

Colchester Institute

Access and Participation Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

Introduction and strategic aim

Colchester Institute is a large general further education college based in North Essex with campuses located in Colchester and Braintree and additional outreach Centres in Harwich and Clacton-on-Sea. Colchester Institute has a history of delivering higher education courses for over 50 years and established the brand 'University Centre Colchester (UCC)' in 2016 under the auspices of the department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to group together its higher education provision.

Colchester Institute specialises in the provision of technical and professional education and training from levels 1 – 7 and has a strong widening participation focus. The College's mission is **to support its local communities and to transform lives through the development of technical, professional, and personal knowledge and skills**. It is the organisation's goal **to offer a responsive curriculum, mapped to local and national skills priorities that meets the skills needs of individuals, organisations, the economy, and the environment**.

The organisation looks to do this whilst simultaneously offering **a curriculum that is inclusive by level, subject, provision type and delivery mode** with the ambition of **eliminating achievement gaps for learners with SEND or by ethnicity, gender, and age**.

Our higher education provision is a relatively small part of the wider Colchester Institute offer, having reduced in recent years and having gone from being predominantly a provider of social and creative arts programmes to being increasingly focused on employer-informed professional programmes, with a large percentage of students on apprenticeship or part-time employer-sponsored programmes.

Colchester Institute is based in the local authority area of 'Colchester' and recruits the majority of its undergraduate students from a 30-mile radius of Colchester.

Our curriculum is currently made up of HNC, HND, Cert HE, Dip HE, Cert Ed, PGCE and Degree Top-Up courses as well as of a handful of more traditional three-year Honours degree programmes.

For the 2024/25 academic year we anticipate having approximately 300 learners (210 FTEs) on full-time, part-time or apprenticeship programmes covering Business and Management: Construction, Counselling, Early Years, Engineering and Teacher Training. Further programmes in Fine Art, Policing and Digital Film Production are on teach-out, the latter two until Summer 2025 and Fine Art until Summer 2026.

Our programmes blend academic study with the opportunity for workplace (and workplace-style) experience which allows students the opportunity to gain valuable skills while working towards nationally recognised and valued higher education qualifications.

Our approach to equality of opportunity encompasses several key initiatives:

Widening Access: We actively work to remove barriers to entry by looking to provide tailored support and information. We collaborate with local schools and other stakeholders to ensure potential students are aware of the opportunities available to them in their own locality.

Tailored support and interventions: We recognise that every student has unique strengths and challenges. We therefore look to provide comprehensive support services and targeted interventions to address individual needs. Our aim is to ensure that every student receives the support and guidance necessary to succeed academically and personally.

Inclusive learning environment: We look to foster a welcoming learning environment where all students feel valued, respected and supported. We promote equality and diversity through inclusive teaching practices, student support services and a commitment to addressing individual needs.

Employer Engagement: We actively collaborate with employers and industry professionals with regard to course development and providing meaningful opportunities for students. By creating strong partnerships we provide access to industry-relevant experiences that enhance employability and pathways to successful careers.

We are dedicated to providing an opportunity to all learners, regardless of their background to access, succeed and progress from higher education.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Utilising the Access and Participation Data Dashboard (provided by the Office for Students), our own internal data analysis, and the equality of opportunity risk register (EORR) we have undertaken a detailed analysis of performance of all stages of the student lifecycle.

A detailed breakdown of this analysis can be found in Annex A, 'Assessment of Performance'.

Important Note: Our self-assessment of performance was undertaken prior to the 1st July 2024 due to the required submission date for this report. During the finalisation and approval process of this report new official widening participation statistics were released by the Office for Students. Although the timing of this release was after the original self-assessment had taken place it was agreed that we would include any significant changes to performance or narrative into the review where possible and be used when setting targets and milestones. Such updates are highlighted within Annex A and are evident in our target setting later in this plan.

Access

The Access and Participation Data Dashboard shows that historically the institutions primary type of provision has been full-time undergraduate study (67% of new students in 2021-22). When analysing recruitment trends against data within the data dashboard, Colchester Institute was found to recruit above national trends for mature learners (8.7 percentage points above national average), those with a reported disability (4.7 percentage points above national average), students from Tundra quintiles 1 and 2 (combined 29.2 percentage points above national average), students eligible for free school meals (4.7 percentage points above national average) and students from ABCS quintiles 1 and 2 (combined 31.5 percentage points above the national average).

One area where Colchester Institute was below the national average was ethnicity, as the comparison below highlights.

	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
UCC (21-22)	88.50%	2.44%	3.14%	4.88%	1.04%
National Rates (21-22)	73.00%	12.00%	8.00%	5.00%	2.00%

However, upon closer inspection with data taken from the local population census (2021) recruitment was found to be in line with the demographics of the local area (see below). As previously stated, the very large majority of students are drawn from within 30 miles of Colchester.

	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Colchester	87.02%	5.14%	3.46%	2.91%	1.48%
Tendring	96.20%	1.21%	0.61%	1.61%	0.36%
Babergh	96.67%	0.95%	0.54%	1.46%	0.37%
Braintree	94.66%	1.65%	1.22%	1.94%	0.52%
Maldon	96.86%	1.12%	0.36%	1.35%	0.32%

Upon initial review, access to our full-time provision was not seen as a significant risk to equality of opportunity.

However, as discussed earlier in this plan our curriculum has undergone significant change in recent years with the volume of full-time and part-time undergraduate students decreasing and the percentage of learners on apprenticeship programmes increasing. This is evident in the Office for Students size and shape provision data dashboard (below):

Type of provision	Level of study	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	4 year aggregate	
Full-time	Full-time (total)	390	290	260	110	1,050	
	All undergraduates	380	280	250	100	1,010	
	All other undergraduate	190	130	110	20	450	
	Other undergraduate level 4	90	50	90	10	230	
	Other undergraduate level 5+	110	80	20	10	230	
	First degree	190	150	140	80	560	
	All postgraduates	10	10	10	10	40	
	PGCE	10	10	10	10	40	
	Part-time	Part-time (total)	60	90	50	120	310
		All undergraduates	50	70	40	90	250
All other undergraduate		50	60	30	90	220	
Other undergraduate level 4		40	50	20	80	190	
Other undergraduate level 5+		10	10	10	0	30	
First degree		10	10	10	10	40	
All postgraduates		10	20	10	20	60	
PGCE		10	10	10	10	30	
Postgraduate taught Masters		[DPL]	10	0	10	20	
Apprenticeship		Apprenticeship (total)	120	90	110	110	430
	All undergraduates	100	90	80	70	350	
	Credit or modules	20	10	30	40	90	

We are currently anticipating this trend to continue, and for Higher or Degree Apprentices to make up close to 50% of our undergraduate intake in 2024/25, and for them to become our largest student type over the duration of this Access and Participation Plan.

Data regarding Apprenticeship learners was more limited within the Access and Participation Data Dashboard. However, during our analysis of performance, we did identify discrepancies with the diversity of both our part-time and apprenticeship cohorts when compared to the full-time student body.

Although we are proud of our historic records regarding attracting and recruiting students from a widening participation background, our current apprenticeship offering is centred on accommodating apprentices referred to UCC by their employer. There is concern over the impact that recruitment which is mainly driven by third party referrals could have on our student profile in the future.

As an example, 30.1% of students who commenced a full-time course in 2022-23 reported they had a disability (OFS WPDD). Data below shows this value to be noticeably decreased for learners on an apprenticeship, although this has risen in recent years and is currently above the national average.

2019/20 (OFS WPDD)	2020/21 (OFS WPDD)	2021/22 (OFS WPDD)	2022/23 (OFS WPDD)	2023/24 (Internal Data)
11.9%	10.3%	4.3%	18.8%	15.9%

It has also been identified internally that apprentice students with learning support needs have self-declared or come forward for diagnostic opportunities late in the academic year. Feedback from mentors suggest this is due to concerns over stigmatisation and the impact it may have on their employment or with peers. We have witnessed this before with traditional adult learners, but we have now recognised a need for a separate approach for informing prospective apprenticeship learners, and their employers, of the services available to them, and removing any perceived stigmatisation relating to receiving additional support, whilst studying in Higher Education. This will be targeted under Intervention Strategy 3.

On Course Outcomes - Continuation, Completion and Attainment

Our analysis shows there to be greater risks to equality of opportunity during the 'on-course' elements of the student lifecycle in comparison to gaining access to the provision. Due to reasons documented in Annex B we have chosen to focus our Access and Participation Plan on improving continuation and attainment rates for on-course support.

Continuation

Overall continuation rates have been on a positive trajectory for all student groups from 2017-18 through to 2020-21. The updating of the OFS Access and Participation Data Dashboard in July 2024 showed a drop in continuation rates for all students at Colchester Institute. The dip witnessed in 2021-22 (post Covid) was reflected in national rates, and internal data suggests this will be redressed during the 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic years.

The official data sets to quantify the level of improvement expected will not be released until 2025 and 2026 respectively. To safeguard our targets, we propose to set dual targets for targeted groups which will look to reduce the gap in opportunity within the institution, but also ensure continuation rates are in-line with the sector.

Based on our analysis of performance, which can be found in Annex A, we propose to target the following learners:

- Students with a declared disability
- Students entitled to free school meals
- Young learners

Colchester Institute has implemented several initiatives in recent years to improve continuation for its full-time learners. Some of these were included in our 2020-2025 Access and Participation Plan, and some are in addition to those commitments. Internal data shows that positive improvements can be tracked since their implementation, and that the college is on target to have continuation rates for mature learners above the national average for both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 academic years. **It is therefore the intention to build on and continue these interventions within this plan, with our intervention strategies built around providing access to additional and enhanced academic and personal support. We will also look to expand these services to apprenticeship students where applicable.**

Due to the interconnections between continuation, completion, and attainment we will be targeting all the above groups under Intervention Strategy 1.

Attainment

Attainment rates at both Colchester Institute and nationally dropped significantly in 2021-22 for most student groups. This appears to be a delayed impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the relinquishing of pandemic related no-detriment policies across the sector.

Rates at Colchester Institute bounced back in 2022-23, although not quite to pre-pandemic levels. Nationally attainment rates continued to drop from a peak which reached its apex during the Covid period, and more specifically the 2020-21 academic year.

There is an expectation that rates will increase nationally over the lifetime of the plan, and therefore to safeguard our targets we propose to reduce the gap in opportunity within the institution, but also ensure attainment rates become more in line with the sector.

Based on our analysis of performance, which can be found in Annex A, we propose to target the following learners:

- Young learners

Due to the interconnections between continuation, completion, and attainment we will be targeting the above group under Intervention Strategy 1.

Progression

Due to the size and shape of its provision there is limited data regarding progression for Colchester Institute in the Access and Participation Data Dashboard. What data is available shows that progression rates for mature learners have been increasing from 2018-19 to 2021-22, a trend that is opposite to the sector. It also shows that the drop-in progression rates seen nationally in 2020-21 was not replicated at Colchester Institute.

The impact of the Covid-pandemic is visible when reviewing data for 2021-22 both at institution and national level, especially for young learners.

Progression rates for mature learners rose to being 7.4 percentage points above the national average in 2021-22, however a significant gap in progression rates has developed for young learners, both internally and nationally.

Based on our analysis of performance, which can be found in Annex A, we propose to target the following learners:

- Young learners
- Students with a declared disability

We will be targeting all the above groups under Intervention Strategy 2.

How we will support sector wide risks

Supporting schools to raise pre-16 attainment.

We are working to raise the attainment levels of those who have not achieved good passes at level 2 by the age of 16. The work of our outreach teams supports pre-16 attainment through, among other things, hosting visits to the campus of pre-16 pupils to raise aspirations, careers fayres in schools and parent information sessions covering attainment requirements for post 16 pathways.

Colchester Institute offers an extensive breadth of provision that raises English and maths attainment for learners who did not achieve Grade 4 passes, pre-16. We offer vocational study programmes and apprenticeships at multiple levels (entry level to level 7) that meet a wide range of student interests, local skills needs and in areas most likely to lead to positive progression and employment according to market intelligence.

We have high academic ambitions for all learners and strive to offer an accessible and inclusive programme of maths and English learning, building on previous teaching and learning to enable students to continue to improve their grades whilst in tertiary education. As GCSE remains the most recognised L2 literacy and numeracy qualification offering students a wider choice when applying for employment or further study, the majority of 16-18 study programme learners have the opportunity to continue GCSE (33% study GCSE Maths and 31% GCSE English 2023-24) with the ambition to at least raise a grade each year of study. Approximately 200 young students pursue other courses to improve their literacy and/or numeracy, for example, Functional Skills.

National employer surveys indicate that communication and problem solving skills are essential skills, and the world economic forum identifies literacy and numeracy as key skills. These are the focus of the GCSE curriculum, together with the development of resilience. Study of GCSE also contributes to developing the skills priorities of basic English, Maths and soft skills identified as a need in local skills and improvement plan.

The 16-19 GCSE disadvantage grade gap widened in 2020 and 2021 and has continued to widen 2023-2024. Colchester Institute is committed to addressing social disadvantage through continuing to offer students who have yet to achieve a grade 4 in GCSE English and Maths, opportunities to progress and improve life chances. Post Covid, Colchester Institute has continued to demonstrate continuous improvement in GCSE Maths and English progress. 2022-2023 saw the college achieve 1.7% higher than the national average for students raising their maths grades from 3 to a 4. Since 2021 over 6,000 learners have had the chance to demonstrate progress in GCSE and achievement has consistently remained higher than the national average.

GCSE Maths Entrants

Academic Year	No of students	Colchester Institute Achievement Rate	National Achievement Rate
2021/22	1,081	82.4%	78.1%
2022/23	1,161	83.7%	80.1%
2023/24	1,250	86.2%	80.1%

GCSE English Entrants

Academic Year	No of students	Colchester Institute Achievement Rate	National Achievement Rate
2021/22	897	82.6%	80.8%
2022/23	985	81.7%	79.9%
2023/24	1,194	83.6%	79.9%

Through providing opportunities for significant numbers of students to improve their GCSE grades, we are assisting in addressing the impact of poor pre-16 attainment in England.

How we will expand and promote diverse and flexible pathways and provision

Significant work has taken place in recent years to ensure our provision is accessible through offering a diverse collection of qualification types and attendance patterns. As of September 2024, our curriculum only included one full-time, three-year degree programme, that was not also available as a different qualification type or via different modes of attendance.

In the past few years, we have widened our apprenticeship offerings introduced Degree Apprenticeships in Business & Management and Engineering, whilst we are scheduled to launch Degree Apprenticeships in Construction Management and Teacher Training in 2024/25. We have re-positioned to offer level 4 and 5 qualifications with progression opportunities rather than standard BA or BSc programmes and have recently developed a new Certificate of Higher Education in Construction Skills in collaboration with our awarding partner the University of East Anglia. The course, which was designed in collaboration with regional and national employers from the sector, is envisioned to be our first step in offering specialised, flexible and transferable micro-credentials for the Construction industry.

Our undergraduate programmes have a long tradition of offering intensified course delivery hours, designed with the intention of limiting the number of days that students are required to be on campus and providing individual flexibility to students to organise and prioritise their own self-directed study, part-time employment and other personal responsibilities.

Despite actions already taken we continue to be committed to diversifying our provision of higher education qualifications to cater for the diverse needs of our students and the sectors we serve.

Over the life of our access and participation plan we intend to continue to increase the number of higher-level technical qualifications (which could include some which are formally recognised as HTQs), micro qualifications, level 4 and 5 programmes and degree apprenticeships that we offer. We also commit to review the timetabling of such sessions to ensure they are offered at times best suited to our student community.

How we will improve the mental health of our students

Colchester Institute has a well-established wellbeing and safeguarding support network, designed to support both 16-19 students, adult learners and those studying on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. This includes trained professionals including counsellors.

As a further education college, which does not offer any residential accommodation to students, we have recognised that there is a gap in our out of hours wellbeing support. As a result, we have implemented a Student Assistance Programme for all students on our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes that provides 24/7 access to wellbeing, mental health and safeguarding support. The programme also provides all students with access to additional 1-1 in-person or remote counselling services. **It is our intention to continue with this approach during the lifetime of this Access and Participation Plan.**

As a further education college working with both children and vulnerable adults, we have a range of statutory duties, including those under 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and all staff employed by the college are required to undertake compulsory training on; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Prevent; Safeguarding; Responding to Sexual Harassment and Violence and online safety.

Objectives

Colchester Institute will look to focus on three key objectives for this Access and Participation Plan.

In setting these objectives and targets we will look to recognise the impact of the Covid pandemic on the sector and national data sets by setting two objectives, where appropriate. These will look to address the risks to equality of opportunity between student groups at Colchester Institute and to simultaneously ensure we maintain or improve our performance in relation to national levels.

By undertaking this approach, it is our intention to ensure the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the official datasets does not limit the ambitions of the targets set below.

Our three key objectives are:

- 1) Improvement of on-programme success metrics through enhanced student support
- 2) Improvement of progression rates for young learners on full-time programmes
- 3) Safeguarding of diversity and success of student population as the percentage of apprentices within the student body grows.

Objective 1 - Improvement of on-programme success metrics through enhanced student support

This intervention strategy has been designed to address multiple risks of opportunity within the success (on-course) stage of the student lifecycle. It will look to address continuation, completion, and attainment gaps for the below student groups:

Students with a declared disability

- To reduce the continuation rate gap between full time undergraduate students with and without a declared disability to 0% by 2028-29.
- To increase the continuation rate for full time undergraduate students with a declared disability to the national average by 2028-29.

Students from low-income households

- To reduce the continuation rate gap between full time undergraduate students entitled to Free School Meals (FSMs) and those who are not to 0% by 2028-29.
- To increase the continuation rate for full time undergraduate students entitled to Free School Meals to the national average by 2028-29.

Young Students

- To increase the continuation rate for full time undergraduate young students to the national average by 2028-29.

- Reduce the attainment gap for full time undergraduate young learners to be within 5 percentage points of the national average and within 5 percentage points of mature learners at Colchester Institute by 2028-29.

Objective 2 - Improvement of progression rates of young people on full-time programmes.

This intervention strategy has been designed to address the risk of opportunity at Colchester Institute between young and mature learners. This is the converse to the wider sector position, where progression rates for young learners are higher than for mature learners. It will also look to incorporate an increase in progression rates for students with a declared disability. It will look to focus on:

Young Learners

- Reduce the progression gap between full-time young and mature learners studying at Colchester Institute to be within 10% (reduction of 12.9 percentage points across duration of APP) by 2028-29.
- Reduce the progression gap for young students on full time student to be within 5% of the national average (reduction of 11.3 percentage points over duration of APP) by 2028-29.

Students with a declared disability

- Reduce the progression rate gap between students with and without a declared disability who study on a full-time course at Colchester Institute to 0% by 2028-29.
- Reduce the progression rate gap for students with a declared disability to national averages to be within 4 percentage points of the national average by 2028-29.

Objective 3 - Safeguarding of diversity and success of student population as curriculum moves to being pre-dominantly apprenticeship based.

This intervention strategy has been designed to pro-actively acknowledge a potential risk to opportunity before it becomes evident in data metrics.

We will look to recruit apprenticeship learners with a similar diversity of background through promotion and education of the opportunities we offer to local employers.

Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Intervention Strategy 1: Enhanced on Course Support to Address Disadvantage.

Objectives and targets

This intervention strategy has been designed to address multiple risks of opportunity within the success (on-course) stage of the student lifecycle. It will look to address continuation, completion and attainment gaps for the below student groups:

Students with a declared disability

- To reduce the continuation rate gap between full time undergraduate students with and without a declared disability to 0% by 2028-29.
- To increase the continuation rate for full time undergraduate students with a declared disability to the national average by 2028-29.

Students from low-income households

- To reduce the continuation rate gap between full time undergraduate students entitled to Free School Meals (FSMs) and those who are not to 0% by 2028-29.
- To increase the continuation rate for full time undergraduate students entitled to Free School Meals to the national average by 2028-29.

Young Students

- To increase the continuation rate for full time undergraduate young students to the national average by 2028-29.
- Reduce the attainment gap for full time undergraduate young learners to be within 5 percentage points of the national average and within 5 percentage points of mature learners at Colchester Institute by 2028-29.

Risks to equality of opportunity

This intervention strategy will look to address the following risks of equality of opportunity.

Students with a declared disability

- There is an 18.7 percentage point gap in continuation rates between full time undergraduate students with and without a declared disability (Source: OFS APDA 21-22).
- There is a 22.91 percentage point gap in continuation rates between full time undergraduate students at Colchester Institute to the national average (Source: OFS APDA 21-22).

Students from low-income households

- There is an 18.9 percentage point gap in continuation rates between full time undergraduate students entitled to Free School Meals (FSMs) and those who are not. (Source: OFS APDA 21-22).
- There is a 19.1 percentage point gap in continuation rates between full time undergraduate students entitled to Free School Meals at Colchester Institute to the national average. (Source: OFS APDA 21-22).

Young Students

- There is an 11.4 percentage point gap in continuation rates for full time undergraduate young learners studying at Colchester Institute to the national average. (Source: OFS APDA 21-22).
- There is an 18-percentage point gap in attainment rates for full time undergraduate young learners to mature learners. (Source: OFS APDA 22-23).
- There is a 17.5 percentage point gap in attainment rates for full time undergraduate learners studying at Colchester Institute to the national average. (Source: OFS APDA 22-23).

Related objectives and targets

The impact of this intervention strategy is expected to increase continuation and attainment rates for young learners and those with a declared disability. It is expected that they will also have an impact on interventions strategy 2 and its associated targets related to progression for these learner groups.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
<p>1.1</p> <p>Diagnostic Services</p>	<p>We will expand our support of providing access to learning support diagnostic services to include all learners, including those on an apprenticeship programme.</p> <p>Additional promotion of the service will be added to induction programmes and highlighted in apprenticeship sign-up activity and early 1-1 to encourage earlier identification of barriers to success for mature learners returning to education.</p>	<p>Funding for learners that may have an unidentified learning support need to receive a formal diagnosis.</p> <p>Cost: £20k</p>	<p>Early identification of previously undetected learning support needs.</p> <p>Reduction in diagnosed but undeclared learning support requirements.</p> <p>Increase in students accessing appropriate 1-1 support.</p> <p>Increase in retention and completion rates.</p> <p>Increase in attainment rates.</p>	<p>IS-2.</p> <p>Improved progression through better attainment.</p> <p>Service will be promoted via IS-3.</p>

<p>1.2</p> <p>Financial Support</p>	<p>We will redesign our Hardship Fund and look to re-promote it as an Engagement Fund aimed at removing preconceived perceptions of its use. The application process will be streamlined and be more geared to enhancing student retention and achievement.</p>	<p>Cost: £40k</p>	<p>Increase in visibility and perception of financial support programmes.</p> <p>Increase in applications for support.</p> <p>Increase in awards made to students.</p> <p>Increase in retention and completion rates.</p> <p>Increase in attainment rates.</p>	<p>Service will be promoted via IS-3.</p>
<p>1.3</p> <p>Student Assistance Programme</p>	<p>We will continue to offer an HE specific Student Assistance Programme to learners. Service to offer access to remote wellbeing, safeguarding and financial advice on 24/7 basis.</p>	<p>Cost: £20k</p>	<p>Increase in retention and completion rates.</p> <p>Increase in attainment rates.</p>	<p>Service will be promoted via IS-3.</p>

<p>1.4</p> <p>Extenuating Circumstances</p>	<p>In recognition of the characteristics of our students, and that many will be studying on part-time or apprenticeship modes of study we will adapt our extenuating circumstances policy to allow self-certification as per our awarding bodies' regulations.</p>	<p>Cost: Free</p>	<p>Reduce barriers to students who may not have access to appropriate medical evidence.</p> <p>Increase in retention and completion rates.</p> <p>Increase in attainment rates.</p>	<p>IS-2</p> <p>Improved progression through better attainment.</p> <p>Policy will be promoted via IS-3.</p>
<p>1.5</p> <p>Academic Skills Centre</p>	<p>We will expand the recently established Academic Skills Centre, with the creation of additional on-line study skills and soft skills modules designed to help support students independently and in their own time.</p>	<p>Cost: £50k</p>	<p>Provide access to more specialised academic support to help ease transition and development within HE environment.</p> <p>Increase in retention and completion rates.</p> <p>Increase in attainment rates.</p>	<p>IS-2</p> <p>Improved progression through better attainment.</p> <p>Provision will be promoted via IS-3.</p>

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

Summary of evidence base and rationale

A full breakdown for our reasoning for this intervention strategy can be found in Annex B.

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
1.1 Diagnostic Services	Earlier diagnostics of unknown or undeclared learning difficulties.	Tracking of retention and completion rates for diagnosed students.	Evaluation will be shared annually with UCC Student Council and UCC Academic Board.
1.2 Academic support	Access to additional support. Improved achievement on programme.	We will track achievement rates of apprenticeship students with a declared disability against full time and part time students with the same characteristic who have access to DSA support.	Evaluation will be shared annually with UCC Student Council and UCC Academic Board.
1.3 Financial Support	Increase in applications and awards. Increase in retention and achievement.	Impact survey on awarded students at point of award and 3 months after. Tracking of retention and completion rates for awarded students.	Evaluation will be shared annually with UCC Student Council and UCC Academic Board.
1.4 Student Assistance Programme	Increase in retention and completion rates.	Tracked via student satisfaction survey and service engagement statistics.	Evaluation will be shared annually with UCC Student Council and UCC Academic Board.
1.5 Academic Skills Centre	Better transition to and understanding of HE processes and expectations. Increase in retention and completion rates. Improved achievement on programme.	Student satisfaction surveys. Tracking of participation. Tracking of continuation rates of first year students.	Evaluation will be shared annually with UCC Student Council and UCC Academic Board.

Intervention Strategy 2: Improvement of Progression Rates of Young People on Full-Time Programmes.

Objectives and targets

This intervention strategy has been designed to address risks of opportunity within the progression (post-course) stage of the student lifecycle. It will look to address progression gaps for the below student groups:

Young Learners

- Reduce the progression gap between full-time young and mature learners studying at Colchester Institute to be within 10% (reduction of 12.9 percentage points across duration of APP) by 2028-29.
- Reduce the progression gap for young students on full time student to be within 5% of the national average (reduction of 11.3 percentage points over duration of APP) by 2028-29.

Students with a declared disability

- Reduce the progression rate gap between students with and without a declared disability who study on a full-time course at Colchester Institute to 0% by 2028-29.
- Reduce the progression rate gap for students with a declared disability to national averages to be within 4.0% of the national average by 2028-29.

Risks to equality of opportunity

This intervention strategy will look to address the following risks of equality of opportunity.

Young Learners

- There is a 22.9 percentage point gap between full-time young and mature learners studying at Colchester Institute. (Source: OFS APDA 21-22).
- There is a 16.3 percentage point gap between young students studying on a full-time undergraduate course compared to the national average. (Source: OFS APDA 21-22).

Students with a declared disability

- There is a 5.4 percentage point gap between students with and without a declared disability who study on a full-time course at Colchester Institute. (Source: OFS APDA 21-22).
- There is a 8.1 percentage point gap between students with a declared disability studying at Colchester Institute to the national average. (Source: OFS APDA 21-22).

Related objectives and targets

The impact of this intervention strategy is expected to increase progression rates for young learners and those with a declared disability. It is expected that they will also have an impact on interventions strategy 1 and its associated targets related to continuation and attainment for these learner groups.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
<p>2.1</p> <p>Diagnostic Services</p> <p>(This is a cross intervention strategy see 1.1)</p>	<p>We will expand our support of providing access to learning support diagnostic services to include all learners, including those on an apprenticeship programme.</p> <p>Additional promotion of the service will be added to induction programmes and highlighted in apprenticeship sign-up activity and early 1-1 to encourage earlier identification of barriers to success for mature learners returning to education.</p>	<p>Funding for learners that may have an unidentified learning support need to receive a formal diagnosis.</p> <p>Cost: £20k</p>	<p>Increased access to specialised support.</p> <p>Increase in retention and completion rates.</p> <p>Increase in attainment rates.</p> <p>Increase in progression rates for students with diagnosed disability.</p>	<p>IS-1.</p> <p>Improved continuation and attainment rates.</p> <p>Service will be promoted via IS-3.</p>
<p>2.2</p> <p>Extenuating Circumstances</p> <p>(This is a cross intervention strategy see 1.4)</p>	<p>In recognition of the characteristics of our students, and that many will be studying on part-time or apprenticeship modes of study we will adapt our extenuating circumstances policy to allow self-certification as per our awarding bodies regulations.</p>	<p>Cost: Free</p>	<p>Reduce barriers to students who may not have access to appropriate medical evidence.</p> <p>Increase in retention and completion rates.</p> <p>Increase in attainment rates.</p> <p>Increase in progression rates.</p>	<p>IS-1</p> <p>Improved continuation and attainment rates.</p> <p>Policy will be promoted via IS-3.</p>

<p>2.3</p> <p>Academic Skills Centre</p> <p>(This is a cross intervention strategy see 1.5)</p>	<p>We will expand the recently established Academic Skills Centre, with the creation of additional on-line study skills and soft skills modules designed to help support students independently and in their own time.</p>	<p>Cost: £50k</p>	<p>Provide access to more specialised academic support to help ease transition and development within HE environment.</p> <p>Increase in retention and completion rates.</p> <p>Increase in attainment rates.</p> <p>Increase in progression rates.</p>	<p>IS-1</p> <p>Improved continuation and attainment rates.</p> <p>Provision will be promoted via IS-3.</p>
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Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

Summary of evidence base and rationale

A full breakdown for our reasoning for this intervention strategy can be found in Annex B.

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
2.1 Diagnostic Services	Earlier diagnostics of unknown or undeclared learning difficulties.	Tracking of retention and completion rates for diagnosed students.	Evaluation will be shared annually with UCC Student Council and UCC Academic Board.
2.2 Extenuating Circumstances	Access to additional support. Improved achievement on programme.	We will track achievement rates of apprenticeship students with a declared disability against full time and part time students with the same characteristic who have access to DSA support.	Evaluation will be shared annually with UCC Student Council and UCC Academic Board.
2.3 Academic Skills Centre	Increase in applications and awards. Increase in retention and achievement.	Impact survey on awarded students at point of award and 3 months after. Tracking of retention and completion rates for awarded students.	Evaluation will be shared annually with UCC Student Council and UCC Academic Board.

Intervention strategy 3: Redesign of Apprenticeship Information Services

Objectives and targets

Risks to equality of opportunity

This is a pro-active intervention to ensure the change in curriculum to becoming increasing employer and apprenticeship focused does not result in the creation of additional risk to opportunity through losing the historically diverse student community.

We will look to set ambitious targets to see us recruit students from underrepresented groups at a rate in-line with our previous full-time cohorts and above national averages.

Related objectives and targets

- To maintain the percentage of apprenticeship learners who declare a diagnosed disability to be above the national average (currently 15.1%)
- To increase the percentage of apprenticeship learners who declare a diagnosed disability to be the same as those on full-time programmes (currently 30.1%)
- To maintain the percentage of mature apprenticeship learners to be above the national average (currently 72.2%).

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
3.1 Induction Plus Programme	<p>We will increase the resources made available within our Academic Skills Centre and develop an Induction Plus programme that looks to enhance students' awareness of support programmes both pre-registration and during the induction programme.</p> <p>Development of employer focused materials for apprenticeship learners.</p> <p>Enhancement of remote, independently taken study skills resources for learners.</p>	<p>Staff costs of £25k</p>	<p>Increase knowledge and access to services.</p> <p>Increase in retention and completion rates.</p>	<p>Will include promotion of services covered in IS 1 and 2.</p>
3.2 Academic Support	<p>We will provide apprenticeship students with equal 1-1 academic support that would normally be awarded via the Disabled Students Allowance.</p>	<p>Cost: £60k</p>	<p>Increased access to specialised support.</p> <p>Increase in retention and completion rates.</p> <p>Increase in attainment rates.</p> <p>Increase in progression rates for students with diagnosed disability.</p>	<p>IS-1</p> <p>Improved continuation and attainment rates.</p> <p>Service will be promoted via IS-3.</p>

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

Summary of evidence base and rationale

A full breakdown for our reasoning for this intervention strategy can be found in Annex B.

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
3.1 Induction Plus Programme	Earlier diagnostics of unknown or undeclared learning difficulties.	Tracking of retention and completion rates for diagnosed students.	Evaluation will be shared annually with UCC Student Council and UCC Academic Board.
3.2 Academic support	Access to additional support. Improved achievement on programme.	We will track achievement rates of apprenticeship students with a declared disability against full time and part time students with the same characteristic who have access to DSA support.	Evaluation will be shared annually with UCC Student Council and UCC Academic Board.

Whole provider approach

Colchester Institutes higher education provision is delivered through its centralised sub brand University Centre Colchester (UCC). UCC operates within the wider College's management structure, with strategic leadership for both higher and further education provided by the Principal and Chief Executive.

UCC has distinct staffing and accommodation, but also makes use of the College's shared services with senior College management involved in its day-to-day curriculum delivery and management.

The guiding principle of both Colchester Institute and University Centre Colchester is widening access and success in education. Looking to address risks to equality of opportunity is rooted in the College's mission and strategic plan which all staff were involved in redeveloping in 2024.

The management and evaluation of this plan will be largely provided by staff whose roles are dedicated to Higher Education provision, supported by the Principal and Chief Executive and other College leaders.

To ensure a credible whole provider approach we will provide updates and evaluation of progress at meetings across the institution, this includes our UCC Learning and Teaching Committee, UCC Academic Board and Colchester Institute Corporation Board meetings.

In addition, we will provide and updates and progress to the UCC Student Council and provide opportunities for collaborative decision making with our student community.

As an institution we pay due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and all related measures. Equality and diversity training forms an integral part of all staff induction.

Student consultation

We have consulted with a cross-section of current and former University Centre Colchester students regarding their experiences of accessing higher education, both with ourselves and other providers. They have informed views on current services, their impact and visibility to the student community.

Going forward, we will be implementing a new student engagement process for the 2024/25 academic year which includes the creation of a new Student Council. The Student Council will be a formalising of our previous student representative system that will sit within our quality assurances procedures and empower students to have a greater voice on our undergraduate provision. The Student Council will be comprised of student representatives from all course areas and be provided with annual updates on the plan's objectives, targets, millstones, and intervention strategies. The Student Council will be provided with the opportunity to both collaborate with, and challenge, college management staff regarding the plan's implementation and success.

Evaluation of the plan

We will be engaging in an ongoing monitoring and evaluation of our intervention strategies and will continuously reflect on and respond to evaluation findings to improve and develop our practices.

Evaluation will be undertaken by the centralised UCC Academic Services team, and all evaluation will be shared with internal stakeholders through the UCC Academic Board, UCC Student Council and Governing Body.

Student involvement will be important in our evaluation plan, and we will work in partnership with our newly established Student Council on the design and implementation of the evaluation of the objectives, interventions and activities listed in this document.

We have built effective evaluation practice into our strategies by establishing a range of evaluation processes to the individual activities that contribute towards the overall objective of each strategy. We can therefore build up an understanding of which activities are having impact, and which are not.

Overall objectives for the plan will be reviewed through the clear and transparent targets set for each intervention strategy, with all targets linked to official national statistics made available by the Office for Students.

Publication Plan of Evaluation Findings

Publication of the results of evaluation activities will be as follows:

- 1) All in-year evaluation activities generated as part of the evaluation strategies will be reported to both the UCC Student Council and to UCC Academic Board, and onward to Governors as appropriate. A Higher Education link governor receives minutes of the Academic Board.
- 2) Annual summary reviews of the intervention strategies and impact on associated targets will be reported to the Student Council and to Academic Board, and hence to Governors as above.
- 3) Insights gained from evaluation processes, particularly any relating to what interventions are and are not effective will be presented to fellow UK based partners of the University of East Anglia at an annual sharing of good practice conference.

Provision of information to students

Our Access and Participation Plan, fees, financial support, and any associated cost details will be available on the Colchester Institute website.

Students will be provided with information about the college financial support available at the point of application, enrolment and during induction. The information will also be made available on the college website, UCAS, intranet and through internal communications during the academic year.

All students may apply for both the Engagement Fund (previously Hardship Fund) and for support from the Colchester Institute Foundation Trust (CIFT).

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

Analysis of published data sets

Within this annex we identify risks to the equality of opportunity across each stage of the student lifecycle at Colchester Institute. To complete this analysis we have used the following data sources:

- OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard
- OfS Student Outcomes Data Dashboard
- OfS TEF Data Dashboard
- OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR)
- NOMIS (Census 2021)
- Internal Data Sets (2024)
- Internal Student Satisfaction Survey (2024)
- National Student Survey Data (2023 and 2024)

As and when an indicator of risk, as defined by the Office for Students (OfS) Equality of Opportunity Risk Register, is identified it will be noted and tallied for wider consideration at the end of this annex where the level of each risk will be determined.

OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard

Important Note: All tables and data provided below were accurate as of the 1st July 2024. Any updated data released since the 1st July 2024 has not been considered within the assessment of performance due to the required submission date of this report.

Update: During the finalisation and approval process of this report new official widening participation statistics were released by the Office for Students. Although the timing of this release was after the original self-assessment had taken place it was agreed that we would include any significant changes to performance or narrative into the review where possible and be used when setting targets and milestones. Any such updates will be highlighted within the report.

Size and Type of Provision

The Access and Participation Data Dashboard shows that the institution main type of provision is full-time undergraduate study (67%). This is followed by apprenticeships (22%) and part-time undergraduate (12%). All areas will be considered where data is available, but specific attention will be given to full-time undergraduate study due to the size of the provision, and apprenticeships, due to the expected future growth areas of these at the institution.

Level of study	Mode of study	
	Apprenticeship	
All undergraduates	22%	
Level of study	Mode of study	
	Full-time	Part-time
All undergraduates	67%	12%
Other undergraduate	35%	0%
First degree	31%	2%
Undergraduate with postgraduate components	0%	0%

The data available from the Access and Participation Data Dashboard for Colchester Institute suffers from having low denominators. As a consequence, no useful full-time timeline data is published for the following.

Access: Ethnicity

Continuation: Ethnicity

Completion: Ethnicity

Attainment: TUNDRA, Ethnicity, ABCS Quintile and Eligibility for free school meals.

Progression: TUNDRA, Deprivation (IMD 2019), Ethnicity, ABCS Quintile and Eligibility for free school meals.

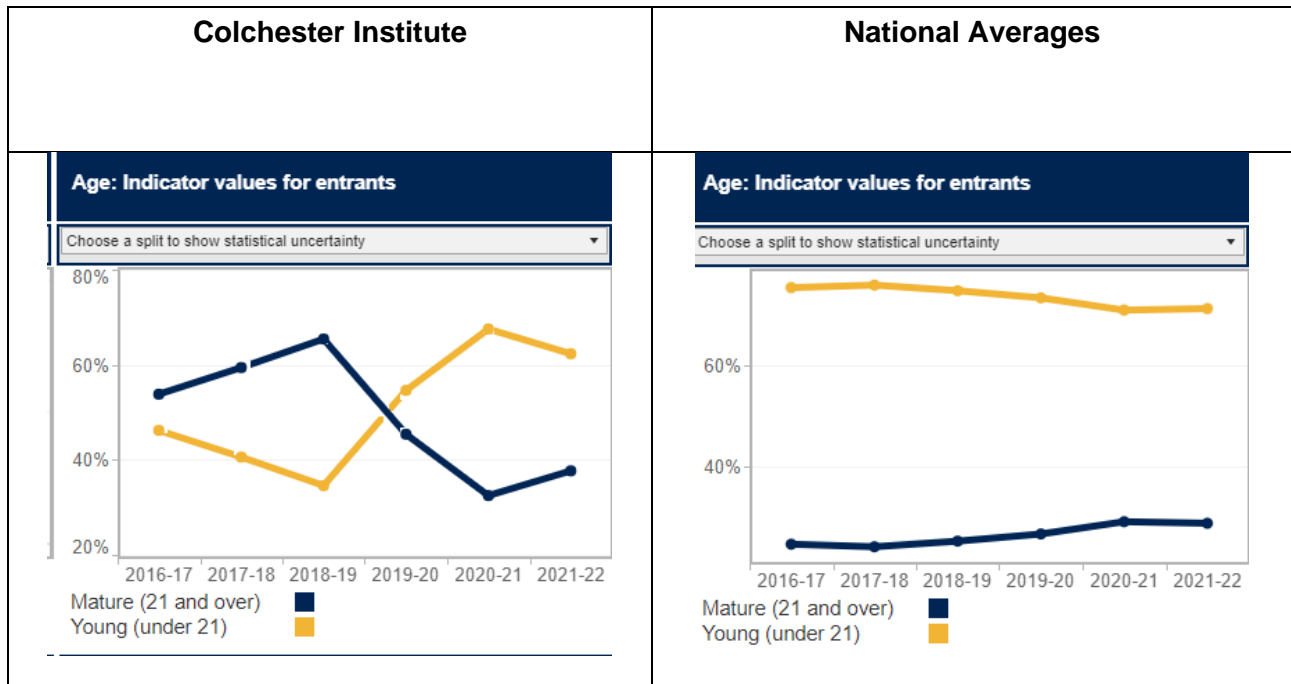
For both part-time and apprenticeship provision only, Access data for age, disability and deprivation (IMD) is deemed to contain meaningful data.

Timeline data

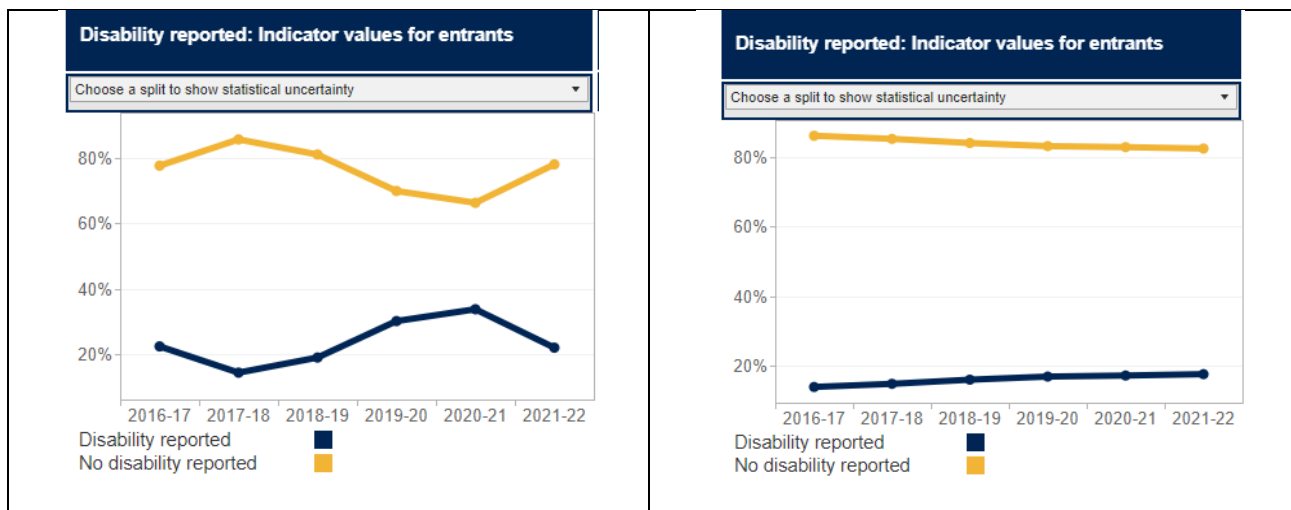
The following conclusions, can however, be drawn from the available timelines.

Access

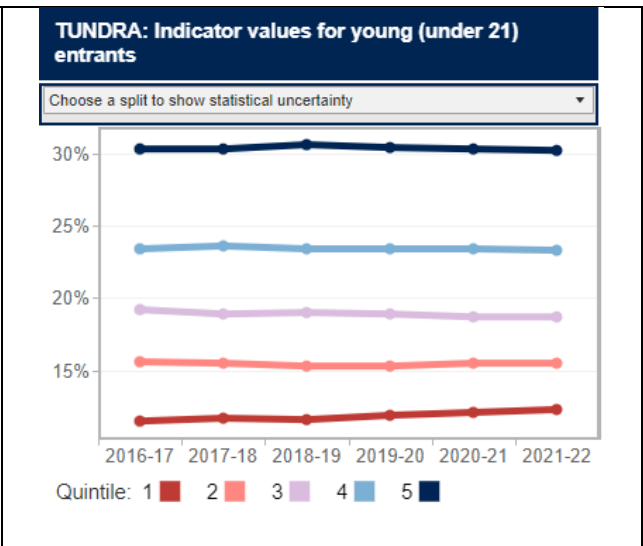
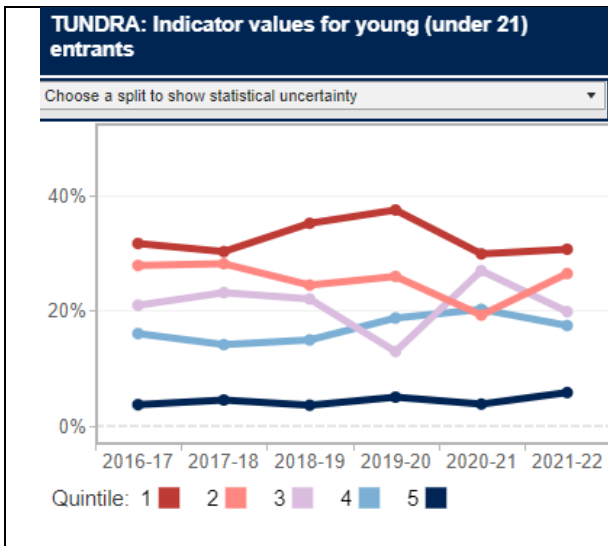
All Undergraduates - Full Time



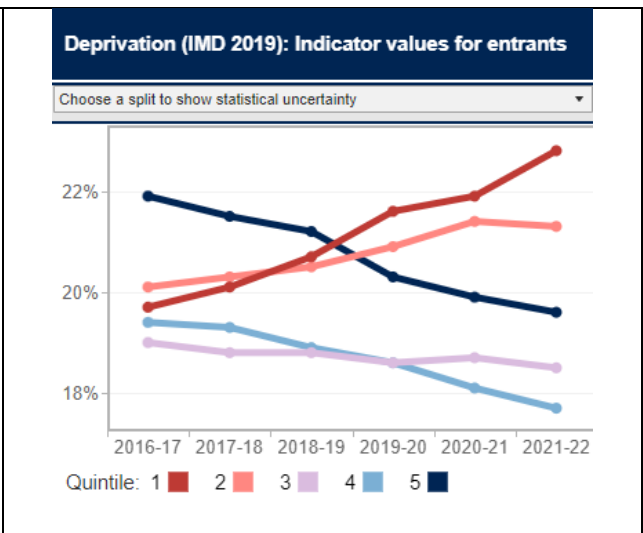
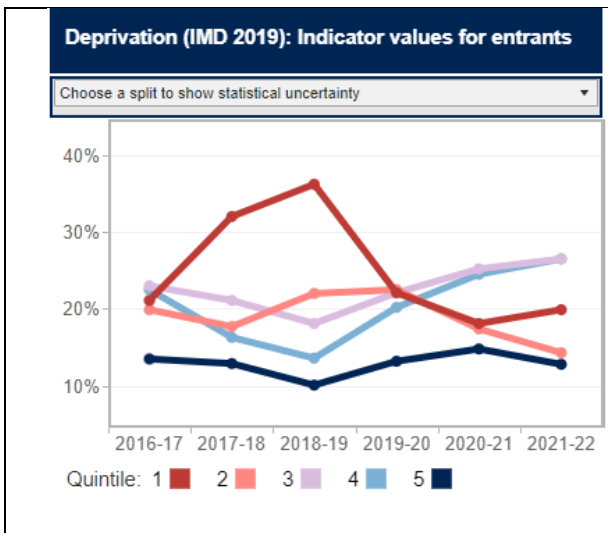
The institution’s recruitment of mature students (37.7%) is **significantly above** the national average (29%) in 2021-22. This trend has continued across the 6 years of data despite a drop between 2018-19 and 2020-21.



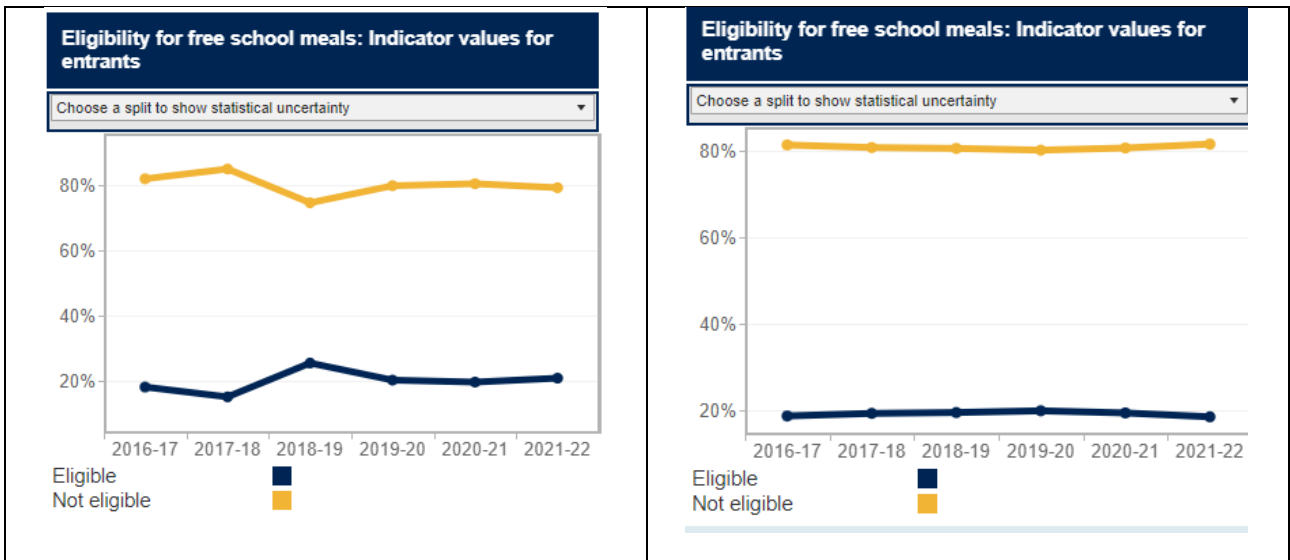
The institution’s recruitment of students with a reported disability (22.1% in 2021-22) has been **consistently above** the national average (17.4% in 2021-22) over the past 6 years. However this did fall in the 2021-22 academic year.



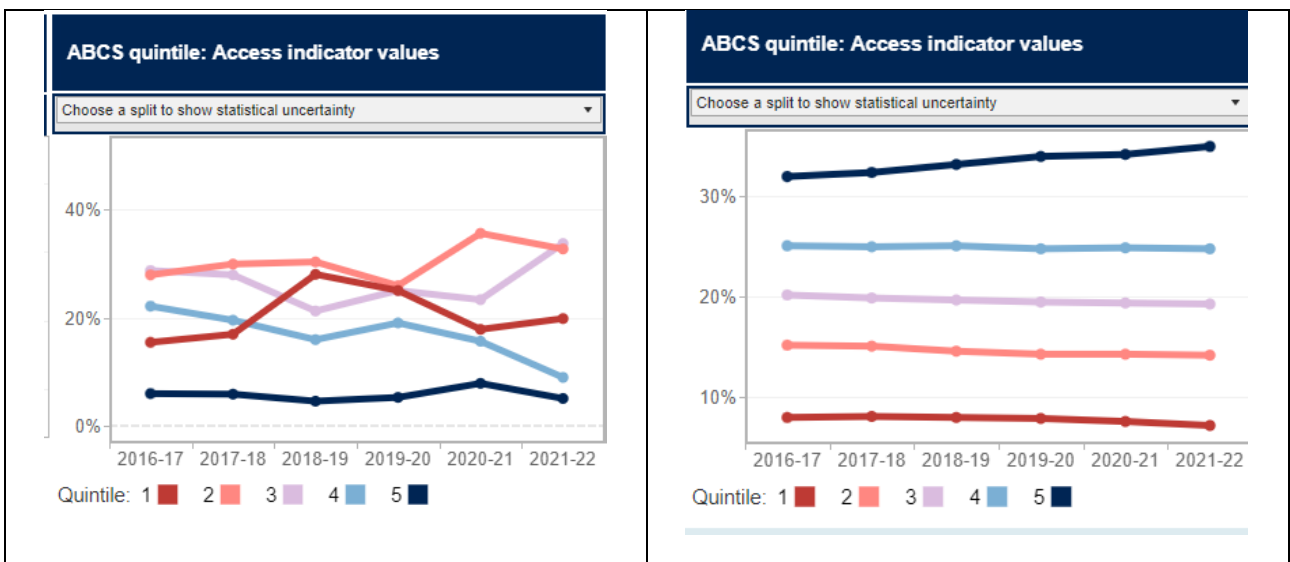
The recruitment of students from quintile 1 and 2 have consistently been **above average** compared to national trends. Quintiles 1 and 2 were first and second in regards of highest percentage of recruited students in 2021-22 achieving 30.6% (compared to the national average of 12.3%) and 26.4% (compared to the national average of 15.5%) respectively.



Historically Colchester Institute has recruited a large number of its applicants from quintiles 1 and 2, peaking at 58.2% in 2018/19. This has dropped in recent years, and this fall can be linked to the ending of its subcontracted provision. In 2021-22 Colchester Institute recruited 34.2% of its provision from quintiles 1 and 2 which was 9.9% **below** the national average.



The institution's recruitment with students who are eligible for free school meals has been in line or **above the national average** for the 6 years of data shown. In 2021-22 this was 22.1% compared to the national average of 17.4%.



The recruitment of students from quintiles 1 and 2 have consistently been **above average** compared to national trends. Quintiles 1 and 2 were second and third in regards of highest percentage of recruited students in 2021-22 achieving 19.8% (compared to the national average of 7%) and 32.7% (compared to the national average of 14%) respectively.

Access - All Undergraduate's F/T - EORR Considerations

The information presented within the Access and Participation Data Dashboard reflects the institution's mission of being a widening participation provider, with recruitment in-line or above national averages in most areas. The only area of real concern was performance of recruiting from areas designated as quintiles 1 and 2 of Deprivation (IMD).

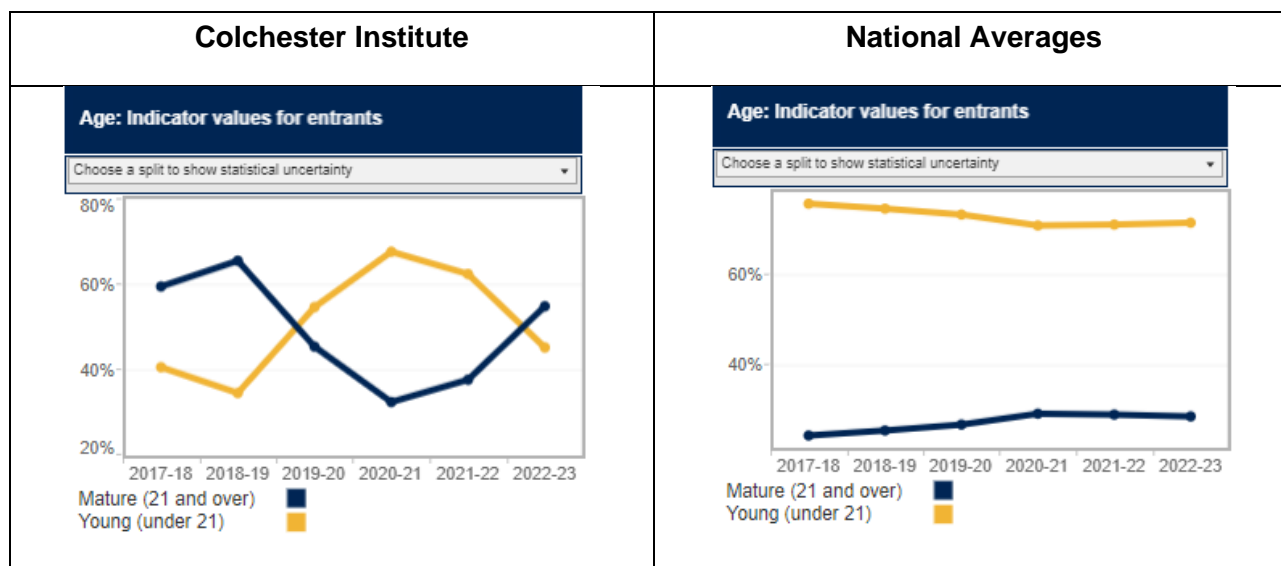
There has been a noticeable recruitment drop in this area, which although linked to some discontinued sub-contracted provision, suggests there remains room for improvement.

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) allows risks to be identified by student characteristics. It does not however provide guidance on what risks are associated with students from areas of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). All socio-economic characteristics listed within the guidance do not have access indicators attached to them. Therefore, the following risks have been identified internally:

- Risk 1 Knowledge and Skills
- Risk 2 Information and Guidance
- Risk 3 Perception of Higher Education

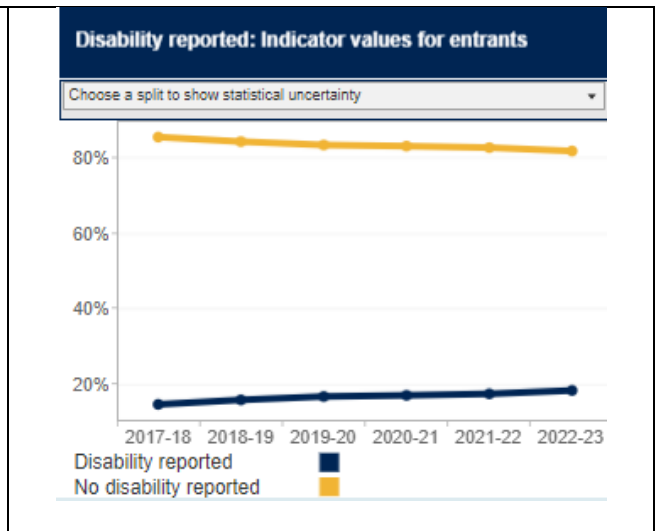
Key updates following July 2024 release of new OFS Widening Participation Dashboard Data

The new release of data highlighted the trend of recruiting more mature learners to our full-time programmes than the national average. In 2022-23 54.8% of learners were mature, 26.1% **above** the **national average** of 28.7%



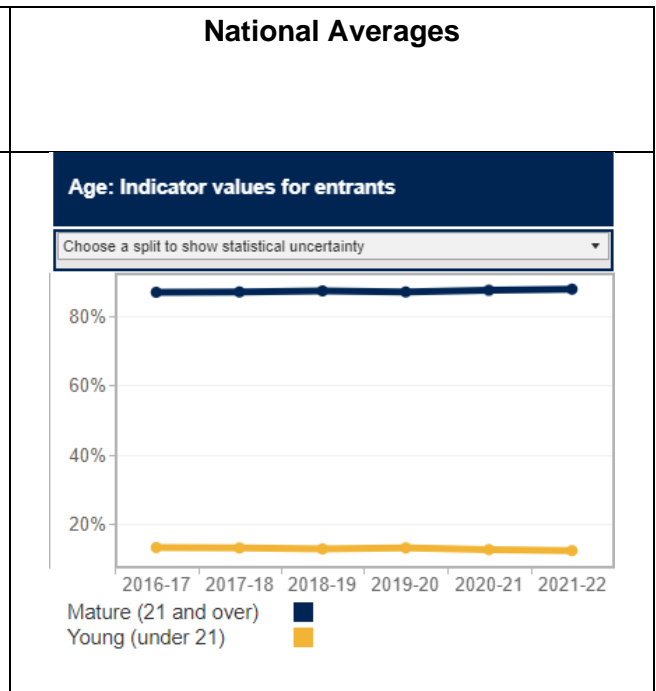
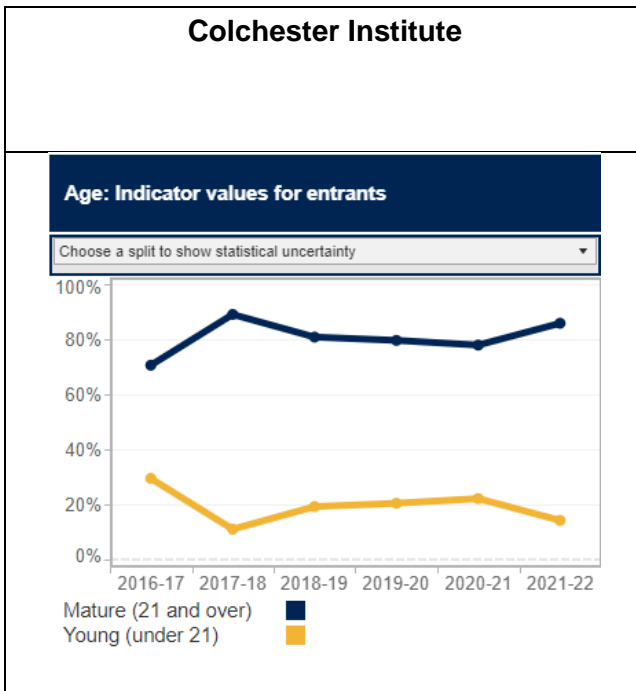
It also revealed that recruitment of students with declared disabilities had returned to pre-pandemic levels at 30.1%, 11.8% **above the national average** of 18.3%.

Colchester Institute	National Averages

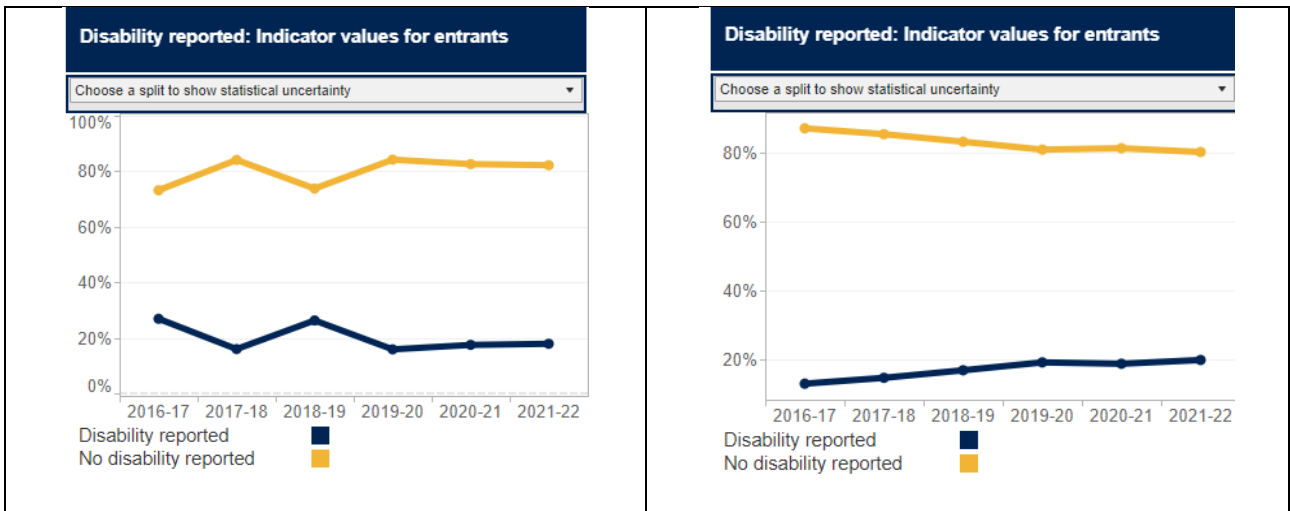


Access

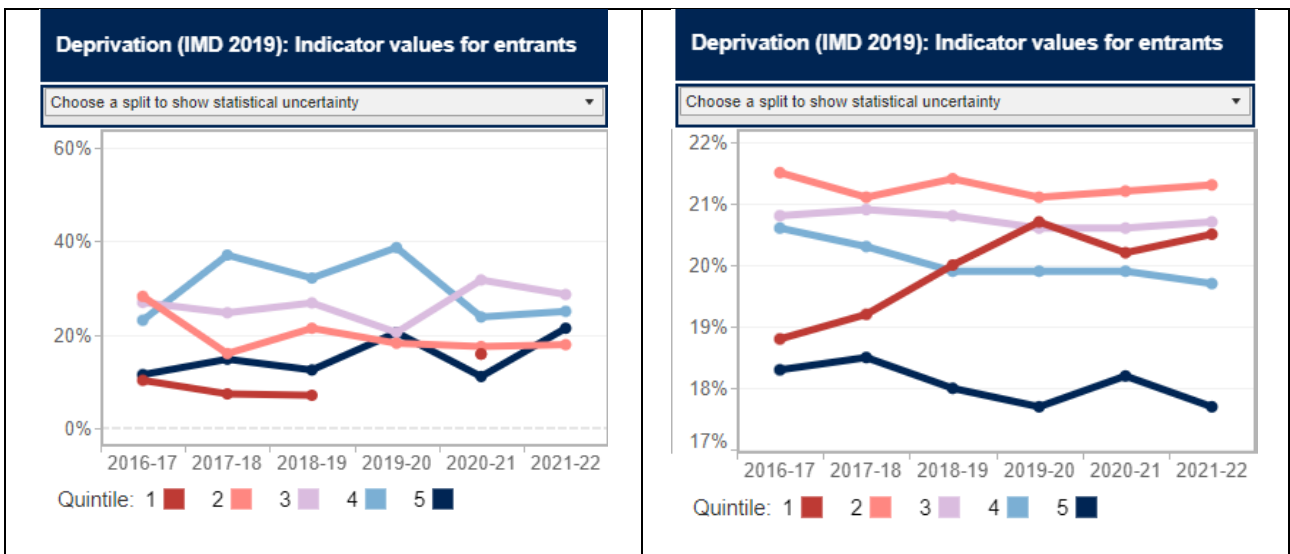
All Undergraduates – Part Time



The institutions recruitment by percentage of mature students on its part-time provision (85.7%) is **slightly below** the national average (87.9%) in 2021-22.



The institutions recruitment of students with a reported disability (17.9% in 2021-22) is **slightly below** the national average (19.7% in 2021-22). Prior to this there was a trend of being in-line or above the national average for the time period included in the Access and Participation Data Dashboard.



The deprivation data is slightly more difficult to decipher. However, there is slightly more deviation in the institutional recruitment than the national average, with quintiles 1 and 2 appearing to be the smallest recruited areas.

Access All undergraduate's P/T - EORR Considerations

The available part-time data is intriguing and presents a slightly different picture than the full-time information. According to the OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard the part-time provision only represents 12% of the institutional curriculum and should be considered as such.

However, it appears to suggest that the strengths of the widening participation recruitment seen in the full-time data is not as strong with part-time recruitment. As the part-time provision is increasingly employer focused, and many students are already employed or come sponsored by

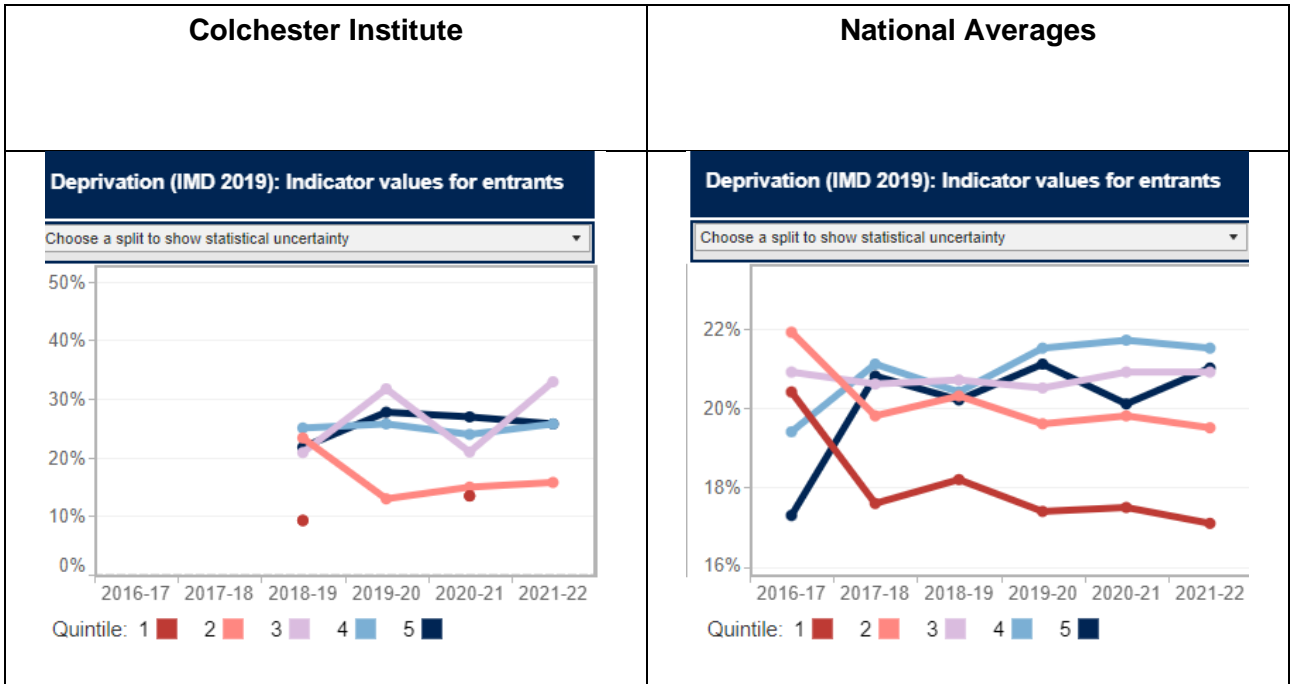
their employer there appears to be potential that students are either not disclosing support needs, that employers are not putting forward or recruiting individuals with such needs or that students with support needs are under-represented in the employed population.

As a result, the following risks have been identified:

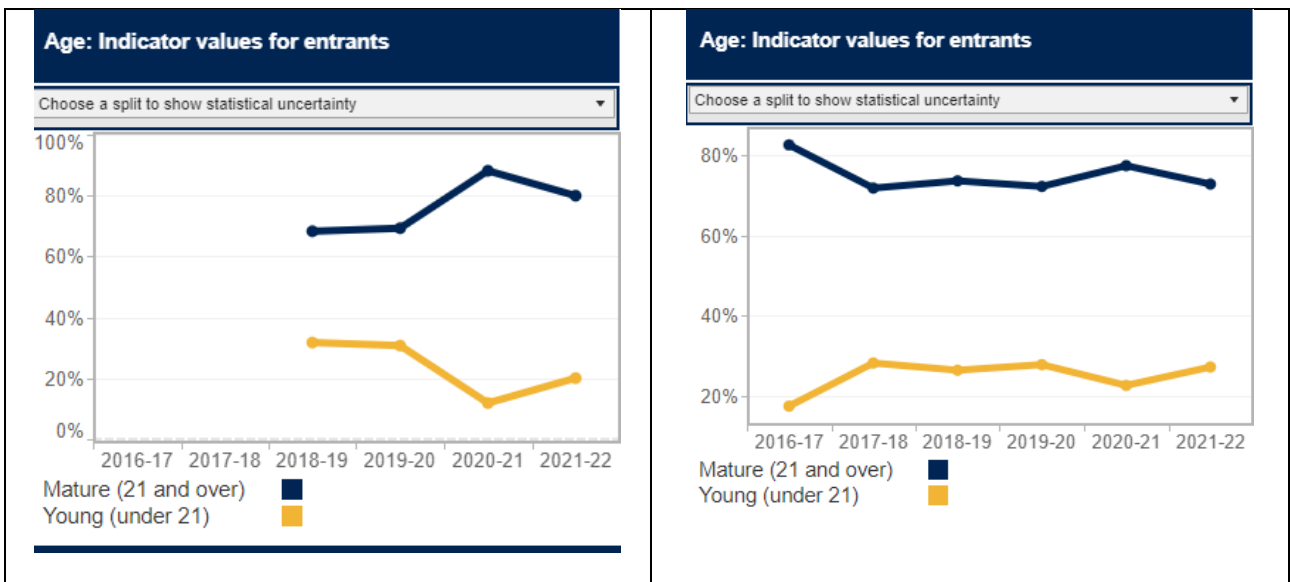
- Risk 1 Knowledge and Skills
- Risk 2 Information and Guidance
- Risk 3 Perception of Higher Education
- Risk 4 Application Success Rates
- Risk 5 Limited choice of course type and delivery mode

Access

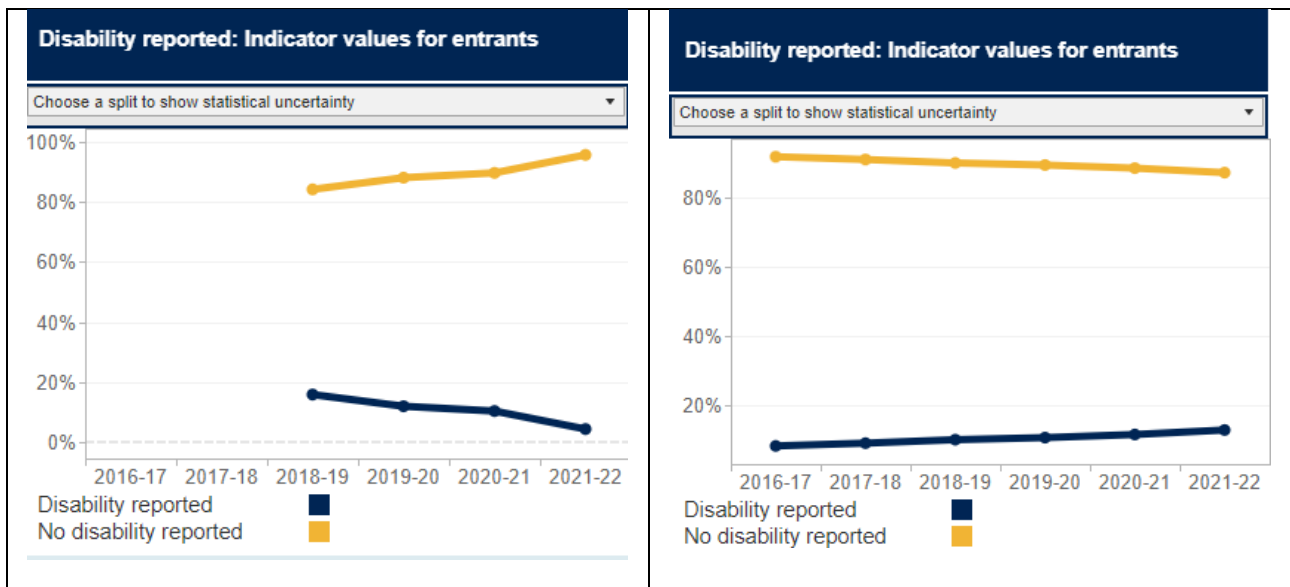
All Undergraduates - Apprentices



The deprivation data is more difficult to decipher. However, there is slightly more deviation in the institutional recruitment than the national average, with quintiles 1 and 2 both appearing to be **below the national average**.



Since 2018-19 the percentage of mature learners recruited onto apprenticeship programmes has been in-line or **above national averages**. In 2021-22 this was 7.1% **above** the national average.



Since 2018-19 when Colchester Institute was above the national average (at 15.8%) the percentage of apprentices declaring a disability has declined, going against national trends. In 2021-22 the percentage recruited by the institution (4.3%) was 8.5 percentage points **below the national average** (12.8%).

Access - Apprenticeships - EORR Considerations

Apprenticeships are in a similar position to part-time undergraduates in that there is limited data currently available on the Widening Participation Data Dashboard.

The information that is available however does highlight consistencies with data from other areas. Recruitment from quintiles 1 and 2 of IMD Deprivation areas is again below the national average. This is now consistent across all three provision types.

The high level of 'mature' students studying on Colchester Institute programmes continues.

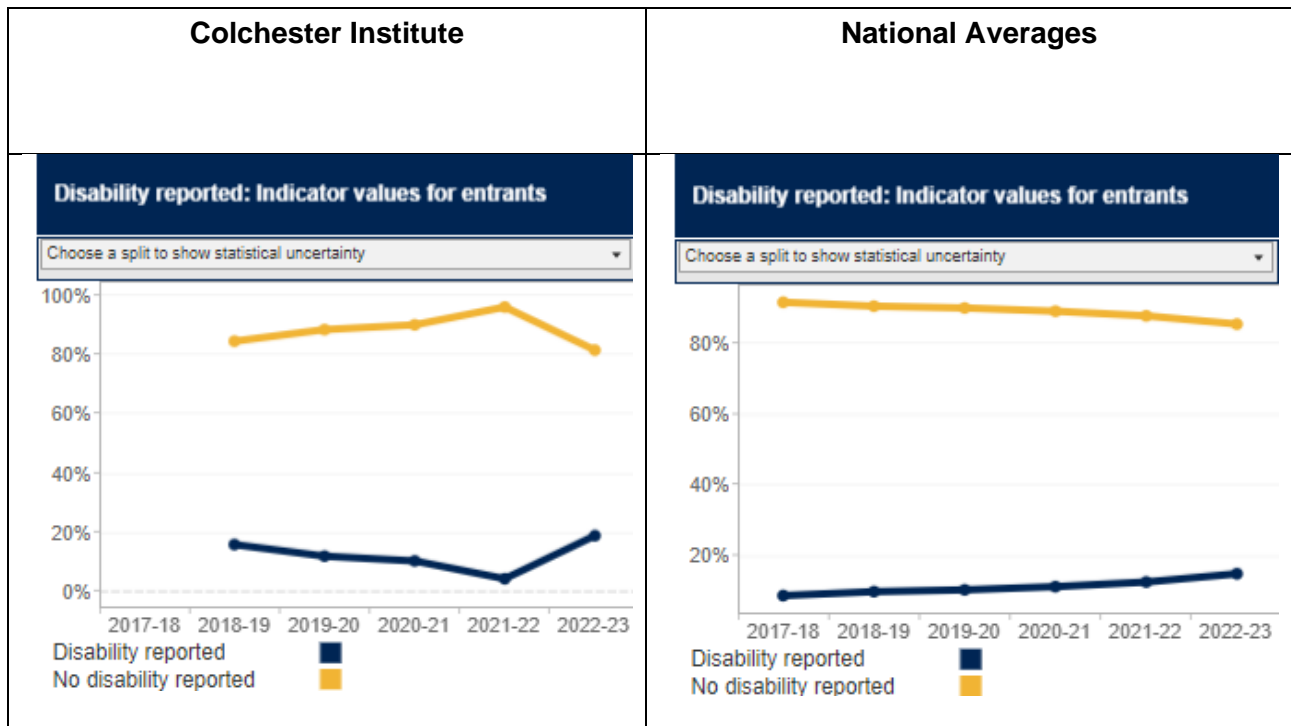
The volume of students not declaring a disability is noticeable and suggests similar risks to either non-disclosure or access to students with disabilities as identified in the part-time analysis.

As a result, the following risks have been identified:

- Risk 1 Knowledge and Skills
- Risk 2 Information and Guidance
- Risk 3 Perception of Higher Education
- Risk 4 Application Success Rates
- Risk 5 Limited choice of course type and delivery mode

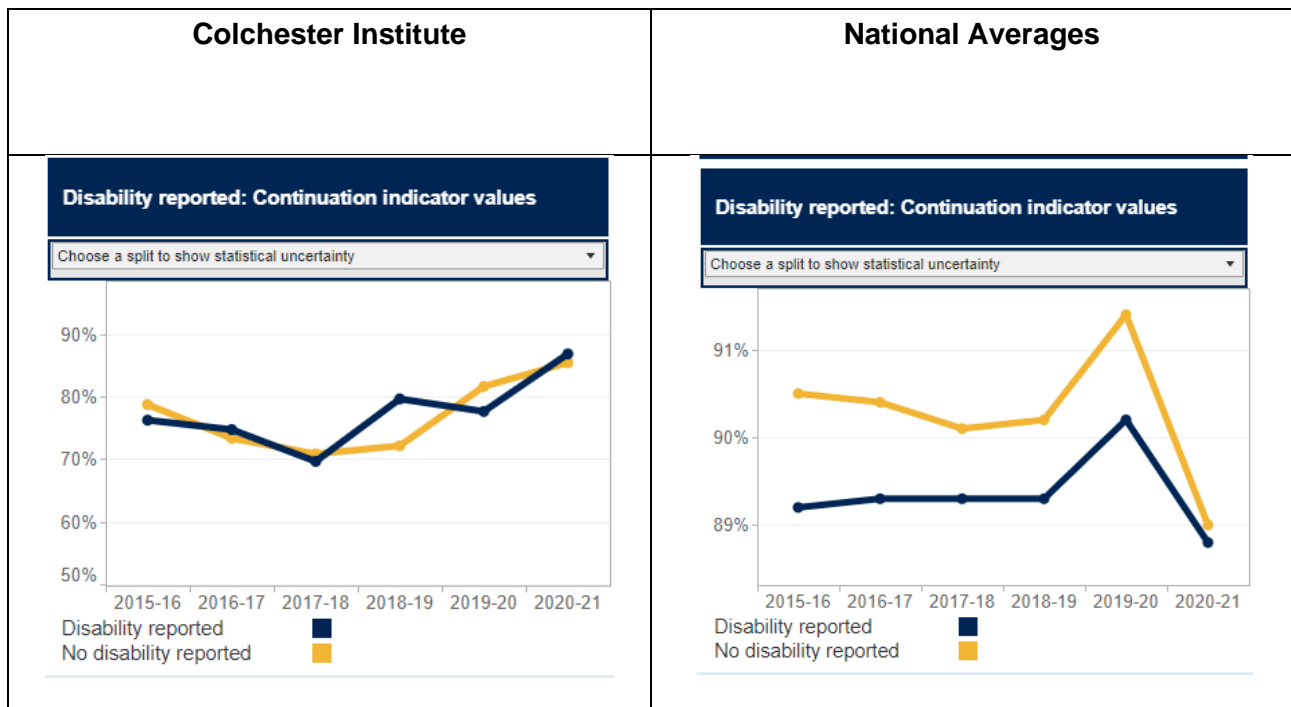
Key updates following July 2024 release of new OFS Widening Participation Dashboard Data

The key update from the July 2024 data release was the increase in students with a reported disability that saw it rise to 18.8%. This increases it to 3.7 percentage points **above the national average**.

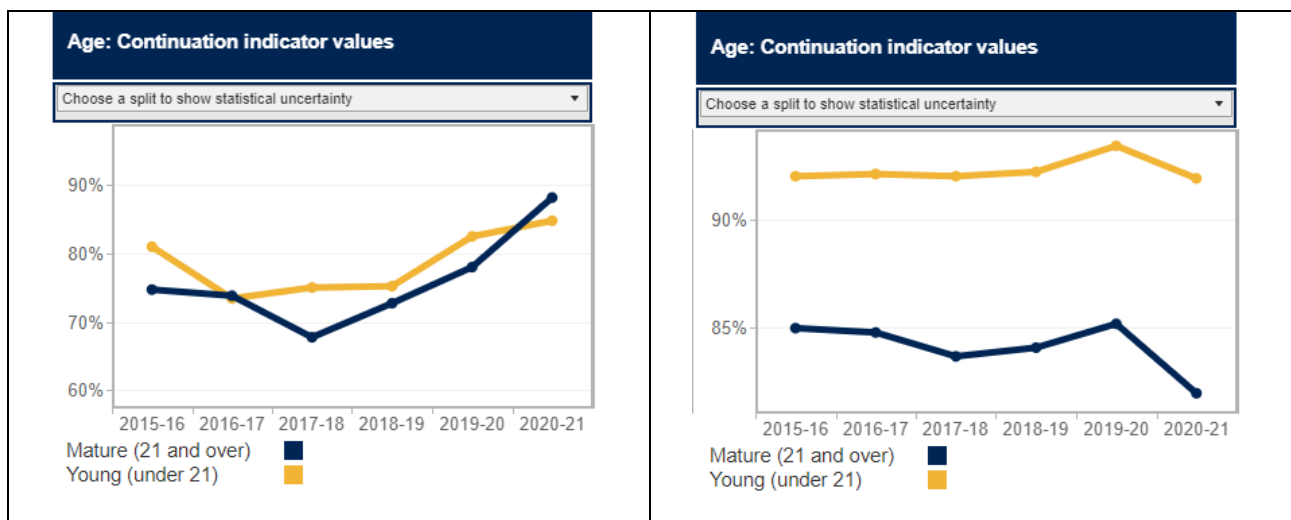


Continuation

All Undergraduates - Full Time

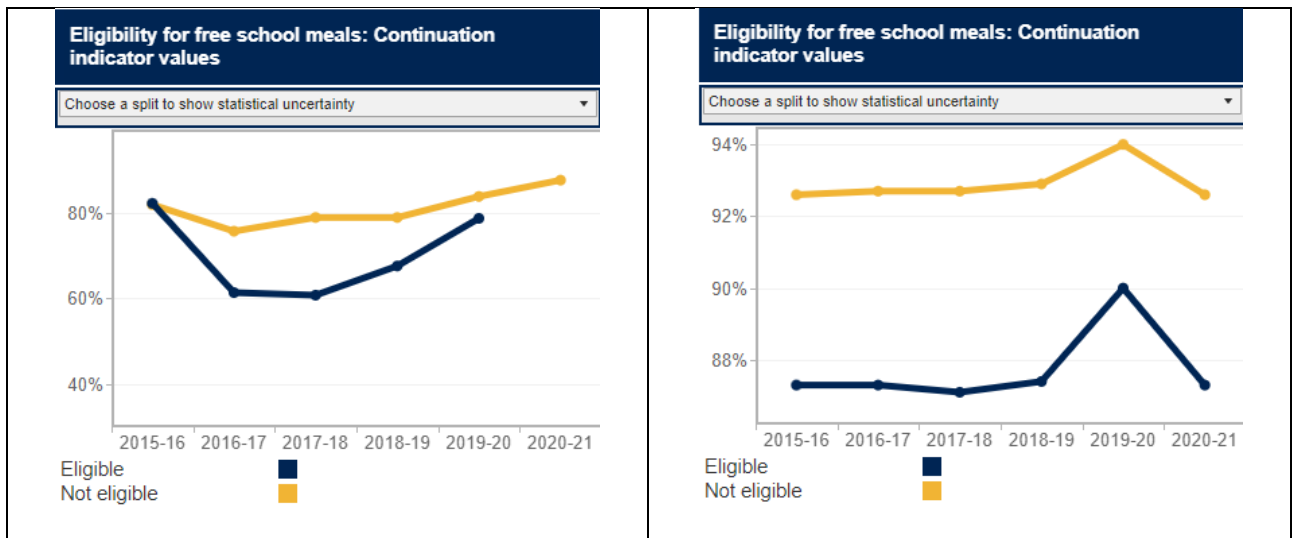


Colchester Institute has seen an overall positive trend of increased continuation for learners with a reported disability from 2017-18 through to 2020-21. This has seen the continuation rate increase to be **above** that of students who do not report a disability, and only 2 percentage points behind the national average in 2020-21 (86.8%). The gap between those with a reported disability and those without was 1.4 percentage points in 2020-21, which is slightly more than the national average of 0.2%.

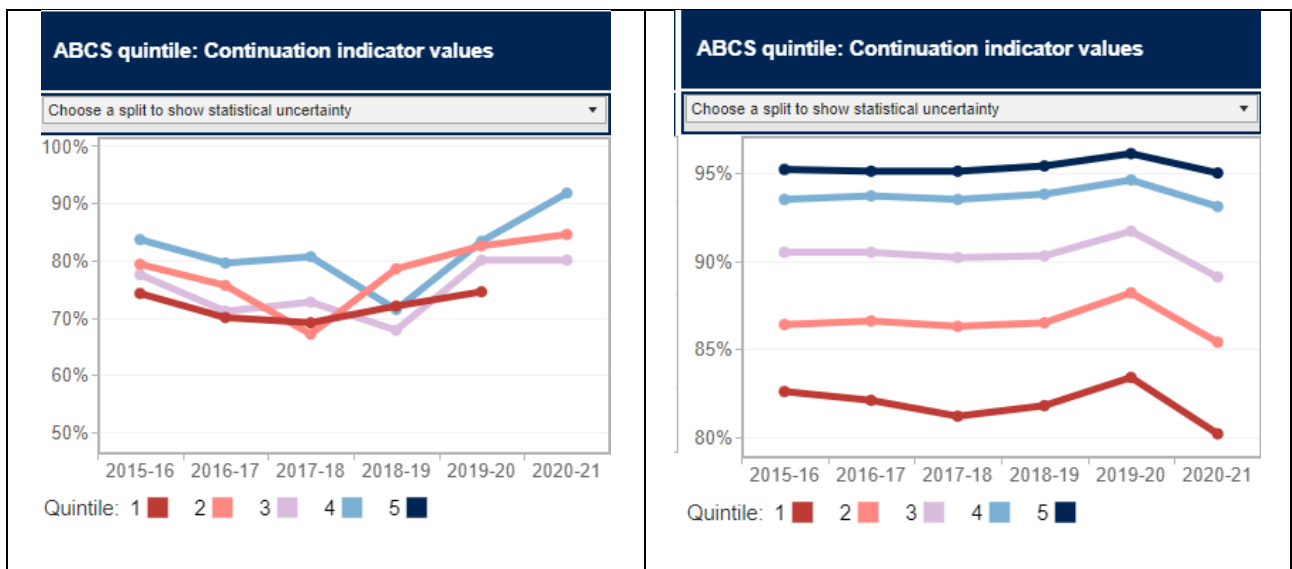


Colchester Institute has seen an overall positive trend of increased continuation for mature learners from 2017-18 through to 2020-21. This has seen the continuation rate increase to be above that of young students, and 6.2 percentage points **above the national average** in 2020-21 (88.2%). The gap between young and mature learners was 3.4 percentage points in mature

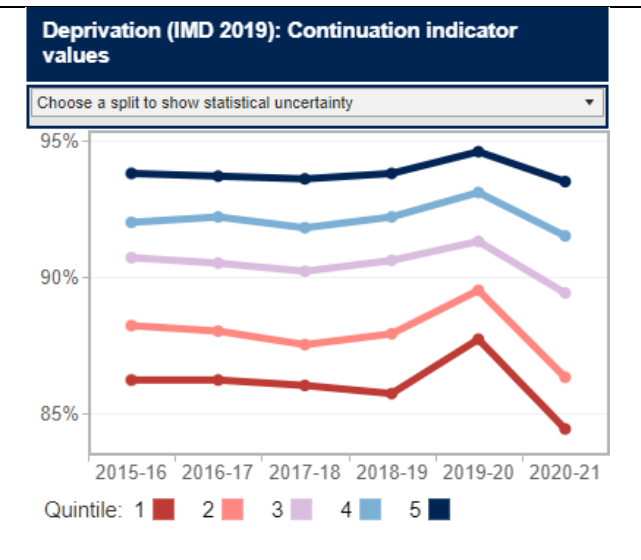
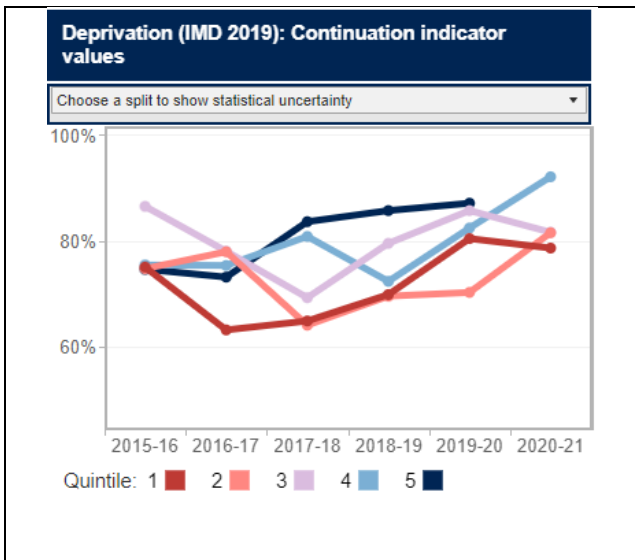
learners favour in 2020-21, this is compared to the national average of 9.9 percentage points in young learners' favour.



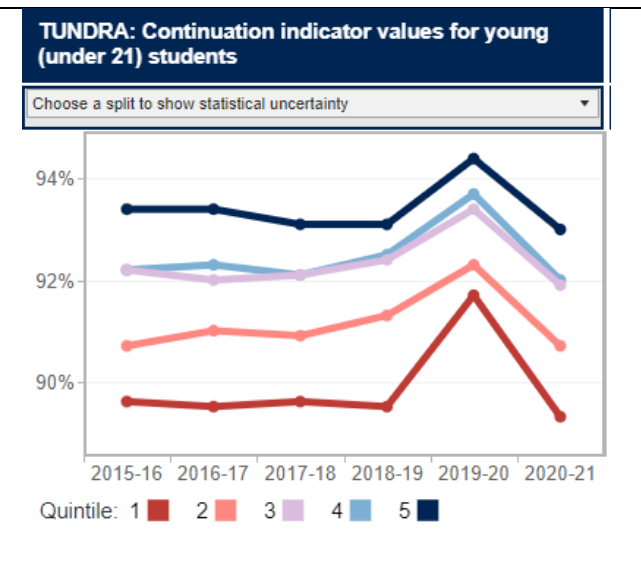
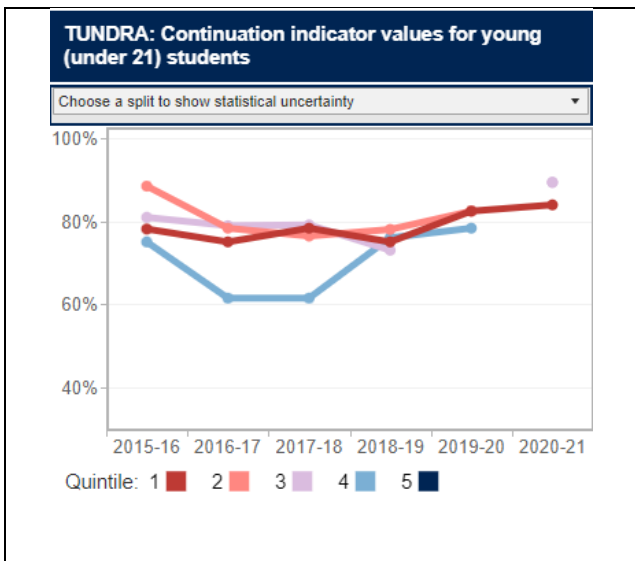
Colchester Institute has seen a positive trend in the continuation rate of students eligible for free school meals since 2016-17. However, this was still over 10% percentage points **below** the national average in 2019-20 and due to the low numbers of students from eligible for this metric in 2020-21 there is no official statistic for 2020-21.



The ABCS data is slightly more difficult to decipher. However, it is clear that continuation rates for all quintiles are **below** the national average. There are more fluctuations compared to the national trends, and students from quintile 2 have shown better continuation than those from quintile 3 for many of the years displayed.



The completion rate for Colchester Institute has seen significant fluctuation between the quintiles over the 6-year period displayed on the data dashboard. The ongoing, continuous trends between the quintiles seen at national level have not been duplicated. This has resulted in the continuation rates for quintiles 1 to 3 being separated by only 3 percentage points in 2020-21, compared to 5 percentage points nationally. However, all continuation rates, with the exception of quintile 4, were **below** the national average in 2020-21.

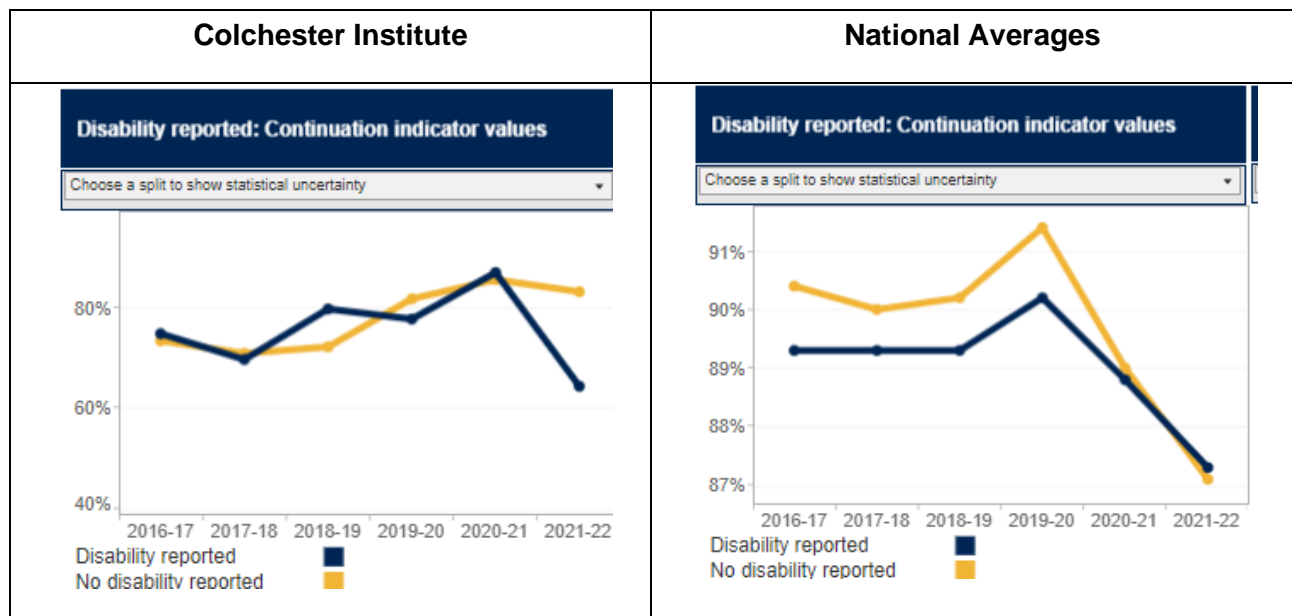


Colchester Institutes Tundra data is limited, and difficult to draw conclusions from. Similar to IMD and ABCS data the continuous trends seen on national data are not obvious, but there is a similar consistency with all quintiles being **below** the national average.

Key updates following July 2024 release of new OFS Widening Participation Dashboard Data

There was a significant change in the continuation rate of students with reported disability when the 2021-22 dataset was released in late July 2024. This saw Colchester Institutes continuation rates for students with a reported disability drop by 22.5 percentage points to 64.3% and see the gap to students with no disability reported increase to 18.7 percentage points. The drop-in

continuation rates in 2021-22 was also seen at national level but was equally felt between both those with and without a reported disability.

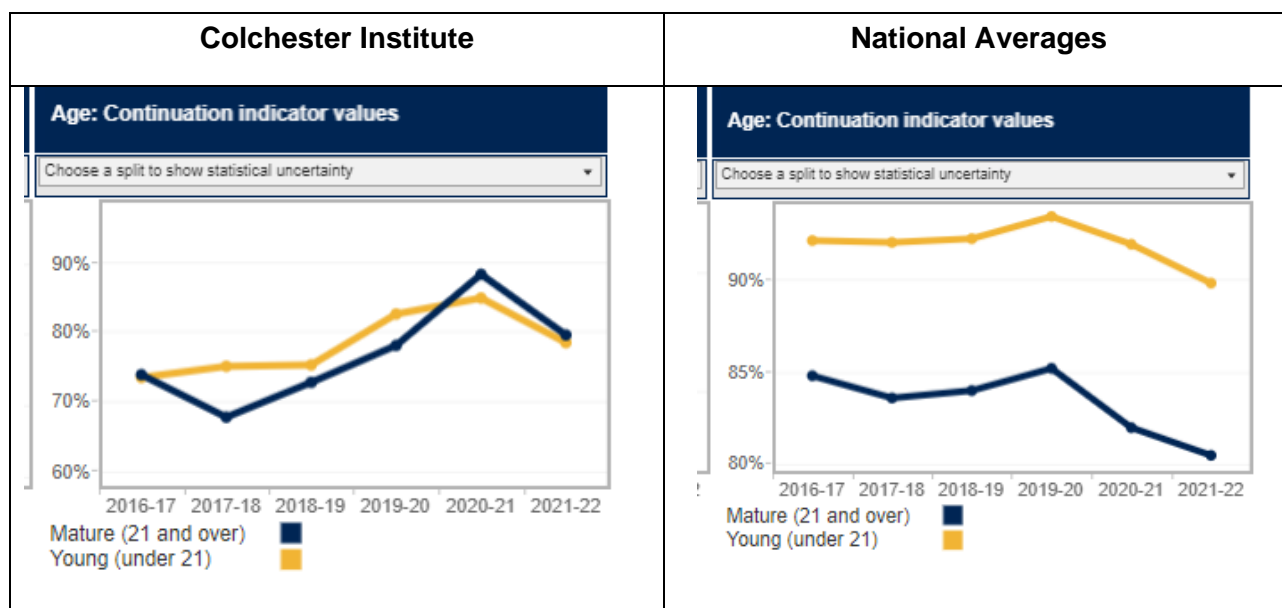


Internal data indicates the gap should return to approximately 3% for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic years. Although this data will not be officially recognised until 2025 and 2026 respectively it does support the hypothesis that the 2021-22 continuation data was a one-off, linked directly to the covid-19 pandemic and its impact is already in the process of having been negated.

Continuation rate for students with a reported disability at Colchester Institute (Internal Data)

Academic Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Target (Achievement Gap)	1PP	0PP	0PP	0PP
End of year Retention	3.69PP	10.02PP	-3.15PP	+3.77PP
Confirmed OFS Data	+1.4PP	-18.70PP	TBC	TBC
Diff to Target	+0.4PP	-18.70PP	-3.15PP	+3.77PP
National Average	0.2PP	0.2PP	TBC	TBC
Diff to National Average	+0.6PP	-18.90PP	TBC	TBC

Overall continuation for all students were impacted in 2021/22, with continuation rates for both young and mature students dropping both at Colchester Institute and nationally.



Internal data indicates that continuation rates are on target to increase for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 academic years. Although this data will not be finalised and confirmed until 2025 and 2026 respectively even with a 5% margin of error it shows that continuation rates for both young and mature students have increased to be in-line or above expected national rates.

Continuation rate of young learners at Colchester Institute (Internal Data)

Academic Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Target	80%	82%	83%	84%
End of year Retention	89.25%	74.00%	86.00%	95.74%
Confirmed OFS Data	84.80%	78.40%	TBC	TBC
Diff to Target	+4.80%	-3.6%	+3.00%	+11.74%
National Average	91.9%	89.8%	TBC	TBC
Diff to National Average	-7.1%	-11.4%	TBC	TBC

Continuation rate of mature learners at Colchester Institute (Internal Data)

Academic Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Target	72%	74%	76%	77%
End of year Retention	93.41%	94.20%	93.68%	92.86%
Confirmed OFS Data	88.20%	79.50%	TBC	TBC
Diff to Target	+16.20%	+5.5%	+17.68%	+15.86%
National Average	82%	80.5%	TBC	TBC
Diff to National Average	+6.2%	-1%	TBC	TBC

Continuation - EORR Considerations

Continuation rates are below the national averages for most of the student groups considered. This highlights a significant risk for students to be able to succeed on their course.

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that lower than expected continuation rates can be indicators for 9 of the risks identified in EORR. These are:

- Risk 1 Knowledge and Skills
- Risk 2 Information and Guidance
- Risk 5 Limited choice of course type and delivery mode
- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 8: Mental Health
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus
- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

Mature learners do not present as a significant risk due to their continuation rate being above the national average. Learners with a reported disability are seen as a reduced risk due to their continuation rate being above those without.

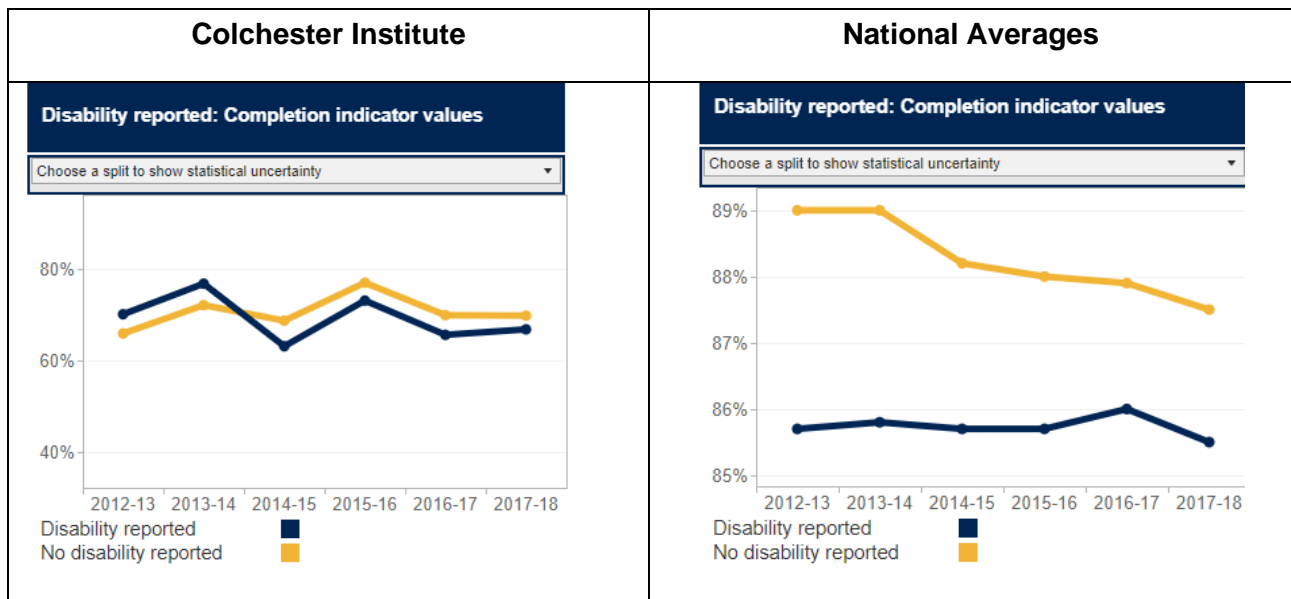
The reduced continuation rates for students from deprived areas (IMD) and those eligible for Free School Meals suggests there is a risk for students from low incomes.

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that issues with students from low-income households can be indicators for 5 of the 'On Course' risks identified in the EORR. These are:

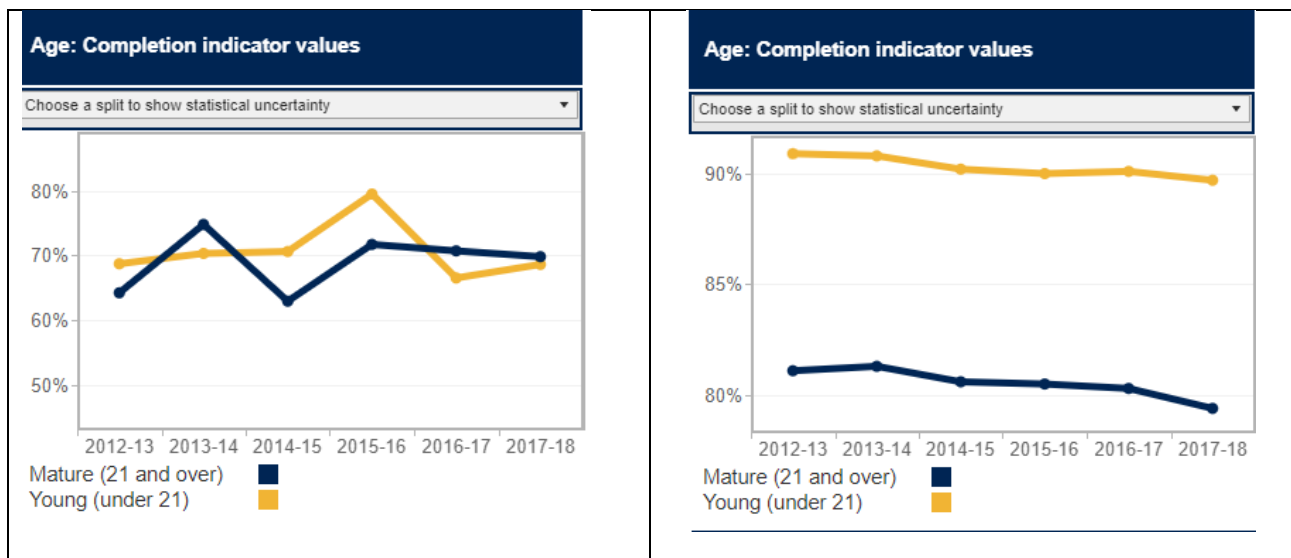
- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus

- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

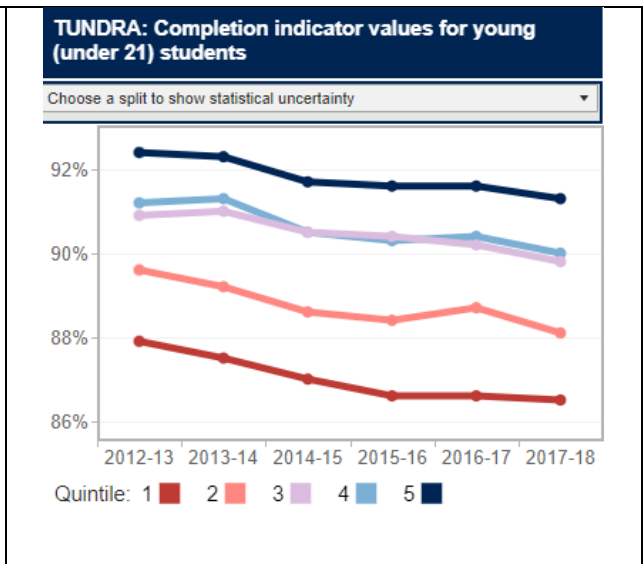
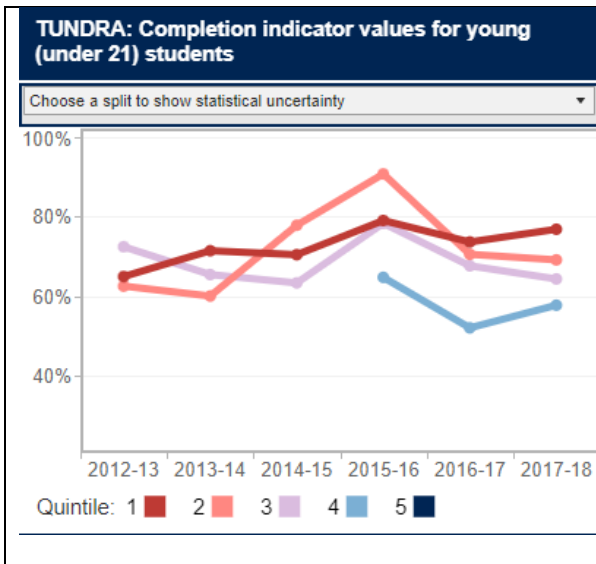
Completion



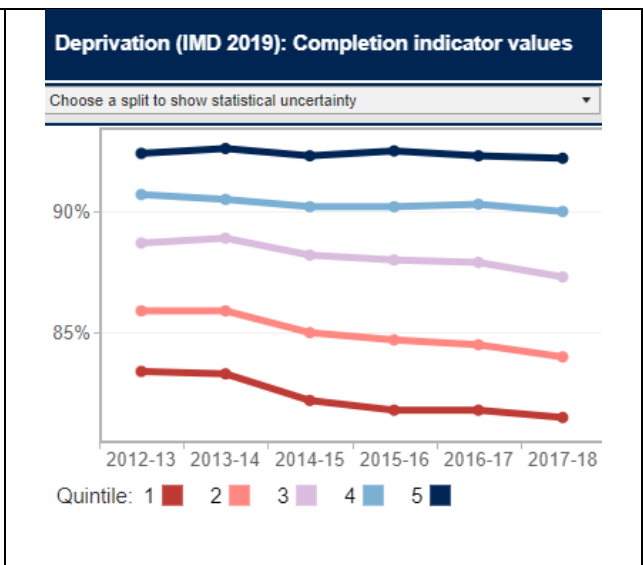
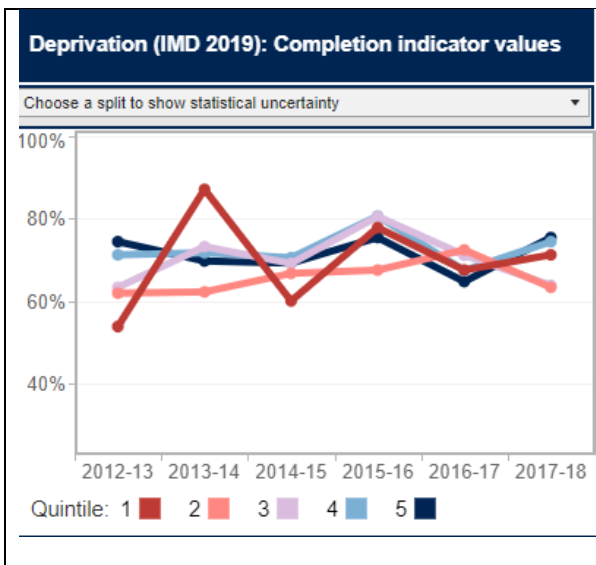
Completion rates of both students with and without a reported disability are **below** the national averages. For the 2017-18 cohort the gap between the two was 3 percentage points, which is slightly greater than the national average of 2 percentage points.



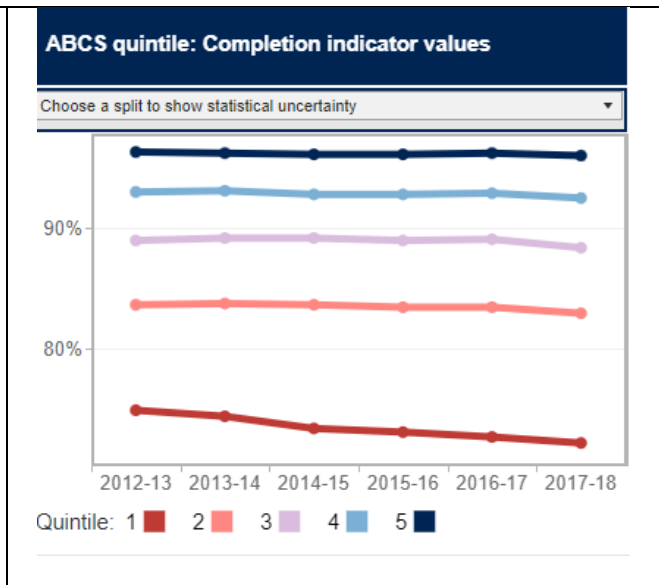
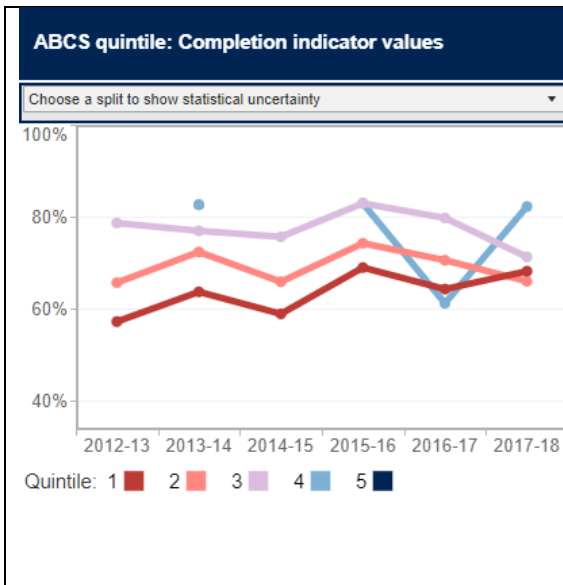
Completion rates of both young and mature students are **below** the national average. However, the gap between the two for the 2017-18 cohort was only 1.2 percentage points compared to the national average of 10.3 percentage points. In addition, the 2017-18 cohort also saw the mature completion rate move ahead of the rate for young learners.



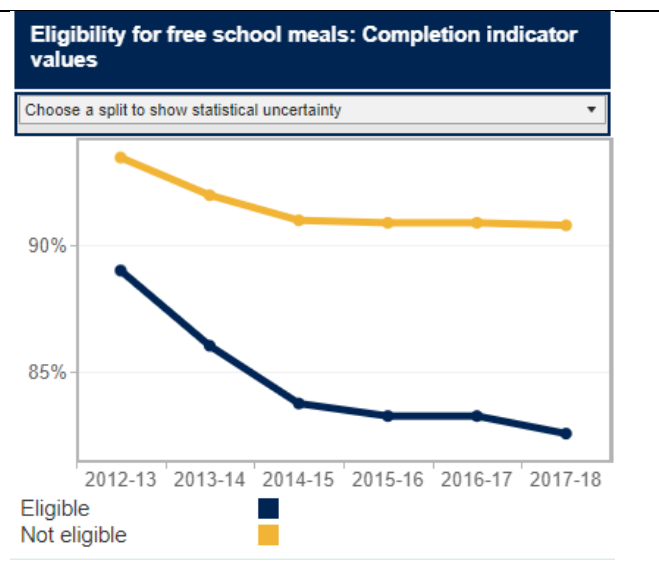
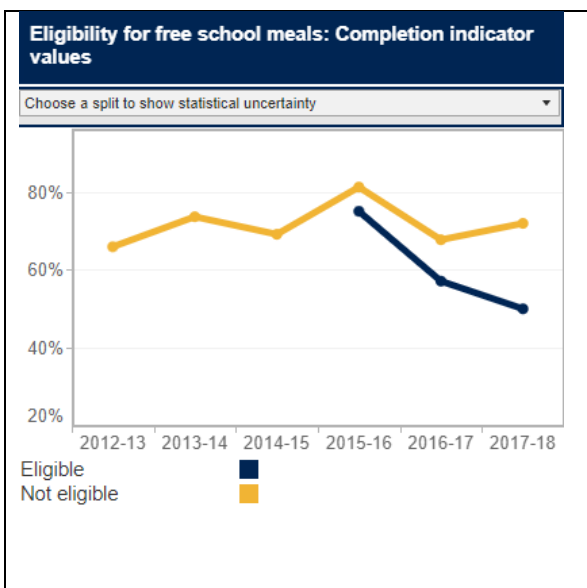
Completion rates of all TUNDRA quintiles are **below** the national averages. In contrast to the national trend completion rates of students from quintiles 1 and 2 have continuously been the highest rated since the 2014-15 cohort.



Although there is noticeable fluctuations within the time period, quintiles one and two have tended to be the quintiles with the lowest completion rates. Although the completion rates for all quintiles were below the national averages in 2017-18, it is noticeable that the gap between quintile one and quintile five has been closer than the national gap between the two quintiles for the past 3 years of data. In 2017-18 the gap between the two was 4.2 percentage points whilst the national gap was 10.7 percentage points.



Completion rates for ABCS data show a closer correlation with national trends than many other of the postcode analyses within this document. Although all quintiles are **below** the national averages the gap between quintiles 1-3 (3.1%) is smaller than the national average (16.1%) in 2017-18.



Completion rates for learners eligible for Free School Meals is both below the national average and had a gap of 21.9% in 2017-18.

Key updates following July 2024 release of new OFS Widening Participation Dashboard Data

When the 2021-22 OFS Widening Participation Dashboard was republished in July 2024 it showed an improvement in performance for both students with a reported disability (now 6.2 percentage points above those without) and students eligible for free school meals (gap reduced from 22.4 percentage points to 10.5 percentage points). Mature learners also dropped from being 1.2 percentage points above Young learners to being 2.8 percentage points below.

Although the new release data included some positive trends this has not changed our understanding of risks to opportunity surrounding completion rates.

Completion - EORR Considerations

Completion rates are an area of improvement for all student groups.

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that lower than expected completion rates can be indicators for 8 of the discrepancies identified in EORR. These are:

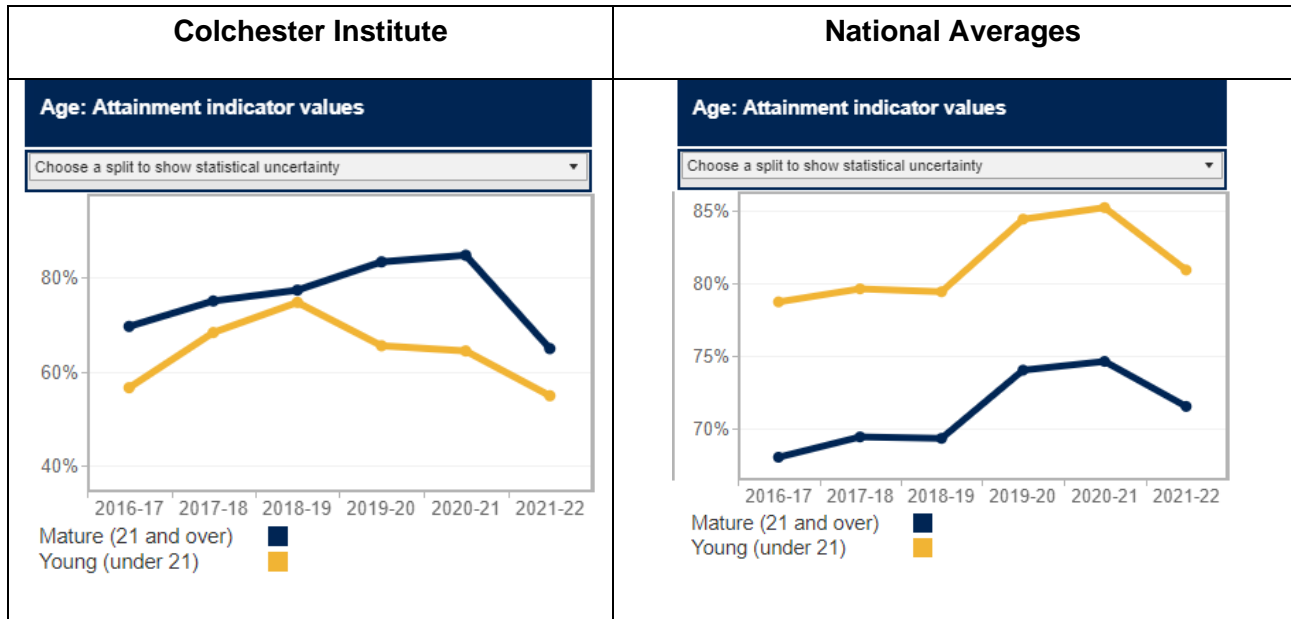
- Risk 1 Knowledge and Skills
- Risk 2 Information and Guidance
- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 8: Mental Health
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus
- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

The most serious deviation from national averages seen was the completion rate of students eligible for Free School Meals in 2017-18. Therefore, this is seen as an additional risk for this category in addition to 'all students'.

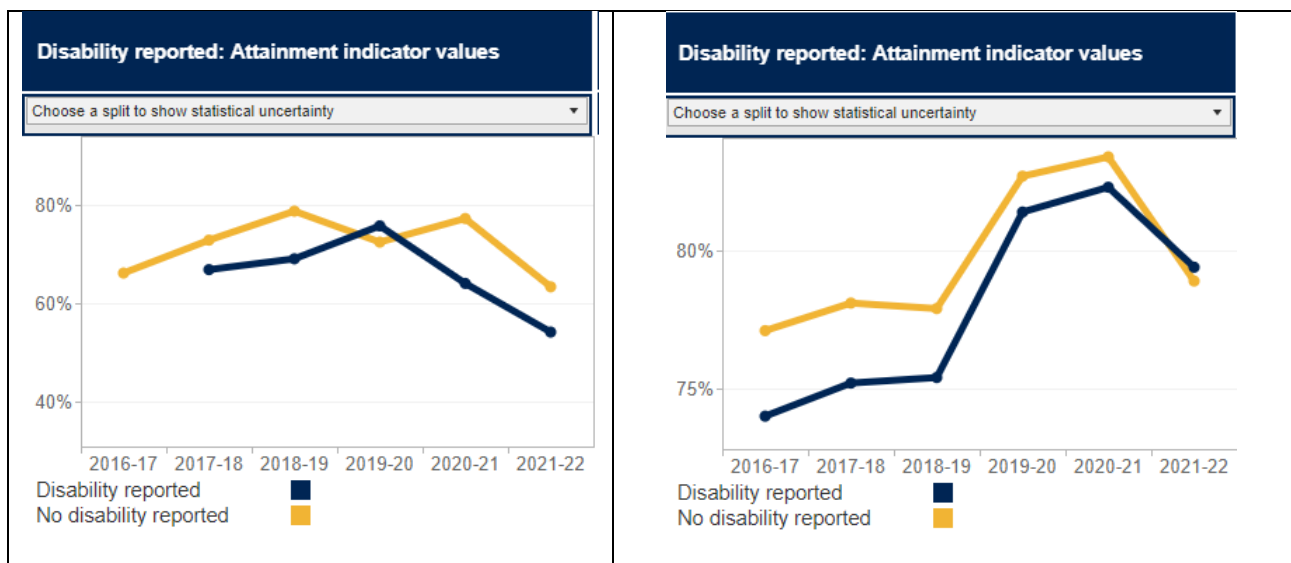
The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that issues with students from low-income households can be indicators for 5 of the 'On Course' risks identified in the EORR. These are:

- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus
- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

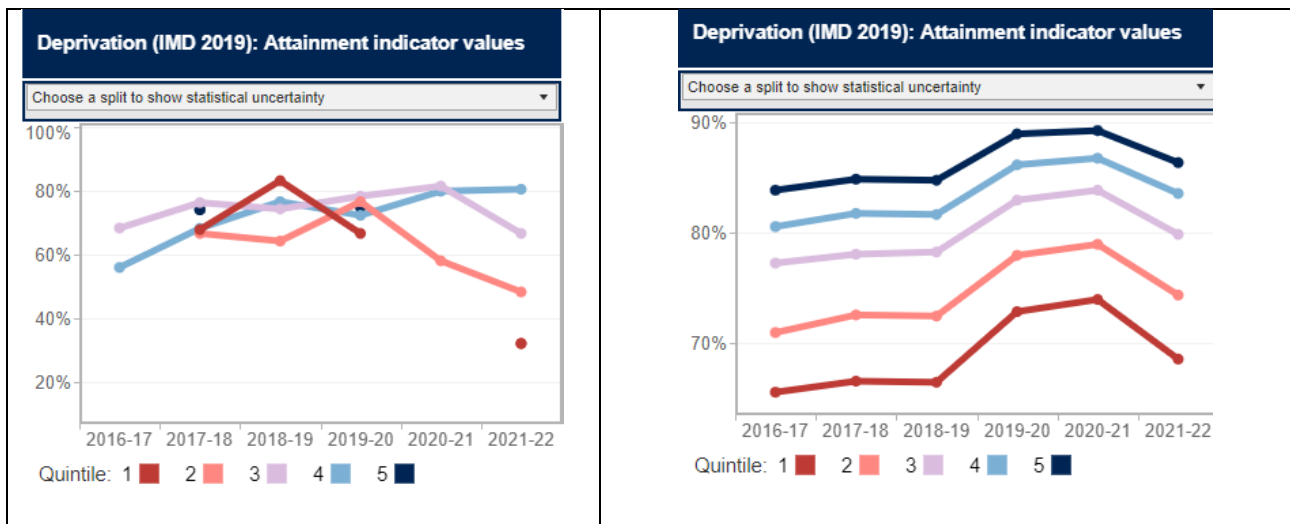
Attainment



Attainment rates for mature learners have been consistently above those for young learners, the reverse of the national trend. Both however are **below** national averages.



Attainment rates for students with a reported disability have been below that of a student without a reported disability for the majority of the time considered, with it being 9.2% below in 2021-22. The attainment gap is significantly larger than the national average (0.5%) with overall attainment rates also being **below** national averages.



IMD data is less complete, with fluctuations being present compared to national trends. It is noticeable that attainment for quintiles 1 and 2 dropped in 2020-21 and 2021-22 compared to other quintiles, during the peak of the Covid pandemic.

Attainment - EORR Considerations

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that lower than expected attainment rates can be indicators for 9 of the risks identified in EORR. These are:

- Risk 1 Knowledge and Skills
- Risk 2 Information and Guidance
- Risk 5 Limited choice of course type and delivery mode
- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 8: Mental Health
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus
- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

The noticeable drop-offs in performance in 2020-21 and 2021-22 both locally and nationally suggest significant impact from the Covid pandemic. The widening participation background of the college, highlighted in earlier sections of this self-assessment, and multiple layers of risks from having students with multiple widening participation characteristics appears to have had an increased detriment compared to national trends.

The noticeable drop in attainment rates for students from deprived areas (IMD quintile 1) from 2019-20 to 2021-22 suggests there is an increased risk for students from low incomes.

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that issues with students from low income households can be indicators for 5 of the 'On Course' risks identified in the EORR. These are:

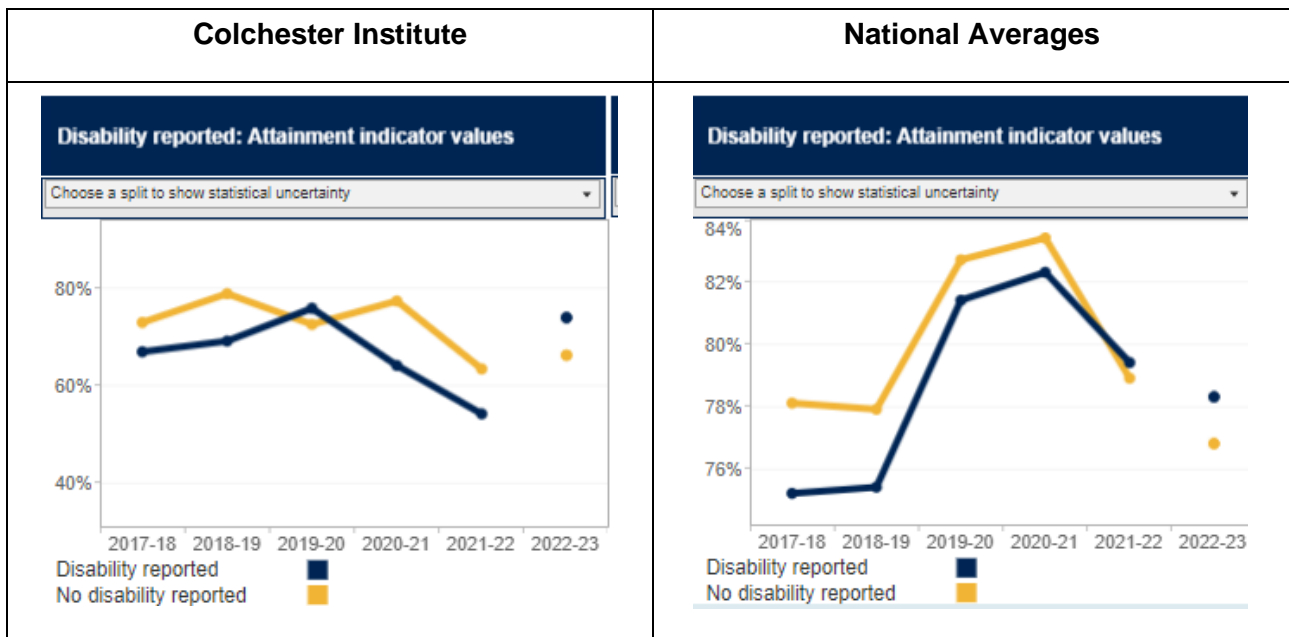
- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus
- Risk 10: Cost Pressures

- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

Key updates following July 2024 release of new OFS Widening Participation Dashboard Data

The 2022-23 academic year data release showed an improvement in attainment for nearly all student groups at Colchester Institute. The impact of the covid pandemic of 2020-2022 appears visible in both the colleges and national statistics with negative fluctuation experienced over this period. The 2022-23 data shows attainment levels increasing, although not yet back to pre-pandemic levels.

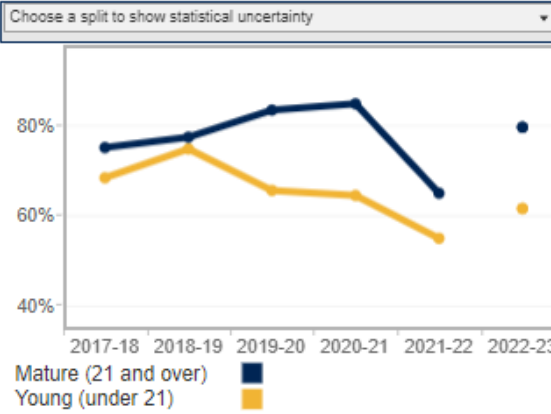
An additional change of note is attainment for students studying at Colchester Institute with a reported disability (73.7%) outperforming those without (66%) in 2022-23. The overall attainment rate however is still 4.6 percentage points below the national average.



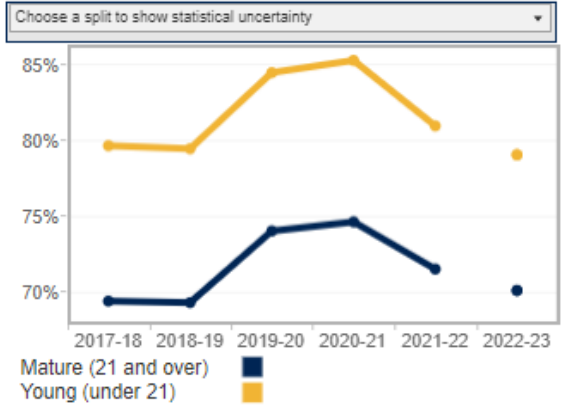
Attainment for mature learners increased to 79.5% in 2022-23, 9.4 percentage points **above** the national average. Attainment for young learners continues to be below the national average at 61.5% (17.5 percentage points below the national average). The attainment gap between young and mature learners taught at Colchester Institute has increased to 18 percentage points.

Colchester Institute	National Averages

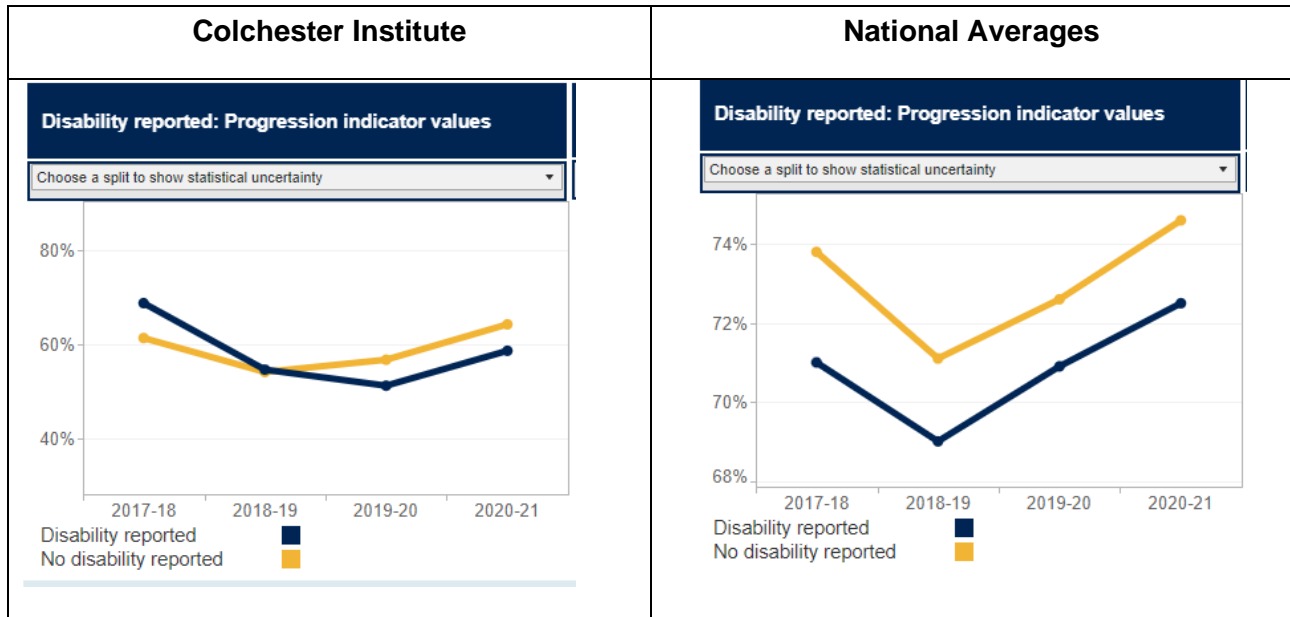
Age: Attainment indicator values



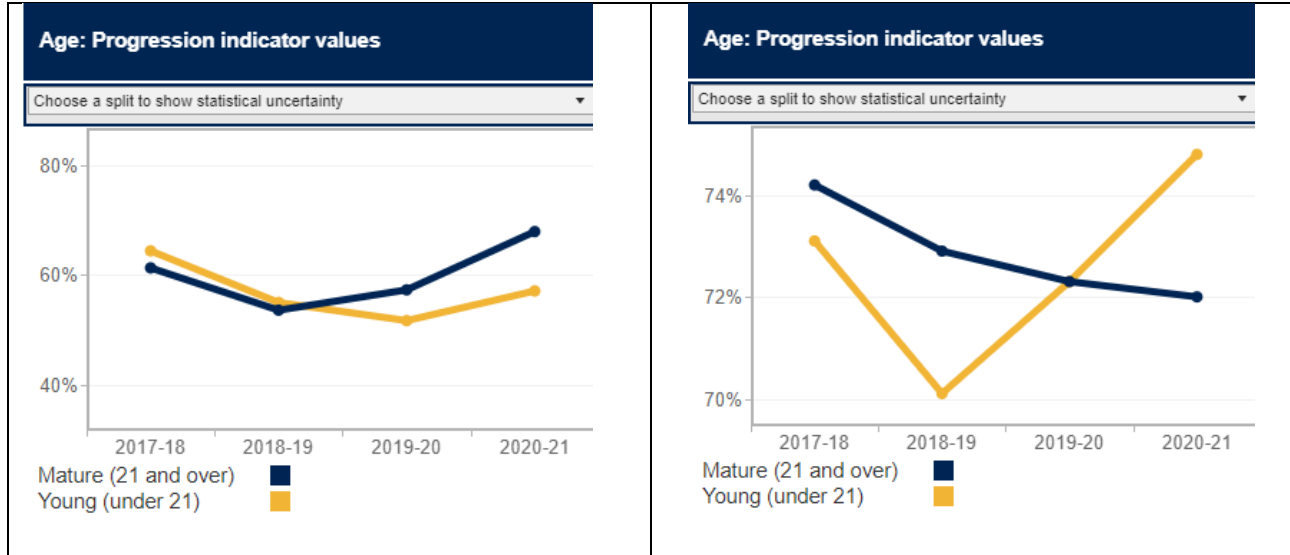
Age: Attainment indicator values



Progression



The progression gap between students who have and haven't reported a disability has fluctuated since 2017-18. In 2017-18 the gap was 7.4 percentage points in favour of those who had reported a disability. The gap has since closed and then re-opened at a 5.5% gap in favour of those who do not, and this has remained constant for the past 2 years. In both cases the progression gap is **below** the national average.



Mature learners have a higher progression rate, with this stretching to 10.8 percentage points above the national average in 2020-21. The mature learner progression rate is slightly below the national average of 72%. The young learner progression rate fell to being 17.7 percentage points **below** the national average in 2020-21.

Progression - EORR Considerations

Progression appears to be an area where the institution is performing below other institutions with both of the data sets available showing a performance below national average.

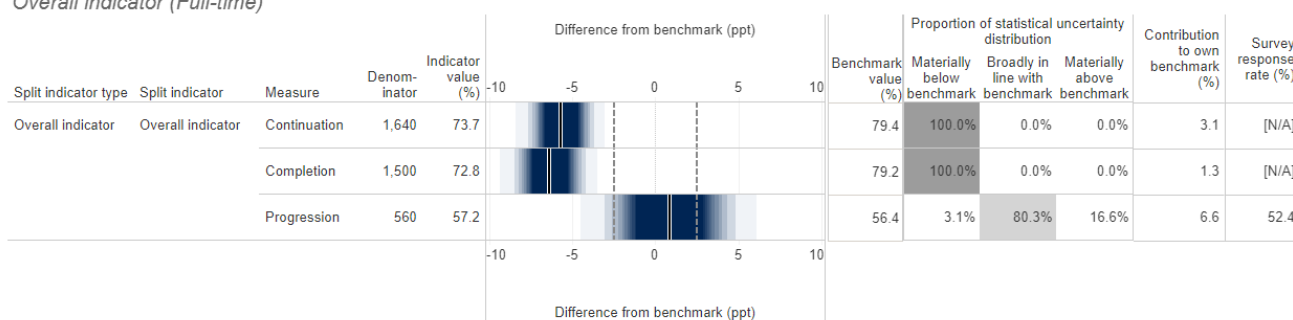
The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that lower than expected progression rates can be indicators for 7 of the risks identified in EORR. These are:

- Risk 6: Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7: Insufficient personal support
- Risk 8: Mental Health
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus
- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues
- Risk 12: Progression from higher education

This is a surprising revelation as the TEF Data Dashboard appeared to show that Colchester Institute's Progression rates were slightly above the national average:

Colchester Institute (Full-time)

Overall indicator (Full-time)



Further analysis of the data provided by the TEF Data Dashboard provides an insight into some of the student groups not covered sufficiently within the Access and Participation Data Dashboard. It appears to show that progression rates are largely in-line with national benchmarks with the exception of students **Eligible for Free School** meals, students from **ABCS quintiles 2 & 3** and students studying on an Applied Health related course.

Contrasting the two datasets it is also clear that the characteristics of the student community at Colchester Institute are likely responsible for the differentiation showed, with the reporting showing students with a reported disability being 0.4% above benchmark on the TEF Data Dashboard but 13.9% below the national average on the Access and Participation Data Dashboard.

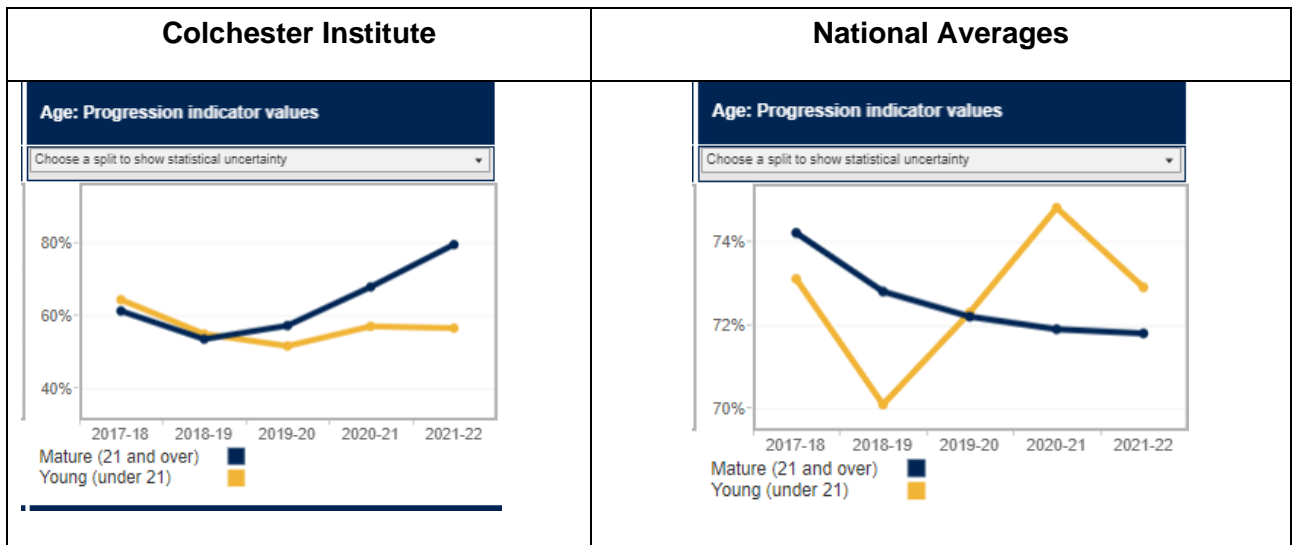
The EORR does not provide risk indicators for young learners, but the size of the difference to national averages for young learners in 2020-21 means that the following risk indicator will be highlighted for young learners also.

- Risk 12: Progression from higher education

Key updates following July 2024 release of new OFS Widening Participation Dashboard Data

The July 2024 update had limited information for Colchester Institute regarding progression, with the exception of young and mature learners. Colchester Institutes progression data continued to increase in 2021-22 for its mature learners, rising to 79.5% (7.4 percentage points **above** the national average). For young learners it maintained its progression rate despite national trends seeing a decline. The gap for young learners however is still 16.3 percentage points below national

rates and a 22.9 percentage point gap has developed between young and mature learners who study at Colchester Institute.

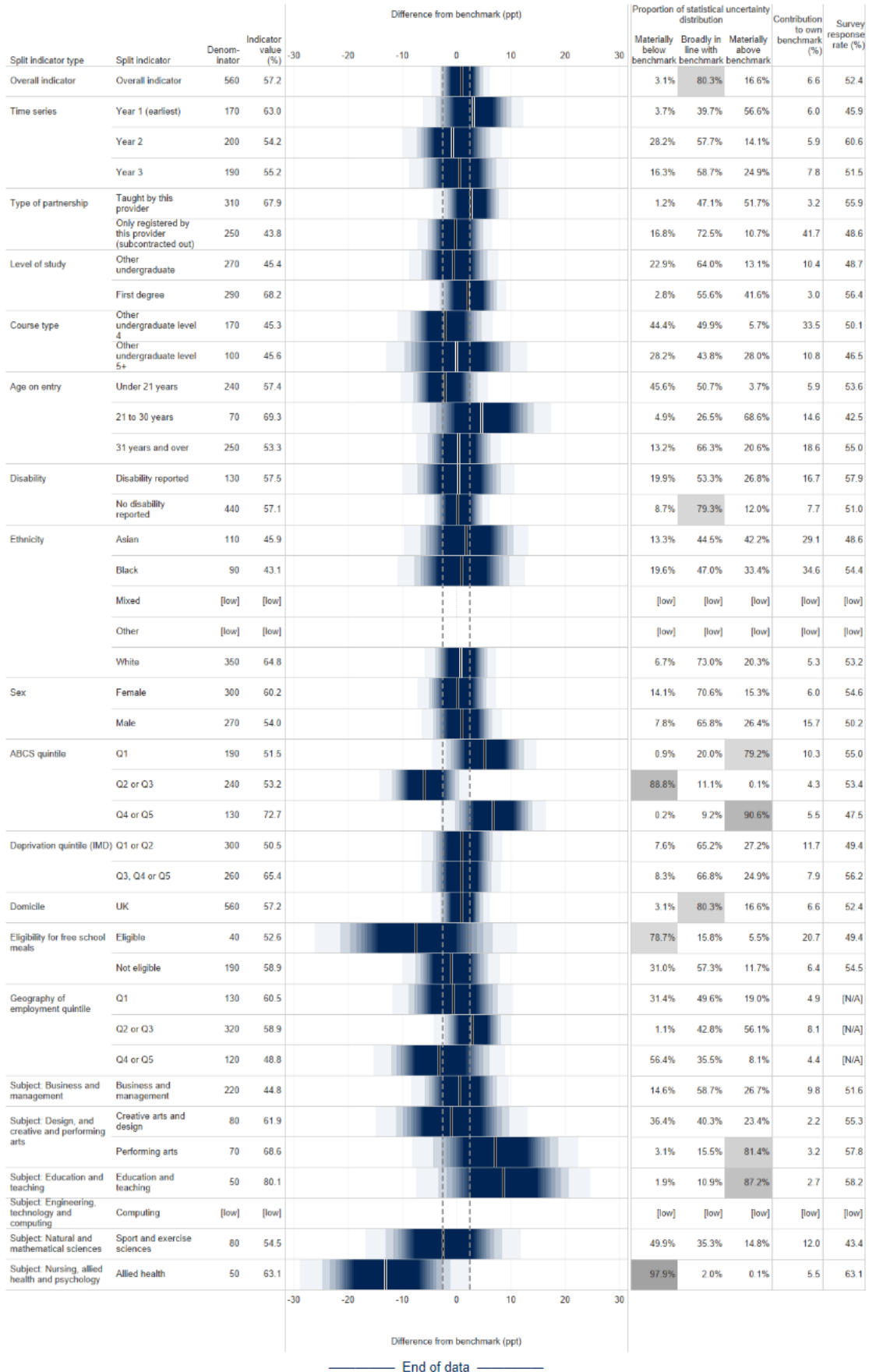


Colchester Institute TEF Data Dashboard – Progression (Full Time).

Colchester Institute (Full-time)

Note: High benchmark values (above 95%) are highlighted in yellow

Student, subject and study characteristic split indicators: *Progression (Full-time)*



Consideration of Other Data (Access)

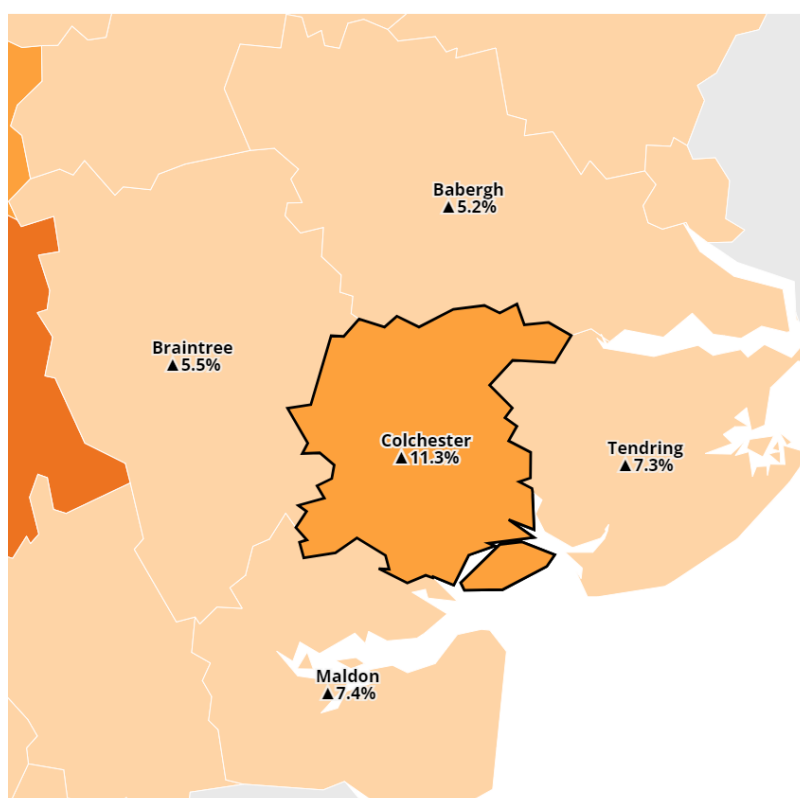
Local Authority Demographic data

Ethnicity

Source: 2021 Census data.

With the lack of ethnicity information within the Access and Participation Data Dashboard we have taken into consideration both local and national demographic data.

Colchester Institute recruits the majority of its learners from within 30 miles of the campus. The campus is based within the local authority area of 'Colchester' and is surrounded by four other local authorities, Babergh, Braintree, Maldon and Tendring.



The 2021 Census shows both the local and wider catchment areas to have a very high 'white' population.

Immediate Catchment - Colchester

	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Colchester	87.02%	5.14%	3.46%	2.91%	1.48%

Wider Catchment – Surrounding local boroughs.

	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Colchester	87.02%	5.14%	3.46%	2.91%	1.48%
Tendring	96.20%	1.21%	0.61%	1.61%	0.36%

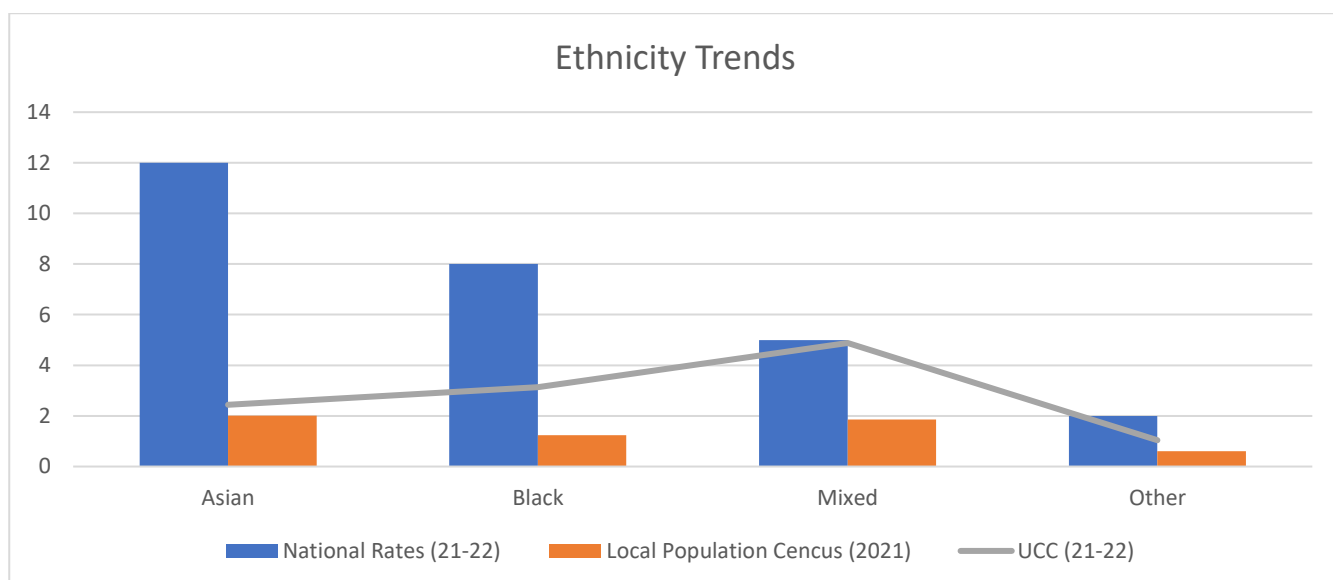
Babergh	96.67%	0.95%	0.54%	1.46%	0.37%
Braintree	94.66%	1.65%	1.22%	1.94%	0.52%
Maldon	96.86%	1.12%	0.36%	1.35%	0.32%

Colchester Institute primarily recruits from the local area, with most courses being aimed at learners already employed or looking to undertake a career change. This trend is expected to increase following the changes in curriculum referenced elsewhere in this document.

Therefore, when considering the ethnicity breakdown of our student body, attention needs to be given to the demographic of the local community more than the wider national figure.

Recruitment in Context

	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
UCC (21-22)	88.50%	2.44%	3.14%	4.88%	1.04%
Local Population Census (2021)	94.28%	2.01%	1.24%	1.85%	0.61%
National Rates (21-22)	73.00%	12.00%	8.00%	5.00%	2.00%



What this shows is that although recruitment is below national averages, Colchester Institute has consistently recruited above the ethnicity characteristics of the local area. Direct comparison data from the 2021 intake highlights this below.

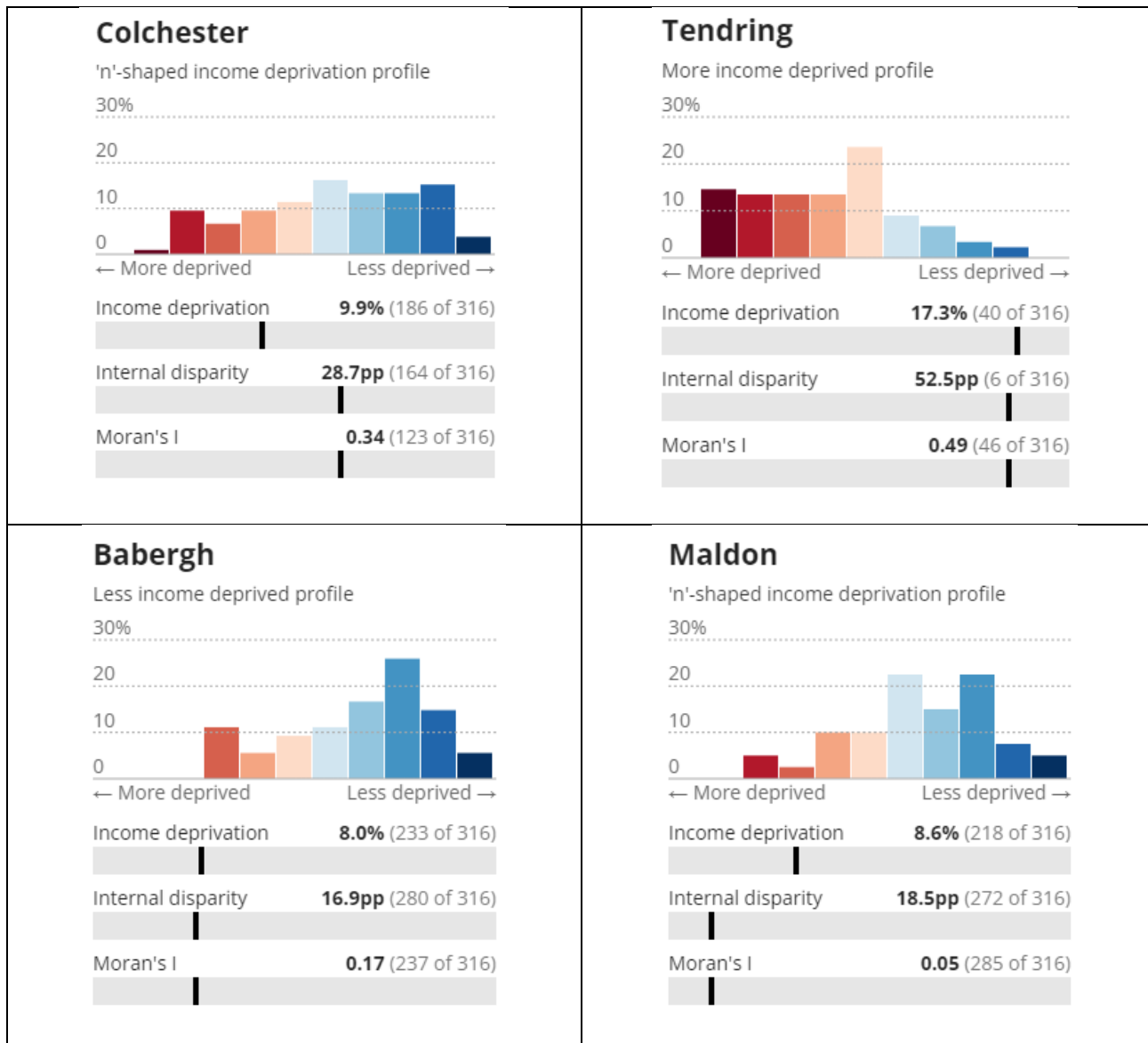
Although the institution is keen to continue to increase the diversity of its student community, this area is not seen as a key target area for this Access and Participation plan.

Ethnicity - EORR Considerations

There are no risks identified regarding access to provision by ethnicity.

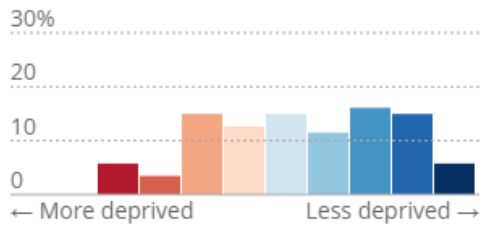
With recruitment from quintiles one and two of IMD Deprivation postcodes being one of the only areas that Colchester Institute was showing as being below national averages the income characteristics of the local area have also been considered in some more detail.

Of our wider catchment area four boroughs are found to be within the top 50% of least deprived neighbour hoods according to 2021 census. However, the borough of **Tendring** is listed as being 40th out of 316 for the most income deprived areas in the country.



Braintree

'n'-shaped income deprivation profile



Income deprivation **9.2%** (204 of 316)

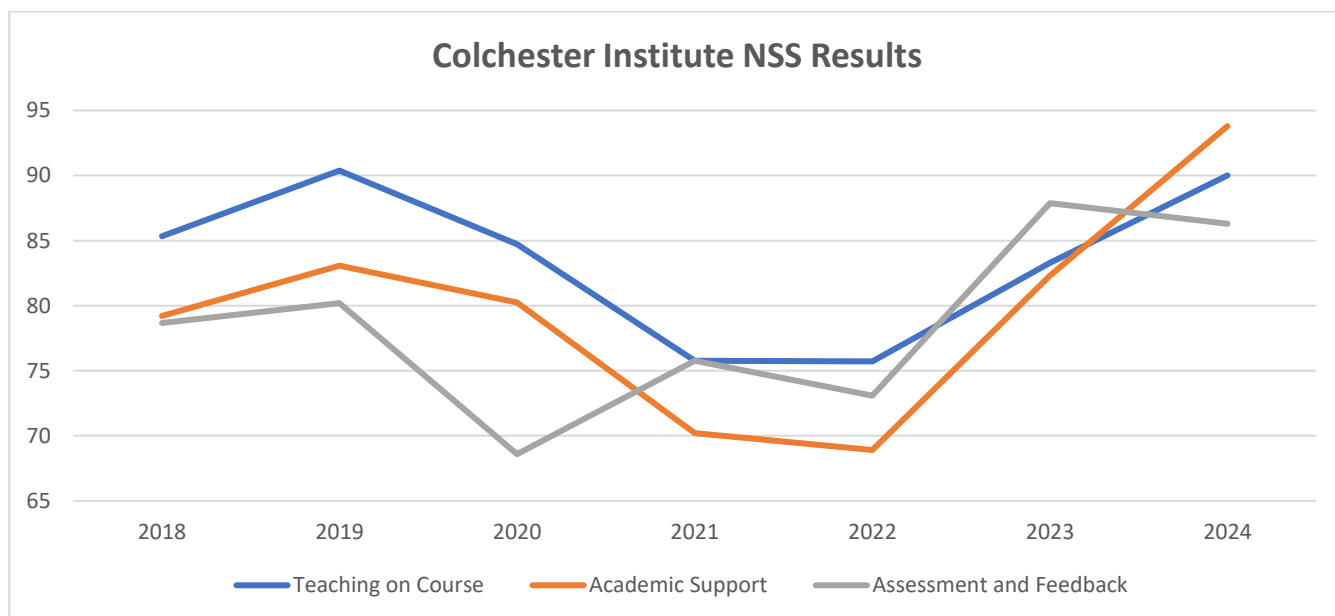
Internal disparity **19.5pp** (265 of 316)

Moran's I **0.15** (247 of 316)

Consideration of Other Data (Continuation, Completion and Attainment)

We have looked to other data sets to try and get an understanding of the perception of student support services both during the periods covered by the Widening and Participation Data Dashboard and more recently.

Reviewing institutional satisfaction surveys from the National Student Survey (NSS) we can see that satisfaction of services between 2020 and 2022 dropped but have increased again in recent years.



Colchester Institute NSS Results (2024)

Category	The teaching on my course	Learning opportunities	Assessment and feedback	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources	Student Voice
UCC 2024	90.00	85.40	86.30	93.80	74.10	84.80	70.50
UCC 2023	83.33	82.12	87.88	82.31	71.97	79.04	73.74
England 2023 (all providers)	84.73	81.38	78.04	83.40	73.77	86.14	71.93
England 2024 (all providers)	85.30	82.40	78.50	85.40	75.40	86.80	74.00
Difference to England (all providers) in 2024	+ 4.70	+ 3.00	+ 7.80	+ 8.40	- 1.30	- 2.80	- 3.50
Difference to England (all providers) in 2023	-1.40	+0.74	+9.84	-1.09	-1.80	-7.10	+1.81
Percentage Change in difference to England	+ 6.10	+ 2.26	- 2.04	+ 9.49	+0.50	+ 4.30	- 5.31

(all providers) 2023/2024									
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There does appear to be some correlation between the drop in continuation and attainment rates demonstrated in the widening participation data dashboard and student satisfaction rates for the question blocks within the NSS that are most closely linked to academic support. That the drop covered the years 2020-2022 there appears to be a link to the impact of the covid-19 pandemic.

Due to the institution’s decreasing student numbers not all of the student groups listed within the data dashboard are represented in the breakdown of National Student Survey numbers. However, if we look at results from the 2023 NSS (when satisfaction rates were on the increase) we can see the increase in satisfaction rates relating to academic support was seen across most groups.

Colchester Institute NSS Results (2023) – Characteristic Breakdown

	England	CI	CI	Tundra Quintiles		Disability		Age on Entry		
				Tundra 1	Tundra 2	All	Cognitive	Under 21	21-25	31+
Assessment & Feedback	78.04	87.88	9.84	7.52	9.1	10.66	11.96	5.71	11.96	18.63
10. How Clear were the marking criteria used to assess your work?	75.75	86.36	10.61	-3.53	17.11	11.21	14.25	6.75	6.07	24.25
Academic Support	83.4	82.31	-1.09	8.27	-6.48	5.24	16.6	-8.4	7.51	16.6
15. How easy was it to contact teaching staff when you needed to?	83.1	84.62	1.52	5.79	-6.18	3.26	16.9	-5.6	16.9	16.9
16. How well have teaching staff supported your learning?	83.76	79.69	-4.07	10.68	-6.84	6.72	16.24	-11.97	-1.94	16.24

Positive Difference to National Average
Negative Difference to National Average

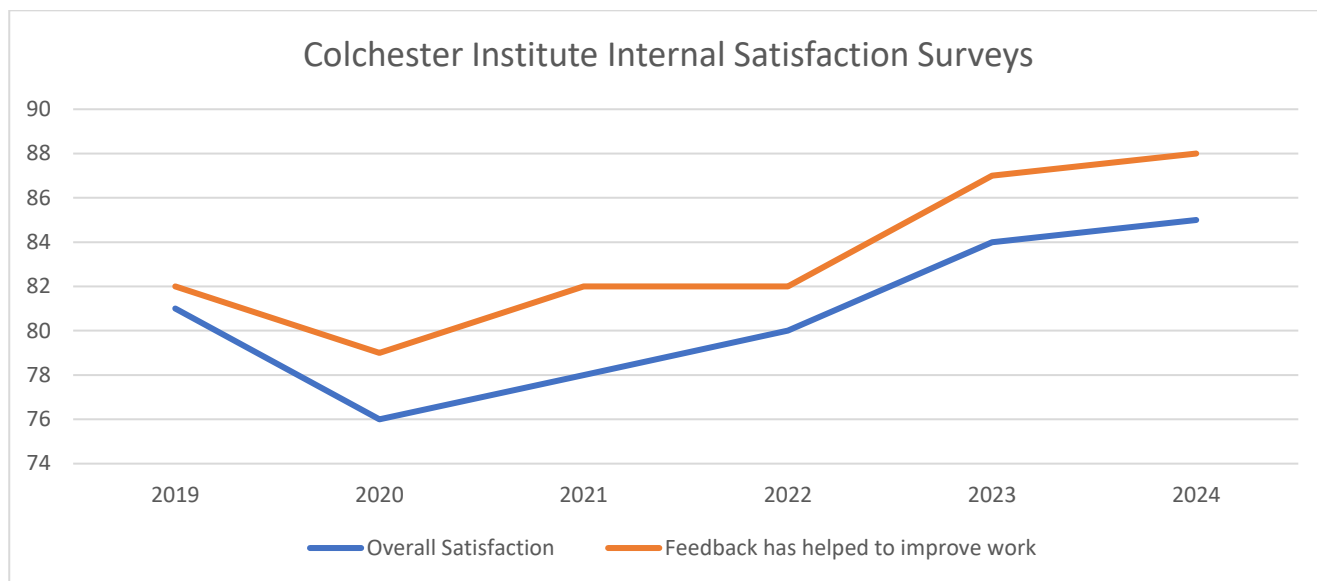
This was with the exception of Tundra Quintile 2 and young learners (under 21 on age of entry).

The 2024 NSS dataset included some limited IMD data, which has been included below due to its noticeably difference from the institutions overall position.

Colchester Institute NSS Results (2024) – Characteristic Breakdown

	England	CI	CI	IMD Quintile 2
Assessment & Feedback	78.51	86.25	7.74	2.4
10. How Clear were the marking criteria used to assess your work?	76.03	76.79	0.76	-12.39
Academic Support	85.45	93.75	8.3	0.91
15. How easy was it to contact teaching staff when you needed to?	85.33	94.64	9.31	5.58
16. How well have teaching staff supported your learning?	85.62	92.86	7.24	-3.8

The view that academic support arrangements were perceived as declining during the 2020-22 period is also supported by comparing the reduction in satisfaction rates with Colchester Institute's own student satisfaction surveys.



EORR Considerations

Satisfaction rates for academic support services appear to have improved since the data that was considered within the Widening Participation Data Dashboard. The time-period impacted, and which has close correlation with the continuation and attainment rates considered earlier in the document suggests a direct impact from the Covid pandemic of 2020-2022.

However there are noticeable variations within the characteristic breakdowns made available by the NSS to suggest that younger learners and those from quintiles 1 and 2 of Tundra and IMD postcodes believe they require additional support to succeed on programmes.

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that issues with students from low income households can be indicators for 5 of the 'On Course' risks identified in the EORR. These are:

- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus
- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) does not give a direct list of risks for students from quintile 1 and 2 of Tundra postcodes. However they do suggest that issues with students from no parental experience of higher education households can be indicators for 2 of the 'On Course' risks identified in the EORR. These are:

- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support

TEF (2023) Data Sets

With the absence of significant part-time and apprenticeship data to consider within the Access and Participation Data Dashboard the data provided as part of TEF 2023 has also been considered.

For full-time students the indicators are similar in that they show continuation and completion rates below benchmark figures. As the self-assessment has already identified these areas as being areas of improvement for most learners this information does not provide any particular additional insight.

Colchester Institute TEF (2023) Data – Full Time Overview

Colchester Institute (Full-time)

Overall indicator (Full-time)

Split indicator type	Split indicator	Measure	Denominator	Indicator value (%)	Difference from benchmark (ppt)					Benchmark value (%)	Proportion of statistical uncertainty distribution			Contribution to own benchmark (%)	Survey response rate (%)	
					-10	-5	0	5	10		Materially below benchmark	Broadly in line with benchmark	Materially above benchmark			
Overall Indicator	Overall Indicator	Continuation	1,640	73.7							79.4	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1	[N/A]
		Completion	1,500	72.8							79.2	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3	[N/A]
		Progression	560	57.2							56.4	3.1%	80.3%	16.6%	6.6	52.4

Part-time TEF data shows continuation rates to be below full-time rates, but completion rates appear to be more in-line with benchmark institutions (although still below).

Colchester Institute TEF (2023) Data – Part Time Overview

Colchester Institute (Part-time)

Overall indicator (Part-time)

Split indicator type	Split indicator	Measure	Denominator	Indicator value (%)	Difference from benchmark (ppt)							Benchmark value (%)	Proportion of statistical uncertainty distribution			Contribution to own benchmark (%)	Survey response rate (%)				
					-15	-10	-5	0	5	10	15		Materially below benchmark	Broadly in line with benchmark	Materially above benchmark						
Overall indicator	Overall indicator	Continuation	280	72.1												81.1	99.3%	0.7%	0.0%	1.4	[N/A]
		Completion	390	78.6												82.0	66.2%	33.4%	0.4%	0.9	[N/A]
		Progression	70	74.3												77.6	57.8%	33.4%	8.8%	5.2	45.6

Apprenticeship TEF data shows both continuation and progression data to be in line with or above benchmark institutions. There is no data available for continuation.

Colchester Institute TEF (2023) Data – Apprenticeship Overview

Colchester Institute (Apprenticeship)

Overall indicator (Apprenticeship)

Split indicator type	Split indicator	Measure	Denominator	Indicator value (%)	Difference from benchmark (ppt)					Benchmark value (%)	Proportion of statistical uncertainty distribution			Contribution to own benchmark (%)	Survey response rate (%)	
					-20	-10	0	10	20		Materially below benchmark	Broadly in line with benchmark	Materially above benchmark			
Overall indicator	Overall indicator	Continuation	250	82.4							82.2	10.5%	74.9%	14.6%	2.7	[N/A]
		Completion	30	83.9							[BK]	[BK]	[BK]	[BK]	[BK]	[N/A]
		Progression	30	83.9							80.9	14.8%	31.5%	53.7%	17.8	58.5

Reviewing the part-time continuation rates show most students to be below benchmarks. Of all student characteristics students with a declared disability is the most significant below benchmark.

Colchester Institute TEF (2023) Data – Part Time Continuation Data

Colchester Institute (Part-time)

Note: High benchmark values (above 95%) are highlighted in yellow.

Student, subject and study characteristic split indicators: *Continuation (Part-time)*

Split indicator type	Split indicator	Denominator	Indicator value (%)	Difference from benchmark (ppt)											Proportion of statistical uncertainty distribution			Contribution to own benchmark (%)	Survey response rate (%)			
				-50	-40	-30	-20	-10	0	10	20	30	40	50	Materially below benchmark	Broadly in line with benchmark	Materially above benchmark					
Overall indicator	Overall indicator	280	72.1															99.3%	0.7%	0.0%	1.4	[N/A]
Time series	Year 1 (earliest)	70	78.3															43.7%	34.9%	21.4%	2.3	[N/A]
	Year 2	80	72.0															92.2%	7.0%	0.7%	2.0	[N/A]
	Year 3	80	71.3															95.9%	3.9%	0.3%	3.3	[N/A]
	Year 4 (most recent)	50	65.4															96.9%	2.8%	0.3%	2.1	[N/A]
Type of partnership	Taught by this provider	280	72.1															99.3%	0.7%	0.0%	1.4	[N/A]
Level of study	Other undergraduate	220	77.3															88.8%	11.0%	0.2%	1.0	[N/A]
	First degree	60	51.8															99.9%	0.1%	0.0%	3.1	[N/A]
Course type	Other undergraduate level 4	130	81.9															31.6%	49.2%	19.1%	1.0	[N/A]
	Other undergraduate level 5+	90	71.0															99.4%	0.6%	0.0%	1.8	[N/A]
Age on entry	Under 21 years	50	77.4															80.9%	15.1%	4.0%	1.9	[N/A]
	21 to 30 years	110	77.2															75.7%	21.7%	2.6%	1.7	[N/A]
	31 years and over	110	64.2															99.6%	0.4%	0.0%	2.8	[N/A]
Disability	Disability reported	50	56.0															99.8%	0.2%	0.0%	5.9	[N/A]
	No disability reported	230	75.7															89.5%	10.0%	0.1%	1.3	[N/A]
Ethnicity	Asian	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[N/A]
	Mixed	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[N/A]
	Other	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[N/A]
	White	260	72.3															99.1%	0.9%	0.0%	1.7	[N/A]
Sex	Female	100	70.4															93.3%	6.3%	0.4%	2.3	[N/A]
	Male	180	73.0															97.4%	2.6%	0.0%	1.4	[N/A]
ABCS quintile	Q1	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[N/A]
	Q2 or Q3	30	62.1															95.3%	3.6%	1.1%	1.3	[N/A]
	Q4 or Q5	240	74.1															97.1%	2.9%	0.0%	1.5	[N/A]
Deprivation quintile (IMD)	Q1 or Q2	80	64.5															98.5%	1.4%	0.1%	3.2	[N/A]
	Q3, Q4 or Q5	200	75.1															94.7%	5.3%	0.1%	1.5	[N/A]
Domicile	UK	280	72.4															99.1%	0.9%	0.0%	1.4	[N/A]
Eligibility for free school meals	Not eligible	50	[DP]															[DP]	[DP]	[DP]	[DP]	[N/A]
Subject: Design, and creative and performing arts	Creative arts and design	30	40.6															99.6%	0.3%	0.0%	5.8	[N/A]
Subject: Education and teaching	Education and teaching	90	79.3															69.6%	25.7%	4.7%	1.1	[N/A]
Subject: Engineering, technology and computing	Computing	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[N/A]
	Engineering	70	78.4															81.5%	16.0%	2.5%	0.6	[N/A]
Subject: Natural and built environment	Architecture, building and planning	80	72.4															97.2%	2.7%	0.1%	1.3	[N/A]

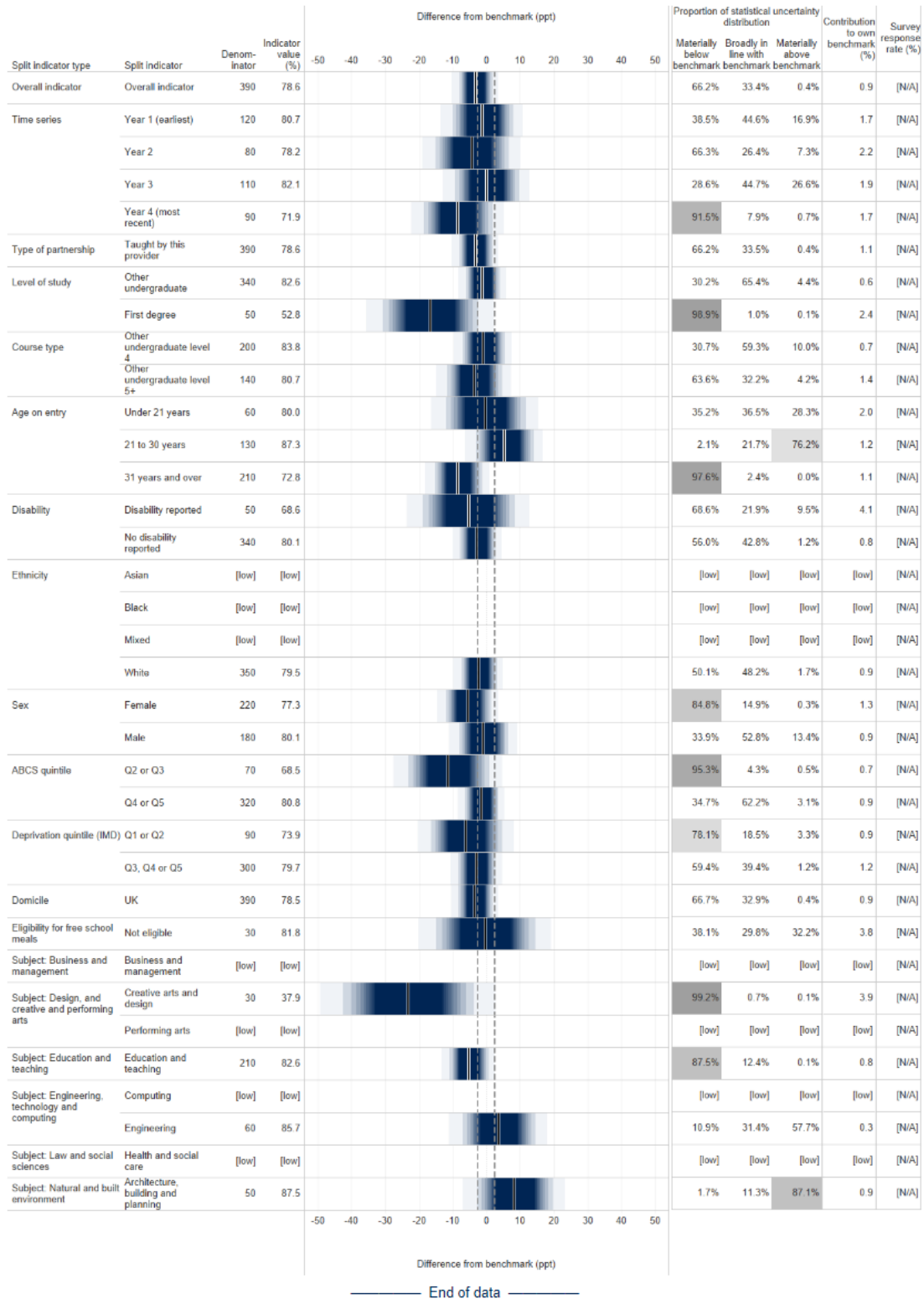
Reviewing the breakdown of part-time courses completion rates show many groups to be just in-line with benchmarks. However, it also highlights mature learners (aged 31 years or above), students with a reported disability, students from quintiles 2 or 3 of ABCS postcodes, and students from quintile 1 or 2 of IMD postcodes as particularly below benchmark figures.

Colchester Institute TEF (2023) Data – Part Time Completion Data

Colchester Institute (Part-time)

Note: High benchmark values (above 95%) are highlighted in yellow.

Student, subject and study characteristic split indicators: *Completion (Part-time)*



Part-time progression data is more limited, but mature and male learners appear to be at greater risk of not progressing compared to their peers.

Colchester Institute TEF (2023) Data – Part Time Progression Data

Colchester Institute (Part-time)

Note: High benchmark values (above 95%) are highlighted in yellow.

Student, subject and study characteristic split indicators: *Progression (Part-time)*

Split indicator type	Split indicator	Denominator	Indicator value (%)	Difference from benchmark (ppt)						Proportion of statistical uncertainty distribution			Contribution to own benchmark (%)	Survey response rate (%)			
				-30	-20	-10	0	10	20	30	Materially below benchmark	Broadly in line with benchmark			Materially above benchmark		
Overall indicator	Overall indicator	70	74.3										57.8%	33.4%	8.8%	5.2	45.6
Time series	Year 1 (earliest)	20	72.8										48.7%	24.6%	26.7%	4.9	39.7
	Year 2	30	72.1										72.9%	17.6%	9.2%	6.0	49.1
	Year 3	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Type of partnership	Taught by this provider	70	74.3										57.8%	33.4%	8.8%	5.2	45.6
Level of study	Other undergraduate	50	69.3										79.6%	16.7%	3.7%	3.8	45.7
	First degree	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Course type	Other undergraduate level 4	30	74.2										61.3%	23.9%	14.9%	7.7	42.5
	Other undergraduate level 5+	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Age on entry	Under 21 years	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
	21 to 30 years	30	69.9										72.8%	19.4%	7.8%	8.4	45.9
	31 years and over	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Disability	Disability reported	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
	No disability reported	50	71.3										78.9%	17.6%	3.5%	5.2	42.9
Ethnicity	White	70	73.5										66.0%	28.0%	6.0%	5.0	45.5
Sex	Female	30	75.9										35.1%	30.9%	34.0%	8.9	60.0
	Male	40	73.0										75.6%	18.6%	5.8%	8.8	38.4
ABCS quintile	Q1	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
	Q2 or Q3	30	77.7										20.2%	26.1%	53.7%	5.6	49.1
	Q4 or Q5	30	77.4										67.0%	23.4%	9.6%	5.5	40.0
Deprivation quintile (IMD)	Q1 or Q2	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
	Q3, Q4 or Q5	50	74.5										65.5%	26.5%	8.0%	7.3	42.2
Domicile	UK	70	74.3										57.8%	33.4%	8.8%	5.2	45.6
Eligibility for free school meals	Not eligible	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Geography of employment quintile	Q1	20	69.8										59.3%	22.4%	18.3%	6.8	[N/A]
	Q2 or Q3	30	75.8										37.8%	29.2%	33.0%	3.7	[N/A]
	Q4 or Q5	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[N/A]
Subject: Design, and creative and performing arts	Creative arts and design	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Subject: Education and teaching	Education and teaching	30	78.0										22.0%	24.0%	54.0%	3.8	55.6
Subject: Engineering, technology and computing	Engineering	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Subject: Natural and built environment	Architecture, building and planning	[low]	[low]										[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]

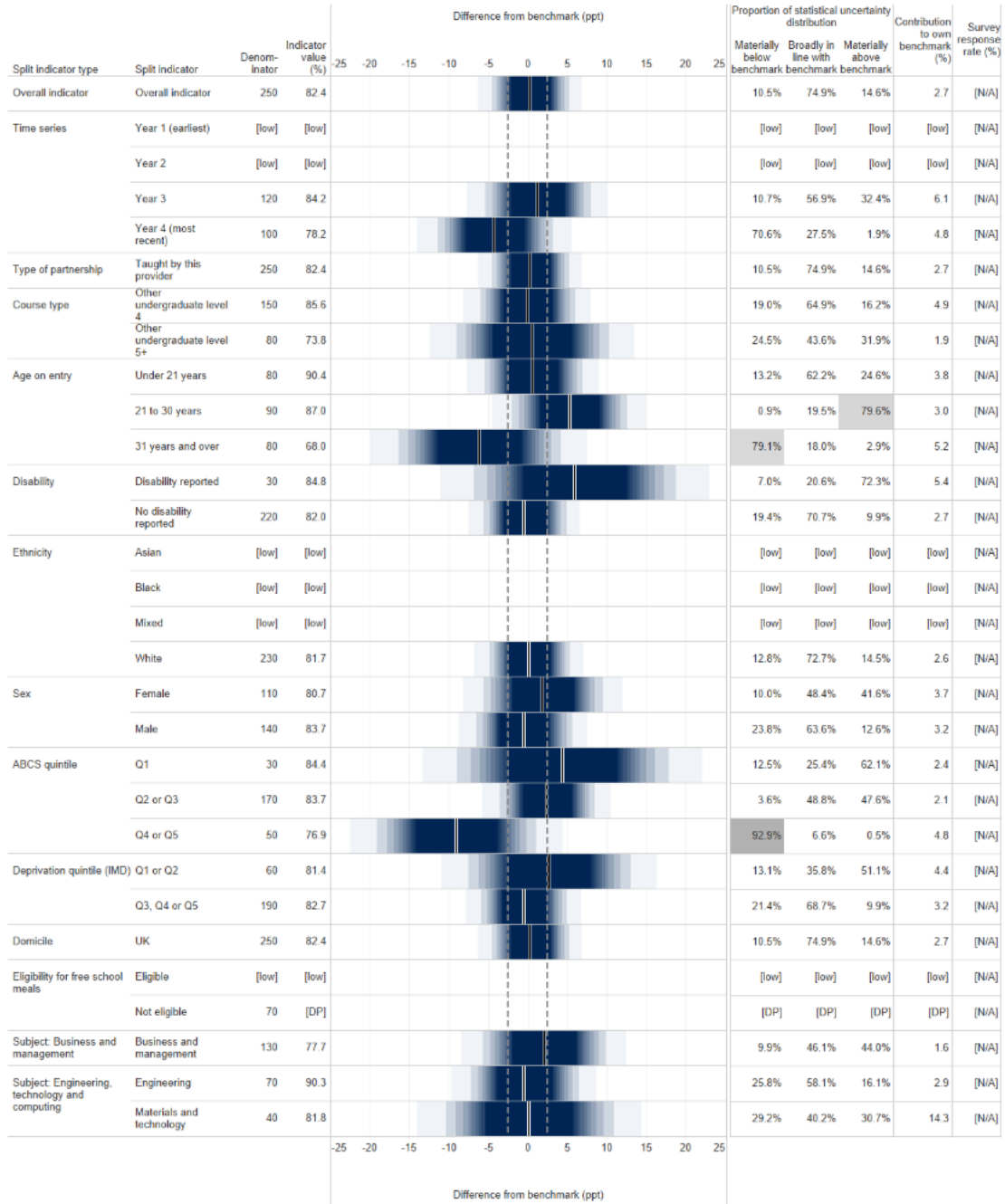
Reviewing the breakdown of Apprenticeship continuation rates highlights only ABCS quintiles 4 and 5 and learners aged 31 years or above as areas of significant concern.

Colchester Institute TEF (2023) Data – Apprenticeship Continuation Data

Colchester Institute (Apprenticeship)

Note: High benchmark values (above 95%) are highlighted in yellow

Student, subject and study characteristic split indicators: *Continuation (Apprenticeship)*



End of data

Reviewing the breakdown of Apprenticeship progression rates raises no issues of additional concern.

Colchester Institute TEF (2023) Data – Apprenticeship Progression Data

Colchester Institute (Apprenticeship)

Note: High benchmark values (above 95%) are highlighted in yellow.

Student, subject and study characteristic split indicators: *Progression (Apprenticeship)*

Split indicator type	Split indicator	Denominator	Indicator value (%)	Difference from benchmark (ppt)											Proportion of statistical uncertainty distribution			Contribution to own benchmark (%)	Survey response rate (%)			
				-25	-20	-15	-10	-5	0	5	10	15	20	25	Materially below benchmark	Broadly in line with benchmark	Materially above benchmark					
Overall indicator	Overall indicator	30	83.9															14.8%	31.5%	53.7%	17.8	58.5
Time series	Year 1 (earliest)	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
	Year 2	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
	Year 3	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Type of partnership	Taught by this provider	30	83.9															14.8%	31.5%	53.7%	17.8	58.5
Course type	Other undergraduate level 4	30	80.0															16.1%	24.1%	59.8%	21.5	58.1
	Other undergraduate level 5+	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Age on entry	Under 21 years	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
	21 to 30 years	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Disability	No disability reported	30	82.8															11.0%	27.9%	61.1%	20.4	60.4
Ethnicity	White	30	81.5															36.6%	34.2%	29.3%	19.1	56.3
Sex	Female	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
	Male	30	84.0															17.9%	28.4%	53.7%	16.6	58.1
ABCS quintile	Q2 or Q3	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
	Q4 or Q5	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Deprivation quintile (IMD)	Q1 or Q2	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
	Q3, Q4 or Q5	30	84.8															21.0%	32.0%	47.0%	19.8	57.8
Domicile	UK	30	83.9															14.8%	31.5%	53.7%	17.8	58.5
Eligibility for free school meals	Not eligible	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]
Geography of employment quintile	Q1	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[N/A]
	Q2 or Q3	[low]	[low]															[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[N/A]
Subject: Engineering, technology and computing	Engineering	30	83.3															12.4%	26.0%	61.6%	19.8	58.8

EORR Considerations (TEF Data Sets)

No further risks have been indicated for full time learners based on the 2023 TEF data. Part time continuation rates have been identified as a risk, both for all learners and more specifically for those with a declared disability.

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that lower than expected continuation rates can be indicators for 9 of the risks identified in EORR. These are:

- Risk 1 Knowledge and Skills
- Risk 2 Information and Guidance
- Risk 5 Limited choice of course type and delivery mode
- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 8: Mental Health
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus

- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that learners with declared disability lower can be indicators for 5 of the on-course risks identified in EORR. These are:

- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus
- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

The review of part-time completion rates has suggested risks for mature learners (aged 31 years or above), students with a reported disability, and students from quintile 1 or 2 of IMD postcodes as particularly below benchmark figures.

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that mature learners can be indicators for 5 of the on-course risks identified in EORR. These are:

- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 8: Mental Health
- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests issues with students from low-income households can be indicators for 5 of the 'On Course' risks identified in the EORR. These are:

- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus
- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

The review of part-time progression routes has highlighted concern over part-time mature and male students. Both student characteristics are seen as displaying indicators of being at greater risk of Risk 12. Progression from Higher Education.

The review of apprenticeship continuation rates highlighted risk associated with mature learners undertaking an apprenticeship.

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that mature learners can be indicators for 5 of the on-course risks identified in EORR. These are:

- Risk 6 Insufficient academic support
- Risk 7 Insufficient personal support
- Risk 8: Mental Health
- Risk 10: Cost Pressures
- Risk 11: Capacity Issues

Risks Identified by Risk Indicators within self-assessment.

		Risk	Description	Indicators Tally	Student Groups at Risk
Access	1	Knowledge and Skills	Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to be accepted onto higher education courses that match their expectations and ambitions.	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FT IMD students • PT & Apprenticeship IMD students • Apprenticeship students with Disability • All FT students • All PT students
	2	Information and Guidance	Students may not have equal opportunity to receive the information and guidance that will enable them to develop ambition and expectations, or to make informed choice about their higher education options.	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FT IMD students • PT & Apprenticeship IMD students • Apprenticeship students with Disability • All FT students • All PT students
	3	Perception of Higher Education	Students may not feel able to apply to higher education, or certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified.	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FT IMD students PT & Apprenticeship IMD students • Apprenticeship students with Disability
	4	Application Success Rates	Students may not be accepted to a higher education course, or may not be accepted to certain types of	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeship students with Disability • PT students

			providers within higher education, despite being qualified.		
	5	Limited Choice of Course Type and Delivery Mode	Students may not have equal opportunity to access a sufficiently wide variety of higher education course types.	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeship students with Disability • PT students • FT students
On Course	6	Insufficient Academic Support	Students may not receive sufficient personalised academic support to achieve a positive outcome.	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students • FT students • Low-income students • Students from Tundra quintiles 1 and 2 • All PT students • PT declared disabled. • PT mature • PT low income • Apprentice mature
	7	Insufficient Personal Support	Students may not receive a sufficient personalised non-academic support or have sufficient access to extracurricular activities to achieve a positive outcome.	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students • FT students • Low-income students • Students from Tundra quintiles 1 and 2 • All PT students • PT declared disabled. • PT mature • PT low income • Apprentice mature

8	Mental Health	Students may not experience an environment that is conducive to good mental health and wellbeing.	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students • FT students • All PT students • PT mature • Apprentice mature
9	Ongoing Impacts of Coronavirus	Students may be affected by the ongoing consequences of the coronavirus pandemic.	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students • FT students • Low-income students • All PT students • PT declared disabled. • PT low income
10	Cost Pressures	Increases in cost pressures may affect a student's ability to complete their course or obtain a good grade.	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students • FT students • Low-income students • All PT students • PT declared disabled. • PT mature • PT low income • Apprentice mature
11	Capacity Issues	Students may not have equal opportunity to access limited resources related to higher education, such as suitable accommodation.	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students • FT students • Low-income students • All PT students • PT declared disabled. • PT low income • Apprentice mature

On Exit	12	Progression from Higher Education	Students may not have equal opportunity to progress to an outcome they consider to be a positive reflection of their higher education experience.	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students • Young Learners • PT mature • PT male

Conclusions:

Colchester Institute is a relatively small provider of higher education in a further education setting. It has a mission to be a widening participation provider, and to provide opportunities to learners who may not otherwise be able to enter higher education. Its student community is representative of this mission.

The data reviewed suggests that increasing access to its programmes is not the most significant risk to opportunity for its students. Instead, it recruits above national trends for mature learners (8.7% above national average), those with a reported disability (4.7% above national average), students from Tundra quintiles 1 and 2 (combined 29.2% above national average), students eligible for free school meals (4.7% above national average) and students from ABCS quintiles 1 and 2 (combined 31.5% above the national average).

Data for Colchester Institute regarding ethnicity was limited on the OFS Widening Participation Data Dashboard, but through a combination of internal and official statistics relating to its local catchment it was found that recruitment is in line with the ethnicity characteristics of the region.

Data analysed, and the risk indicators identified via the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR), during the assessment of performance suggested risks to opportunity instead lay in the on-course elements of the student life cycle. Continuation, completion and attainment data was found to be the principle areas for development for multiple student groups. As a result, it is recommended that on-course support be the primary focus of Colchester Institutes Access and Participation Plan. It is also recommended that due to the size of the provision, and the make-up of its student community, where many students have multiple factors of disadvantage many of these interventions look to address the wider HE community where possible. Where appropriate these will be focused more specifically on areas identified as being at most risk within the EORR.

The July 2024 update of the OFS Data Widening Participation Data Dashboard provided a helpful context for this report. Although its release after the initial self-assessment had taken place was not ideal, it has provided clarity that dips in performance across continuation, completion and attainment can be mapped to the timeline of the covid-19 pandemic. It also provided insight into the recovery that both Colchester Institute and the wider sector has made since, and allow more ambitious objectives, targets and milestones to be set within this Access and Participation Plan.

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

Colchester Institute is a relatively small provider of higher education in a further education setting. It has a mission to be a widening participation provider, and to provide opportunities to learners who may not otherwise be able to enter higher education. The analysis of performance within Annex A evidenced that its student community reflects this mission.

The data reviewed suggests that **increasing access to its programmes is not the most significant risk to opportunity for its students**. Instead, it recruits above national trends for mature learners (8.7% above national average), those with a reported disability (4.7% above national average), students from Tundra quintiles 1 and 2 (combined 29.2% above national average), students eligible for free school meals (4.7% above national average) and students from ABCS quintiles 1 and 2 (combined 31.5% above the national average).

Data for Colchester Institute regarding ethnicity was limited on the OFS Access and Participation Data Dashboard, but through a combination of internal and official statistics relating to its local catchment it was found that recruitment is in line with the ethnicity characteristics of the local area.

Data analysed, and the risk indicators identified via the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR), during the assessment of performance suggested risks to opportunity instead lay in the on-course or 'success' elements of the student life cycle. Continuation, completion and attainment data was found to be the principle areas for development for multiple student groups. As a result, it is recommended that **on-course support be the primary focus of Colchester Institute's Access and Participation Plan**. It is also recommended that due to the size of the provision, and the make-up of its student community, where many students have multiple factors of disadvantage many of these interventions look to address the wider HE community where possible. Where appropriate these will be focused more specifically on areas identified as being at most risk within the EORR.

Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic and Setting of Targets

The July 2024 update of the OFS Data Access and Participation Data Dashboard provided a helpful context for this report. Although its release after the initial self-assessment had taken place was not ideal, it has provided clarity that dips in performance across continuation and attainment can be mapped to the timeline of the covid-19 pandemic. It also provided insight into the recovery that both Colchester Institute and the wider sector has made since, and allow more ambitious objectives, targets and milestones to be set within this Access and Participation Plan.

When devising this Access and Participation Plan we have rightfully considered our past performance, but have also had a close eye on the future. As previously referenced in this document our curriculum, delivery methods and in-turn student community is going through a period of change.

By the end of the period covered by this Access and Participation Plan we anticipate that the majority of our learners will be mature, employed apprentices whose time on campus will be limited to one day a week.

There are however significant similarities to our current student community. The majority of our full-time student intake are mature learners (54.8% in 2022-23). Our undergraduate programmes have a long tradition of offering intensified course delivery hours, designed with the intention of limiting the volume of days students are required to be on campus and providing individual flexibility to students to organise and prioritise their own self-directed study, part-time employment and other personal responsibilities.

The Access and Participation Data Dashboard shows that current strategies to support our mature learners are having a positive impact with continuation being 6.2 percentage points above the national average in 2020-21, attainment being 9.4 percentage points above the national average and progression being 7.4 percentage points above the national average in 2021/22.

As a result, we believe we can look to adjust and build on previously adopted strategies as our student community changes.

On Course Support - Consideration of the Student Life Cycle (Continuation, Completion and Attainment)

Continuation Rates

Overall continuation rates have been on a positive trajectory for all student groups from 2017-18 through to 2020-21. The dip witnessed in 2021-22 was reflected in national rates, and internal data suggests a recovery will have taken place by 2023-24.

There was a significant drop in continuation rates for students with a reported disability, a drop that went against historical trends at the institution. Internal data suggests this has been redressed during the 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic years, and that the drops in continuation were a direct impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the nervousness about wider public interactions for those with underlying health conditions or disabilities.

The official data sets to quantify the level of improvement expected will not be released until 2025 and 2026 respectively. To safeguard our targets, we propose to set dual targets for targeted groups which will look to reduce the gap in opportunity within the institution, but also ensure continuation rates are in-line with the sector.

Based on our analysis of performance, which can be found in Annex A, we propose to target the following learners:

- Students with a declared disability

- Students entitled to free school meals
- Young learners

Due to the interconnections between continuation, completion, and attainment we will be targeting all the above groups under Intervention Strategy 1.

Colchester Institute has implemented several initiatives in recent years to improve continuation for its full-time learners. Some of these are included in our 2020-2025 Access and Participation Plan, and some are in addition to those commitments. Internal data shows that positive improvements can be tracked since their implementation, and that the college is on target to have continuation rates for mature learners above the national average for both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 academic years. **It is therefore the intention to build on and continue these interventions within this plan and expand these services to apprenticeship students where applicable.**

Completion Rates

Completion rates on the Access and Participation Data Dashboard are the most delayed of all official metrics related to the on-course 'success' element of the student lifecycle. Currently the most recent data set available is for those who started their higher education programmes in the 2018-19 academic year. As a result, the impact of the covid-19 pandemic and the interventions introduced during the previous Access and Participation Plan are yet to be realised on official statistics.

We anticipate that our completion rates will drop during the timescale of this plan, in a similar fashion to how continuation and attainment rates dropped during the pandemic period. We however also recognise that it will not be possible to evidence any impact of intervention strategy introduced under this plan through official national statistics during the lifetime of this plan. Instead, the impact of the covid pandemic would likely be seen during the first two years of this plan and would not provide an insight into the real time impact of interventions.

We wish to ensure our targets and interventions can be impact assessed and relevant to the period the plan will be in operation. It is also our desire to track interventions against official national statistics and not internal data. Due to the delay in completion statistics becoming available and our desire to track interventions against official national statistics and not internal data, we believe setting of completion targets would not be an appropriate measure in our plan.

Instead, we will look to set ambitious targets for the 'success' period of the student lifecycle through improvement of continuation and attainment rates. These two areas have already demonstrated the impact of the pandemic within their official data sets, and with their release not as delayed as completion statistics, will provide a more time relevant understanding of impact.

Attainment Rates

Attainment rates at both Colchester Institute and nationally dropped significant in 2021-22 for most student groups. This appears to be a delayed impact of the covid-19 pandemic, and the relinquishing of pandemic related no-detriment policies across the sector.

Rates at Colchester Institute bounced back in 2022-23, although not quite to pre-pandemic levels. Nationally, attainment rates continued to drop from a peak which reached its apex during the covid period, and more specifically the 2020-21 academic year.

Attainment rates are the first of the success metrics which are presenting official post-pandemic outcomes on the OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard. Due to the timeliness of the data release, and that the impact and partial recovery from the pandemic is visible in the data means that it presents good evidence for interventions within this plan.

There is an expectation that national rates will increase over the lifetime of the plan, and therefore to safeguard our targets we propose to reduce the gaps in opportunity within the institution, but also ensure progression rates become closer and more in line with the sector.

Based on our analysis of performance, which can be found in Annex A, we propose to target the following learners:

- Young learners

Due to the interconnections between continuation, completion, and attainment we will be targeting all of the above groups under Intervention Strategy 1.

Progression Rates

Due to the size and shape of its provision there is limited data regarding progression for Colchester Institute in the Access and Participation Data Dashboard. What data is available shows that progression rates for mature learners have been increasing from 2018-19 to 2021-22, a trend that is opposite to the sector. It also shows that the drop in progression rates seen nationally in 2020-21 was not experienced at Colchester Institute.

The impact of the Covid pandemic is visible when reviewing data for 2021-22 both at institution and national level, especially for young learners.

Progression rates for mature learners rose to being 7.4 percentage points above the national average in 2021-22, however a significant gap in progression rates has developed for young learners, both internally and nationally.

Based on our analysis of performance, which can be found in Annex A, we propose to target the following learners:

- Young learners
- Students with a declared disability

Risks of Opportunity for On-Course 'Success' element of the Student Life Cycle

Our use of the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR)

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that issues with students from low-income households can be indicators for 6 of the 'on course' risks identified in the EORR. These are:

- EORR Risk 6 – Insufficient Academic Support
- EORR Risk 7 – Insufficient Personal Support
- EORR Risk 8 – Mental Health
- EORR Risk 9 – Ongoing Impact of Corona Virus
- EORR Risk 10 - Cost Pressures
- EORR Risk 11 - Capacity Issues

These risks are considered in more detail below.

EORR Risk 6 – Insufficient Academic Support

Colchester Institute has seen continuation rates continuously increase over a 4-year period up to 2021-22. The dip witnessed in 2021-22 was reflected in national rates, and internal data suggests a recovery will have taken place by 2023-24. With this in mind we have looked to review and expand existing provision, and where possible ensuring its relevance for the more work-based student body expected during the course of this Access and Participation Plan.

In previous Access and Participation Plans we have recognised and implemented strategies with the intention of ensuring that students are made aware and gain access to support which they are entitled to. With a community made up of predominantly mature learners, some of which are returning to education after many years we have seen examples of underreporting of learning support needs and accessing of appropriate support. Through a comprehensive support service, we have encouraged students to disclose conditions, helped to identify and formally diagnose previous undetected conditions and assisted students to gain access to their support.

We will look to undertake the following activities as part of intervention strategy one.

Diagnostic Assessments

For the past few years, we have offered, and funded, a service for learners to be nominated for formal dyslexia assessments. This has allowed students to be diagnosed with previously undetected learning support needs, and access support both through the college and the Disabled Students Allowance. For many this opportunity has been transformative for their experience of education, and for their ability to achieve on programme.

The theory of change for this initiative is:

Increased knowledge of student needs > extra academic support > improved outcomes

We propose to continue with this as part of intervention strategy one. We will also look to increase visibility of the programme to apprentices during the recruitment process under intervention strategy three.

Historically there have been minimal apprentices who have been put forward for this opportunity but reviewing our internal records we can see this has increased substantially recently. In the past two years, we have seen the volume of apprentice learners accessing this facility increase by 200%.

Simultaneously we have witnessed a number of late declarations of documented learning support needs. It has also been identified that apprentices come forward later in the academic year for diagnostic opportunities. Feedback from mentors suggest this is due to concerns over stigmatisation and impact it may have on their employment or with peers.

Intervention strategy three will look to educate and address these perceptions early in the recruitment cycle.

Additional Support for Apprentices with Learning Support Needs.

Apprenticeship learners with learning support needs are not currently eligible to apply for additional support from the Disabled Students Allowance. For the past few years, we have looked to mirror the academic study skills and mentor support that would be provided by the DSA for full-time or part-time students.

This has proved to be a very successful practice, and has encouraged apprentices to disclose previously unknown conditions, or seek diagnoses.

The theory of change for this initiative is:

extra academic support > improved outcomes> improvements to success and progression metrics

We aim to continue to offer this service so as not to disadvantage the student due to the funding arrangements of their programme.

EORR Risk 7 – Insufficient Personal Support

Personal support services at Colchester Institute covers several areas, many of which are covered under EORR risks 8, 10 and 11. These are detailed further under those headings below.

EORR Risk 8 – Mental Health

In our **Assessment of Performance (Annex A)**, mental health showed the fewest indicators in the "on-course" stage of the student lifecycle. Despite this, it remains an area of focus for us, and we are committed to ensuring sufficient support for our learners' mental wellbeing.

Given the small size of our provision, we can offer a highly personalized student experience. Students are typically on a first-name basis with their lecturers and study in class sizes of 10 to 25 learners. Numerous testimonials from students have highlighted our small class sizes and learner-centred environment as a key reason for choosing to study with us and for staying with us.

Colchester Institute has a well-established wellbeing and safeguarding network designed to support a wide range of learners, including those aged 16-19, adult learners, and students on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Our support infrastructure includes trained professionals, such as counsellors, who provide direct assistance to students.

As a further education college without its own student accommodation, we recognised the gap in out-of-hours wellbeing support. To address this, we have implemented a **Student Assistance Programme** for all undergraduate and postgraduate students, offering 24/7 access to mental health, wellbeing, and safeguarding support. This programme also provides students with additional one-on-one counselling services, available in-person or remotely. **We intend to maintain this approach throughout the duration of this Access and Participation Plan.**

We also understand that many of our students are mature learners or studying alongside employment. Recognising the multiple responsibilities they manage, we believe that adapting our rules and regulations to better support this balance would be a valuable measure in promoting their mental health.

Our undergraduate programmes have a long-standing tradition of **intensified course delivery**, reducing the number of days students are required to attend campus. This allows students the flexibility to organize and prioritise self-directed study, part-time work, and personal responsibilities. As part of this plan, **we are committed to continuing this approach in the design of our curriculum.**

Additionally, we have reviewed our student-focused policies and **are committed to adopting a self-certification option for our Extenuating Circumstances policy.** With our validating partners leading the way on this practice, this change will offer greater reassurance and reduce anxiety for students facing circumstances beyond their control.

EORR Risk 9 – Ongoing Impact of Corona Virus

The inclusion of this risk within the EORR was helpful, as it provided a focus on the ongoing impact from the pandemic. The 2021-22 data for both continuation and attainment that is currently available on the Access and Participation Data Dashboard highlights the impact on performance caused by this disruptive period. It is expected that a similar impact will be seen for completion rates once that data becomes available during the lifetime of this plan. Data for subsequent years, both on the data dashboard (attainment) and through internal data sets show a recovery in performance can be seen from 2022-23 onwards.

We will not set any specific intervention plans for this risk, but instead it will inform the format and milestones set for our overall objectives. For instance, we will where possible, set dual targets to allow us to track improvements in institutional performance, but also linked to national averages which we also expect to rise as the sector continues its recovery from this period.

EORR Risk 10 - Cost Pressures

Analysis of the Access and Participation Data Dashboard suggests there is a risk to equality of opportunity for students from low-income households. Presently Colchester Institute offers students access to two financial support funds whilst on programme, the UCC Hardship Fund and the College's charitable trust, the Colchester Institute Foundation Trust. It does not currently offer significant bursaries, scholarships or discounts for its student community.

Analysis of internal data sets does not indicate a significant need to change the approach in this area. Student withdrawal data (see below) from 2021-2024 shows that financial reasons were a comparably low contributing factor provided by students as their primary reason for withdrawing. Simultaneously the demand placed on the College’s current support funds has not exceeded supply, with both applications and awards from the college’s hardship fund dropping in recent years.

Reasons for Withdrawal provided by Colchester Institute students.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Financial Reasons	2%	4%	0%
Personal Reasons	23%	43%	24%
Ill Health	6%	7%	12%
Career Change/Employment	8%	9%	35%
HE Transfer	1%	3%	0%
Exam Board	60%	28%	12%
Other	0%	4%	18%

It is possible that the impact on low household students is hidden, being seen in the generic ‘personal reasons’ or where students are choosing to leave education for employment opportunities. This is an area that will require more investigation and **Colchester Institute will redesign its exit questionnaire to acquire more detailed information on the factors impacting students to withdraw within the broader categories above.**

We will also commit to increase the visibility of the financial support available to students whilst on programme at all points of the student lifecycle. In an effort to reduce perceptions around the fund it will also be renamed and streamlined to make it more accessible for learners.

We will not, however, introduce any new student bursary or scholarship within this Access and Participation Plan. Instead focus will be given to providing additional academic, personal and mental health support.

EORR Risk 11 - Capacity Issues

Colchester Institute does not operate its own accommodation, and instead signposts the small number of students requiring student accommodation to third party providers. As a result, we do not believe this risk is relevant to our provision and will not be looking to put in place an intervention strategy for it.

Student Types – Mode of Study

Full Time Students

Full time undergraduate learners have been Colchester Institute's largest higher education student group historically and form the basis of most data that has been available during our self-assessment of performance. Although classified as full-time learners, many of our students have characteristics like those found for traditional part-time learners with the majority being mature students with significant additional responsibilities, including employment, to be balanced alongside their studies.

As a result, we feel we can take a one-provider approach to our intervention strategies and offer activities that may be targeted at full-time learners based on the evidence available for full-time learners, but with confidence that these strategies will also benefit part-time and apprenticeship learners.

Apprentices

As discussed earlier in this plan our curriculum has undergone significant change in recent years with the volume of full-time and part-time undergraduate students decreasing and the percentage of learners on apprenticeship programmes increasing. This is evident in the Office for Students size and shape provision data dashboard (below):

We are currently anticipating this trend to continue, and for Higher or Degree Apprentices to make up around 50% of our undergraduate intake in 2024/25, and for them to become our largest student type over the duration of this Access and Participation Plan.

Data regarding Apprenticeship learners was more limited within the Access and Participation Data Dashboard. However, during our analysis of performance, we did identify discrepancies with the diversity of both our part-time and apprenticeship cohorts when compared to the full-time student body.

Our current apprenticeship offering is centred on accommodating apprentices referred to ourselves by their employer. There is therefore concern over the impact that recruitment which is mainly driven by third party referrals could have on our student profile in the future.

As an example, 30.1% of students who commenced a full-time course in 2022-23 reported they had a disability (OFS WPDD). Data below shows this value to be noticeably decreased for learners on an apprenticeship, although this has risen in recent years and is currently above the national average for apprenticeship learners.

2019/20 (OFS WPDD)	2020/21 (OFS WPDD)	2021/22 (OFS WPDD)	2022/23 (OFS WPDD)	2023/24 (Internal Data)
11.9%	10.3%	4.3%	18.8%	15.9%

It has also been identified internally that apprentice students with learning support needs have self-declared or come forward for diagnostic opportunities later in the academic year. Feedback from mentors suggest this is due to concerns over stigmatisation and impact it may have on their employment or with peers. We have witnessed this before with traditional adult learners, but we have now recognised a **need for a separate approach to informing prospective**

apprenticeship learners, and their employers, of the services available to them whilst studying in Higher Education.

This is seen to be important to safeguard the positive access arrangements at Colchester Institute, and the diversity of the student community for student intakes over the lifetime of this plan.

Due to the historically low level of apprenticeship learners, and the delay in continuation, completion and attainment data becoming available there are minimal official statistics available on the Access and Participation Data Dashboard. As a result, we will not formally commit to specific targets within our plan, but will look to match national averages when formal data becomes available. We will do this by having a whole provider approach to our intervention strategies for continuation and attainment, making activities available to both full-time and apprenticeship learners.

Part Time Students

We anticipate our part-time learner community to continue to decrease during the lifetime of this plan. Changes in learner and employer behaviour have seen the majority of our previous part-time students now studying with us as apprentices. This is a trend we expect to continue and all current part-time programmes which we offer will be offered either as an apprenticeship or as 'full cost' with both learner types learning together. This is already the case in Initial Teacher Education, Engineering and Construction. As a result, we will concentrate this plan on interventions for our full-time and apprenticeship communities, but look to make interventions available to part-time learners where possible so that they can also take advantage of the benefits of such schemes.

We will look to have an inclusive approach to our interventions, to allow targeting but also a consistent experience for our learners.

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Colchester Institute

Provider UKPRN: 10001535

Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

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

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	8795
Foundation degree		N/A	8795
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND		N/A	6795
CertHE/DipHE		N/A	8795
Postgraduate ITT		N/A	8795
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
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	*	*	*
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	6596
Foundation degree		N/A	6596
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND		N/A	5096
CertHE/DipHE		N/A	6596
Postgraduate ITT		N/A	6596
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	*	*	*
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: Colchester Institute

Provider UKPRN: 10001535

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 OIS 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	£19,000	£19,000	£19,000	£19,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000

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 (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£19,000	£19,000	£19,000	£19,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	Total access investment (£)	£19,000	£19,000	£19,000	£19,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (as % of HFI)	5.9%	5.8%	5.6%	5.6%
Access activity investment	Total access investment funded from HFI (£)	£19,000	£19,000	£19,000	£19,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (£)	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)	2.5%	2.4%	2.3%	2.3%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Colchester Institute

Provider UKPRN: 10001535

Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim [500 characters maximum]	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
To maintain the percentage of apprenticeship learners who declare a diagnosed disability to be above the national average.	PTA_1	Access	Reported disability	Disability reported		To maintain the percentage of apprenticeship learners who declare a diagnosed disability to be above the national average. This is a proactive target, designed to safeguard the diversity of the student community at Colchester Institute. There is currently a positive difference of 3.7 percentage points to the national average and we will look to ensure this rate does not turn negative during the four years of this plan.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2022-23	Percentage points	3.7	0	0	0	0
To increase the percentage of apprenticeship learners who declare a diagnosed disability to be in-line with our full-time programmes.	PTA_2	Access	Reported disability	Disability reported		To increase the percentage of apprenticeship learners who declare a diagnosed disability to be in-line with our full-time programmes. This is a proactive target, designed to safeguard the diversity of the student community at Colchester Institute. There is currently a difference of 11.3 percentage points for learners studying on a full-time undergraduate programme and on an apprenticeship. We will look to eliminate this difference across the four years of this plan.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2022-23	Percentage points	11.3	10	8	4	0
To ensure the percentage of mature learners joining an apprenticeship programme continues to be above the national average for apprenticeship programmes.	PTA_3	Access	Age	Mature (over 21)		To ensure the percentage of mature learners joining an apprenticeship programme continues to be above the national average for apprenticeship programmes. This is a proactive target, designed to safeguard the diversity of the student community at Colchester Institute. There is currently a positive difference of 0.3 percentage points to the national average and we will look to ensure this rate does not turn negative during the four years of this plan.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2022-23	Percentage points	0.3	0	0	0	0
	PTA_4														
	PTA_5														
	PTA_6														
	PTA_7														
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
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