

Access and Participation Five Year Plan: 2020-21 onwards

Introduction

our Veterinary Nursing students are not counted in progression data. The OfS uses Standard Occupational Classification (SOC2010) to determine whether a profession is regarded as highly skilled; veterinary nursing is not in this category. Cohorts included in the different measures are indicated in Table 1.

	Access	Attainment	Progression
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Access

Our priorities for Access are to increase the proportions of IMD Q1

Progression to employment or further study

Progression to employment or further study rates are limited in the data set and individual groups are largely data protected. Our own analysis indicates that, while the data are incomplete, there are significant gaps in progression between IMD Q1 and Q5, between Polar 4 Q1 and Q5 and between Polar4 Q2 and Q5. However, the gap between IMD Q2 and Q5 has closed in the past 3 years (Table 8). Thus there will be a focus on progression for IMD Q1 and Polar 4 Q1&2 students in order to replicate this success. Similar to non-continuation, the small numbers of students in both Q1 groups can result in large variations in the percentage point gaps, meaning it is currently not prudent to make specific Progression targets. However, these gaps are of concern and may be widening as we improve access for Q1 and Q2 students, thus we will make a commitment to improve progression rates for IMD Q1 and Polar 4 Q1&2 students. Our Data Working Group will closely monitor these gaps and if trends appear t

Success

Non-continuation

Aggregated data across all groups show that our non-

Access Non-continuation Attainment Prog W* re/MCID 7>> BDC (air

Access

The gap in Access between Students with a disability and without has increased slightly over the past 5 years from 68.3 to 70.3 percentage points. However, as we have similar percentages of students with different disabilities at RVC to the national HE population (Table 13) this is not a priority area to address. However, we will monitor this data closely to ensure that the gaps do not increase.

Success

Non-continuation

Non-continuation rates between Disabled and Non-Disabled students at the RVC are very similar (1.12pp gap; 5 year average), therefore, this is not a priority area. The Data Working Group will be investigating areas where data is protected.

Attainment

The Attainment rate of Disabled Students is lower than the national HE population (Table 13), however, this is influenced by the lower overall attainment of students in all categories (see also Table 5). In fact, in 2017-18, when the overall Attainment rate dipped, the Disabled Student Attainment rate was 70%, compared to non-disabled student attainment rate of 51%. Therefore, this area is not currently a target, but the gathering of better data to allow for disaggregated analysis will be a priority.

Progression to employment or further study

Progression rates for Disabled Students are slightly better compared to Non-Disabled students at the RVC (-

2 Strategic aims and objectives

be central to future Access and Participation Plans 2024-2028 and subsequently. The Data Working Group

Profession cited above, the representation of ethnic minorities among respondents increased marginally; from 2% to 3% between 2006 and 2010. Asian/Asian British ethnicities make up 1% of this cohort, as do those of mixed ethnicity. Chinese ethnicities constituted 0.5% and Black/Black British 0.3%, with other ethnicities 0.3%. Lack of diversity is not just an issue in the UK; it is worldwide - see for example Greenhill et al. (2010) discussing working with animals and the issue of working with sacred animals are barriers that prevent students from some religions applying to Veterinary Medicine and allied degrees. This view is informed by our own research from student focus groups undertaken during 2010-2011. We say that RVC lacks diversity. We have, for our size, a large and diverse international student population and a range of students for the various and diverse cohorts. A new student-led initiative, *Animal Aspirations*, is specifically targeted at BAME youth and is run by RVC BAME students who present themselves as role models.

Mature students

There is a gap of 9.44pp between our mature student population compared to the national HE population although we have narrowed the gap between Young and Mature students at the RVC over the previous 5 years.

they are to qualify. Until such time as the veterinary professional body addresses these issues, RVC must abide by current professional regulations and course accreditation requirements.

2.2 Aims and Objectives

LPN / Socio-Economic Groups

Similar to many London HEIs, students from IMD and Polar4 Q1 are in the minority across all degree courses. We are encouraged that, in relation to females in Polar4 Q1&2, we have successfully increased numbers (see Table 15).

The RVC Gateway Programme was established 14 years ago to specifically target young people from lower socio-economic groups and continues to recruit 18-20% of our initial BVetMed year intake. Not all this cohort are, however, from

Targets

To reduce the gap between the BAME student population at the RVC and the national population from 3.2 percentage points to 0.5 percentage points at a rate of 0.5 percentage points per year for the first two year and then accelerated decreases as our activities have impact.

Access

Improve targeting of schools to focus on those with students from Polar4 Q1, IMD Q1 and BAME students. We will be mindful of these priorities when selecting for our longitudinal programmes; Junior Vet Club (ages 7-12), Teen Vet Club (ages 13-18), Year 10 Easter school, Year 11 and Sutton Trust Summer Schools.

We will communicate our targets to agencies we work collaboratively with including NCOP and

plan. We shall then make Success and Progression priorities in terms of setting targets and outcomes in subsequent Access and Participation Plans.

3 Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

To reiterate, the strategic measures we shall adopt to achieve the aims and objectives of the Access and Participation Plan

to 2021. The APP has been shared and discussed at the most senior levels of the College, including the Council. It will be disseminated to all major college committees and form the basis for staff development and inset days. The RVC sees the Plan as being a document of which all staff must take cognisance and, as we describe below, the activity and policies that it generates will be monitored and discussed in all spheres of college life. The management and governance structure of the RVC (Figure 1) will continue to play a significant role in the annual assessment of progress throughout the lifetime of the plan.

The proposed strategy aims to provide all our priority groups with higher education and is pivotal. Given that our major degree is one of a highly specialist nature, our undergraduate student numbers are relatively

3.3 Evaluation strategy

Strategic context

Evaluation underpins all widening participation activities at the RVC and is placed at the centre of any discussion around planning new and developing pre-existing programmes. In May 2018, a Widening Participation Project Officer was appointed to lead on the evaluation of all widening participation activities; expanding the reach and depth of evaluation at the RVC and ensuring that we have, in reference to the OfS Self-Assessment, the necessary skills base among professional service staff for undertaking evaluation of access and participation plan programmes.

The Widening Participation team works in partnership with Academic staff, Student Registry, Student Admissions and the Directorate of Learning and Wellbeing to provide a strategic approach to access and participation across the student lifecycle. The collection and analysis of student data will be managed by the Data Working Group, which will meet regularly to ensure the institution is making progress towards ambitious widening participation goals and reports to strategic committees (Figure 1). The Data Working Group is comprised of senior staff members from across Widening Participation, Student Recruitment, Admissions and Academic staff who take responsibility for ensuring programme officers and partners across the institution are aware of the importance of evaluation and are committed to facilitating robust data collection.

The RVC is a member of the AccessHE, Aimhigher London and NEON widening participation focused collaborative networks. The widening participation evaluation strategy at the RVC is informed by regular

can draw from a vast knowledge base across the sector for undertaking evaluation of access and participation plan programmes.

When designing and developing widening participation activities, we engage with current students to ensure we adequately capture the student voice. For example, Animal Aspirations, a project designed to introduce veterinary role models from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups to young people from widening participation backgrounds, was entirely designed and led by curre

be used to enhance both the evaluation strategy taken at the RVC and the practice through

As financial support is an area of significant investment at the RVC, we utilise the OfS financial support evaluation toolkit to ensure our approach is evidence led. In late 2018, the RVC contacted all recipients of financial support in the previous completed academic year at the institution and asked them to complete a survey constructed by the Office for Students. The survey was circulated in order to better understand how financial support recipients used the financial support offered to them by the institution, and the perceived value to recipients of that support. The survey was open from 23 November to 13 December 2018 and received 237 responses. The report has been submitted to the OfS and has been used internally to make student-led adjustments to current practice.

Following self-assessment via the OfS Self-Assessment tool, we have also identified that there are practices which need to be developed:

1. We do not currently design our research to evidence which would demonstrate the causal effect of an intervention. As stated above, we do not have plans to collect this type of evidence in the future, choosing instead to embed and expand the

Evaluation implementation

The application forms and surveys used to administer and evaluate the widening participation activities at the RVC have been designed in collaboration with a Data Protection Officer at the institution to ensure we are fully GDPR compliant. Data are stored on secure servers operated by JISC Online Surveys before being downloaded as password protected files on RVC operated secure surveys. All data collected are subject to the RVC Data Protection Policy, which is publicly available online.

Evaluation of pre/post intervention change is collected through individual responses, which enables the RVC to analyse data at an individual participant level capable of capturing changes in the outcomes of individuals. -group trends.

As mentioned above, we are adopting multiple strategies to overcome the weaknesses of self-reported data. These include requesting additional information six months after the programme is completed, incorporating peer-to-peer evaluation strategies, and the implementation of an evaluability assessment to clearly establish the activities that can be evaluated credibly and reliably.

Following self-assessment via the OfS Self-Assessment tool, we have also identified that there are practices which need to be developed:

1. We do not currently have an established methodology to track the outcomes of our participants over time. In order to address this, we are currently exploring our options regarding the tracking of students.
2. We have not systematically undertaken risk analysis for our evaluations. We will work collaboratively with our partner networks, including AccessHE and Aimhigher, to enhance our knowledge of this area and implement a risk analysis for our most substantial and long term programmes.

Learning to shape improvements

The findings from our previous Widening Participation programmes are directly used as evidence and insight

aims and objec

2. We are not able to demonstrate how we have used evaluation findings to inform improvements to our access and participation interventions cycle-on-cycle. While improvements are made the effects of these changes have not been reported clearly. The effects will now be reported clearly in programme evaluations ensuring that we can closely monitor the effectiveness of the changes.

4 Provision of Information to Students

Information for prospective students is placed on the RVC website and is prominent and clearly signposted.

Network, and Outreach activities.

Information includes details on fees and other costs including accommodation charges made by the College and an indication of charges made by other landlords. There is also information on bursaries and other funds to alleviate hardship. Details will also appear in college prospectuses but given the lapse in publication timetables the website will be regularly updated with the correct detail. The Students Union will also disseminate relevant information and we shall consult with them on the various accessible means of communication that we might adopt.

The bursary support available from the RVC is listed below:

Household Income	Award per year
Below £35,000	£1,000

This will be reassessed each year dependent on annual household income. A sum of £5,000 has been allocated to provide an initial £1,000 bursary for up to five students from a Care background. All students will be eligible to apply for hardship funds which are assessed on an individual and case by case basis. No students should be deterred from study at RVC on purely financial reasons. In the appended Resource Plan we have tabulated our financial commitments for the Year 2020 – 2021.

Financial Information and Employability Advice

We are conscious of the financial burdens that can be placed on students. RVC students face significant costs when undertaking compulsory external placements across the UK and the longer terms in clinical years also hinder the availability of paid vacation work. No potential student of RVC should feel ineligible because of financial issues and to ensure that this vital non-academic issue is given full weight we shall embed financial advice and practical support sessions within all our outreach activity. This will be dovetailed with sessions on careers and employability throughout all degree programmes so that students can feel confident that the investment they have made in training for a career have been worthwhile. Recent statistics show that 96% of RVC students have employment within six months of graduation but i

5 Appendix

For a small, specialist institution the level of access work in our widening participation activities has been significant. This has not always been straightforward given the specialist nature of our

attainment. R

We have made considerable investment in our wider transitions support. Students need to be able to get off to a good start at the RVC and recognition of the importance period of study to later progression and attainment, is a key reason the RVC has integrated its welcome and induction process for new students in 2022-23. This longitudinal, skills-based approach to the induction process starts with the online pre-arrival induction introducing

In 2023-24 following evaluation of the pilot of Careers Information Sheets we will further develop this data-driven targeted approach to supporting employability skills for all cohorts. By monitoring the uptake of interventions against the demonstrated learning gain for careers readiness for specific groups of students,

of evidence on what works in access and support for students, in particular for students from underrepresented groups.

This will be a significant extension of o
not rest on its academic laurels. We wish to be seen as a professional and educational centre which seeks to enrich society by training veterinary and scientific graduates to a high level so that they can achieve personal benefit from rewarding employment and social satisfaction through their contribution to a liberal, caring and highly qualified society.

Summary of key objectives

- x Expand our transition support to ensure students make a successful transition to HE.
- x Develop our staff training programmes to embed the concepts of Universal Design to ensure that our provision is accessible to all.
- x Implement a data-driven approach to support development of employability skills.
- x Introduce training to



Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: The Royal Veterinary College

Provider UKPRN: 10007779

Investment summary

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	£415,435.19	£419,341.19	£418,193.57	£416,472.14	£416,472.14
	£186,945.83	£188,703.53	£188,187.10	£187,412.46	£187,412.46
	£166,174.07	£167,736.47	£167,277.43	£166,588.85	£166,588.85
	£41,543.52	£41,934.12	£41,819.36	£41,647.21	£41,647.21
	£20,771.76	£20,967.06	£20,909.68	£20,823.61	£20,823.61
	£622,000.00	£621,000.00	£619,000.00	£617,000.00	£618,000.00
	£10,185.39	£10,389.10	£10,596.88	£10,808.82	£11,025.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HF1%)

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25

Provider name: The Royal Veterinary College

Provider UKPRN: 10007779

Table 2a - Access

					2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
To reduce the gap in percentage points between the RVC's IMD PTA_1 and IMD 5 cohorts	Socio-economic	Our target is to reduce the pp gap between IMD 1 students at the RVC	Yes	The access and participation dataset 2017-18					17.4pp

N/A	PTS_4	Other	N/A	No	Other data source	Other (please include details of commentary)	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
N/A	PTS_5	Other	N/A	No								

