# The Courtauld Institute of Art - 10007761

# Access & Participation Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25

## Introduction

The Courtauld Institute of Art is a small, specialist institution that focuses on art history, conservation and curating, and which offers a single, full-time undergraduate degree: the BA (Hons) History of Art. This is a rigorous, academic qualification that typically recruits a of 85 students annually, of whom up to 80 are Home/EU students. It is a high tariff degree that typically makes offers of AAA, but uses contextual data to vary that offer to recruit students from under-represented groups with the potential to thrive on the degree.

## 1. Assessment of performance

Following evaluation of previous performance, The Courtauld recognises that there are significant disparities in access to its degree. This plan addresses those disparities and the underlying root problem: the lack of applications from under-represented groups. However, The Courtauld has a strong record of support for students from under-represented groups from the point of application to the successful completion of their degree, including rate of offers and conversion, progression, attainment and success. Data demonstrates that success and progression rates are consistent across the broader student body, but The Courtauld recognises that this support can be improved.

Evaluation of our current undergraduate admissions cycle indicates that there are measures that we can put in place immediately to improve our recruitment of students from under-represented groups. We will continue to monitor our progression benchmark into further study and employment to ensure that there are no gaps with under-represented groups. There are also deeper, structural issues that need to be addressed to make a more fundamental impact. These require longer-term solutions that respond to the general lack of awareness at schools of art history as a rigorous humanities subject, and the specific lack of teaching of art history in state schools (only 717 students took art history A Level in 2018; and the subject is taught in fewer than 5% of state schools).

Section 2.1 of this plan sets out our ambitious but realistic targets for 2021-25, which build on the success of our existing, well-established and active outreach programmes. We recognise that we need to shift the emphasis of these programmes to focus more sharply on institutional outcomes. Section 2.2 of this plan sets out our longer-term strategy, which will take ten to fifteen years to come to fruition. This strategy includes both internal and external projects.

* Internally, we are reviewing our curriculum and academic appointments strategies to ensure that the degree provides the global subject coverage, knowledge, skills and critical abilities that will attract a broad range of applicants and maximise their employment prospects on graduation; and also to ensure that the faculty is inclusive and able to deliver a diverse, global curriculum.
* Externally, we are building on existing co-operations with other organisations to promote art history more broadly. The Courtauld recognises the need to grow the pool of applicants for art history; and that this must be done to benefit the discipline across the HE sector. Art history as a humanities discipline faces challenges nationally, and The Courtauld is committed to working with colleagues within and beyond the sector to ensure that this field of study survives and flourishes. We believe that this broader goal for the discipline is as important as the institutional-level, outcomes-focused targets and strategy that we set out in this plan.

Throughout the assessment of performance that follows, we note significant issues with the volatility of our data: with a very small student intake and therefore low absolute numbers of students from under-represented groups, it is difficult to discern significant or meaningful trends. Single individuals equate to large changes in percentage points, and data must often be suppressed in order to protect anonymity. It should also be noted that we have to compare our single department data against that for large multi-faculty universities in which the profile of humanities departments is not visible as it is aggregated with that of the sciences and social sciences.

The Courtauld benchmarks itself against the departments at Bristol, Cambridge, Essex, Oxford, St Andrews, Sussex, UCL, UEA, Warwick and York, which have similar tariff entry requirements. However, to undertake accurate benchmarking, data for the individual Art History departments for these peer universities needs to be available to enable a direct comparison to be made with The Courtauld, and this is not currently available. This is an issue we are reviewing with HESA so that we can contextualise our performance more accurately against a more closely aligned segment of the Higher Education sector with similar patterns of recruitment. To make up for this absence, we also use data taken from the 2018 Royal Historical Society (RHS) report on Race, Ethnicity and Equality in UK History which explicitly deals with diversity of students and faculty in the Historical and Philosophical Studies in Higher Education.

#### **Assessment of performance of OfS under-represented groups**

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|   | **Table 1 - Access: Students registering at The Courtauld (POLAR4 analysis)** |  |  |  |   |
|   |  | **POLAR4 Quintiles** | **2013/4** | **2014/5** | **2015/6** | **2016/7** | **2017/8** | ***Change 2013/4 - 2017/8*** |   |
|   | **The Courtauld** | **Q1** | 0.0% | 0.0% | 5.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | *0.0%* |   |
|   | **Q2** | 0.0% | 10.0% | 10.0% | 10.0% | 15.0% | *15.0%* |   |
|   | **Q3** | 10.0% | 10.0% | 15.0% | 13.0% | 10.0% | *0.0%* |   |
|   | **Q4** | 10.0% | 20.0% | 15.0% | 18.0% | 30.0% | *20.0%* |   |
|   | **Q5** | 80.0% | 60.0% | 55.0% | 56.0% | 45.0% | *-35.0%* |   |
|   | **GAP** | 80.0% | 60.0% | 50.0% | 56.0% | 45.0% | *-35.0%* |   |
|   | **Rolling Average** | **Q1 and Q2** | N/A | N/A | 8.3% | 11.7% | 13.3% |  |   |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
|   | **Sector** | **Q1** | 11.1% | 11.6% | 11.7% | 11.8% | 12.0% | *0.9%* |   |
|   | **Q2** | 15.3% | 15.6% | 15.5% | 15.6% | 15.5% | *0.2%* |   |
|   | **Q3** | 19.2% | 19.1% | 19.1% | 19.2% | 19.2% | *0.0%* |   |
|   | **Q4** | 23.5% | 23.4% | 23.4% | 23.2% | 23.2% | *-0.3%* |   |
|   | **Q5** | 31.0% | 30.5% | 30.4% | 30.4% | 30.3% | *-0.7%* |   |
|   | **GAP** | 19.9% | 18.9% | 18.7% | 18.6% | 18.3% | *-1.6%* |   |
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|   | **Table 1b - Access: Students Registering at The Courtauld Socio economic background (IMD analysis (Quintile 1 vs. Quintile 5)** |  |   |
|   |  | **IMD Quintile** | **2013/4** | **2014/5** | **2015/6** | **2016/7** | **2017/8** | ***Change 2013/4 - 2017/8*** |   |
|   | **The Courtauld** | **Q1** | 0.0% | 0.0% | 10.0% | 5.0% | 0.0% | *0.0%* |   |
|   | **Q2** | 10.0% | 10.0% | 20.0% | 19.0% | 5.0% | *-5.0%* |   |
|   | **Q3** | 30.0% | 30.0% | 20.0% | 26.0% | 30.0% | *0.0%* |   |
|   | **Q4** | 30.0% | 30.0% | 35.0% | 29.0% | 35.0% | *5.0%* |   |
|   | **Q5** | 30.0% | 30.0% | 15.0% | 21.0% | 30.0% | *0.0%* |   |
|   | **GAP** | 30.0% | 30.0% | 5.0% | 16.0% | 30.0% | *0.0%* |   |
|   | **Rolling Average** | **Q1 and Q2** | N/A | N/A | 16.3% | 21.3% | 19.7% |  |   |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
|   | **Sector** | **Q1** | 19.0% | 20.4% | 20.9% | 21.2% | 21.6% | *2.6%* |   |
|   | **Q2** | 18.8% | 19.6% | 19.7% | 19.9% | 20.0% | *1.2%* |   |
|   | **Q3** | 18.7% | 18.6% | 18.6% | 18.4% | 18.5% | *-0.2%* |   |
|   | **Q4** | 20.1% | 19.5% | 19.2% | 19.0% | 18.9% | *-1.2%* |   |
|   | **Q5** | 23.3% | 22.0% | 21.7% | 21.5% | 21.0% | *-2.3%* |   |
|   | **GAP** | 4.3% | 1.6% | 0.8% | 0.3% | -0.6% | *-4.9%* |   |
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|   | **Table 2 - Access: Students registering at The Courtauld (Ethnicity data)** |  |  |   |
|   |  |  | **2013/4** | **2014/5** | **2015/6** | **2016/7** | **2017/8** | ***Change 2013/4 - 2017/8*** |   |
|   | **The Courtauld** | **Asian** | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | *0.0%* |   |
|   | **Black** | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | *0.0%* |   |
|   | **Mixed** | 0.0% | 10.0% | 5.0% | 0.0% | 10.0% | *10.0%* |   |
|   | **Other** | 5.0% | 0.0% | 5.0% | 8.0% | 0.0% | *-5.0%* |   |
|   | **White** | 95.0% | 90.0% | 90.0% | 92.0% | 90.0% | *-5.0%* |   |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
|   | **Sector** | **Asian** | 11.9% | 12.5% | 12.9% | 13.3% | 13.7% | *1.8%* |   |
|   | **Black** | 8.6% | 9.8% | 10.2% | 10.4% | 10.5% | *1.9%* |   |
|   | **Mixed** | 4.1% | 4.4% | 4.6% | 4.7% | 4.8% | *0.7%* |   |
|   | **Other** | 1.6% | 1.7% | 1.8% | 1.9% | 2.2% | *0.6%* |   |
|   | **White** | 73.8% | 71.6% | 70.5% | 69.7% | 68.8% | *-5.0%* |   |
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|   | **Table 3 - Access Age of Students** |  |  |  |  |  |   |
|   |  |  | **2013/4** | **2014/5** | **2015/6** | **2016/7** | **2017/8** | ***Change 2013/4 - 2017/8*** |   |
|   | **The Courtauld** | **21 & Over** | ND | ND | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% | *5.0%* |   |
|   | **Under 21** | ND | ND | 95.0% | 95.0% | 95.0% | *95.0%* |   |
|   | **GAP** | ND | ND | 90.0% | 90.0% | 90.0% | *100.0%* |   |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
|   | **Sector** | **21 & Over** | 24.7% | 26.4% | 26.9% | 27.4% | 27.8% | *3.1%* |   |
|   | **Under 21** | 75.3% | 73.6% | 73.1% | 72.6% | 72.2% | *-3.1%* |   |
|   | **GAP** | 50.6% | 47.2% | 46.2% | 45.2% | 44.4% | *-6.2%* |   |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
|   |  ND – No data |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |
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|   | **Table 4 - Access: Students declaring a disability.** |  |  |  |  |   |
|   |  |  | **2013/4** | **2014/5** | **2015/6** | **2016/7** | **2017/8** | ***Change 2013/4 - 2017/8*** |   |
|   | **The Courtauld** | **Disability** | 25.0% | 10.0% | 25.0% | 28.0% | 15.0% | *-10.0%* |   |
|   | **No disability** | 75.0% | 90.0% | 75.0% | 72.0% | 85.0% | *10.0%* |   |
|   | **GAP** | 50.0% | 80.0% | 50.0% | 44.0% | 70.0% | *-20.0%* |   |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
|   | **Sector** | **Disability** | 11.8% | 12.3% | 12.9% | 13.7% | 14.6% | *2.8%* |   |
|   | **No disability** | 88.2% | 87.7% | 87.1% | 86.3% | 85.4% | *-2.8%* |   |
|   | **GAP** | 76.4% | 75.4% | 74.2% | 72.6% | 70.8% | *-5.6%* |   |
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|  **Table 5 – Access: Care Leavers (and other under-represented groups, such as Travellers)** No data available  |

The tables above set out our performance against each of the five categories established by the Office for Students. Although not part of the OfS categories our analysis has also included a review of the gender balance of our current student body, which is split 80% female, 20% male. This section provides our analysis of that data against criteria of access, success (non-completion and attainment) and progression into further study or employment.

**1.1.1 Access**

The Courtauld recognises that there is a large gap between registration of students from higher POLAR4 (quintile 3 - 5) groups and those in the lower groups (quintile 1 and 2). Following a review of our admissions procedures, there has been a significant reduction in the proportion of students from POLAR4 quintile 5 of 35%, over the 5-years from 2013-14 to 2017-18. Over the same period, there has been a slight increase in the number of students registering from quintiles 2 and 3.

The inference of Table 1, which set out POLAR4 data, is that The Courtauld has moved towards recruiting students from mid quintile (Q2 – Q4) POLAR 4 areas. We recognise that there is still significant progress to be made, particularly for students from quintile 1.

POLAR4 data is the most readily available for this analysis, but it was last updated in 2012 and is least representative when analysing students from London and the south east, currently the home of the majority of our students. Therefore, we have also used the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) to analyse our student body. The proportion of students shown in Table 1b supports the analysis of POLAR4 data: that students recruited at The Courtauld tend towards the mid-quintile groups (Q2 – Q4). However, there is insufficient data to indicate an overall change in trends over the 5-year period. This is a major disparity in access, and therefore forms a significant target for this plan.

Table 2 shows the ethnic background of students registered at The Courtauld, highlighting a 5% reduction between 2013-14 to 2017-18 of white students and an increase of 10% of students of mixed ethnicity. However, white students continue to dominate the student population. This is a major disparity, particularly for an institution based in London, and therefore forms a significant target for this plan. The Royal Historical Society (RHS) report on Race, Ethnicity and Equality reports that nationally only 11.3% of undergraduate cohorts in historical and philosophical studies are from BAME backgrounds.

The data in Table 3 shows that we have few mature students at undergraduate level, reflecting low application rates. However, we are confident that we are able to provide the necessary support required for mature students through the knowledge gained from delivery of our Graduate Diploma programme, which attracts mainly mature students. In addition, we also deliver short courses run by our Public Programmes department. The short courses have no academic qualification requirements and are specifically designed for mature students.

Table 4 shows that 28% of students declared a disability on registration at The Courtauld in 2015-16 and 25% in 2016-17. Analysis of internal data collected by our Wellbeing Manager indicates that annually up to 30% of undergraduate students come forward to disclose some form of mental health issue including anxiety or other related disability during the course of the academic year. The fall to 15% in 2017-18 reflects the volatility of our data given our small student cohort, but also a reluctance on the part of some students to disclose disability on enrolment. We are therefore reviewing how we develop and promote the support available to students and how we convey a sense of inclusion and belonging to overcome this initial reluctance. The earlier students provide us with information about disabilities, the better the support package we can put in place for each student.

At The Courtauld, increased support has been recruited in the form of three Counsellors and the appointment of a Wellbeing Manager within the last 12 months to provide greater advice and guidance to students. The Wellbeing Manager assesses the support requirements in order to ensure that all registered students are provided with the necessary support whilst studying at The Courtauld and an extensively revised induction programme for first year undergraduates will be delivered during our Welcome Week in 2019-20 as a result of the Wellbeing Manager’s input and expertise.

The Courtauld has not recruited any care leavers over the past 5 years and therefore no data is available. However, we recognise that this an important under-represented group in Higher Education and we will give training to our Wellbeing Manager and our Associate Dean for Students to ensure that we could support anyone from this background, or the other categories highlighted by the OfS, who applied. Our key goal will be to ensure equality of opportunity which we will monitor and evaluate annually. We are members of London branch of AccessHE and we will be working closely with their Care Leavers forum over the next 12 months to ensure that we can put in place a robust support package for care leavers once they join The Courtauld. We will also be focusing greater attention on our outreach programme to ensure that we can identify care leavers at the pre-university application stage and provide a greater level of support to them before they apply. As a small higher education provider we recognise that this is a difficult area in which to attract and recruit students; and we have not included care leavers as one of our specific targets as our numbers are too small, but we have a made a commitment to inform, register and support students from this group to ensure their success at The Courtauld.

It must be recognised that underlying all this data is the challenge that our student recruitment numbers are heavily influenced by the reality that 95% of state secondary schools in the UK do not offer Art History at GCE A Level.

**1.1.2 Success & Attainment**

Evaluation of our data shows that although the absolute numbers of students from each under-represented groups are small, these students are successfully completing their first year of the programme and go on to complete their undergraduate degree. Our limited data shows minimal variation in success between students from different backgrounds, but we recognise that differential achievement is a recognised problem in the sector as a whole, and that it will be essential for us to monitor and review this data as the population of students from under-represented backgrounds grows and changes. We are taking particular care to evaluate the success rate among students offered lower A level offers as a result of consideration of contextual data. As our plan develops and we increase the number of students from under-represented groups, we expect to be able to target new groups and add them to our Access and Participation Plan.

Students from lower to middle socio-economic status have, generally speaking, very high completion rates for their first year of study in line with those from higher socio-economic groups, and students from minority ethnicities have the same first year completion rate of 94% as the majority student population.

Approximately two-thirds of our students achieve an upper-second degree, and about 20% gain a first-class degree. This reflects the level of progress that we would expect of students who have entered The Courtauld with high tariff A levels (or equivalents). Within that, we have no meaningful data to provide analysis of students to indicate that students’ POLAR4 or IMD status has had any negative impact on their attainment.

While we recognise that the current number of ethnic minority students is low, we are tracking the success and attainment of the students in this category. As our plans to increase the proportion of ethnic minority students bear fruit, having reliable data will be fundamental in evaluating their attainment, and we are currently developing the relevant systems and to ensure that students from under-represented groups have the relevant support at all stages of the student lifecycle.

We have reviewed the attainment levels of students who have declared a disability against those who have not, and are confident that there is no meaningful difference in the proportion of first-or upper-second class degree outcomes.

There is insufficient data to show any meaningful differences between the academic success of students from under-represented categories set out by the OfS and the cohort as a whole.

**1.1.3 Non-continuation**

Overall non-continuation rates at The Courtauld for 2015-16 and 2016-17 are 6.0% and 3.1% respectively. For both years, this is favourable when compared with the sector as a whole, which represents all UK domiciled students studying at undergraduate level.

Non-continuation rates for under-represented groups are too small to reveal meaningful trends within these data, but we continue to monitor this area of our undergraduate programme to ensure that we can identify if there is any significant change. It should be noted that non-continuation rates on our Graduate Diploma programme, which attracts mature students, are also minimal.

**1.1.4 Employment Progression**

Currently we review our employment statistics on an annual basis when the Destination for Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) becomes available. We monitor this data because we recognise that it is a barrier to access from students from underrepresented groups who, our evaluations show, are more concerned about future employment and graduate salaries when choosing a subject to study at university. We are therefore concerned to monitor that our employment statistics do not act as a deterrent to potential applicants from under-represented groups.

We also have a detailed analysis of our internal careers support which has been provided to students. Although we collect information on all our graduates going into employment, we do not as yet have data specifically for undergraduates going into graduate level roles. The data given below reflects the current analysis we use to determine how well we are performing against the sector. The Employment Performance Index (EPI) figure reflects the percentage of UK domiciled, first degree undergraduates from full-time courses in any type of employment or further study (i.e. not just graduate-level)as a proportion of all those available for work/study. We will use Graduate Outcomes data to supplement and refine our analysis as this becomes available.

The table below shows the EPI and the benchmark for each of The Courtauld’s main competitors. The benchmark is set by HESA and takes into account factors such as ethnicity and grades on entry. The table shows which institutions have met or exceeded their benchmarks. The Courtauld fell below its benchmark by 2.7%. This plan includes action to address this gap.

**Employment Performance Index by institution**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Institution** | **Base population** | **Number employed or studying** | **Indicator (%)** | **Benchmark (%)** |
| **The Courtauld Institute of Art** | **35** | **30** | **91.2** | **93.9** |
| The University of Bristol | 2,440 | 2,275 | 92.5 | 94.7 |
| The University of Cambridge | 1,980 | 1,845 | 93.1 | 94.6 |
| The University of Exeter | 2,550 | 2,420 | 95.2 | 94.8 |
| The University of Oxford | 2,015 | 1,905 | 93.4 | 94.3 |
| The University of St Andrews | 705 | 665 | 95.2 | 94.8 |
| University College London | 1,740 | 1,610 | 92.6 | 94.7 |
| The University of Warwick | 2,125 | 1,950 | 93.2 | 93.6 |

While we recognise that the data above covers all students and not specifically those from under-represented groups, we are aware of the general issue that graduates from subjects, such as art history do not enter graduate positions to the same extent as other subjects. We will continue to monitor the success of all our students and those from underrepresented groups to ensure that they are no discrepancies in performance between various groups and take action, with additional student support, if gaps in performance are identified.

### 1.2 Intersections of disadvantage

In reviewing data analysing under-represented groups in higher education, the small annual cohort recruitment at The Courtauld does not highlight any significant intersections of disadvantage. This will continue to be monitored and evaluated to identify and address any meaningful trends that become apparent.

### 1.3 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

As a very small specialist higher education provider, our analysis of the financial and personnel resources available to us indicates that we can have greatest impact by concentrating on a limited number of targets, where we have identified the most significant gaps in access and success. We will continue to monitor other areas of disparity, and expect to begin targeting these, once we have demonstrated success in the initial areas.

## 2. Strategic aims, objectives and targets

The Courtauld aims to:

* Transform the perception of Art History and Conservation in the UK to become a mainstream subject studied by people from all backgrounds by *“recruiting the best possible students with the highest academic and intellectual potential, regardless of their ethnic, economic or social background, who will gain the most from studying at The Courtauld*.”

To achieve this, The Courtauld’s objectives are to:

* Recruit students from a diverse range of backgrounds, and support them through the life of their degree.
* Provide a rigorous academic education in art history that prepares students for further study and employment, and who will contribute actively to society across all fields and endeavours. This includes subject knowledge, transferable skills and greater self-confidence, based around independent, creative and critical looking, reading, thinking and writing. We train students to be able to synthesise information to deliver concise, cogent and persuasive arguments in oral, written and visual forms.
* Support student success at each stage of the student life cycle from entry to graduation and beyond. Our ethos and policies are driven by values of inclusivity and belonging.

These objectives determine the targets and aspirations set out in this plan. Our current principal targets primarily concern recruitment of students from Polar4 groups 1-2 and BAME students as our analysis of our data shows that recruitment is where the largest gaps in opportunity occur.

We have invested heavily in student support over the past two years in order to promote equality of success and attainment among our student cohort. Monitoring and evaluation of the value of this investment is key to the future development of this plan. Given our small absolute numbers, we believe that it is essential that we do not separate out students from under-represented groups in any way. We therefore offer our support services to all students in order to promote them as core elements of the programme. This philosophy is underpinned by student feedback which consistently emphasises the need for support to be inclusive. As a result, collecting separate data on these services and their impact on students from under-represented groups is particularly hard. We will do this by:

* An inclusive student recruitment and selection process and policies to tackle barriers at the point of admission, which uses contextual data to vary offer decisions as appropriate
* A comprehensive induction programme at the point of enrolment to help students adjust to university life, and to facilitate recruitment and retention
* An academic skills programme that builds throughout the course of the degree
* An academic support programme to support students in all aspects of their programme of study, but particularly to support those from under-represented backgrounds to ensure that they can fully benefit from their study at The Courtauld. Feedback from students from under-represented groups demonstrates the importance of such support being inclusive and is therefore compulsory for all students, thus helping them to integrate socially within a small student community
* An emphasis on small group teaching to enable students to develop and flourish to their full potential
* A robust personal tutoring system that offers students one-to-one academic advice and support, led by the Associate Dean for Students
* A Wellbeing Service with dedicated counselling staff providing pastoral support and guidance to students with non-academic issues. We also work with the Student Union to support student initiatives, such as Mental Health Awareness Week
* Careers provision that offers students the opportunity to develop their careers not only in the art world but across a wider employment sector. This support continues after graduation for two years, during which all graduates are offered access to our careers service.
* Continually reviewing and updating our curriculum in support of widening participation
* Change our staff profile to be more representative and inclusive

**Theory of Change**

The Courtauld applies Theory of Change through a continuous improvement policy in that we monitor, evaluate and act on findings. At a high level the Governing Board and Senior Management set clear strategies and objectives across the organisation and review performance against these regularly, identifying alternative steps and improvements. This is informed by a robust Risk Management matrix which is a standing agenda item on the weekly senior management meetings. At a lower level we have procedures in place to ensure that we regularly review our activities, and expected outcomes and outputs to ensure that they are delivering our goals and objectives. We are currently in the process of applying a Theory of Change methodology into our critical decision making processes to ensure that causal pathways are clearly understood before any change actually takes place. For example, we are using Theory of Change in a major redefinition of our brand. As part of our staff development we have identified relevant employees who will take formal Theory of Change training.

In preparation of this plan, analysis of performance identified key gaps in access and recruitment. From this, we set new, challenging targets for recruitment, which have driven major changes to our internal systems both to enable them, but also to monitor and evaluate their success.

A second strategic aim of The Courtauld is to:

“*contribute positively to society through the study, display, understanding and promotion of art*” and to enable “*the widest possible audience to connect with the visual arts*”.

A key element of this is to support the promotion of art history as a subject at school level, including through the provision of resources, from Year 10 onwards. This is work that we undertake in collaboration with partner organisations in order to maximise its reach and effectiveness. This feeds directly into our access plan as a means to widen knowledge about the discipline at school level, particularly in areas and among communities with less awareness of the subject, and to broaden the base for applications to the undergraduate degree.

### 2.1 Targets for 2021-25

From analysis of the data we have identified the three key targets for 2021-25. The first two respond to areas of under-representation among applicants that we can effectively target, and whose subsequent success we can accurately monitor and evaluate. The third addresses a gap in progression into further study or employment. We continue to monitor our activities to ensure success during the student lifecycle.

### 2.1.1 Access/Recruitment

The immediate targets for 2021-2025 are to increase recruitment of students from under-represented groups to put The Courtauld at the head of our benchmark universities, and particularly their major humanities departments. We will use the 2017-18 data as our benchmark to measure this, but we will also use a three-year rolling aggregate in order to iron out volatility in the data.

1. **Access Target** - To increase the proportion of Students from Polar4 groups 1-2 (lower socio-economic groups) studying for a BA at The Courtauld to 30% by 2025. This represents an increase of 100% above current intake.
2. **Access Target** – To increase the proportion of Students from IMD Q1 and Q2 (lower socio-economic groups) studying for a BA at The Courtauld consistently to at least 30% by 2025. This represents an increase of 50% above our current rolling 3-year average intake.
3. **Access Target** – To increase the proportion of BAME students studying for a BA at The Courtauld to 20% by 2025. This is almost twice the 11.3% average intake for historical and philosophical studies reported by the RHS.

Given the existing profile of the student body, the proposed targets are very ambitious and stretching. We intend to increase the proportion of students studying in both Q1 and Q2 for both Polar4 and IMD. However, we recognise that we will need to focus our efforts on students from Polar4 Q1 and IMD Q1, where we currently have a very low take-up. We believe that we get most value for money by targeting schools with pupils from both Q1 and Q2, but we then apply contextual data to ensure that appropriate recruitment and retention strategies can be applied to remove any bias against this grouping. We consider that these targets are realistic for a small, specialist university that focuses on a single humanities degree. In conjunction with the longer-term plans set out below, we believe that these figures are the first stages in a much more ambitious goal to make The Courtauld the most visible and the most inclusive centre for the study of Art History in the UK. We also aim to ensure that The Courtauld plays a central role in ensuring that the subject thrives across the Higher Education sector through our outreach programmes. These are designed to attract students to The Courtauld, but we are equally proud that the school students who enter our programmes will often wish to enter university to study art history or other disciplines elsewhere. In the medium to longer term we aspire to have a student body that is recognised for its diversity, and which reflects the make-up of the city in which it is based.

### Activity plan

*Target areas*

The 2021-25 plan focuses initially on outreach activities that are within reach of our base in London. Our medium-term ambition is to build on the outreach that we undertake outside London to develop larger programmes in our partner cities elsewhere in the UK. Our initial target areas are:

* London. To make more effective use of our already well-established outreach programme currently delivered to 25 state schools in economically-deprived parts of London (with 30%+ students on free school meals).
* Areas of the South East. We will build on collaborations with schools in Hastings and Folkestone, from which lower proportions of school age children continue into Higher Education. We are considering an expansion of these outreach activities to other towns on the Kent and Essex coasts.
* Partner towns outside London: Ashton, Swindon, Blackburn, Nottingham and Bolton; as well as cities associated with Courtauld factories: Hull, Preston, Belfast, Braintree and Halstead, Coventry, Hull, Preston and Wolverhampton. These are partnerships developed with The Courtauld Gallery, for which an Activity Plan was agreed in November 2017 as part of the Courtauld Connects project to redevelop the Gallery.

*Engagement activities*

The activities that we run to deliver our targets include:

* **Summer University** (ASDAN accredited). This is an intensive one-week course for up to 30 students in Year 12 from under-represented groups considering entering Higher Education. The course includes special access to the Courtauld’s Virtual Learning Environment and progression support sessions (currently being expanded) in the autumn term following the course to ensure that young people are better supported particularly in their choices for further study and to support their applications to university.
* **Insights into Art History** programme. This is a series of one-day workshops held at The Courtauld for state school and further education college students, introducing art history, visual analysis and research skills. It works with 150 A-level students from 49 state schools and colleges over the course of the year to introduce them to the potential of art history and university study. Each of the 10 sessions are 5½ hours long and run during weekends and school holidays.
* **Art History for All** programme. This is a series of one-day outreach study daysthat engage schools and colleges outside London with art history. These study days include a visit to students’ local museum or gallery collection where possible.It works with 240 post-16 students in 10 state schools and further education colleges across the UK. This includes Years 11-13 and Access to HE (adult learners).

The targets set out above are based on the expected outcomes of these projects.

Along with other elements of our established outreach programme, these activities deliver:

* + Online and printed resources to 630 teachers across the UK
	+ Teachers events for 95 teachers within London
	+ Outreach workshops to around 6000 students in state school and further education within London (Key Stages 2 – 5)
	+ Activities to over 1,700 pupils in our target widening participation schools to develop their awareness of art history
	+ Longer term collaborative projects on an annual basis with 400 students from 37 state schools within London.

In addition, we are planning:

* A new, dedicated art history festival, aimed at school age children to raise their awareness of and excitement about the subject
* an extension of our UK-wide outreach programme which will strengthen activities with existing partners and engage new schools and colleges in areas of the UK directly relating to the Courtauld’s social and industrial history
* Greater collaboration with partners, such as Art History Link-up, Arts Emergency
* Improved and focused communication activities with our target groups
* Greater access to our library resources – offering contextual research and EPQ support.

*Target evaluation*

Please see the Evaluation Strategy at 3.4 for full details.

### 2.1.2 Success/Continuation

A key strand in our policy to ensure student success has been to offer bursaries to students from qualifying backgrounds. To qualify for a bursary, household income should be under £45,000 and students should come from a State school or college educated, their parents should not have attended university, be resident in a low Higher Education participation neighbourhood and if relevant be in receipt of Disability Support Allowance. Full details are available on our website.

Each year we offer circa 50 bursaries to undergraduate UK students amounting to over £110,000. We monitor withdrawal rates in our student cohort, and among those receiving a bursary the withdrawal rate is minimal, with a maximum of only one student per year. This, combined with annual feedback from recipients which repeatedly notes their reliance on this support and their risk of having to withdraw if it were ended, indicates its value and success. We continue to monitor its effectiveness closely. The aim of the bursary is to remove a significant barrier to equality of opportunity as students from under-represented backgrounds report increased anxiety about their financial position, and are more likely to struggle academically when required to take on part-time work alongside their study.

We offer other support to students to develop and complete their studies:

* **Specialist Student Ambassador Scheme**. Student Ambassadors, who are current students, at the heart of our activities, acting as important role models to young people at a crucial time in their lives as they decide on their career paths. We offer a range of training opportunities for students in areas such as public speaking, developing resources and evaluation tools as well as assisting on outreach sessions. This programme supports student success by building confidence, and student recruitment by increasing our outreach to schools.
* **Academic Skills Programme**. This is delivered and run by our dedicated Academic Skills Co-ordinator across all three years of the undergraduate programme. Both group and one-to-one sessions are available. We constantly review how this programme could be strengthened in the light of annual feedback. In the past year students have noted that the skills sessions do not align closely enough with the corresponding stages and the art history curriculum, which we are addressing for implementation in the next academic year.
* **Wellbeing service**. The Wellbeing Manager works closely with academic staff, including the Associate Dean for Students, the Student Union and relevant Professional Services staff to identify students at risk and put in place mechanisms to provide the necessary support to students. In 2018/19 the Wellbeing Manager provided support and guidance to 100 students. The Wellbeing Manager is also reviewing relevant policies and procedures to ensure that all students are treated fairly and inclusively, and given the necessary support to complete their studies.
* **Careers Provision**. The Courtauld offers students comprehensive support with their professional development through our Careers Service. We contract a careers consultant for 2 days a week through The Careers Group, University of London. Our careers consultant supports us in enhancing student employability throughout each year of study. The focus is on career management skills, career confidence and professional development relating to careers both within and outside of the arts.

The careers consultant offers twice-weekly blocks of six 20-minute one-to-one guidance appointments. In addition, students can book practice interviews and longer guidance appointments. Student uptake of individual guidance appointments has increased year on year.

Students also have access to a wide range of paper and electronic careers and employability resources. These include an online careers library consisting of more than 9,000 resources, a jobs board with more than 2,000 vacancies and internships, interview and assessment day simulation software, and a large selection of careers and further study information help sheets. The service is available for all students; 40% of students used the service in 2016/17 and we plan to expand this to 50%.

The progression to further study or graduate employment is an important element of developing student skills while at The Courtauld. In 2012 The Courtauld launched *The* [*Courtauld*](https://www.courtauldassociation.com/?page=CACC) *Institute Careers Programme* (CICP), and in 2016-17 33 students gained this certificate. The aim of the CACC is to support and develop the employability skills of all current students. It is run in conjunction with The Courtauld alumni network. We have a dedicated alumni officer, the Alumni Manager, a major element of whose role is to run a series of events to provide support and networking opportunities for current students with Courtauld alumni, as well as career coaching sessions for alumni. This helps to build relationships between current and past students and results in a strong supportive alumni network of over 7,700 who are active in supporting The Courtauld and the student body. The CICP programme consisted of 9 careers sessions, running from autumn to spring, addressing different aspects of career planning, including career options for BA History of Art graduates and networking events. The CICP culminates in a large networking event for current students with Courtauld alumni who are involved in different career groups. The programme complements the support offered by The Courtauld’s dedicated Careers Consultant, who offers individual student consultations twice-weekly, including hour-long practice interview sessions. This careers support is available to all students and 40% of students across all courses and levels take part in careers events.

### 2.1.3 Progression

We ultimately wish to have a further key target addressing progression into graduate level employment which would be:

*To increase the proportion of Courtauld undergraduates going into highly skilled or professional jobs.*

However, to date our data is not sufficiently granular to enable us to set this targetbut we do intend to review this objective internally over the next 12 months and aim to achieve by:

* Continuing to carefully monitor the EPI to ensure that we are working towards matching our competitors and to take action if required
* Continuing our wide-ranging careers support working to increase the number of students who participate in these careers events by ensuring that all students are aware of the support and activities provided
* Reviewing our syllabus to include and deliver transferrable skills better to support students when seeking employment. This will include skills, such as digital literacy, team and project work, presentation skills and time management.

### Achieving our targets

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2020-21** | **2021-22** | **2022-23** | **2023-24** | **2024-25** |
| **Target 1**Increase POLAR4 Q1&Q2 | 15% | 18% | 22% | 25% | 30% |
| **Target 2**Increase IMD Q1 & Q2 | 20% | 22% | 25% | 28% | 30% |
| **Target 3**Increase BAME student numbers | 10% | 10% | 14% | 17% | 20% |

In setting these targets we recognise that the first two years of our Access and Participation Plan will be driven by initiating changes during which change will be slow. Thereafter we expect more rapid improvement.

### Interim targets

We will measure the success of our targets at the following points in the 5-year cycle, using 2017-18 data as our base mark. We expect relatively slow change in the first two years as we implement our plans and make the institutional changes needed, but for the change to become more rapid thereafter.

To achieve these short-term objectives and meet the three targets identified above, we will:

* Develop comprehensive procedures across the organisation to collect consistent data sets that can be evaluated to support our widening participation activities, including outreach to schools, and to ensure that they are monitored and fully evaluated. We will use contextual data where appropriate to ensure that under-represented groups are not disadvantaged
* Review and improve our communications to ensure higher visibility for the events we already undertake aimed at attracting students from under-represented groups to apply to our undergraduate programme
* Ensure better co-ordination and collaboration with the Association for Art History (AAH), Art History Link-up, Articulations, the Brilliant Club and other relevant bodies and educational establishments to broaden our reach
* Deliver comprehensive Equality and Inclusion Training to faculty as a compulsory CPD component
* Deliver training to faculty and students (e.g. PhD students) to support outreach in our target schools
* Prepare and deliver online resources that are suitable to allied disciplines, e.g. English, History, Modern Languages, that show the potential of art history while fitting in with the GCSE and A Level curriculum.

### 2.2 Longer-term aims and objectives

In the medium-longer term we intend to work on more challenging objectives. These will take a decade to come to fruition and include:

* Building up our outreach programme outside London. Evaluation of our existing London-based programmes has revealed that they are successful in raising the ambition of those who attend, but many want to leave London to study in a different city. We will build on the existing regional work that we undertake in conjunction with the activity plan of the Gallery to build these links to include more activities focused on art history as a university discipline.
* Reviewing our academic appointment strategy to ensure that our faculty is equipped to deliver the diversified curriculum that we are developing; along with a clear strategy for marketing this to groups who do not currently think that The Courtauld is for them.
* Reviewing our curriculum and assessment strategy. This began in May 2019, with an Academic Faculty Away Day, including work with Museum Detox, that reviewed all aspects of the undergraduate degree to consider ways to make it more inclusive. This covered curriculum design and content, assessment methods, transferrable skills and employability. This was followed by a special Academic Board devoted to curriculum reform to establish working groups and a timetable to complete implementation by academic year 2024-25. Some elements of reform will be introduced earlier, but this timetable will ensure full consultation and market research, as well as guaranteeing that we maintain our Quality Assurance mechanisms throughout.

We recognise that:

* By 2025, the HE sector will have moved beyond the initial targets we have set. However, by that stage our longer-term reforms will have begun to take effect, so enabling us significantly to raise our ambitions.
* Reaching sector-wide targets will be challenging for The Courtauld as the benchmarks on which they are based reflect data from multi-faculty universities. They disguise the particular profiles of individual subject areas. A more accurate benchmark for The Courtauld is departments of art history and other humanities disciplines in our main competitor institutions, but we have very limited access to this subject/department-level data. However, we expect to find some of this data in more detailed returns from HESA and will be working on this aspect over the next twelve months to enable us to have a more accurate picture to enable us better to evaluate our outcomes. We will continue to use alternative external data, such as that prepared for the Royal Historical Society.
* Given our small absolute numbers, our data is volatile and liable to change radically year-on-year.

Our goals are significantly to outperform the discipline in terms of representation and diversity by 2030 and to ensure the closure of any gaps in non-continuation and success rates between most and least represented groups by 2024-25, and to eliminate the absolute gap by 2030.

Our longer term strategy depends on close and effective collaboration with external organisations.

**2.2.1 Effective collaboration**

We have a close partnership with IntoUniversity, acharitable organisation which offers study support and mentoring for widening participation students. The Courtauld hosts 1-2 focus days per year where young people visit The Institute, and meet staff to find out about their professional roles. We work with a number of other London institutions with multi-disciplinary activities aimed at broadening school children’s awareness of art history and how it links with other subject areas. As members of AccessHE, we collaborate with other HEIs, FE Colleges and schools, and contribute to staff training.

We have a partnership with the Brilliant Club working with younger pupils in Year 5 to Year 8 to deliver ‘The Art of the Story’ to make them aware of art history and aid them to develop their written and critical thinking skills. This Key Stage 2 resource is academically challenging and increases access to art history, using The Courtauld Gallery Collection as primary source material. The resource has been made available to Brilliant Club partner schools across the country.

We continue to work with other charitable organisations, such as Articulation, First Story, and The Sorrell Foundation Saturday Club, to extend the scope and reach of our widening participation programmes and engagement with art history as a humanities discipline. We have developed a multi-disciplinary approach in the delivery of our outreach activities, which underpins our offer to schools. We have successfully built relationships with teachers of other subjects such as Modern Languages, Music, History, Mathematics and English, as well as continuing to support Art and Design. In collaboration with teachers we have honed the content of outreach activities to include a range of transferrable skills, such as how to undertake visual analysis, research and find reliable evidence, articulate ideas verbally and in writing, collaborate and negotiate with others, present findings in a public forum. Through regular review, evaluation and feedback teachers inform us that these skills impact upon attainment by giving students unique opportunities to extend their knowledge and abilities outside the scope of regular lessons and the constraints of the curriculum. In addition, this develops their confidence in engaging with cultural institutions in debate and in exchange of academic ideas, areas where students from less privileged backgrounds can experience barriers to inclusion.

## 3. Strategic measures

### 3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

As a small specialist institution, we have commitment from across the organisation to support this plan. Its principles and targets have been discussed and agreed by the Senior Management Team, the Chairman’s Committee of the Governing Board, and the Academic Board. It has the active engagement of academic faculty, public programmes department, the Gallery team and professional services. We have established a dedicated role within the academic faculty to support and champion this plan, significantly raising its profile across the institution.

The re-opening of the Gallery in 2021 (after a two-year major refurbishment) with an integral Learning Centre will act as a major resource for this access plan, and a key tool to drive engagement with our target groups. Whilst the gallery is closed we continue to work with our regional partners, and have set up additional programmes, such as the tour of our Islamic metalwork collection to museums in Truro, Bradford, Bath and Oxford.

##### **3.2 Alignment with other strategies**

As a public body The Courtauld is subject to specific duties as outlined in the Equality Act 2010, which requires all public bodies to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people from different groups. The Act also extends the characteristics protected by law resulting in nine protected groups and so discrimination is now unlawful on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, marriage and civil partnership, and age. Details of our Equalities Policy are available on our website (<https://courtauld.ac.uk/about/equal-opportunities>). Our Access and Participation Plan links with the Equality Act to ensure that our Widening Participation activities are focused on the relevant underrepresented target groups and that we carrying at the duties and responsibility as defined in our Equality Policy in our Access and Participation Plan. We work closely with HR staff to ensure that our widening participation activities are fully aligned with the Equality Act. For example, discussion and review of the Access and Participation Plan includes the relevant staff from the HR team and they are part of the evaluation process of the plan.

We are also reviewing our academic employment strategy to ensure that we have a more diverse teaching faculty that are representative of the community at large and with whom our students can identify.

### 3.3 Student consultation

Our student body is represented on most of our committees and working groups to ensure that they are continually informed and consulted and that their views are heard and acted upon. Our Student Union President sits on the Academic Board and Governing Board of The Courtauld. In addition, our Admissions and Widening Participation Committee, where our strategy in this area is reviewed and updated, also has student representation, including diversity officers. To ensure better focus and review of our Plan we will be splitting the Admissions and Widening Participation Committee into two separate committees: one which will focus solely on Admissions and the second on Widening Participation in order that this Plan can be properly scrutinised by students. The new Widening Participation Committee will have a wider and more diverse student membership in order that they can review and comment on our activities to support the success of the plan. The Plan will be reviewed and discussed 3 times per year and the committee will report to Academic Board on its implementation and evaluation. It will also be discussed with students through the Staff Student Liaison Committee, which has representation of students from all backgrounds. This will give the Access plan greater prominence in our systems and ensure that our activities are explicitly and thoroughly reviewed and scrutinised to ensure we meet the targets we set. Our previous Access Plans have been reviewed and commented on by this committee. The plan and its future monitoring will be reviewed by a range of students. In addition, we welcome comments from students.

Given the timing of the production of this updated Access and Participation Plan, which has fallen outside of the committee cycle and after students had completed their annual exams, we have passed the document for review and comment to our outgoing Student Union President and the incoming President. Their comments have been included below:

“*The Courtauld Students' Union are in agreement with the proposed Access and Participation Plan.  The Student Union has already fed back to Head of Student and Academic Services with regard to some conflicting statements and small adjustments that should be made. The Union recognises that there will be many challenges to overcome but fully supports the proposed strategies within the document*.”

Charlotte Osborne Gus Teasdale

Incoming Student Union President (2019/20) Outgoing Student Union President (2018/19)

### 3.4 Evaluation strategy

The exercise we have undertaken, on analysing our student data in more detail and identifying targets for under-represented groups for developing our Access and Participation Plan, has shown that although we currently collect a certain amount of data it is not as wide-ranging as it should be and the data is not fully evaluated. As a university with a small student intake, we have previously not concentrated on the collection of extensive data requirements. Therefore, we are carrying out a thorough review of our data collection requirements to ensure that we can fully monitor and evaluate the data required to enable us to properly demonstrate how our planned activities are performing against the targets set in this plan.

One significant area we are currently working on is ensuring that the data we collect from some of our outreach activities, such as the Summer University, is collected and entered on a student database and then used to track these students through their student journey to hopefully applying to study at The Courtauld. We plan to have the first part of this data collection process in place for this September with a fully automated process ready for Summer 2020. Improved data collection and evaluation will also help to cover the following:

* By improving data collection at every stage, to provide the information that we need more quickly to identify the progress made by students who have attended our outreach programmes and how many go on to study at The Courtauld and elsewhere.
* Identifying students who have attended these activities and how many go on to study with The Courtauld.
* Identifying students attending these courses and how many go on to study Art History and other subjects at other universities.
* Better monitoring of our already well-established outreach programme to ensure that school children are better supported, particularly in their choices for further study. For example, we will provide greater guidance on the application process to university by providing progression seminars.

With improved data collection and better reporting functionality we will then be able to monitor and evaluate the 3 key targets we have established as part of this plan. We recognise that as the plan develops and as we evaluate the data regularly through our Widening Participation Committee and other committees, we may have to change/adapt or cease some of our activities and add additional targets to ensure that we are meeting the OfS requirements for under-represented targets.

At a Strategic level, once The Courtauld Gallery reopens in 2021, we will be developing a structured and integrated approach to delivering our outreach activities with the Gallery resources. We will also be using The Gallery to deliver some of our charitably funded activities, such as those with Oak Foundation. We will be monitoring the effect of working more closely with the Gallery to support this plan by ascertaining feedback from students and teachers on these events and seeing if those attending go on to take part in other outreach activities and ultimately apply to The Courtauld.

We have just commenced a review of the curriculum for our BA programme and as part of this we will be ensuring that it is more inclusive and that our syllabus has a wider global context, thus appealing to a broader range of students. Implementation of the updated curriculum will be evaluated by an analysis of whether the changes attract more interest from prospective students, and particularly those from under-represented groups.

We now have a dedicated academic lead for our widening participation activities who works closely with our Admissions and Public Programme teams to identify where we can improve the activities we deliver and evaluate their success to ensure we are moving towards our targets. This will include developing further activities that aim to attract a wide and diverse participation of prospective students.

### 3.5 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The performance of our objectives set in the Access and Participation Plan and how well we are doing against targets is regularly monitored and reviewed by in particular our Widening Participation Committee and Senior Management Team to ensure we are making progress, and if not, to review our actions and to make adjustments when necessary. The assessment against targets is reviewed by the following groups:

* Production of relevant data on a bi-monthly cycle to show our performance against targets. This evaluation is made available and reviewed by a number of groups: Senior Management Team, Academic Board, Widening Participation Committee, Student Union and Governing Board.
* The departments concerned with delivering the targets meet on a twice termly regular basis to discuss the various activities and assess performance to ensure that we are on track to meet our objectives. Where there are indications that activities may not be working as well as had been envisaged, this will be reviewed and recommendations made to our Senior Management Team and Academic Board on any proposed changes to strengthen the activities.

# Provision of information to students

Our Access and Participation Plan is available to all through The Courtauld website under the Office for Students. Before submission to the OfS, the draft Plan is reviewed by our Access and Widening Participation (AWP) Committee, which includes student representation, the Senior Management Team and Governing Board for final approval. Through The Courtauld Student Union, students are represented on most major committees, both academic and operational, including Governing Board. Student representation is important in ensuring that our policies and procedures are developed to support the student experience and inclusive for all students.

All Information regarding financial support for widening participation students is provided to prospective students through The Courtauld website, marketing material and direct communication at Open and Offers Days and when the student enrols. In particular detailed student fee information and financial support offered to undergraduate students is given here: <https://courtauld.ac.uk/study/fees-and-funding/undergraduates>

Full information about our courses and widening participation activities are available through our website through both Admissions and Learning:

https://courtauld.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/widening-participation

## https://courtauld.ac.uk/learn/schools-colleges-universities/young-people

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