity so that this can be mapped precisely against our under-represented groups and intersections of support can be considered. This will require changes in working practices and use of the student record system. We are committed to collecting better data by start of 2020/21. [*supporting targets vi, viii and ix*]
- All the School's programmes train for the professions; careers advice and guidance is embedded in the curricula and all programmes have strong links with the professions in terms of visiting artists (directors, composers, conductors, animateurs etc). However, the data shows that action needs to be taken in respect of the **progression** of students with a disability and this should be achieved by a better co-ordination between the Student Experience Directorate, academic departments and the Innovation Department so that the particular needs of these students are being met on all fronts [*target (ix)*]. The School will commit some Access and Participation funding to increased disability support from 2021/22 onwards, with a particular focus on retention and progression.

The School will continue to make provision for **care leavers** and offer a bespoke support service to applicants and students. Both the Student Affairs and Registry Departments have named roles to support care leaver applicants and students. The School will also retain the current Access Bursary scheme⁴⁹ - the only **student financial support** offered under the Access & Participation Plan, with care leavers given priority for awards [*care leavers and target vii*]. Given the low

⁴⁹ For 2020/21 up to 15 bursaries of £3,000 minimum to care leavers, or estranged and independent students from low income backgrounds. From 2021/22 onwards, 30 bursaries are available, with the additional disability and POLAR4 eligibility criterion.

proportion of mature students, the School will advertise more widely the support that mature undergraduate students can receive from both the School and the government.

The City of London Corporation continues to fund the School's Hardship Fund, and there was recent success during the pandemic to raise additional hardship funds from the School's supporters (again Hardship Fund is open to all HE students regardless of level of study or domicile) and it is currently adequate to support the existing student population⁵⁰. As noted earlier, as the population changes there may need to be a readjustment of resources away from Access and towards Success and Progression measures.

Access Bursary

The Access Bursary was intended to mitigate against the extra costs that students incur when they have no family support (care leavers, estranged students and those with independent student status), particularly the additional costs incurred during vacation periods, and to ensure good retention and attainment for recipients. At the end of the first year of operation, there were good results with all non-final year students progressing to their next year of study, and graduating students on track⁵¹. Some of the current recipients engaged with the student consultation for this Access & Participation Plan and spoke of the difficulties of juggling study as a mature student and managing a family life, and the importance of this additional financial support. This was also raised in the 2020 evaluation activity for the Bursary. In light of the pandemic, and the increased financial pressures faced by students and their families, and consequently on the School's wider scholarship and hardship package, in 2021/22 the School broadened the criteria for the Access Bursary, to ensure financial support for other students at risk of non-continuation. The overall number of awards and financial investment was doubled.

New and continuing UK domiciled undergraduate students who meet the following criteria are eligible to apply for the Access Bursary (all must be low-income, in receipt of a government maintenance loan based on a household income of £33k or below, with priority given to those most in financial need):

- Care leavers
- Estranged students
- Students with a declared disability
- Independent students
- Students with a home postcode classified as Quintile 1 or 2 on the POLAR 4 dataset (at the point of application to the School)

A maximum of 30 bursaries will be offered each year with a minimum grant of £3k, and a maximum of £5k per recipient. Care leavers will be prioritised, followed by students meeting eligibility in the order above, with a commitment to mature students within the independent category [*target vii*]. All recipients must reapply each year (via the normal scholarship route) to be reassessed and prioritised and it is a requirement of the grant going forward to engage in evaluation and impact activities. The continuation and attainment of individual recipients is monitored each year, but as numbers are small with the students spread over the 4 years of the undergraduate life-cycle, it will be 5 to 10 years before there will be a sufficient data set to analyse in any of the categories. However, qualitative evaluation will be undertaken each year.

Student consultation in 2019/20 highlighted that the costs associated with beginning a conservatoire programme and moving to London are a barrier for students from low-income households. Therefore, Supported Application Scheme participants will receive a one-off financial award upon enrolment, via the new Access Equipment Fund, to assist the purchase of equipment necessary for study (e.g. clothing for lessons, technical equipment, books) and items for student

⁵⁰ Please note for 2020/21 only, there was additional government funding for hardship, in response to the pandemic.

⁵¹ With deferred assessment yet to be reported further information cannot be given without mentioning individuals (an example of the problem with small numbers)

accommodation (e.g. bedding, kitchen utensils). For the first year in 2020/21, the award was valued at £350, and it will be evaluated in 2023/24 (with two years of data) to ensure it is the right level for future years.

Every part of the School is involved in the delivery of the Access & Participation Plan; the diagram below shows the range and level of involvement of key departments for each of the main activity strands of this Plan. There is already a strong engagement between the Music faculty and GYA with both senior school teaching staff and senior students adding value to the GYA training through visits, workshops and masterclasses. The summer schools directly reflect activity in the senior school, and we will be looking to expand the access activity which directly links to undergraduate programmes, wherever possible ensuring alignment between the teaching on short courses and training in the senior school. The production schedule offers a wealth of opportunity for inspiring, for providing a real taste of the training, and for showing the range of careers available in the creative industries. The UK creative industries generate more than £100bn a year for the economy and employ more than two million people; and it is a growing sector providing real employment prospects⁵².

	External collaborators	Under 18 department	School Faculties			Student Experience Directorate*	Comms & Marketing	Innovation (incl Enterprise)
		GYA	Music	Drama	Production Arts			
Sustained musical training: GYA	R or C (Music Hubs)	D & E	C			E & M		
A taste of Guildhall: summer schools		C	C	C	C	D, E & M	C	D
A taste of Guildhall: drama workshops	R (Open Door)	R		D & E		M	C	
Other drama workshops	D & E (RADA & TP‡)			C		D, E & M		
A taste of Guildhall: programme related activities		R	D (& E)	D (& E)	D (& E)	E & M	C	
Supported applications & care leaver support	R (Open Door, TP)	R	C	C	C	D, E & M	C	
Access Bursary						D, E & M		
Support for HE disabled students			C	C	C	D, E & M		
Employability activities			D	D	D	D & M		D & E
Impact assessment		C	C	C	C	E & M		C

D = delivery, E = evaluation, M = monitoring, C= contributing department, R= provider of potential recipients

* Student Experience Directorate comprises Registry, Library Services (including the e-learning technologist), Student Affairs (including counselling, disability support, health & welfare), and also responsibility for the Access & Participation Plan

‡ Theatre Peckham

⁵² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/britains-creative-industries-break-the-100-billion-barrier>

3.2 Student consultation

Planning (2019)

The School has always been interested in the student voice, and at every stage in the student life-cycle, from potential applicants to doctoral students, there are opportunities to give feedback, make suggestions and get involved. In preparation for this Access & Participation Plan, a consultation strategy for involving students was agreed with the SU President⁵³, who also assisted directly in encouraging students to be involved.

Nevertheless, meaningful student engagement in the development of this specific Plan has been challenging given the limited time frame and the busy performance schedule of the students at the end of the spring term and start of summer term, plus the Easter vacation in the middle. Using a set of questions agreed with the SU President, the Dean of Students and the Access & Participation Officer met with some small groups and individual students, asking questions related to Access, Retention, Attainment and Progression. Altogether, the School obtained feedback from more than 11 students⁵⁴ representing a broad spectrum. *[At least eight undergraduates, three postgraduates; six on Music courses, two on Performance and Creative Enterprise and 3+ on the Acting course (some Acting students completed the questionnaire together, unsupervised, hence the uncertainty around the numbers). The students included four students from BAME communities, at least one student with a declared disability, and 2 mature undergraduates.]* There was further consultation at the Academic Board in early May (which has student representation) and at the Staff Student Liaison Committee at the end of May.

Student opinion largely aligned with the assumptions made in previous access agreements, viz that the priority should be to concentrate on Access and improve diversity within the student population, although there was a greater desire for transition support than the School had anticipated, which we will follow up. The Staff Student Liaison Committee at the end of May highlighted the idea of expanding the “supported application” beyond application fee waivers; there was a real urging for more auditioning outside of London, and/or skype/video auditioning given the very real and prohibitive costs of travel and hotel accommodation. It was felt that if support was offered at the early stage then some commitment from the applicant at a later stage would be appropriate⁵⁵. There was keen interest in further engagement with Access and Participation, with strong support for a termly student steering group and significant interest in supporting activity when their availability allows.

The SU President, on behalf of the student body, has provided a statement in support of this plan (see annex) and for annual reporting.

Planning (2022)

Given the increased numbers of underrepresented students in the student population, the School undertook a second student consultation in May 2022, to support the variation process. This was supported by the Students' Union President, and attended by 12 undergraduate students, nine of whom were former or current beneficiaries of activity offered via the Plan. Discussion centred around the visibility of Access work (with some attendees disappointed not to have known about application support schemes), the financial barriers to studying an intensive programme in London and student belonging. Attendees responded positively to the overview of initiatives offered, and were keen to support however possible. The consultation affords the School some confidence that the current direction of travel for Access and Participation aligns with the priorities of students – much of the work is centred on raising awareness, financial support and initiating belonging pre-application.

⁵³ Please note the School is small, and only has one sabbatical student officer, the SU President.

⁵⁴ Approximately 1% of the student body

⁵⁵ Most programmes have just one audition/interview stage but the Acting programme has a three stage audition process in order that all 2,800 applicants have the opportunity to be seen in person.

Developments and monitoring

Through the Academic Board and the Board of Governors, the student body has always seen a summary of the School's performance in respect of its Access Agreements. However, going forward, the School will put in place a consultation and reporting structure that will involve a wider group of students and ensure student input into programme design.

Formal reports to the Academic Board and the Board of Governors will continue but in addition:

- the Access & Participation team will provide a short report to every Staff/Student Liaison Committee meeting (this is at least twice termly) on activities in development and activities recently conducted, including reporting forward on the deliberations of the Student Access & Participation Steering group. The Staff/Student Liaison Committee comprises all the student representatives in the School and all senior managers.
- the **Student Access & Participation Steering Group**⁵⁶ will meet at least termly (starting autumn 2019/20) to help scope and shape activities and to look at the School's performance. Membership will be open to interested parties from all years and domiciles and it will be promoted at Freshers' Fair and in the student e-newsletter.
- regular updates, at least termly will appear in the student e-newsletter.

Evaluation

To date students have not been involved in the evaluation of Access activities unless they have been a leader in the specific activity. However, the Steering Group will provide a useful forum for identifying what success looks like from the student perspective and how that might reasonably be measured. Evaluations of activities will also be shared with the Student Steering Group to inform future approaches.

Access delivery

Students have for many years been involved in outreach and access projects. A few of these projects, like the roving Samba workshop in 2016/17 and a recent trip to the North East by one of the School's brass bands have been initiated by the students themselves, with the School helping them to scope the project and identify access objectives and the evaluation and impact methodology, as well as assisting with the organisation. We would like to encourage more of these projects as part of our expanded degree programme-specific activities.

In other cases, the project has been determined by the School and students have been approached to be involved, e.g. ambassador roles, or taking part in question and answer sessions for widening participation groups attending performances. Often recent graduates are used in projects, e.g. acting workshops, as given the portfolio nature of their working life they can have more availability than the current students (as the training here is very intensive). All students and graduates are paid for their time to ensure everyone who wishes to be involved can be involved.

Students are also involved in general outreach that has not been organised under the Access agreement:

- (i) through their programmes (e.g. the *Professional studies* module in the BMus, or the *Social Arts Practice* elective module in the Guildhall Artist Masters programme),
- (ii) as extra curricula departmental activity such as visiting ensembles to the GYA centres or similar, and

⁵⁶ This has proven difficult to establish consistently. The undergraduate programmes are intensive, and the limited free time which students have during working hours vary by programme, leaving no good time to meet. Lunchtime meetings would be short and limit possible discussion, and students often have performance commitments (whether performing or watching) in the evening. The establishment of a consistent group remains a commitment for the School, particularly in preparation for the development of future Plans, and we will explore alternative methods of student engagement, utilising research undertaken by other institutions.

(iii) at Open Days as welcomers, stewards, tour guides, and workshop participants

Going forward, we are exploring the possible intersections between curriculum activity and access activity, so that where there is potential for an activity to have access objectives this can be utilised. As an example, an access project linked to the *Beasts of London*⁵⁷ exhibition project with the Museum of London which ran in 2019. Whilst this curriculum project primarily involved our video design students, it also involved some acting and music students and provided an ideal visual and audio explanation of the training on offer in a way that can excite and inspire. The exhibition was the hook for visits to the School for those making their post-16 and post-18 education choices who might be interested in production arts; to explore the training on offer in the School and the careers that could be available.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

Attempting the Evaluation self-assessment has highlighted that the School's evaluation methodology is under developed not least because in the past there has sometimes been a lack of direct connection between some of the activities, particularly in access, and the targets of previous access agreements despite the overall benefits of the activities for the participants (see 3.1 above). Preparation for this plan has been extremely helpful in encouraging the School to conduct a thorough self-evaluation looking at value for money, efficacy and infrastructure.

This self-evaluation comprised:

- Consideration of the context of the School including its vision and mission, the decline of arts education (see section 1), the high technical requisites for some programmes which are essential to support the School's world class status and world class outputs, the limited potential for expansion of student numbers in existing programmes, and the range of partnerships, formal and informal.
- A consideration of the School's performance to date against its targets, utilising the internal reports for Access monitoring for 2017/18 as well as the OfS-supplied data. The report for 2017/18 was also more specific about the direct impact of activities on applications and new entrants, from the success of application fee waivers to the lack of impact on applications and new entrants of Creative Learning activities (note this does not denigrate the importance of the personal impact in aspiration raising and skill attainment for the participants who undertook the activities).
- A mapping exercise of all types of access-funded activity in 2017/18, considering the relevant Access categories (e.g. post-16, adult and communities), the relevant target milestone(s) under the existing Access & Participation Plans (e.g. socio-economic, state school), potential for linkage to future targets under this agreement (e.g. POLAR 4 quintiles 1 & 2), and tracking capacity (i.e. how easy to follow the participant along the student journey). It then mapped the perceived efficacy, and potential efficacy, of the activity in respect of recruitment to each undergraduate programme, with an assessment of value for money based on type of activity (sustained or otherwise), cost per head and impact on targets.
- Using the OfS evaluation toolkit to assess the traditional outreach that has been provided by Creative Learning and funded under the Access Agreement since 2006. Whilst this highlighted that many areas were in the "emerging phase" it specifically highlighted a need for a greater concentration of access focussed practitioners within the broader arts outreach work of the department and greater support for evaluation.
- Using the OfS evaluation toolkit to assess more recent Access activities, such as application fee waivers, acting workshops etc. Again many areas fell in the emerging phase but these differed from the Creative Learning (each area having strengths and weakness). It specifically highlighted the need for an agreed and consistent approach to defining the evaluation at the outset and the resources that would be required.

⁵⁷ See <https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/museum-london/whats-on/exhibitions/beastsoflondon> for exhibition details

This self-evaluation was discussed during the consultation, and highlighted:

- the need to refocus some activity away from early years and to move more activity out of London.
- the need for a School-wide understanding of evaluation within the context of the Access & Participation Plan and an agreed, scaled framework. For instance, there was an obvious difference in approach between the two parties using the toolkit⁵⁸.
- the need for a dedicated higher education focused and experienced senior manager to work with the Dean of Students to deliver the overall plan across the whole student life cycle. This post was implemented in 2020.

The Covid-19 pandemic necessitated further self-evaluation and reflection on what good practice in Access and Participation looked like for the School, given the challenges in delivering activity remotely and fully utilising available budgets. We have refocused activity from 2020/21 onwards, with all budgets and projects coordinated centrally by the School's Access and Participation team, in liaison with the undergraduate departments, GYA division and other outreach focused teams. This will enable consistency across evaluation and targeting, and greater relevancy and impact of activity going forward.

The new Head of Access & Participation, working with all departments of the School, will develop a new evaluation and impact framework for use in 2020/21 onwards (fully implemented by 2021/22), that will encompass the following:

Access

- A scaled approach - not all elements of the toolkit will be relevant to every project – but there needs to be a clearly articulated School expectation of the type of evaluation that should be used for particular types of activity. This is likely to map to Type 1: Narrative and Type 2: Empirical Enquiry as randomised control trials are not suitable for the work undertaken by the School.
- Guidance on creating well-defined, and measurable, objectives for each activity directly related to at least one School target that will be informed by evidence and will help shape programme design.
- Guidance on interim measurable objectives for very long-term activities. For instance, a participant can receive up to 7 years of musical training from age 11 to 18 but during that time could drop out for a variety of reasons unconnected to the quality of the opportunity, e.g. because of GCSE or A level pressures. Also, those progressing to university might not necessarily choose music for their degree even if they intend to continue with the practice (there have been applications for veterinary science and engineering), and then finally, those that do choose to progress to university to study music might not choose the School because they want a new environment or a different teacher. From 2019/20 all GYA assisted places recipients (or their parents) under the Access & Participation Plan will be required to engage with evaluation activities as a condition of the offer of a place – and this is likely to involve structured survey and more informal invitations to feedback meetings.
- A consistent approach to data collection across all activities – identifying the minimum participant record so that whole School data sets on access activities can be produced.
- A shared understanding of the standards of evidence in evaluation and how to measure impact.
- A shared understanding of the use of other evidence of success.
- A commitment to sharing evaluations, even where the activity has not been successful, with the wider sector.

⁵⁸ Given the lack of internal consistency and the difficulties in completing the exercise these evaluations will not be uploaded with the submission.

Financial support

The Access Bursary is still relatively new, and numbers have been very small (less than ten in each year) and split across all years of study, which makes in-depth evaluation and reporting challenging. However, we are building on the existing framework that has monitored continuation and graduation rates, and building up a strong evidence base for evaluating the whole bursary scheme at the end of this plan. The introduction of broader eligibility criteria, and increased numbers, will enable a more detailed assessment, and increase the importance of the evaluation, if we are to understand the impact of these changes. The framework will encompass:

- Year on year monitoring of the continuation and assessment outcomes of the participants.
- Annual start of year survey of recipients and end of year structured interview with recipients (participation is now a condition of acceptance of the bursary from 2019/20 onwards)
- A gathering and monitoring of the demographic data of the participants including ethnicity, declared disability, previous school type, application fee waiver and/or involvement of other access activity (e.g. Acting workshop) to support the end of Plan evaluation.

Given the small number of students, the OfS Statistical Toolkit is limited in its use but elements will be incorporated where relevant.

Participation (success & progress)

Participation measures are embedded within the extensive support offered by the School to all students. The School already annually monitors its continuation rates by home domiciled ethnicity and disability categories. The School also already monitors attainment at undergraduate and postgraduate level by the following protected characteristics: age, ethnicity, disability status, sex. However, it has not subdivided this latter analysis to look at home domiciled and will do so in future.

The School's support services are subject to an annual student satisfaction survey, and broad service user data is provided in the service's annual report. There is also a self-evaluation of each strand of activity in the annual report. However, what is lacking is a detailed analysis of service user by characteristic and the intersection of service use by characteristic. At the moment, the service user data is not sufficiently robust for this purpose and the data infrastructure (and its use) is being examined to ensure that from the start of 2020/21 there is a data collection that will support this type of analysis. Going forward, the team will be asked to include in its annual report (for the 2020/21 cycle report)⁵⁹ cross-reference to the success and progression targets and work with under-represented groups generally.

Employability is embedded within the curriculum as all the School's programmes are aimed at training for a particular profession. Progression data (DLHE and Graduate Outcomes), alongside more qualitative evidence such as student and alumni professional profiles and success, is considered within the annual programme evaluation for each programme. Going forward, programme leaders completing their annual programme evaluation reports will be asked to cross-reference to the progression target and to the progression of under-represented groups generally.

The implementation of any targeted, Access and Participation-funded, Success and Progression activity will be thoroughly evaluated, separate to the work outlined above. Evaluation will incorporate some Access evaluation methodology, and include qualitative methods such as focus groups and interviews; the latter becoming increasingly possible as the Access initiatives see greater success, with enrolled students identifying as Access and Participation beneficiaries, and having an established rapport with the team.

All strands

The Evaluation self-assessment highlighted the need for greater sharing cross-departmentally particularly to inform practice and programme design and this will be addressed via the groups

⁵⁹ For 2019/20 there was only an interim report due to the additional, significant workload for staff arising from the pandemic

mentioned in section 4. The self-assessment also highlighted the need for greater reference to external research findings and scholarly articles due to the dilution of effort and therefore limited capacity across multiple parties and this will be addressed by the new Head of Access & Participation and the greater sharing across departments already noted. Key contributors within local departments will be identified to attend networking and conference events outside of the School to build up expertise.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The School will provide an annual report to the Academic Board, Senior Management Team, Board of Governors and Staff/Student Liaison Committee, on progress against Access & Participation targets, a summary of the evaluation of activities, and the impact of access activities on recruitment. These reports have identified static and worsening performance as well as improvements since 2010, but going forward the action plan to address any shortcomings will be more defined. Performance against access targets is also included within the School's risk register⁶⁰ (monitored by the Audit & Risk Management Committee of the Board of Governors). Named Board members are assigned to every strand of the School's overarching strategy, to which Access and Participation is linked.

From 2019/20 onwards:

- The Dean of Students will be the responsible officer for all aspects of the plan, and, assisted by the new Head of Access & Participation (recruited 2020), will work closely with those delivering aspects of the plan across the School, ensuring the range and scope of projects are relevant to the Access & Participation Plan and activities are evaluated, progress is monitored, and impact on targets is measured.
- Those who deliver access projects will also meet termly (Access Practitioners' Group) so that project plans are shared earlier in the cycle to establish intersections, and evaluations of activity are more widely disseminated to influence and improve practice. It will also consider any issues or ideas arising from the Access and Participation Student Steering Group.
- Where progress is not being made, or not at a sufficiently rapid rate, the range and scope of projects will be reviewed utilising the effective practice resources available from the OfS and other resources available via networks such as Conservatoire UK, and HELOA.
- As Chair of the Operations Board, the Dean of Students will keep a watching brief on participation activities and their impact on improving performance against targets. Matters arising from evaluations and impact assessment along with review of annual reports will inform discussions at the Operations Board and future developments.
- The Staff/Student Liaison Committee will have Access & Participation as a standing item.
- The School will continue to monitor annually (in the Spring term for that year of entry) its applications, offers and entrants by programme against the following protected characteristics; age, ethnicity, disability status and sex, but will additionally subdivide the undergraduate analysis by home domiciled students.
- The School will continue to monitor annually (in the Spring term following the conclusion of the previous assessment cycle in the autumn) its attainment rates by programme against the following protected characteristics; age, ethnicity, disability status and sex, but will additionally subdivide the undergraduate analysis by home domiciled.
- Evaluations of activity will be more widely disseminated and will be considered by the Student Access & Participation Steering group and, where relevant, will feed into the wider Equality, Diversity and Inclusion discussions. Those offering insight to the wider sector will be circulated externally either informally through the Performing Arts Widening Participation network or formally via the OfS *Centre for transforming access and student outcomes in higher education*.

⁶⁰ Risk GSMD DDP 003

From 2020/21 onwards

Internally, there will be programme-specific access milestones in respect of state school (and state supported) entrants, entrants declaring a disability, mature entrants and entrants from BAME communities. Progress against these milestones will also be reported in the annual report noted above.

Equality impact assessment

An initial equality impact screening assessment has been undertaken and no negative impact on any of the equality target group is anticipated with positive impact expected for some equality groups. This will be kept under review.

4. Provision of information to students

Approved plan

The School's Access & Participation Plan will be made available on the School's website alongside general information about Access & Participation⁶¹.

Fees

The School's fees are published annually and can be found at www.gsmd.ac.uk/funding. The fee schedule indicates that fees may change for each year of study.

Financial support

Also from www.gsmd.ac.uk/funding information is provided to prospective students about:

- UK Government loan support for UK and EU students
- Loan support from other governments for overseas students
- The School's scholarship programme and the School's Access Bursary
- The Hardship Fund
 - There is a link from this page to the Access and Participation webpage⁶² which also includes information about the Supported Application Scheme (also available from the "apply" pages) and the School's Access Bursary.

The Student Funding Officer is available by phone or email to provide bespoke advice and guidance, and often assists applicants and students with difficult SLC applications. The role holder also gives funding talks at open days and provides particular support to care leavers. Additional support for care leavers is provided by the Student Life Officer. The support for care leavers is advertised on the website⁶³.

Current students are advised annually of the scholarship and bursary support available from the School, and are referred to the Hardship Fund when need arises.

Assisted places

Assisted places for summer schools are advertised on the School's short courses webpages along with the application form. Assisted places for the Guildhall Young Artist Division are advertised and considered within the scholarship programme for each of the centres.

All other Access and Participation projects are advertised on the webpages.

⁶¹ <https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/about-guildhall/corporate-documents/policies>

⁶² www.gsmd.ac.uk/access

⁶³ https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/about_the_school/shared_left_nav/life_at_the_school/care_leavers_looked_after_children/

General advice and guidance

Information about supported applications (previously application fee waivers) will be provided to target schools and youth and community organisations. Information about the assisted places for the summer schools is also circulated to these groups.

The School's Access & Participation Officer works closely with the Student Recruitment Marketing Manager and provides general advice and guidance to prospective students on going to university and specific advice and guidance on the School's programmes. As well as giving talks at open days the role-holder is available to go out to target schools and organisations. Additionally, the role-holder provides individualised help to young people from under-represented groups wanting to make an application to the School.

5. Appendix

The OfS will append the following items from the fees and targets and investment documents when an access and participation plan is published:

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)
2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)
3. Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations we intend to increase fees each year using the RPI-X

Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Table 4c - Part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Guildhall School of Music & Drama

Provider UKPRN: 10007825

Investment summary

The OFS requires providers to report on their planned investment in access, financial support and research and evaluation in their access and participation plan. The OFS does not require providers to report on investment in student success and progression in the access and participation plans and therefore investment in these areas is not recorded here.

Note about the data:

The figures in Table 4a relate to all expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education. The figures in Table 4b only relate to the expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education which is funded by higher fee income. The OFS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£381,925.00	£395,335.00	£388,500.00	£375,500.00	£367,000.00
Access (pre-16)	£175,946.00	£190,552.00	£189,200.00	£183,550.00	£181,700.00
Access (post-16)	£148,179.00	£123,909.00	£120,450.00	£115,700.00	£111,750.00
Access (adults and the community)	£53,800.00	£80,874.00	£78,850.00	£76,250.00	£73,550.00
Access (other)	£4,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£45,000.00	£96,000.00	£96,000.00	£96,000.00	£96,000.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£54,825.00	£45,000.00	£44,000.00	£43,000.00	£42,000.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£1,696,750.00	£1,881,850.00	£1,851,000.00	£1,820,150.00	£1,773,875.00
Access investment	22.5%	21.0%	21.0%	20.6%	20.7%
Financial support	2.7%	5.1%	5.2%	5.3%	5.4%
Research and evaluation	3.2%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%
Total investment (as %HFI)	28.4%	28.5%	28.6%	28.3%	28.5%

