

York College and University Centre Access and participation plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

Introduction and strategic aim

This access to participation plan supersedes the previous 2020-21 to 2024-25 access to participation.

York College and University Centre's (YCUC) purpose is to provide opportunity for our students and apprentices. Our vision, mission, values, strategic priorities and curriculum strategy all work together to fulfil this purpose and we ourselves prides on securing positive destinations for thousands of students every year. Our values of ambition, care, respect and success are integral to every aspect of college life and guides the college to ensure support our students and prepare them for their next steps.

The Strategic Plan sets out 6 key strategic priorities for the college; they focus on students and apprentices, staff, partnerships, investment and financial sustainability:

- To deliver high quality education and training, expecting excellence in all that we do.
- To facilitate the best possible student experience, developing students inside and outside the classroom.
- To develop, retain and invest in a talented staff team.
- To nurture partnerships with benefit students, staff, the City of York and wider region.
- To invest in resources maximising students' success and enabling innovation.
- To ensure long-term financial sustainability.

Leaders have created a 2030 Curriculum Strategy. This identifies our curriculum objectives and priorities to ensure that YCUC continues to be at the absolute forefront of high-quality education and training in York and North Yorkshire, and that the College provides a curriculum offer that reflects local need and addresses the Local Needs Duty.

YCUC is a single-campus site based on the outskirts of York, but within easy reach of York City Centre. The map below shows the geographical reach of the College which extends beyond the City of York, recruiting students from across North Yorkshire. 39.8% of students join us having attended a City of York School, 44.8% join from schools in North Yorkshire or East Riding and a further 15.4% from schools outside of these areas.



The College offers a full range of courses across all levels and provision types. Whilst the majority of enrolments are 16-19, the College offers adult provision across various levels and modes of study and, in partnership with the Open University and University of Huddersfield, the College operates a University Centre conferring degrees and Higher National qualifications. The apprenticeship provision is growing year-on-year, with particularly healthy numbers in Construction. As a wave one T-level provider, leaders continue to be staunch advocates for the T-level qualification with numbers growing significantly since their introduction in 2020. Due to the success of T Levels and the growing demand for skillsbased qualifications the College's Curriculum 2030 strategy has included a wider range of subjects to be offered as Higher Technical qualifications. YCUC act as lead partner for the Yorkshire and Humber Institute of Technology (IOT) and work in partnership with the partner colleges, businesses and communities to ensure an innovative curriculum, structured to support the IoT including Higher Education pathways. YCUC is also rated as silver in the Teaching and Excellence Framework.

YUCU falls within the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority. The College is the lead education partner for the York and North Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF). The Employer Representative Board (ERB) for the LSIP is the West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce. YCUC is one of only two stand-alone Further Education Colleges within the region. The college works closely with the City of York Council and North Yorkshire County Council and enjoys strong working relationships.

In December 2023, the York and North Yorkshire Devolution Order came into force which paved the way for the launch of the Combined Authority on the 1 February 2024, the Local Enterprise Partnership has also integrated into the Combined Authority.

It is anticipated that within the first year of launch, the new Combined Authority will receive over £56 million to invest into the region, including £12.7 million for housing and £10 million to support net zero, unlocking economic growth, empowering business growth and creating

new and better paid jobs. The Mayoral Investment Fund will generate £18 million a year invested into the region for the next 30 years, a total of £540 million pounds of investment.

Devolution will also see local control of the Adult Education Budget (AEB). YCUC has been actively involved in the devolution process.

York itself has a population of over 202,000 people, an increase of 2.4% over the past 10 years. The wider region has a population of over 615,000. York has an ageing population, with an increase of 65–74-year-olds of 19.7% over the past ten years and a decrease of 9% of 35–49-year-olds. 36.4% of the population of North Yorkshire are aged 50-74 years old. 10.9% of York residents identify as having a disability, this figure is just over 17% for the wider region. 65.1% of York residents own their own home, whilst 20% rent privately and 14% live in socially rented property. The figures are similar for the wider region. York and North Yorkshire has an increasingly diverse population, although only 7% of residents are from ethnic minorities compared to 18% nationally. 16.1% of the North Yorkshire population hold no qualifications, whilst 51.7% hold qualifications at level 3 and above.

The employment rate in both York and North Yorkshire is above the national rate at 80.6% and 79.2% respectively, against a national rate of 75.1%. Unemployment across the region is 2.2% of the population aged 16-64 compared to a national average of 3.7%. The unemployment rate in the City of York is marginally higher than the region at 2.3%.¹

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 show that deprivation is not widespread across the region, however 12 of the 493 neighbourhoods (2%) are among the 10% most deprived in England which may be unexpected given the perception of North Yorkshire. Nine of these neighbourhoods are located in Scarborough with single neighbourhoods in Harrogate, Selby and York. Some of the deprivation is concentrated in coastal areas including Scarborough and Whitby. There is however higher deprivation in the area with reference to the Education, Training and Skills domain of the IMD. All districts within the region (excluding Harrogate and Ryedale) have at least one category in the 10% most deprived against this measure. Notably, 11% of neighbourhoods in the region (52 in total) are among the 10% most deprived in relation to the sub-category of Children and Young People. All districts in the region have at least one neighbourhood among the 10% most deprived, with 17 districts in York itself. The picture is more positive in relation to Adult Skills; with only 8 neighbourhoods (2%) falling into the most deprived decile. The 8 neighbourhoods are concentrated in four districts, most notably in Scarborough. Of our current cohort of 16–18year-olds, 17.5% fall into indices 1-4 and 40% of students arrive without having achieved GCSE English and/ or Mathematics. In 2022-23, 70.6% of key stage 4 pupils achieved grade 4 in English and Mathematics, the figure for North Yorkshire was lower at 67%.²

The York Skills and Employment Board published their ten-year skills strategy for the city with an aim to 'ensure York is a place where everyone can thrive; harnessing and growing the city's existing skills-base to enable residents and businesses to make the most of future opportunities and make prosperity a reality for all'. The college is a fundamental part of delivering this vision.

YCUC recruits predominantly from the local area and the college performs well in many aspects of widening participation such as students with disabilities, mature students and students with a non-standard entry tariff.

YCUC is committed to creating an inclusive environment, where people are treated with respect and dignity. The college anticipates and responds to different needs and circumstances, so people can fulfil their potential.

The college continually actively promotes and advances equality of opportunity and this underpins the College's mission, vision and values. The college prides itself on attracting and retaining a diverse range of talented students, staff and partners which will drive the College's future success.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Analysis of risks to opportunity is based on supporting data sets and reasonable assumptions, due to occasionally insufficient objective data. However, for the most part, robust data and other sources of evidence have been used to identify risks related to equality of opportunity. The evidence used in this plan forms the baseline for each Intervention Strategy which will be continuously considered and reviewed over the life cycle of this plan. Risks to equality of opportunity were identified using the OFS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR).

RISK: Information and Guidance

1.1: There are lower proportions of ethnic minority students accessing Higher Education courses in comparison to other college provision. However, only 7% of York and North Yorkshire residents identify as from an ethnic minority group.

Risk: Perception of Higher Education

2.1: There is a perception amongst the 16-19 cohort, that continuing Higher Education studies within a college environment, is not as advantageous as studying at a sole Higher Education Institution. This is notable in the data collection that shows a higher percentage of mature students accessing higher education at YCUC compared to under 21-year-olds.

2.2: The gap in access rates for full time students in relation to IMD quintiles 1 and 2 could be a result of students not believing that they are able to study at a higher level due to socio - economic status, culture or beliefs.

Risk: Student Support – Personal and Academic

3.1: There is a gap in full-time continuation rates between students who have declared a disability and those that have not.

Risk: Disability and Mental Health

4.1: Students accessing personal support services across the College has increased with 11.5% of the Higher Education cohort disclosing a mental health condition in 2023. This represents a 1.5% rise from the 2022-23 academic year.

Risk: Progression from Higher Education

5.3: YUCU data suggests that 30% of under 21's do not progress to positive destinations.

Objectives

Ethnicity

1.1 The college will increase the proportion of ethnic minority students by approximately 2% per annum.

To ensure success a series of outreach activities will be designed to provide information to schools, college students and community groups.

Disability

2.1 To narrow the continuation gap by 6% for students who have declared a disability by increasing support opportunities and awareness of the support offered within the college. To eliminate this gap a target of a 2% increase per annum over three years will be set.

Disadvantage

3.1 To increase access rates for students in IMD quintiles 1 and 2 the college will ensure increased support opportunities are in place and awareness of how to access personal and academic support along with more informed progression opportunities.

YCUC data shows that there is a lack of students from quintiles 1 and 2 accessing Higher Education at YCUC compared to quintiles 3,4 and 5. In 2021-22 44.4% of students were recorded in the lower quintiles compared to 36.7% in 2022-23 and 34.2% in 2023-24. This showing a decline in the number of students from the lower quintiles accessing Higher Education at YCUC. Over the life cycle of this plan YCUC will aim to raise access for students in lower quintiles by the following target of raising access to participation by 8% over the cycle of this plan with 2% to be achieved in 2025-26, 2% 2026-27, 2% 2027-28, 2% 2028-29.

3.2 To increase Access rates for students who are eligible for free school meals (FSM). At present 11.4% of students eligible for FSMs continue into Higher Education at YCUC. Therefore, to align with 4.1 the college will aim to increase entry for students that are eligible for FSMs.

Age

4.1 The college will work to close the gap for access for full time provision in relation to nonmature students. At present the college is 17.8% under the National average in relation to access for the under 21 Higher Education cohort and intake is heavily weighted towards mature students. Over the course of this plan the following targets have been set to ensure better access rates for full time students 3% 2025-26, 4% 2026-27, 5% 2027-28 and 5% for 2028-29.

Access for non-mature learners will be promoted through the redesign of the college's information, advice and guidance that is delivered to students over their time as a further education student. Furthermore, outreach activities will take place in schools and other local educational establishments.

4.2 Work will be carried out to ensure that the gap for completion between mature and non-mature full-time students is narrowed, with an overall target of 8% set over the next four years 2% 2025-26, 3% 2026-27, 2% 2027-28, 2% 2028-29.

Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Intervention strategy 1: Ethnicity Access: To increase the percentage of ethnic minority students accessing Higher Education at York College and University Centre

Objectives and targets

1.1: The college will increase the proportion of ethnic minority students by approximately 2% per annum. This 8% increase will close the gap between the Higher Education and Further Education Cohort.

Data analysis has shown a risk in relation to ethnic minority students' applications for Higher Education Programmes of study. College application data shows that the college's University centre is on average 2% lower than the Further Education population at the college and York and North Yorkshire data. Furthermore, YCUC data shows that there has been a historic low intake for learners from an ethnic minority background with an intake of 2.6% in 2021-22, 6.6% 2022-2023 and 5.28% for 2023-2024.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Risks 2 & 3

Currently the data shows that although there is a gap for ethnic minority students entering Higher Education at YCUC it should be noted that the local and regional context for ethnic minority is lower than other geographical areas. The college has identified Access as an emerging risk in relation to Risk 2: Information and Guidance and Risk 5: Perception of Higher Education.

Related objectives and targets

2.1 To narrow the continuation gap by 6% for students who have a reported disability. To narrow the gap increased and innovative academic and personal support opportunities will be embedded within the college over the lifespan of this plan.

Related risks to equality of opportunity: Risks 6, 7 & 8

The data analysis undertaken by YCUC has shown a 6% gap in the continuation rates of students who have a reported disability against those that have not. Over the past five years YCUC data shows that the student population with a reported disability is 25% of the Higher Education cohort. However, by utilising the (EORR) to analysis risk YCUC has identified three risks that map to the EORR which are Risk 6: Insufficient Academic Support, Risk 7: Insufficient Personal Support and Risk 8: Mental Health.

Intervention strategy 2 Disability - Continuation: To increase the continuation rates for students with an identified disability at York College and University Centre

Objectives and targets

2.1 To narrow the continuation gap by 6% for students who have a reported disability. To narrow the gap increased and innovative academic and personal support opportunities will be embedded within the college over the lifespan of this plan.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Risks 6, 7 & 8

The data analysis undertaken by YCUC has shown a 6% gap in the continuation rates of students who have a reported disability against those that have not. Over the past five years YCUC data shows that the student population with a reported disability is 25% of the Higher Education cohort. However, by utilising the (EORR) to analysis risk YCUC has identified three risks that map to the EORR which are Risk 6: Insufficient Academic Support, Risk 7: Insufficient Personal Support and Risk 8: Mental Health.

Related objectives and targets

Work will be carried out to ensure that the gap for completion between mature and non-mature full-time students is narrowed, with an overall target of 8% set over the next four years 2% 2025-26, 2% 2026-27, 2% 2027-28, 2% 2028-29.

3.1 YCUC has identified that the access rates for Higher Education students in IMD quintile bands 1 and 2 as unsatisfactory in comparison to the data gathered for quintiles 3, 4 and 5. On analysis there are less students in quintiles 1 and 2 studying at YCUC compared to students from quintiles 3, 4 and 5. Therefore, Strategy 4 will focus on the risks associated with quintiles 1 and 2 to ensure better access rates for students in the lower bands. Risks that have been identified using the EORR are Risk 6: Insufficient Academic Support, Risk 7: Insufficient Personal Support and Risk 8: Mental Health

Related risks to equality of opportunity: Risks 6 & 7

Strategy 1 also maps across due to the related risks of the objective 4.2 - Risk 6: Insufficient Academic Support and Risk 7: Insufficient Personal Support.

EORR risks 6 & 7 are also related to objective 3.1.

Intervention strategy 3: Disadvantage – Access - To increase Access rates for students in the IMD quintiles 1 and 2 and to increase Access rates for students eligible for Free School Meals

Objectives and targets

3.1 To increase access rates for students in IMD quintiles 1 and 2 the college will ensure increased support opportunities are in place and awareness of how to access personal and academic support along with more informed progression opportunities.

YCUC data shows that there is a lack of students from quintiles 1 and 2 accessing Higher Education at YCUC compared to quintiles 3,4 and 5. In 2021-22 44.4% of students were recorded in the lower quintiles compared to 36.7% in 2022-23 and 34.2% in 2023-24. This showing a decline in the number of students from the lower quintiles accessing Higher Education at YCUC. Over the life cycle of this plan YCUC will aim to raise access for students in lower quintiles by the following target of raising access to participation by 8% over the cycle of this plan with 2% to be achieved in 2025-26, 2% 2026-27, 2% 2027-28, 2% 2028-28.

3.2 To increase Access rates for students who are eligible for free school meals (FSM). At present 11.4% of students eligible for FSMs continue into Higher Education at YCUC. Therefore, to align with 4.1 the college will aim to increase entry for students that are eligible for FSMs.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Risks 3, 6, 7 & 8

YCUC has identified that the access rates for Higher Education students in the IMD quintile bands 1 and 2 as unsatisfactory in comparison to the data gathered for quintiles 3, 4 and 5. On analysis there are less students in quintiles 1 and 2 studying at YCUC compared to students from quintiles 3, 4 and 5. Therefore, Strategy 4 will focus on the risks associated with quintiles 1 and 2 to ensure better access rates for students in the lower bands. Risks that have been identified using the EORR are Risk 6: Insufficient Academic Support, Risk 7: Insufficient Personal Support and Risk 8: Mental Health

Related objectives and targets

4.2 Work will be carried out to ensure that the gap for completion between mature and nonmature full-time students is narrowed, with an overall target of 8% set over the next four years 2% 2025-26, 2% 2026-27, 2% 2027-28, 1% 2028-29.

Related risks to equality of opportunity: Risks 6 & 7

Related risks of objective 5.2 also maps to the Risk 6: Insufficient Academic Support and Risk 7: Insufficient Personal Support

Intervention strategy 3: Age – Access, Completion and Progression: To increase access and completion rates for young students at York College and University Centre

Objectives and targets

4.1 The college will work to close the gap for access for full time provision in relation to nonmature students. At present the college is 17.8% under the national average in relation to access for the under 21 Higher Education cohort with intake heavily weighted towards mature students. Over the course of this plan the following targets have been set to ensure greater access rates for full time students 6% in 2025-26, 5% 2026-27, 4% 2027-28 and 3% 2028-29

4.2 Work will be carried out to ensure that the gap for completion for full time students below 21 narrows to align with students above the age of 21. To achieve this an overall target of 8% has been set for over the next four years - 2% 2025-26, 2% 2026-27, 2% 2027-28, 1% 2028-29.

4.3 OfS data shows that YCUC students are less likely to progress to a positive destination than students nationally. Therefore, the college has set a target of narrowing the gap by 20% over the next four years with a targeted reduction of 5% per each consecutive year.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Risks 2, 7 & 12

Data shows that over the past five years 62.5% of Higher Education students are over the age of 21 with 37.5% being under. On evaluation the risks that have been primarily associated to equality of opportunity are Risk 2: Information and Guidance, Risk 7: Insufficient Personal Support and Risk 12: Progression from Higher Education.

Related objectives and targets

1.1 The college will increase the proportion of ethnic minority students by approximately 2% per annum.

Related risks to equality of opportunity: Risk 2

Risk 2: Information and Guidance maps across Strategy 1, 2 & 5 due to the interconnectedness of ensuring high quality Information and guidance to all.

Intervention Strategy 1: – Ethnicity– Access: To increase the percentage of students from an ethnic minority background at YCUC by 8% by 2029 (PTA_2). Secondary objectives: PTA_1 (IS1); PTA_2 (IS2); PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4 & PTA_4 (IS4).

Risks to quality of opportunity – Information and Guidance, Limited Choice and Delivery Style, Perception of Higher Education.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Intervention Strategy 1: Expanding Horizons Programme	<p>Develop and launch a new, comprehensive program designed to provide information, advice, and guidance (IAG) to students, schools, and guardians. This program will focus on career's, Higher Education pathways and positive destinations.</p> <p>On-going 2030 Curriculum Review to influence the Expanding Horizon Program to incorporate IAG for new level 4 and 5 skills-based Higher Technical qualifications.</p>	<p>School Liaison Team, Progress Coaches and Careers lead to develop programme. Approx. costing per Anum: £6000</p> <p>Marketing materials: £1000</p> <p>Total approx. costing for life cycle of plan: £25,000</p>	<p>Increased partnerships between Further Education Students, guardians, schools and stakeholders. [O4.1].</p> <p>Increase of Higher Technical applications due to raised awareness of the programmes and career routes [O1.1, O2.1 & O4.1, O4.2 & O4.3].</p>	IS2 & IS3

Evidence base and rationale: YCUC is committed to rolling out the Expanding Horizons Programme which will be comprehensive package of activities that will raise aspirations and break down barriers to access. The YCUC Expanding Horizons Programme is a cross-

strategy programme and will support O1.1 to raise the number of students from an ethnic minority background entering Higher Education. YCUC works closely with York St John University (YSJ) on widening participation and will ensure that YCUC's programme will complement the YSJ Outreach programme. YCUC and YSJ has a shared vision to ensure the best possible opportunities for students, including aligned progression routes.

Evaluation: A trial will be conducted over 2024-2025 to enable YCUC to reflect and evaluate the Expanding Horizons Program before launching to a wider geographical field. The Programme will be trialled using a selected small-scale sample of local schools and will be monitored through a series of desk-based activities and numerical analysis of data relating to open events and admission information. Once the trial is complete and analysis has been undertaken, the programme will be rolled out to a wider geographical field, including schools and community groups.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Short name of activity	Short description of outcomes	Type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. empirical (Type 2).	When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take.
IS1	<p>Increase in Partnership working across schools and community-based groups and stakeholders.</p> <p>Increased understanding of Higher Education Pathways and the differing types of study available.</p> <p>Increased access for students from an ethnic minority background [O1.1]</p>	Type 2	<p>A report on the trial phase will be shared with SLT and the Governing Body.</p> <p>An annual summary will be shared with Senior Leaders and Governors</p> <p>A final report will be produced in 28-29 and shared with relevant stake holders.</p>

Intervention Strategy 1b: Ethnicity– Access: To increase the percentage of students from an ethnic minority background at YCUC by 8% by 2029 (PTA_2). Secondary objectives: PTA_1 (IS1); PTA_2 (IS2); PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4 & PTA_4 (IS4).

Risks to quality of opportunity – Information and Guidance and Perception of Higher Education

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Intervention Strategy 1b: Cultivating Inclusivity in College Communities	Create an EDI Toolkit for all staff and governors that offers comprehensive guidance on inclusive practices and fair representation. The toolkit will feature practical tips, information on relevant laws and regulations, and a checklist for evaluating materials, resources, and content.	<p>Cost of Marketing Materials Approx £1000</p> <p>Cost of staffing assigned to project to develop the toolkit: Approx £2000 per annum</p> <p>Total approx. costing over lifecycle of plan: £9000</p>	<p>Increased applications numbers for students from an ethnic minority background. [O1.1].</p> <p>Improved representation of minority groups [O1.1, O2.1, O3.1, O4.1, & O4.2].</p> <p>Improved understanding and confidence in selecting materials, resources, etc to create an inclusive environment [O2.1, O3.1, O4.2]</p> <p>Increased continuation and completion rates for Higher Education Students. [O2.1, O3.1 & O3,2].</p>	IS1, IS2 & IS3b

Evidence base and rationale: In 2023-24 just over 5% of YCUC Higher Education population identified as being from an ethnic minority background against 7.7% of the Further

Education cohort for 2023-24. Historic data suggests that there is a continued low intake over the past three years in relation to students from an ethnic minority background.

A study carried out by the College of Health and Life sciences; Aston University (2022) focussed on student and staff perspectives regarding tackling academic bias, and reported major gaps in access, continuation and achievement. Furthermore, the 2019 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Student Attainment at UK Universities #Closingthegap report identified a framework of five steps needed for success. These included 1. Providing strong leadership, 2. Having conversations about race and changing the culture, 3. Developing racially diverse and inclusive environments, 4. Getting the evidence to analyse the data and 5. Understanding what works. Therefore, YCUC will work as a collective to ensure real change and meaningful action by integrating the framework above within strategies IS2 and IS2b and the wider college. By enhancing ethnic minority admissions YCUC will ensure that it aligns with both Further Education and regional data. The Cultivating Inclusivity Programme and Empowering Success Programme will ensure inclusive practice throughout the college. The toolkit will be made available to all staff, governors and researchers and IS1b will aim to highlight success within the ethnic minority communities. These interventions link primarily to the Colleges Equality Objectives 1 & 2.

Evaluation: YCUC will undertake a series of activities to collect data and information for IS1 & IS1b over the life cycle of this plan. Data collection will utilise both Type 1 and 2 methodologies and will include empirical data collection points three times a year to coincide with terms. Evaluation of IS1 and IS1b will further involve a series of feedback sessions to align with Student Voice Meetings x3. Predetermined questions will be utilised to create baseline data with the same questions being repeated throughout the year. Year on year data recording will take place until the summative point, whereupon a final report will be produced. Survey questions will align to the college's Equality Objective 1 (1.1.1.2 & 1.4) & Equality Objective 2 (2.1 & 2.2).

Intervention Strategy 1b: Ethnicity– Access: To increase the percentage of ethnic minority students at YUCU by 2.5% by 2029 (PTA_2).

Risks to quality of opportunity – Information and Guidance and Perception of Higher Education

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Intervention Strategy 1b: Empowering Success	To raise ethnic minority representation in Alumni.	As above (IS1) plus approx. £1000 per year.	Improved representation of ethnic minority groups in Higher Education Programmes [O1.1].	IS1, IS3 & IS3b

Evidence base and rational: YCUC will focus on raising aspirations and representation for students from ethnic minority groups through positive reinforcement via role models that are inspiring, relatable and representational.

The Empowering Success Strategy also works in alignment with the Expanding Horizons Programme [IS1].

Evidence: See IS1 above.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Short name of activity	Short description of outcomes	Type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. empirical (Type 2).	When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take.
IS1 & IS1b	As above	Type 2	<p>Annual updates will be presented to the Governing Body, Senior and Middle Leaders and the Student Union.</p> <p>A final Impact report will be produced in 28-29 and shared with relative stakeholders above and the wider college community.</p>

Intervention Strategy 2: Disability – Continuation: To increase continuation rates by 6% by 2029 (PTA_1). Secondary objectives: PTA_1 (IS1); PTA_2 (IS2); PTS_2 (IS2b); PTS_3, PTS_4 & PTA_4 (IS4).

Risks to quality of opportunity – Insufficient Personal Support, Insufficient Academic Support and Mental Health.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
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Intervention Strategy 2: Support and assistance Program	<p>Design and implement a comprehensive Support and assistance program for Higher Education Students. This programme will consist of -</p> <p>A dedicated Progress Coach for Higher Education students to receive personal support through relevant signposting</p> <p>Weekly Academic support drop in sessions</p> <p>Access to onsite Counselling Services and online 24hr counselling support and assistance.</p>	<p>Cost of counselling Assistance programme Approx £22000 per annum.</p> <p>Input from Academic Support team, Additional Learning Support (ALS) and Well-Being. Approx: £2000 per annum</p> <p>Total Approx Costing over lifecycle of plan: £96000</p>	Increased continuation and completion rates for Higher Education Students. [O2.1, O3.1 & O4.2].	IS1, IS1b, IS3 & IS3b
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Evidence base and rationale: Overall YCUC achieves well in terms of students with a reported disability accessing Higher Education courses. With 28.5% of the Higher Education cohort declaring a disability for 23-24. This is 12.5% higher than the Further Education cohort and according to the OfS Data Dashboard is 12% higher. However, YCUC does not perform as well in terms of continuation with continuation rates for YCUC being 6% lower than the figure recorded on the OfS Data Dashboard. YCUC's historical data set further supports OfS data demonstrating that when students do continue and stay on-course, they do not always achieve. This programme will build on and strengthen already existing support measures through innovative planning. IS2 will establish an accessible coherent plan that will increase academic and personal support for students via a series of activities such as drop-in sessions, academic workshops, dedicated Progress Coach support, financial support surgeries, employer engagement and wider enrichment. Dedicated Progress Coach's will work in partnership with Personal Tutors to support and signpost students to relevant departments and services. Alongside YCUC's established counselling service a 24hr counselling app will be introduced to support the growing need in relation to students accessing Mental Health Support Services. YCUC data showed that 11.5% of the Higher Education cohort for 2023 -2024 disclosed a Mental Health condition which is 1.5% rise on

2022-2023. This is a cross-strategy program that will also positively support IS3 below in terms of disadvantage.

Evaluation: The Student Support and Assistance Programme is a whole college approach that will include increased and redesigned support for Higher Education Students. The program is due to be rolled out in phases over 2024-2025 in preparation for 2025-26. To monitor the success of IS3 YCUC will use Empirical Enquiry Methodology (Type 2) to evaluate the impact of the Student Support and Assistance Programme for Higher Education Students.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Short name of activity	Short description of outcomes	Type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. empirical (Type 2).	When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take.
IS2	<p>Increased continuation rates for students with Disabilities and Mental Health conditions</p> <p>Increased completion rates for students with disabilities and Mental Health conditions</p>	<p>Empirical Enquiry - Type 2</p> <p>Anonymous Surveys will be used to ascertain the success of the program</p> <p>Survey 1 to take place on entry</p> <p>Survey 2 Mid-year</p> <p>Survey 3 End of Year</p>	An interim annual data report will be produced and shared with senior and middle Leaders.

Intervention Strategy 3: Disadvantage – Access: To increase Access rates for students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and support students eligible for FSMs (PTS_1, PTS_2) and Access rates for students eligible for FSM (PTA_4). Secondary objectives: PTA_3 (IS3); PTP_1 & PTA_3 (IS5).

Risks to quality of opportunity – Perception of Higher Education, Insufficient Personal Support, insufficient Academic Support and Mental Health.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
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Intervention Strategy 3: YCUC Student Union Program	Redesign and implement the Student Union Program. Redesign will include the integration of Further Education Student Representatives with Higher Education Representatives. The model will consist of 12 Student Representatives across the college that will meet twice termly, influence college enrichment activities and act as a collective voice for the students.	Student Experience Team and Academic staff to develop programme. Approx. Costing per annum: £1000 Total approx. costing: £4000	Increased completion rates for students. [O3.1]. Increased applications across all ages. [O4.2].	IS3b & IS2
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Evidence base and rationale: Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that York and North Yorkshire has 2% of the most deprived areas nationally with only one neighbourhood being situated in York and nine in the Scarborough area. IMD quintile 1-5 shows that YCUC Higher Education Students are less likely to complete their Studies from quintiles 3, 4 & 5 over students in quintiles 1 & 2. However, YCUC data shows that students from quintiles 1 & 2 are less likely to study Higher Education at YCUC. Furthermore, TUNDRA data shows that YCUC is just below average for Q2, Q4 & Q5. YCUC commissioned a third-party company to ascertain student views of the college. Research was carried out via a series of focus group sessions and an interim report was provided to Senior Leaders and the Governing Body. Findings from the Interim report showed that students including Higher Education students expressed that they would like their views to be heard more and would like to see wider student led activities for students to engage with. Furthermore, feedback on the focus groups showed students wanted more progression support along with access to better mental health support. This feedback has helped to inform the redevelopment of the Student Union Programme and S2.

Evaluation: The redeveloped Student Union Programme will be introduced across 2024 - 2025 and impact will be monitored via a series of surveys and focus groups.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
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Short name of activity	Short description of outcomes	Type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. empirical (Type 2).	When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take.
IS3	Increased Access rates for students across the college. Increased student engagement. Increased partnership opportunities with parents/carers and professionals. Foster a positive environment for students to thrive and feel part of their own community with the power to enact change	Narrative Methodology – Type 1 X3 Group feedback sessions will be held in tutorials on an annual basis.	An annual update that includes any proposed changes for the following year will be provided to Senior Managers and the Governing Body. A final report will be produced in 2028 and will also include the reporting on IS5

Intervention Strategy 4: Age – Access and Progression: To increase access rates for young students by 2028-29 (Target PTS_1 & PTA_3). Secondary objectives: (PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4 & PTA_4).

Risks to quality of opportunity – Information and Guidance & Insufficient Personal Support

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Intervention Strategy 3b: YCUC Student Union Mentoring Programme.	A Mentoring Programme will be created to support Student Representatives/Champions in the Student Union Program [IS3]. Key staff will be paired to representatives/champions	See above (IS3).	An increase in the student voice to ensure meaningful change [O2.1, O3.1, O4.2 & O4.3] [Risk 5.1].	IS3

	to provide mentorship, advice and guidance.		College wide increased participation in student led events and activities. [O4.2].	
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Evidence base and rationale: YCUC is developing a Mentoring Programme that aligns to the Student Union Programme [IS3 & IS2]. The mentoring program will be available to all students across the college, with specialised mentoring provided to designated representatives and champions of the Student Union. Key staff members will coach these representatives, with the intention of cascading this coaching as a mentor throughout the broader student community. Woolhouse and Nicholson (2020) suggests that mentoring plays an important role especially in relation to Higher Education with mentoring programmes helping to bridge the gap between academic settings and professional workplaces. The Introduction of the Mentorship Programme alongside IS3 & 2 will assist to close the gap broadly in-line with OfS National data.

Evaluation: YCUC will ensure that students are better supported in IAG and put in place support mechanisms to ensure achievement. Empirical Enquiry (Type 2) will be used to carry out activities to monitor and evaluate the Mentoring Strategy with termly surveys being sent to non-student representatives on entry and exit each year. Feedback sessions will also take place with Student Representatives/Champions on a termly basis to monitor progress and align to the theory of change utilised in this plan.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Short name of activity	Short description of outcomes	Type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. empirical (Type 2).	When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take.

IS4	To increase Under 21 continuation into Higher Education Programmes	Empirical Enquiry (Type 2) X3 Feedback Sessions on an annual basis with Student Representatives/Champions). X2 Anonymous Survey (excluding Student Representatives/Champions participation).	Annual updates will be provided to Senior Managers and Governing Body. A final Impact report will be produced in 2028 with IS3 and IS4 being reported together.
	To support progression to positive destinations		
	To increase personal support to ensure better outcomes for students		

Whole provider approach

York College and University Centre is a small provider of Higher Education. At present the college has approx. 187 Higher Education students in contrast to over 6400 students across the college.

Due to the small cohorts of Higher Education students the YCUC have access to several cross-college services such as Library, Learner Services and other cross college support resources.

The College has a designated University Centre situated within the building that is primarily only used by Higher Education students. This space was developed to provide Higher Education students with a distinct space designed to support academic study and the wider student experience. The centre has several computers for students to work without distraction but also has collaborative spaces, a common room with kitchen facilities and own WC facilities. Classrooms are also situated within the Centre and are usually utilised by distinct Higher Education Staff.

YCUC is committed to widening participation for students and work has already been carried out across the college to set the foundations for the strategies outlined in this plan. These strategies have been influenced by evidence and are aligned to other YCUC activities. The full student lifecycle is considered, and support is at the heart of the college. Strategies set out in this plan align to pre-entry, on course success and post-graduation progression. The college ensures that EDI is woven into all areas including teaching and learning, sustainability, community partnerships and the estates strategy ensuring that the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are adhered to. YCUC sets out a series of Equality Objectives that are assessed in line with Impact Assessments and policies and procedures.

The management of this plan will be overseen by the APP Steering group made up of Senior, Middle managers, Academic and Support staff. The APP group will oversee the

delivery, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of this plan and will also include the Higher Education Student representatives. Reporting's on the plan will be provided at General Academic Meetings, the Higher Education Academic Board and to the Board of Governors.

Student consultation

The college fosters student participation and has student representatives across the college. The college has a Higher Education Student Governor who acts on the Higher Education student's behalf and reports to the Board of Governors.

The college consulted with students to ascertain the students views on college life, experiences and opportunities. This consultation was carried out by a third party to gain fair and representative views of the students and included students from the Higher Education. Interim findings of the student consultation aligned with the risks highlighted in this plan and the strategies were developed to enhance both the academic and wider student experience.

A small scale semi- structured series of interviews were carried out with progressing and exiting Higher Education students to ascertain levels of awareness, effectiveness, and the accessibility of IAG in relation to academic and personal support. At the time of interview students were consulted on the proposed strategies laid out on this plan. Student responses further supported and strengthened the views collected in the wider consultation and the need for strategies laid out in this plan.

Over the life span of this plan Student Representatives will be involved in the reviewing, consideration and revision of the strategies. This will take place through Student Body meetings, and the APP Steering Committee.

Evaluation of the plan

Strategies laid out within this plan were subject to small data sets. This is due to the relatively small numbers of Higher Education students across the college which meant that hard numerical evidence was challenging to collate. However, where able, data from the OfS, college systems and wider local and national data was utilised to further strengthen the validity of the strategies put forward in the plan. Furthermore, the strategies are reflective of the colleges understanding of the student population and communities that the college serves. Relevant literature and research have also been used to underpin theory throughout the strategies.

The college has undertaken a self-evaluation exercise using the OfS Self-Assessment Tool and scored as 'Emerging' for Strategic Context, Programme Design, Evaluation Design and Learning from Evaluations, and scored 'Good' for Evaluation Implementation. The college recognises the need to ensure a robust strategy to support evaluation and evidence-based interventions.

The YCUC APP Steering group will consist of the Director of Higher Education, Quality Manager, Student Experience Manager, Well-Being Manager, Careers Lead and Student Representation. The group will closely monitor the intervention strategies through the evaluation and monitoring processes laid out within each strategy. Close monitoring will

allow oversight of the interventions to evaluate whether strategies are having the intended impact. Annual reports will be produced and shared with Senior Leaders, The Student Body and Governors for critical review.

The methods of evaluations outlined in each intervention strategy were selected based on which method was best suited for each intervention. For the most part empirical methodology aligns to the strategies and will include both quantitative and qualitative research to monitor and evaluate.

Based on the findings of the OfS Self-Assessment tool the college will further commit to strengthening evaluative measures. To do this the college will undertake the following:

- Provide professional development in relation to gaining the required level of skills and knowledge necessary to ensure robust evidence tracking
- To establish better ways of recording and identifying evidence and data to support the APP and the evaluation of the plan.
- Ensure stronger strategic oversight of the APP and continue to strengthen cross working relationships so that findings have an impact.
- Continue to work with other Universities by sharing recommendations and findings of the YCUC APP via the partnership boards that YCUC are members of.

Provision of information to students

York College and University Centre is committed to providing clear and transparent information to students on fees for Higher Education Programmes and the bursary support available to them. Information will be provided to students via the college website, UCAS and the SLC database. In accordance with regulation the College's Access to Participation plan will be displayed on the Colleges website. All Higher Education students are issued with the College Higher Education Student Terms and Conditions and course specific Precontract Information with their offer. All Higher Education Students are provided with a Welcome Pack which also includes information relating to the range of support services available at the college. Funding information is provided during outreach activities, open events and induction and orienteering. Further information on funding is contained within the Terms and Conditions information issued to prospective students. Further information can also be accessed through the college Higher Educational Essentials group online and via the student App.

Higher Education Support Fund

Information that will be provided to students will include signposting to the relevant support areas within the College and the relevant policy documents:

All loans/ grants are made based on the evidence of need following a full disclosure of full student's circumstances.

Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Have a gross annual household income of less than £35,000 per year - Meet the UK residency criteria set out in the ESFA funding regulations.
- Be enrolled on a programme that is recognised as Higher Education for Office for Students (OfS) funding process.
- Demonstrate a financial need that could stop them from enrolling, continuing or completing their course.
- **Students who choose not to apply for the maximum means tested maintenance loan and tuition fee loan will not be eligible.**

Support elements

Full time students - £600

Part time students - £300

This payment is usually made in 2 instalments – November and March.

If the student is under the age of 25 and still living at home, this income is their parent(s). This is because this is how Student Finance England (or equivalent body) assess eligibility for maintenance loans.

If a student has had their income assessed in this way but have since moved out of the family home and are now living independently, we can take their own income into account but will need proof of their independence in the form of a tenancy agreement.

All students must complete a new bursary application for each academic year.

Higher Education Hardship Fund

The Hardship Fund can provide additional support to students who experience unexpected financial difficulty during their course, up to £500.

No more than one payment may be administered per term, as the payment is calculated to last the rest of the term. If a student has applied and received funding for that term, they must apply again and provide up-to-date evidence of continuing hardship before receiving subsequent awards for subsequent terms.

Students who choose not to apply for the maximum means tested maintenance loan and tuition fee loan will not be eligible for the Hardship Fund.

Students who are not eligible for the bursary may still be considered for the Hardship Fund depending on their personal circumstances.

Funding is limited and applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

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Annex A: Assessment of Performance

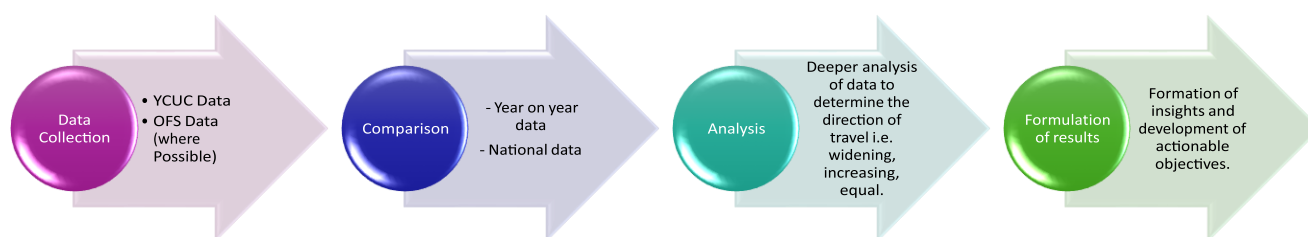
This section outlines the data used to underpin the outcomes of this document. During the process of evaluation data was used to identify the risks of opportunity in relation to equality of opportunity at YCUC.

Due to the relatively small cohort size of higher education students studying at YCUC, limited data is available on the OFS Dashboard. Therefore, YCUC's own data was utilised to aid in the assessment of performance. The Office for Students (OfS) self-assessment tool was also used to provide further insight into the performance of YCUC in relation to equality and opportunity.

Methodology

YCUC identified risks using the quantitative approach through the analysis of data. Analysis of data considered the measure of performance against the student lifecycle categories and OfS Equality of Risk Register (EORR).

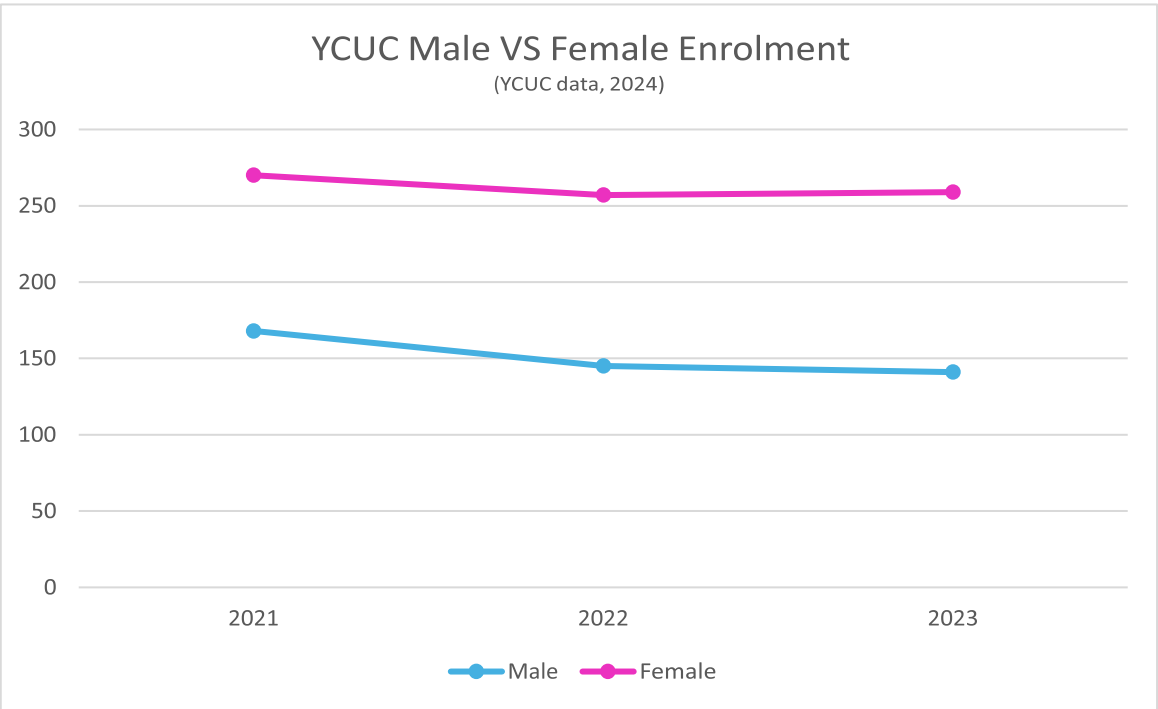
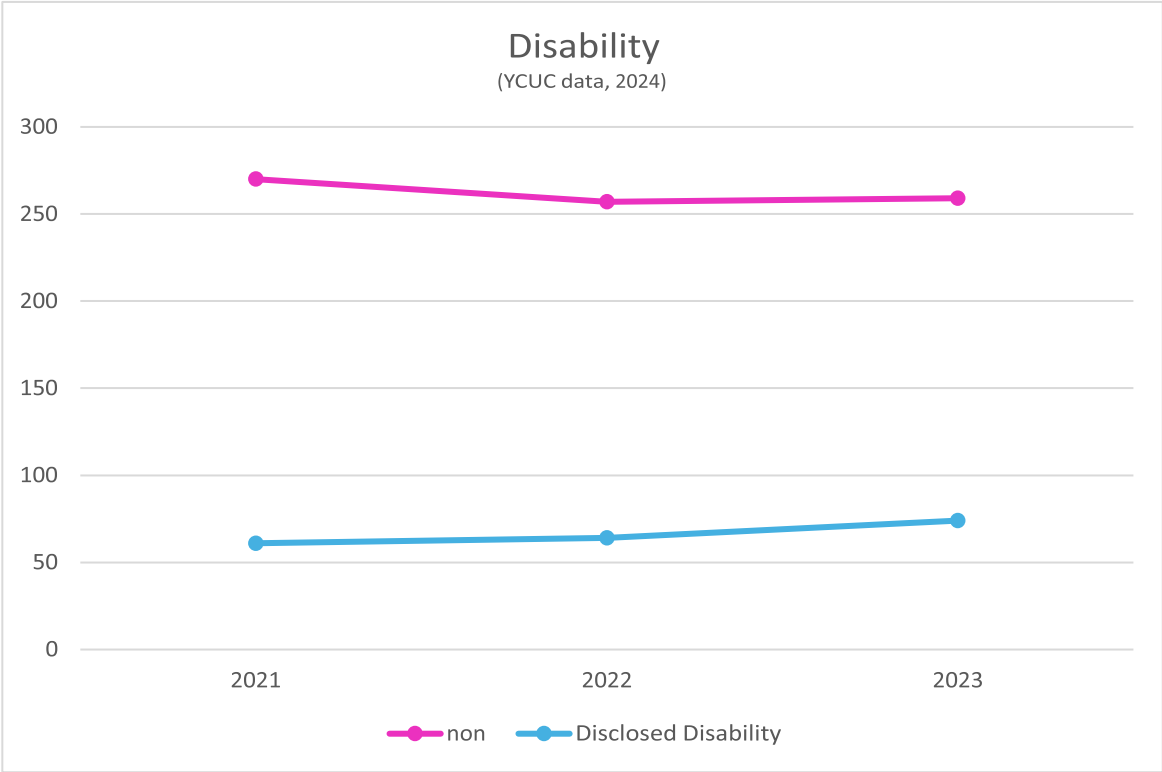
The table below outlines the process taken.

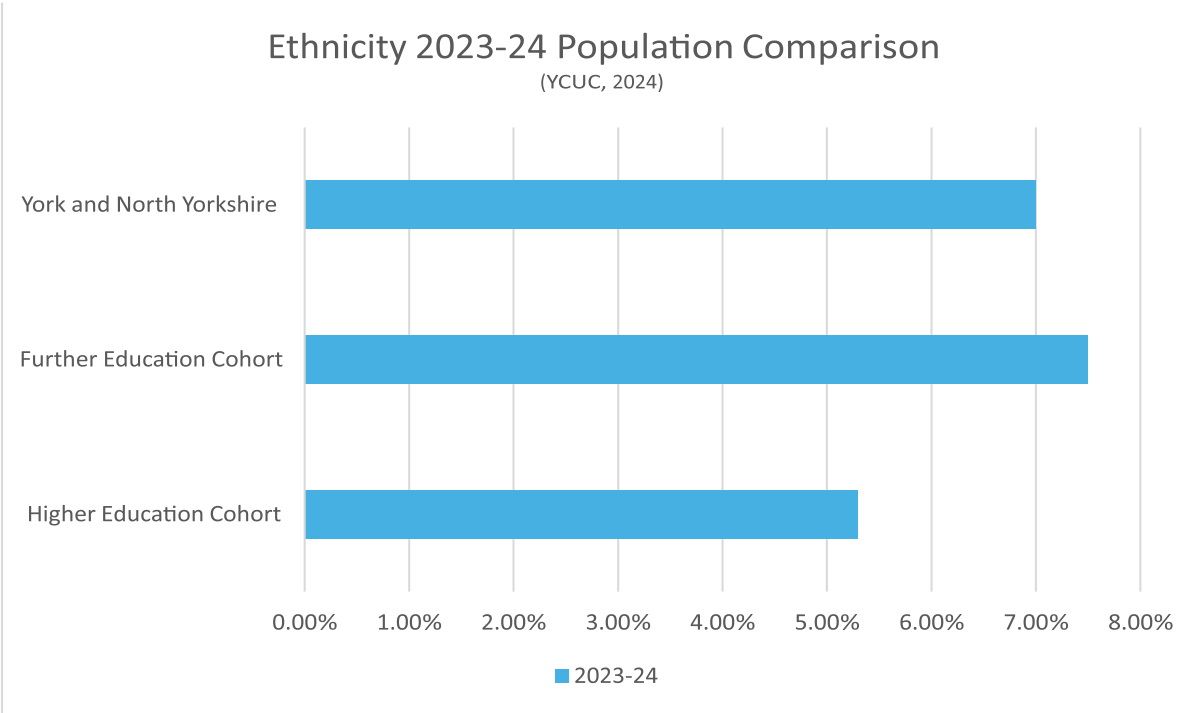
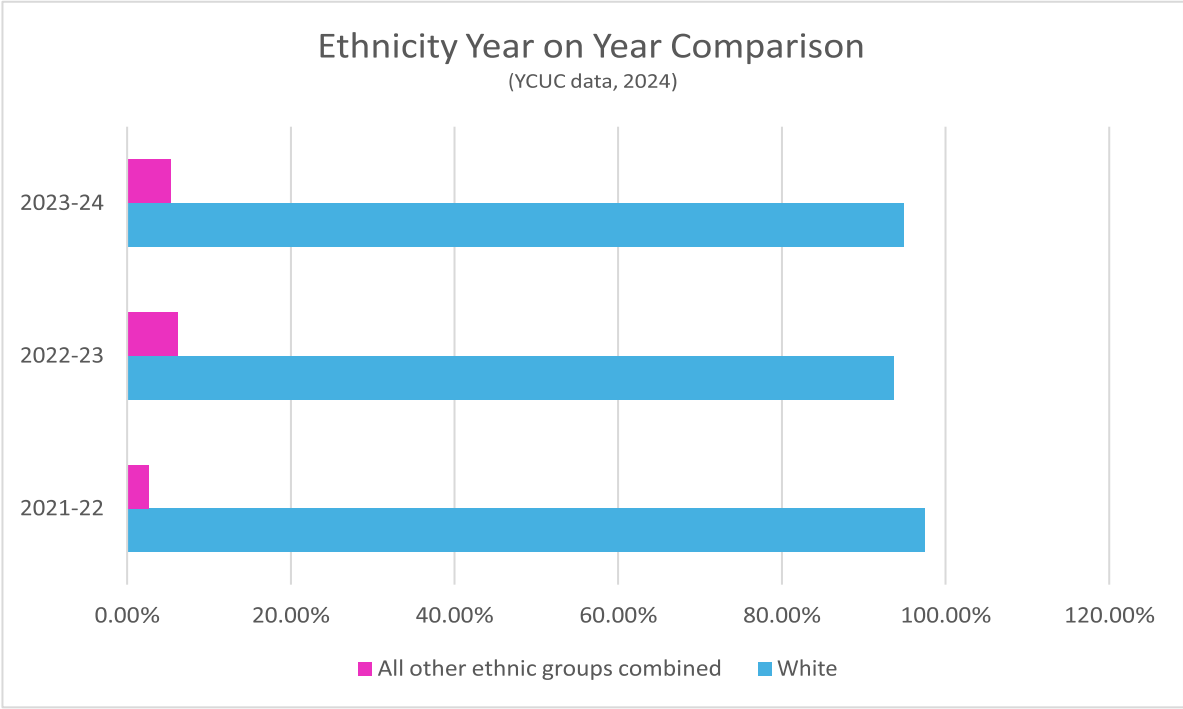


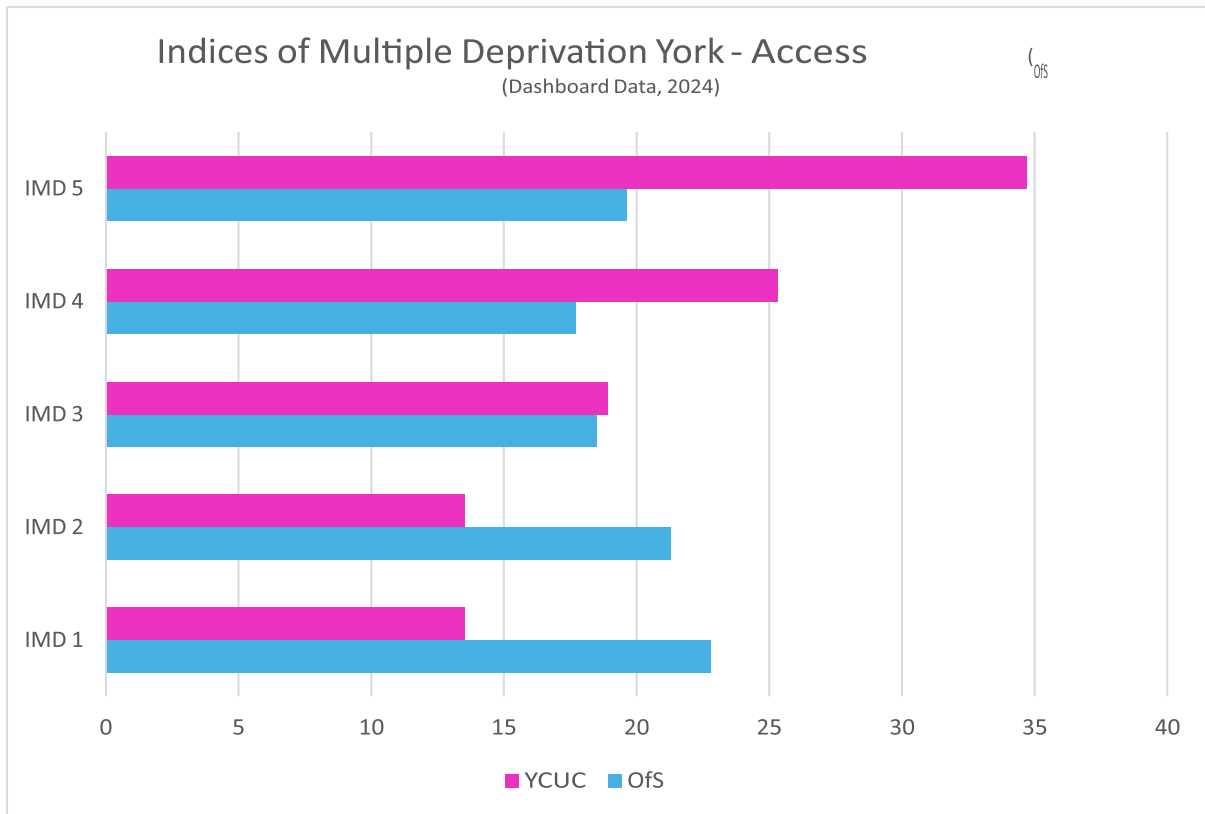
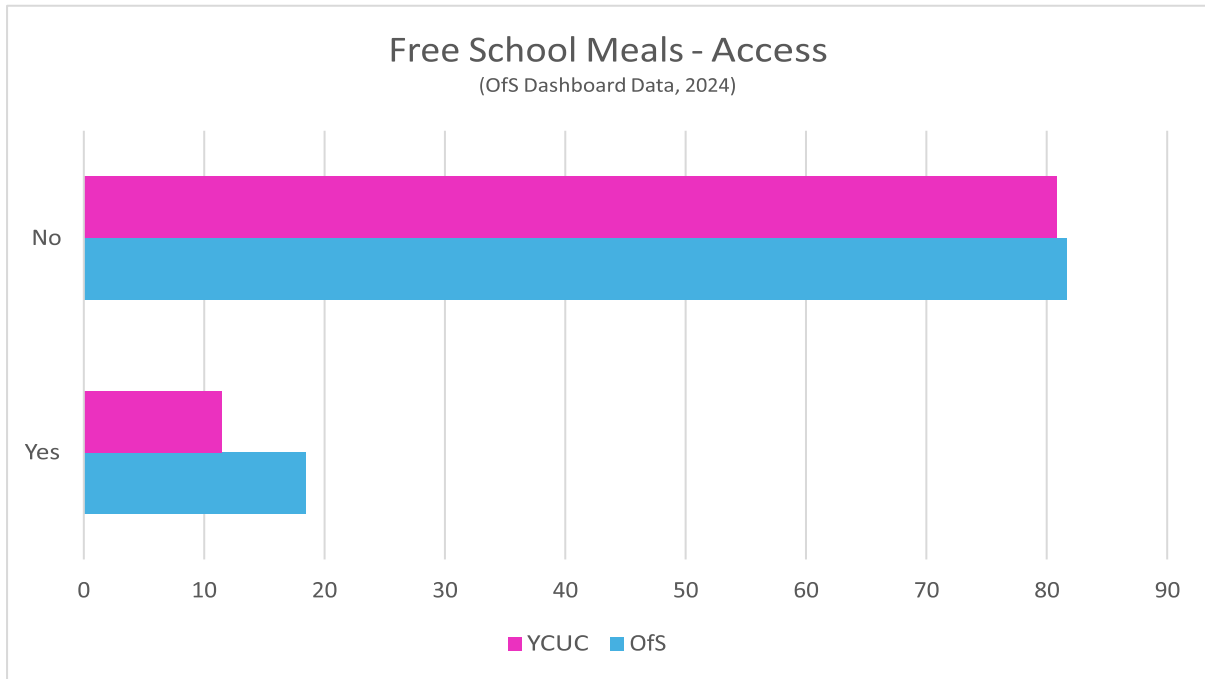
Comparison & Analysis

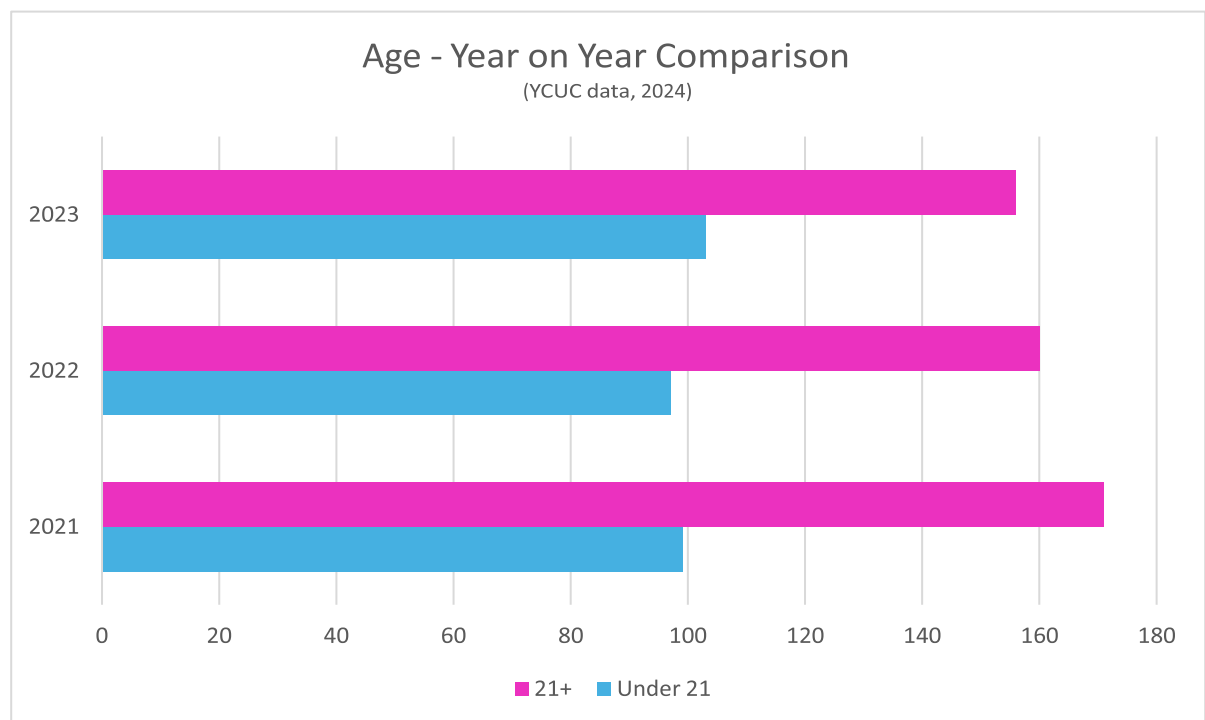
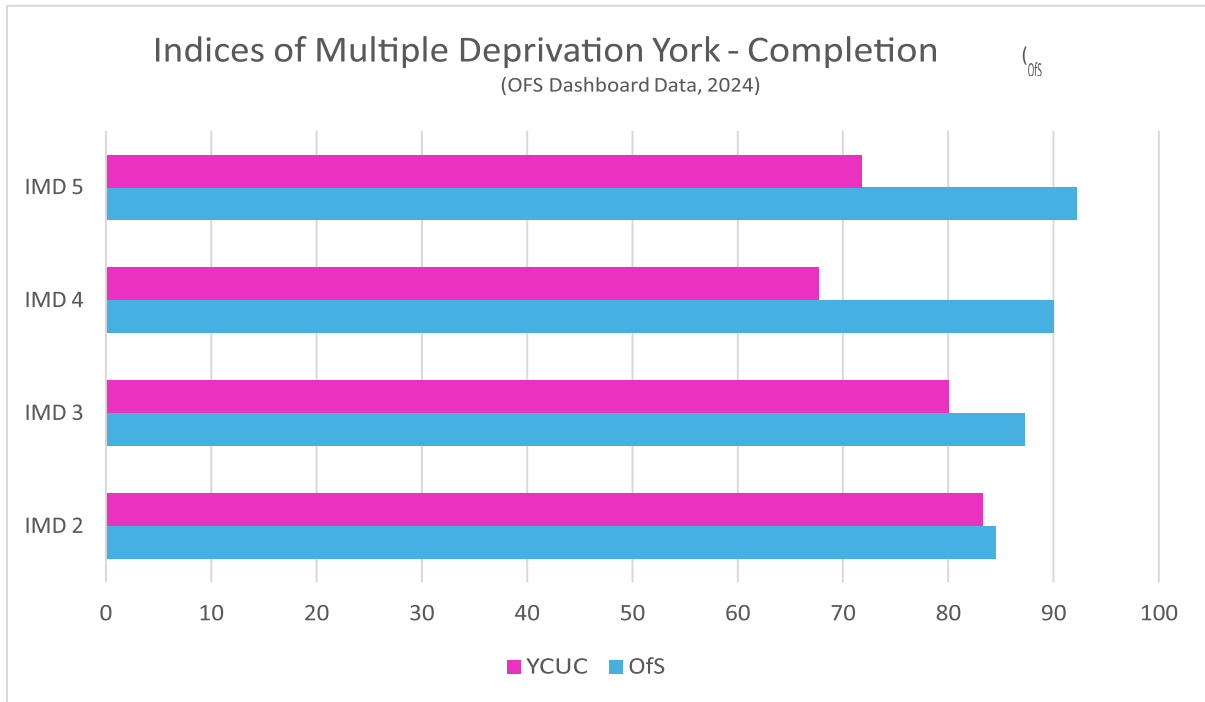
Once data was compiled from the OFS Data Dashboard and YCUC's own reporting systems, an analysis of the data was undertaken to compare YCUC against national data. Data was analysed to identify whether YCUC data showed small gaps, large gaps, equal trajectory or polar trends to national data. Year on year data was further analysed to ascertain the trajectory of trends and performance. Outcomes of the analysis were then mapped to the EORR to identify continued or emerging risks to equality.

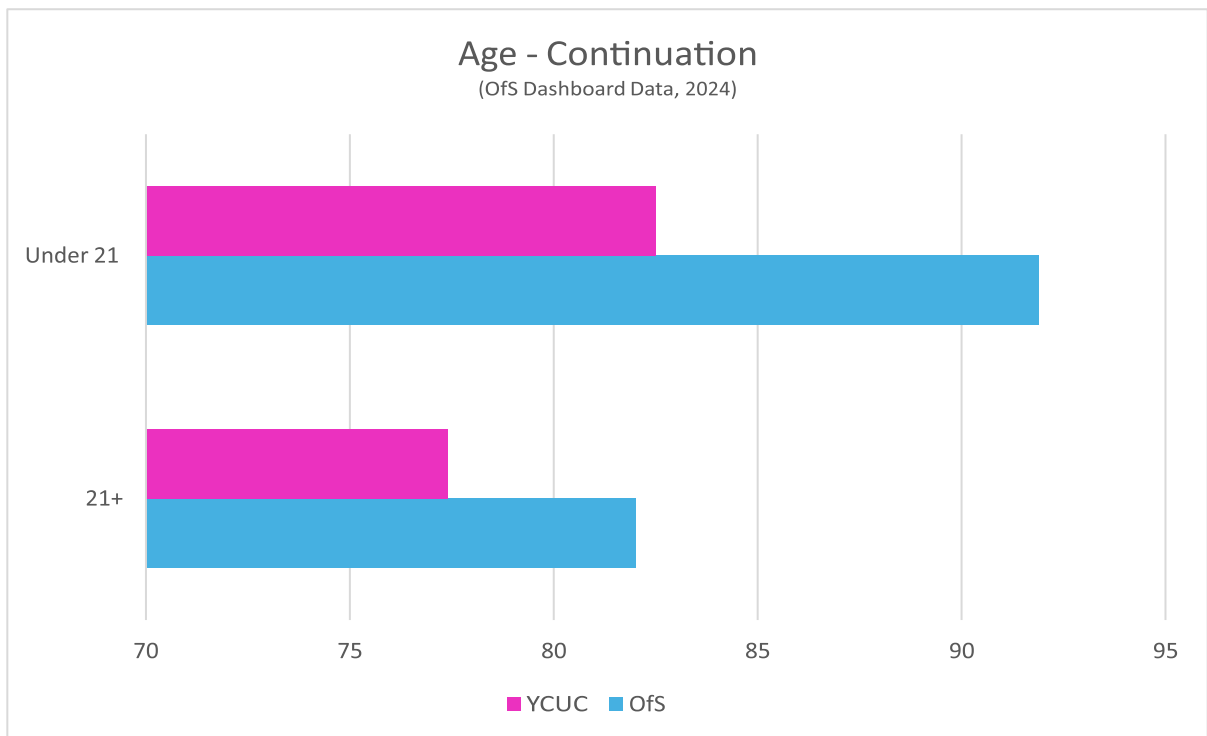
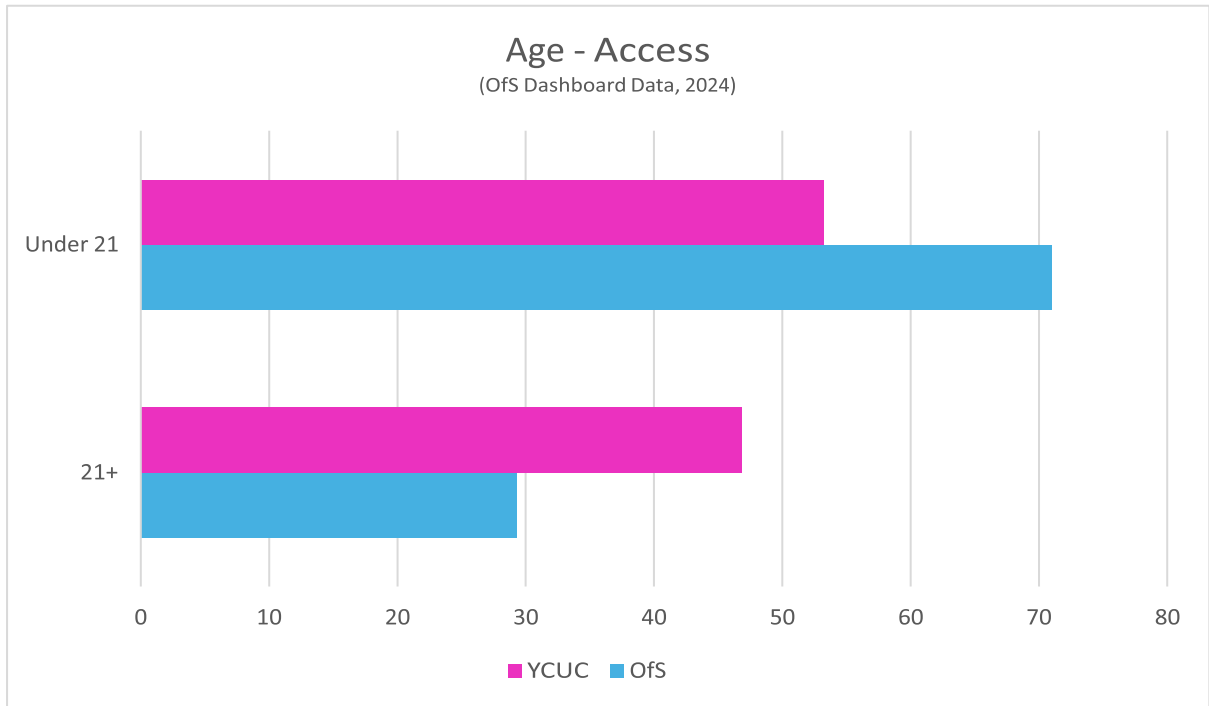
Data Tables

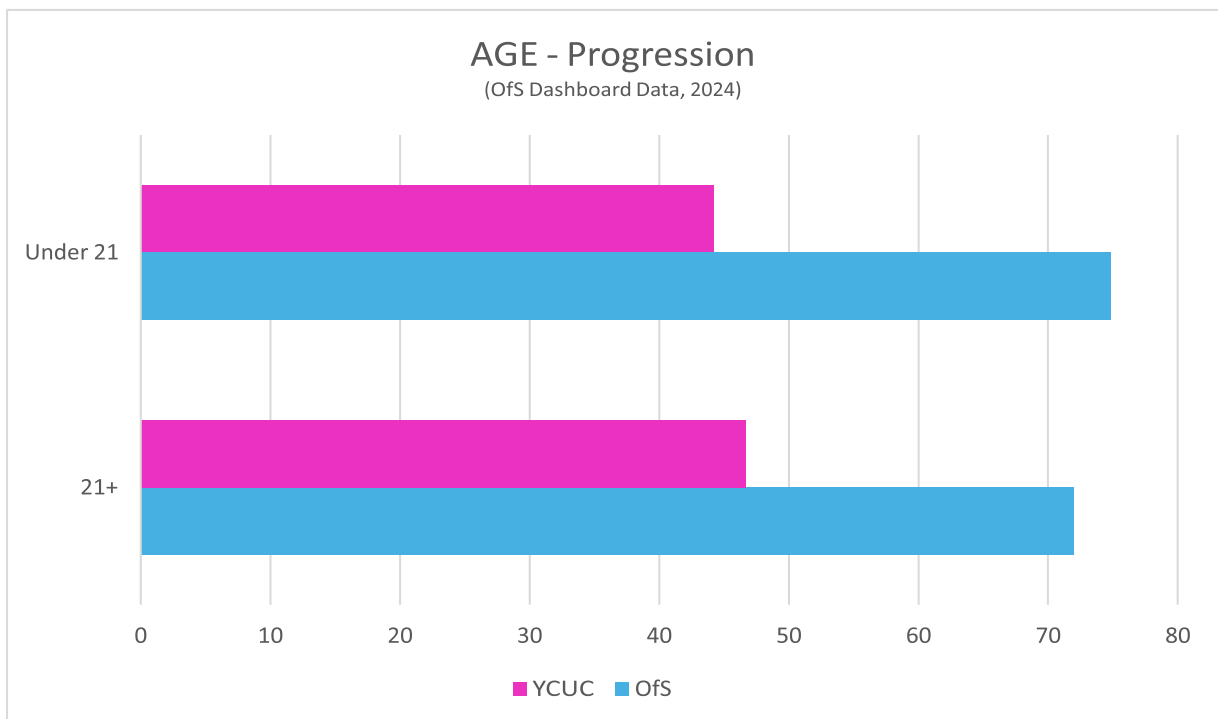
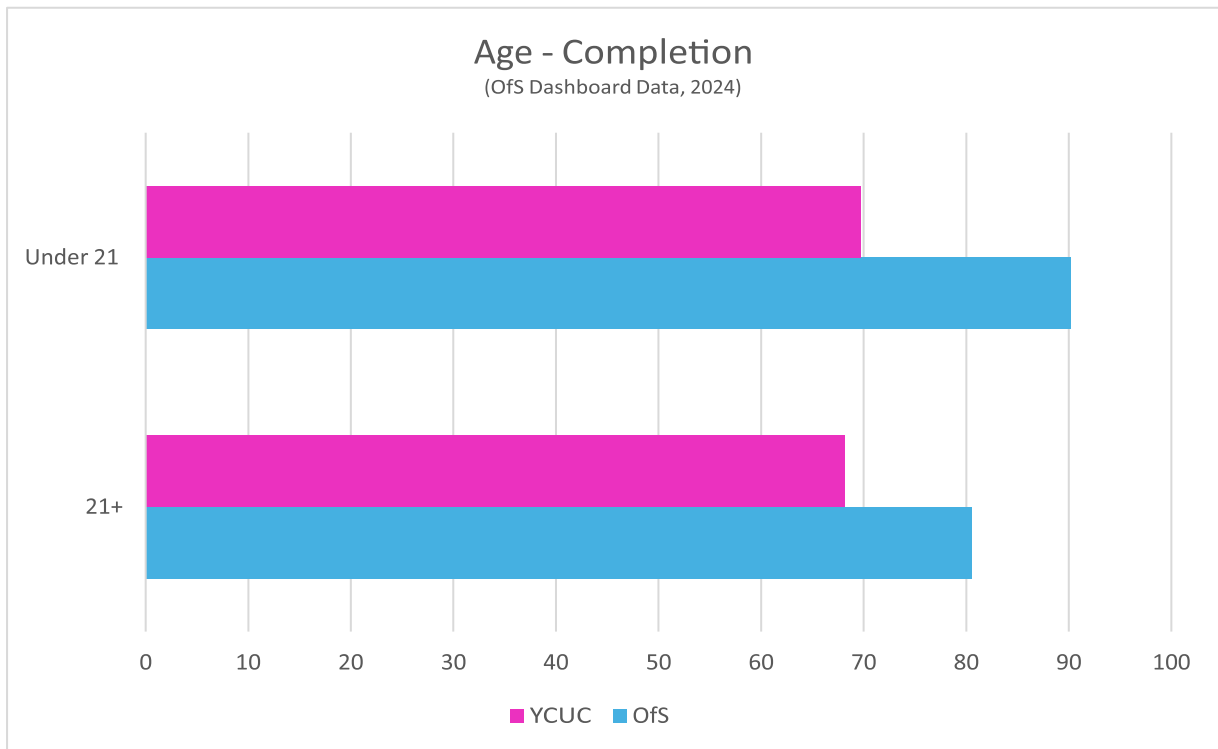


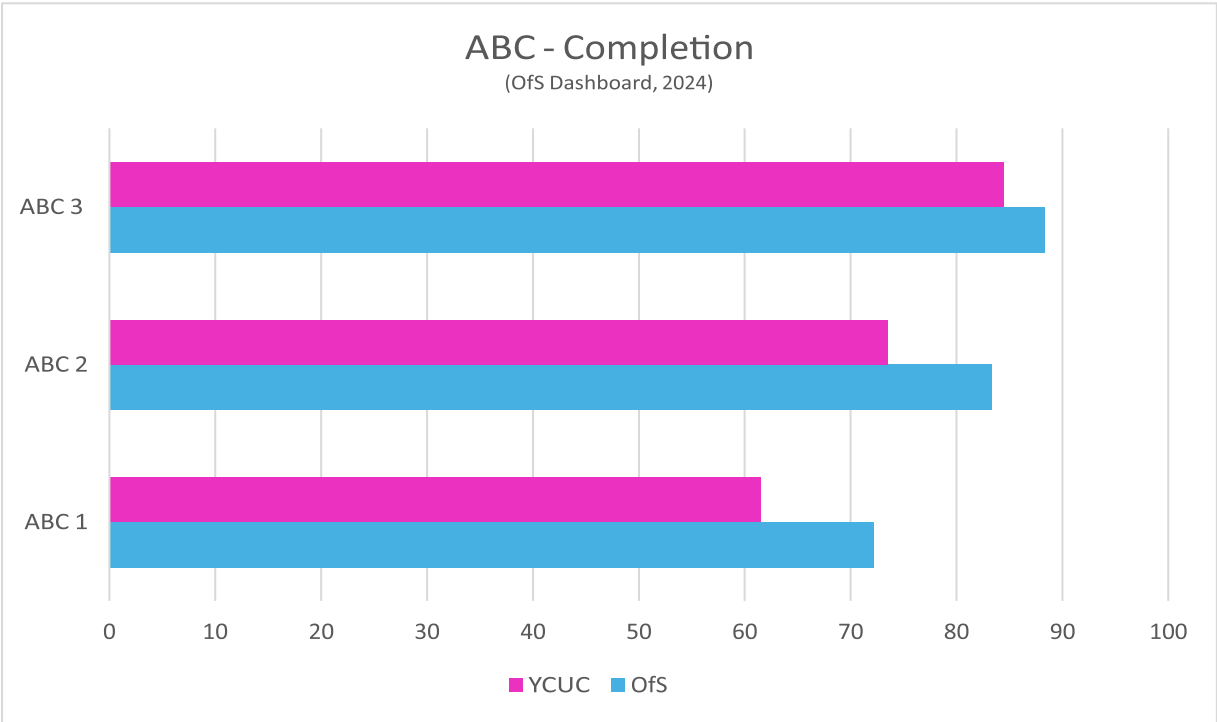
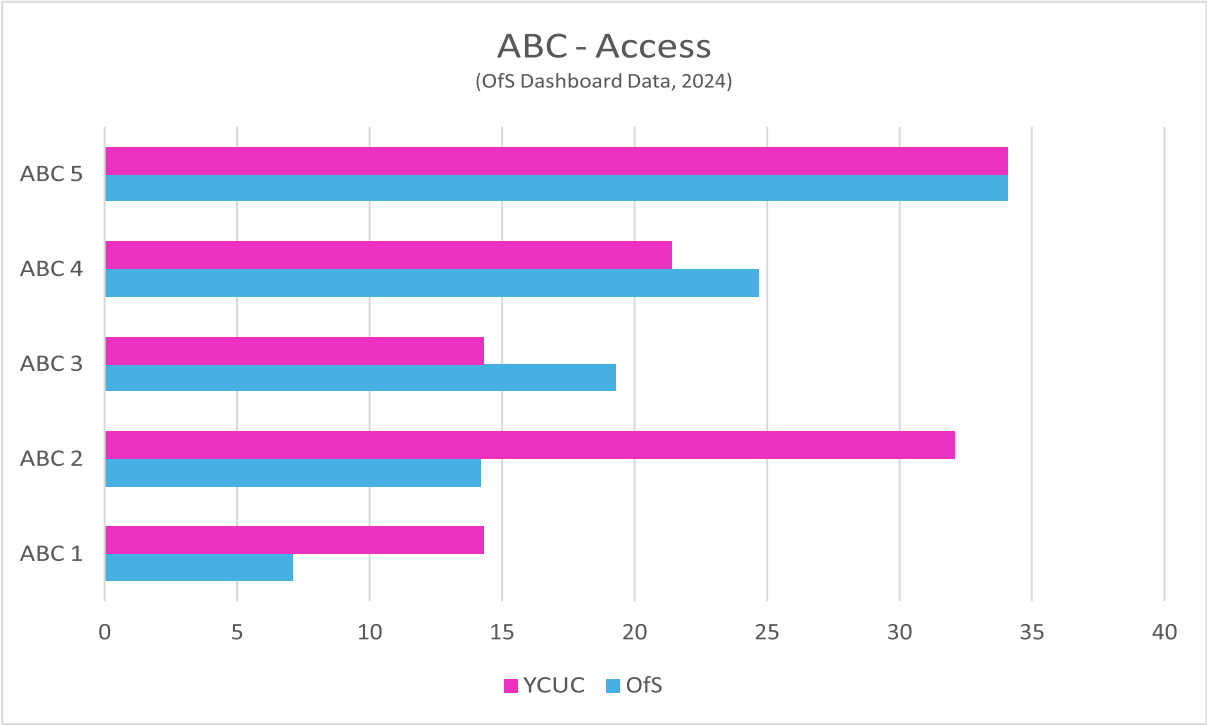


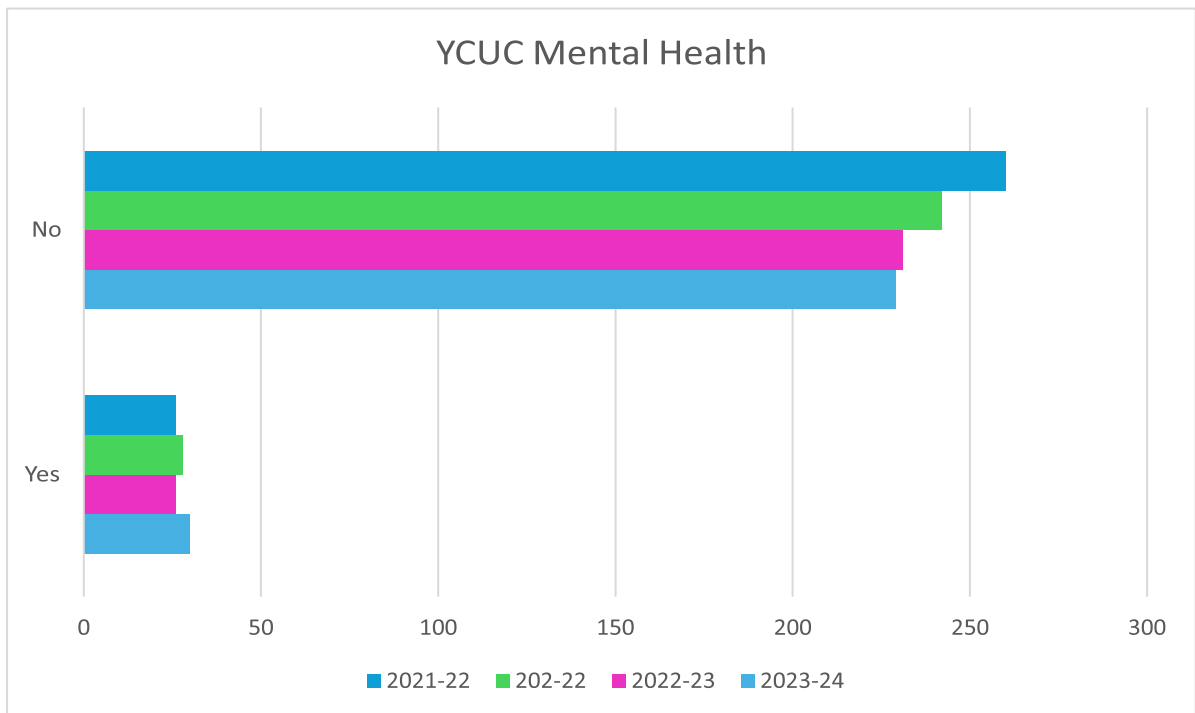
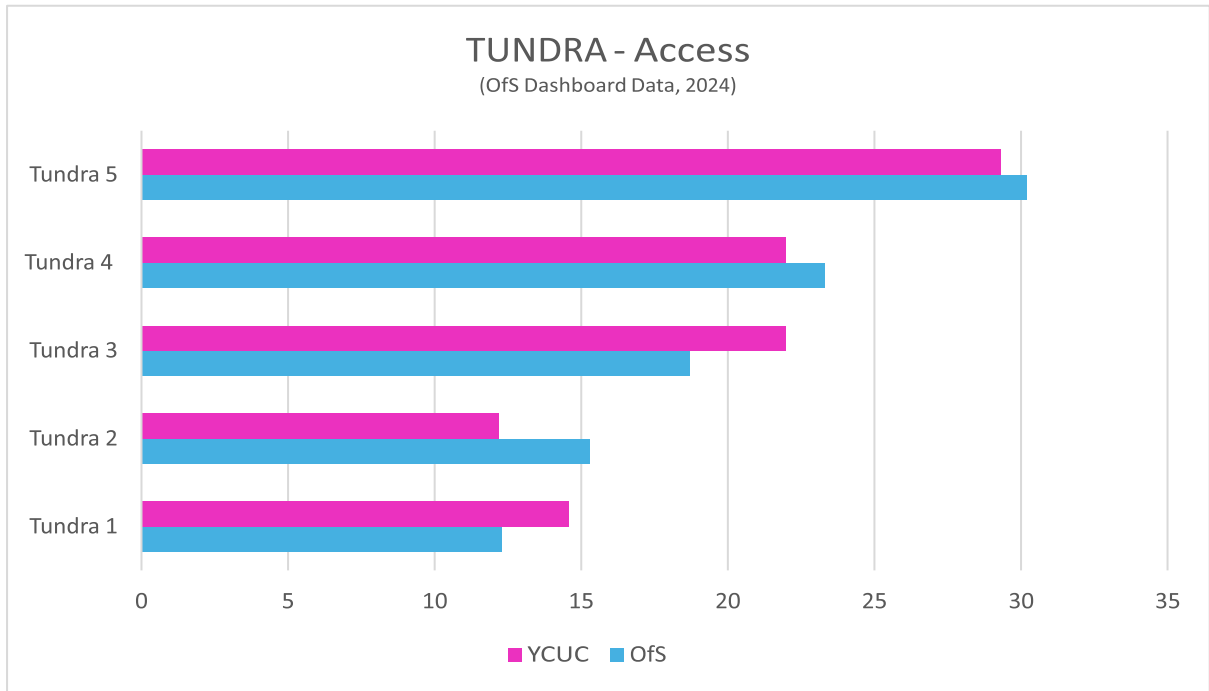


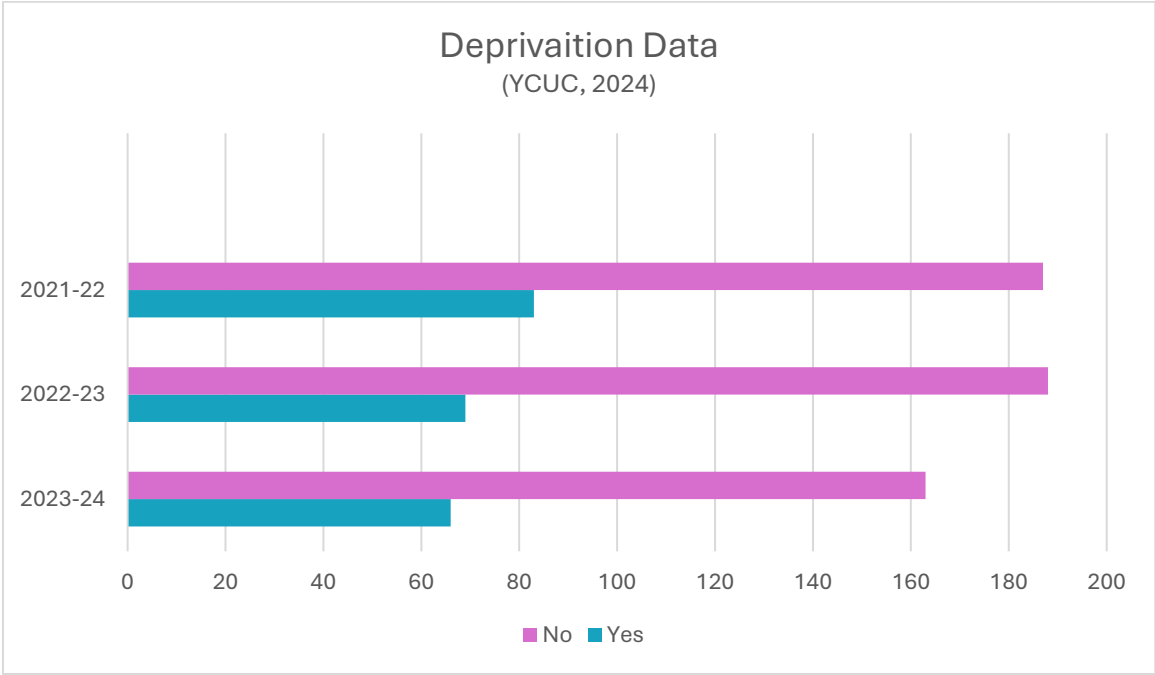












Results

Based on analysis the following objectives and risks were identified, forming the foundation for the intervention strategies outlined in the document above.



Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: York College

Provider UKPRN: 10007709

Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

We will not raise fees annually for new entrants

Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	BA Film Production will include an additional fee element in year 1 only to cover the cost of personal equipment require to study the course to the value of £1,200 increasing the year 1 fee to £8,400	N/A	8400
Foundation degree	FD in Media Makeup, special effects and Hair design will include an additional fee element in year 1 to cover the cost of the personal equipment required to study the course to the value of £1,000 increasing the year 1 fee to £8,200	N/A	8200
Foundation year/Year 0 (classroom based)	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (non-classroom based)	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND		N/A	7200
CertHE/DipHE		N/A	7200
Postgraduate ITT		N/A	7200
Accelerated degree		N/A	8640
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2025-26

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (classroom based)	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (non-classroom based)	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	3600
Foundation degree		N/A	3600
Foundation year/Year 0 (classroom based)	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (non-classroom based)	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	Reduction in fee to support recruitment to STEM and IoT programmes in construction. We have raised the fee inline with HN Engineering programmes. In addition delivery has moved from a 18month - 2year delivery model	N/A	2875
HNC/HND	Reduction in fee to support recruitment to STEM and IoT programmes in engineering	N/A	3100
CertHE/DipHE		N/A	3600
Postgraduate ITT		N/A	3600
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2025-26

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (classroom based)	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (non-classroom based)	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: York College

Provider UKPRN: 10007709

Investment summary

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

Notes about the data:

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

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

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

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

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

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£34,000	£34,000	£34,000	£35,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£55,000	£55,000	£56,000	£59,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£6,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (£)	£34,000	£34,000	£34,000	£35,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (as % of HFI)	14.9%	14.0%	13.2%	13.0%
Access activity investment	Total access investment funded from HFI (£)	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£13,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)	£22,000	£22,000	£22,000	£22,000
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£45,000	£45,000	£45,000	£48,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£10,000	£10,000	£11,000	£11,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (£)	£55,000	£55,000	£56,000	£59,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)	24.1%	22.6%	21.7%	21.9%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)	2.2%	2.1%	1.9%	1.9%

[illegible]

	PTP_11														
	PTP_12														

https://accessandparticipationplans.officeforstudents.org.uk/accessplansdownloads/2528/York%20College_2025-26_V1_10007709.pdf