

KMPF

KENT & MEDWAY
PROGRESSION
FEDERATION

Kent & Medway
Progression
Federation
(KMPF)

Strategy
2025 – 2028

Inclusive Pathways to Higher Education



Foreword

Gavin Delf, Hub Manager

A desire to work collectively to improve the lives of under-represented students has been at the heart of KMPF since its inception, and across the partnership we remain steadfastly committed to supporting these learners to fulfil their potential.



Our new partnership strategy 'Inclusive Pathways to Higher Education' sets out how we will work together over the next three years as a regional partnership to increase the number of students progressing to higher education, particularly those currently under-represented. Our mission is a vital one as higher education remains the key driver of social mobility in this country. There is much to do with the education

sector having to operate in challenging economic times, and students at all stages of education, and especially those who face disadvantage, still trying to overcome learning losses suffered during the pandemic.

With less funding available in the sector we will only be able to deliver our mission with increased strategic collaboration. This will include greater sharing of resources

and expertise and delivering programmes we know provide impact.

To build inclusive pathways we will focus on supporting priority under-represented groups who the evidence indicates are less likely to progress. To do this we will foster meaningful relationships with charities and third sector organisations who can provide specific expertise.

Alongside this, we will engage with parents and carers more effectively to ensure they also receive accurate information, advice and guidance about higher education.

Lastly, we will seek to diversify our funding model so that we can sustain and grow our important work.

The Kent and Medway Progression Federation is a partnership of universities, colleges, and schools who work closely with charities and third sector organisations in the region.

Universities



Colleges



Schools



Charities and third sector organisations



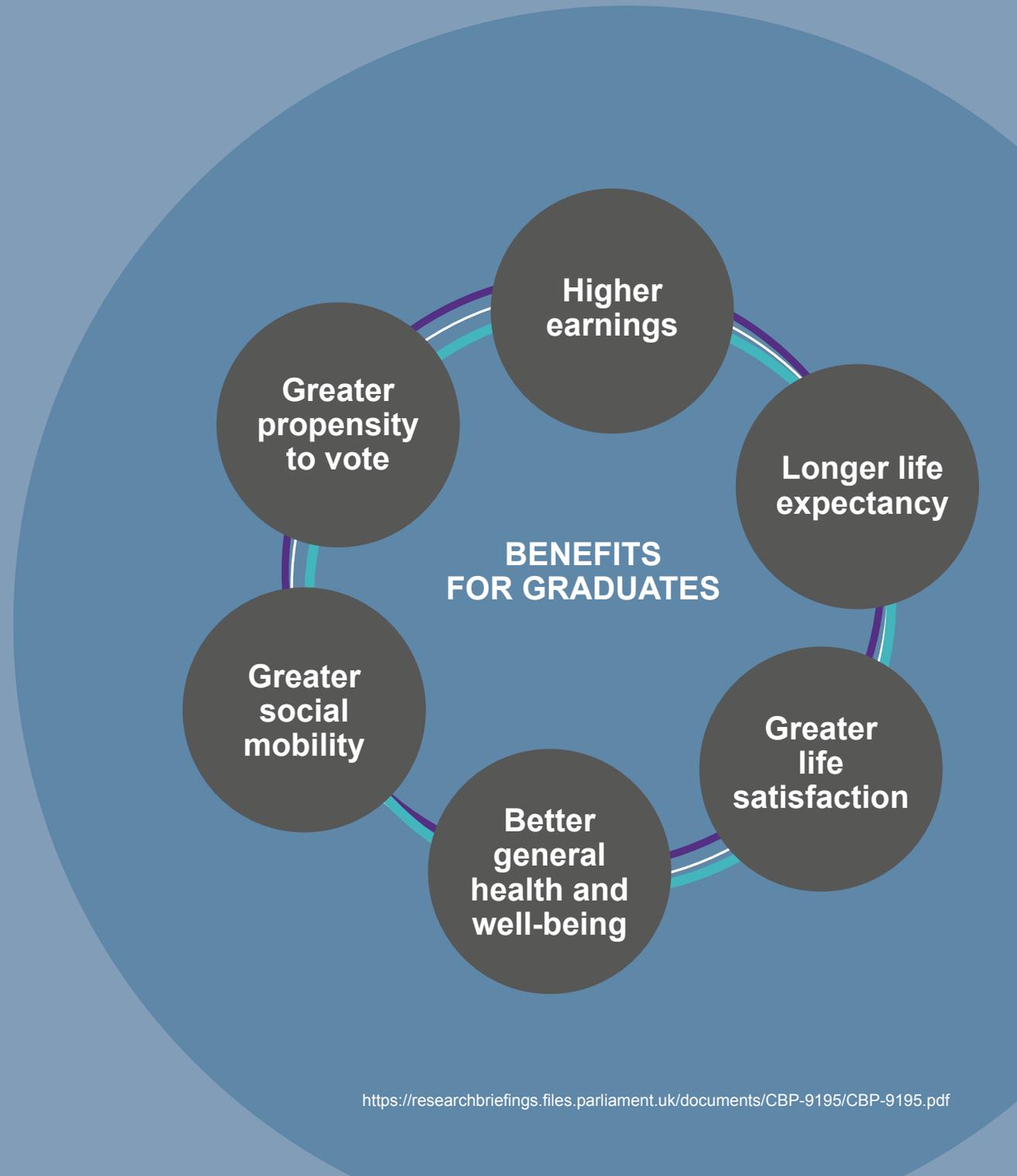
Social Mobility and Higher Education

Equality in access to higher education remains vitally important as graduates on average earn more, enjoy better health, live longer and report greater life satisfaction than non-graduates. Although progress has been made, higher education entry rates for different groups continue to differ. Students eligible for free school meals are far less likely to progress to, and benefit from, university.

Research suggests that widening participation efforts have contributed to preventing entry gaps increasing over the past two decades. Our challenge is now to start closing the entry gap in Kent and Medway over the next three years.



Higher education entry rates for different groups continue to differ.



Kent and Medway

The region we serve has pockets of high socio-economic deprivation and low progression to higher education, and consists of rural, coastal and urban communities. A selective education system operates in Kent and Medway, in which **25–35%** of young people move into selective schools at the age of 11, compared with approximately **5%** of the state-funded secondary population nationally.

The selective system has a significant impact upon the education of young people with non-selective schools in Kent reporting higher numbers of children eligible for free school meals (**27% vs 8%**) and children with special educational needs (**17% vs 5%**) than non-selective schools. Stratification created by grammar schools can lead those students who are unable to attend a grammar school to feel rejected or demotivated. We will focus our collective resources on supporting our 44 member schools and our 3 FE college group partners.

The latest available data on GCSE attainment and progression to higher education at the end of Level 3 study in Kent demonstrates our challenge. **Figure 1**, illustrates the average attainment 8 score for disadvantaged students in Kent (local authority), South East (region), and nationally. It is clear that the attainment of disadvantaged students in Kent and the South East is below the national average. **Figure 2**, shows that disadvantaged students in Kent are **11.6** percentage points less likely to progress to higher education after completing a Level 3 course than their more affluent peers.

FIG 1 | Average Attainment 8 Score of Disadvantaged Pupils

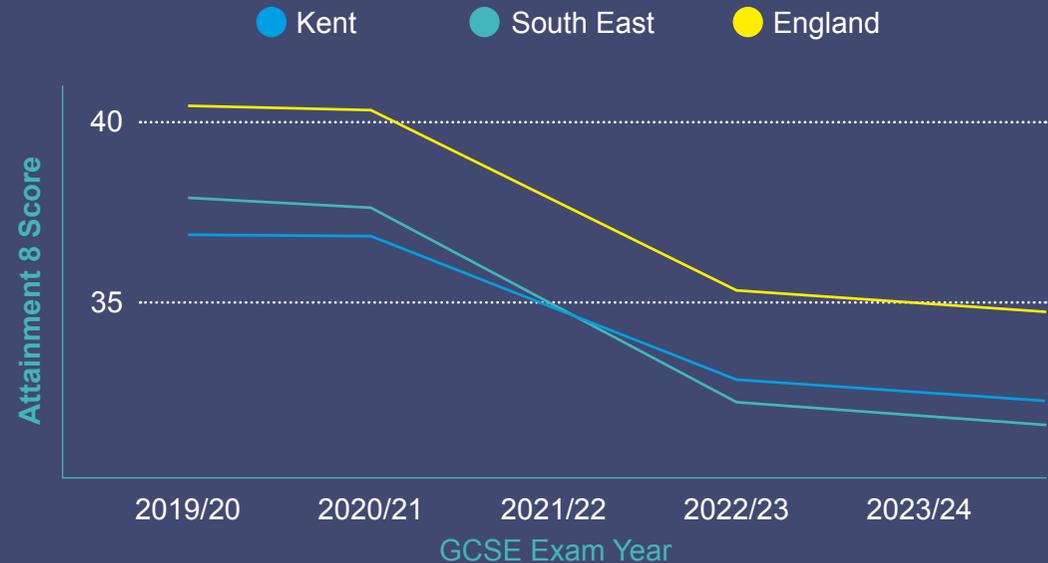
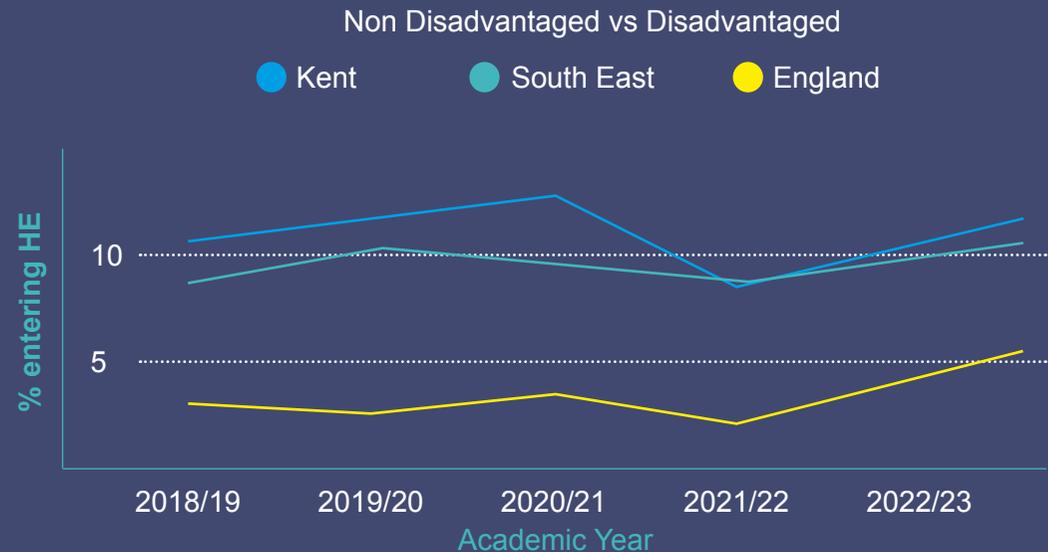


FIG 2 | Gap in % of Students at the end of Level 3 Study entering HE



Vision, Mission & Values

Vision To be the lead regional partnership in ensuring progression to higher education for the next generation of students, through a diverse offer from our partners

Mission Together, we will increase the participation of under-represented students in higher education through outreach, advocacy and research

Values

- ✔ We will promote inclusive pathways to higher education for students from under-represented backgrounds
 - ✔ We will inspire learners to consider higher education and empower them to make informed decisions about their futures
 - ✔ We will take collective action to best serve the needs of our beneficiaries
 - ✔ We will learn from evidence and evaluation and take bold action to continuously improve how we support students
-

Achieving change

Our five strategic objectives, when taken together, will enable us to increase the number of under-represented students from Kent and Medway participating in higher education.

Our first two objectives focus on reaching more under-represented students through collaboration and providing bespoke support for specific priority groups. Our other three objectives will enable us to make long-term sustainable change.

1

Collaborate to engage more underrepresented students in intensive out-reach activity

2

Provide bespoke support for priority groups that addresses underlying barriers

3

Measure the impact of partnership interventions and grow a culture of continuous improvement

4

Raise the profile of the partnership by sharing good practice and influencing policy

5

Improve the financial sustainability of the partnership



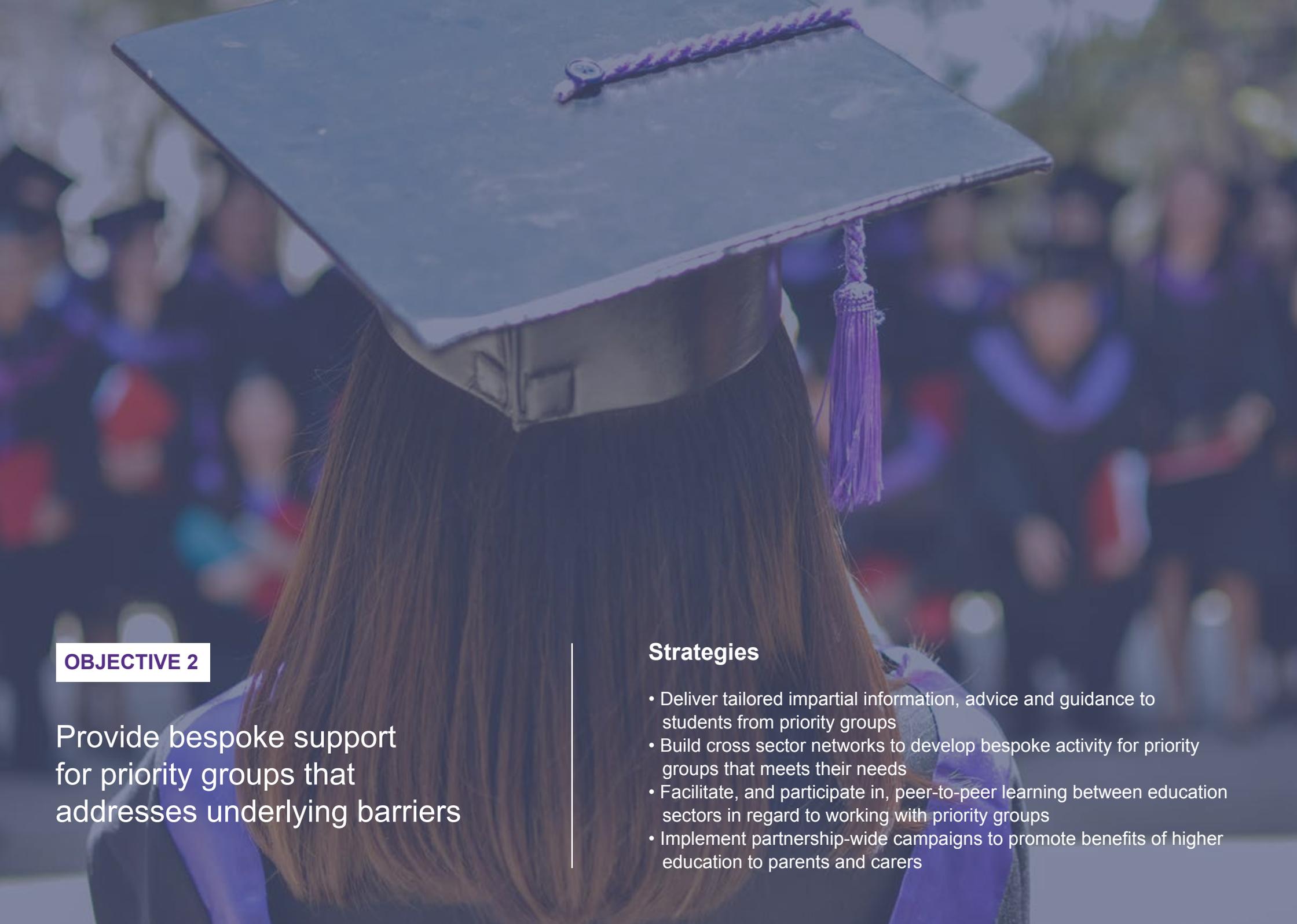
Strategic Objectives

OBJECTIVE 1

Collaborate to engage more under-represented young people in intensive outreach activity

Strategies

- Co-ordinate outreach delivery strategies in partnership so duplication is avoided and reach is maximised
- Share programme content and resources so interventions can be delivered at scale
- Co-develop a partnership CPD offer for educators
- Ensure high priority schools receive a programme of activity across all year groups
- Increase opportunities for learners to experience university campuses



OBJECTIVE 2

Provide bespoke support for priority groups that addresses underlying barriers

Strategies

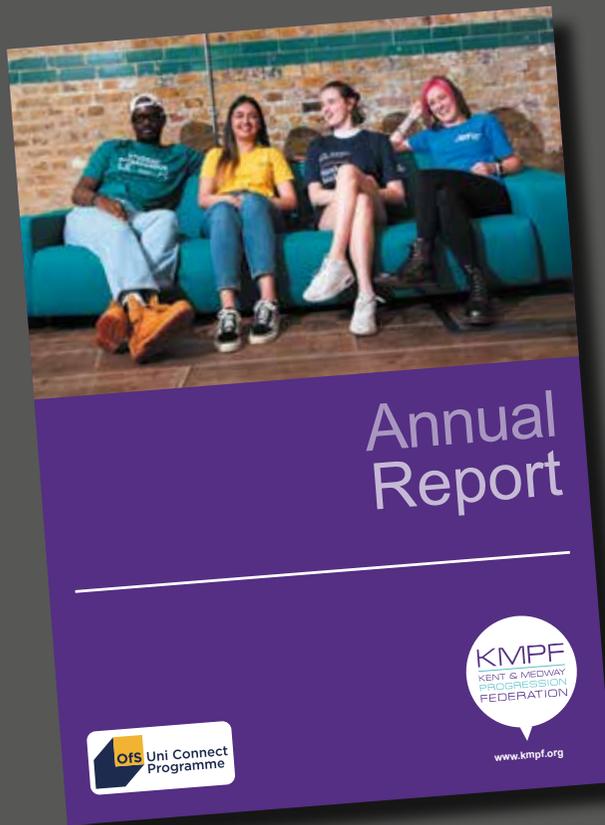
- Deliver tailored impartial information, advice and guidance to students from priority groups
- Build cross sector networks to develop bespoke activity for priority groups that meets their needs
- Facilitate, and participate in, peer-to-peer learning between education sectors in regard to working with priority groups
- Implement partnership-wide campaigns to promote benefits of higher education to parents and carers

OBJECTIVE 3

Measure the impact of partnership interventions and grow a culture of continuous improvement

Strategies

- Develop a partnership monitoring and evaluation framework
- Share knowledge and learning with other regional partnerships
- Share evaluation plans so they can inform future practice
- Publish evaluation reports and contribute to national evidence base
- Collect baseline surveys to understand learner's attitudes towards higher education and their intention to apply
- Produce regional education and economic reports



OBJECTIVE 4

Raise the profile of the partnership by sharing good practice and influencing policy

Strategies

- Deliver events which showcase the partnership's impact
- Produce policy papers that propose approaches to creating more equal access to higher education
- Share good practice with other regional partnerships and charities



OBJECTIVE 5

Improve the financial sustainability of the partnership

Strategies

- Fundraisers across the partnership proactively support prospecting and applying for funds
- Build purposeful relationships with trusts and foundations
- Collectively bid for large scale funding
- Build reserves when income is unrestricted
- Ensure that interventions delivered provide value for money





Our Priority Groups

As a partnership we aim to support all learners who face barriers to progression and particularly those who face economic disadvantage. We also have specific projects to support the following under-represented groups.

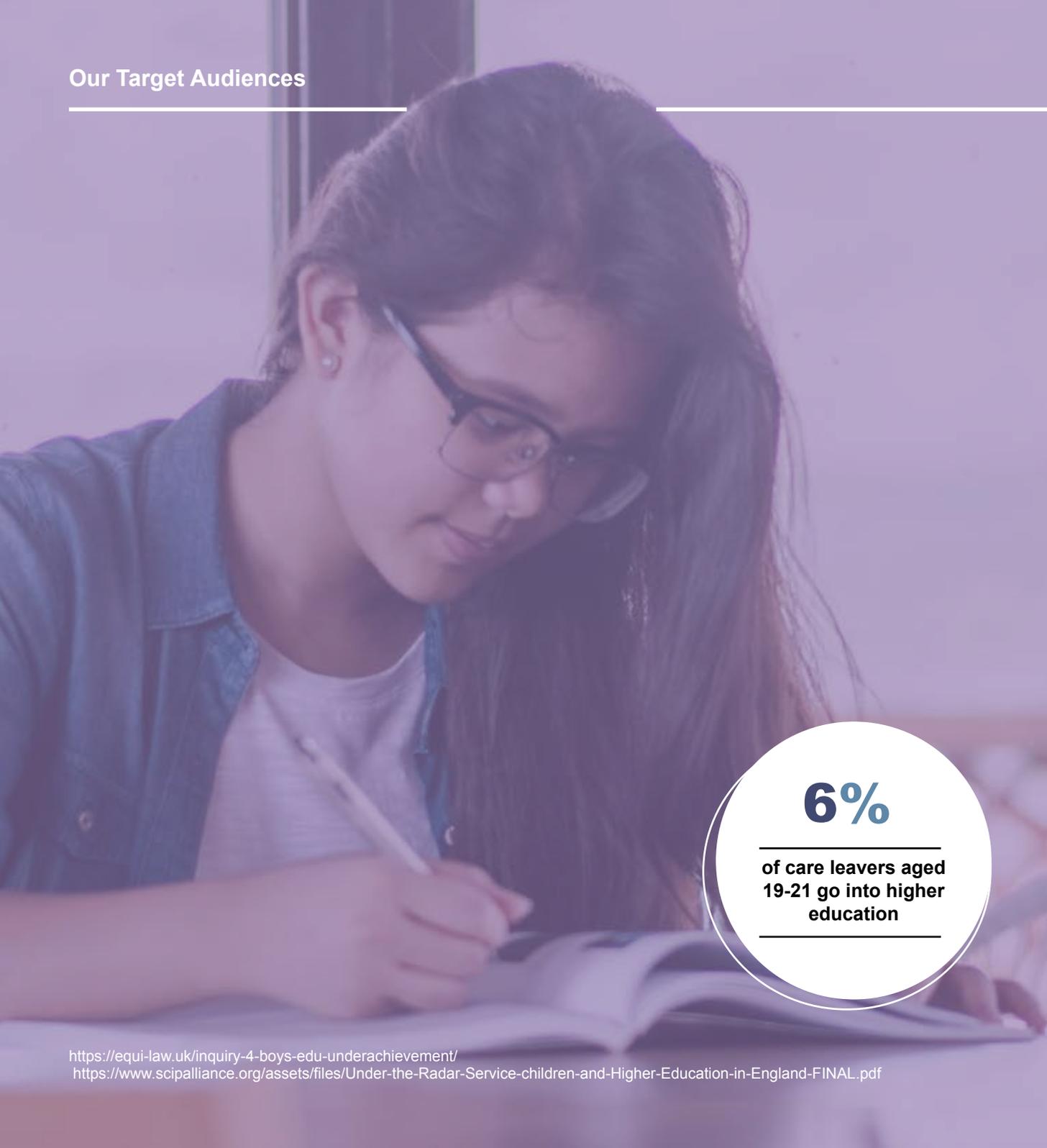
Boys from lower socio-economic areas

Boys are behind girls at every stage of education from early years' through to university and vocational education 4, and for boys in receipt of free school meals this gap increases further.

Children from armed forces families

Children from armed forces families face major challenges where access to higher education is concerned. These include a higher degree of mobility than those without a serving parent and separation from a parent due to military service.

Boys are behind girls at every stage of education



6%

**of care leavers aged
19-21 go into higher
education**

Children in Care

The number of Children in Care across Kent and Medway has increased significantly in the last few years. In 2020/21, the DfE reported that 3,123 Looked-After Children (LAC) were placed in Kent and Medway, with 1,655 children with UASC (unaccompanied asylum-seeking children) status. Currently just 6% of care leavers aged 19-21 go into higher education, and those that do are nearly twice as likely to drop out than their peers.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Progression rates for disabled students are significantly lower than pupils without SEN with only 8.9% of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of SEN progressing to higher education by age 19.

How we will work

We have identified five approaches, which will help inform our work.



1

Early intervention

As children and young people begin to explore their interests and motivations about a wide range of activities from a young age, we will work with students from 11 years of age.

2

Place based

Young people's life chances are shaped by where they live and grow up. We understand this and will focus our work in schools, colleges and communities where there is the greatest need.

3

Youth led

Young people have expert knowledge of their own lives. Their participation in all aspects of widening participation is vital to ensure that the opportunities provided are accessible, appropriate and effective.

4

Collaborative

Collaborative working will support us to reach more under-represented students and scale programmes that have evidenced impact. Sharing resources and expertise will also make our collective work more efficient.

5

Evidence led

In order to deliver our collective mission we need to understand what works. Our programmes will be evaluated with learning shared across the partnership.

Measuring Success

We aim to inspire under-represented students to consider university and provide them with the **knowledge** and **skills to progress to**, and **succeed** at higher education.

The ultimate impact we are aiming for is to see a **sustainable increase** in the number of under-represented learners progressing to university, and in particular our universities.

That is what we want to achieve and we'll **monitor progress** towards this intended impact through annual university admissions data and HESA tracking dataset.

We will also use our annual baseline surveys to **monitor young people's attitudes** towards higher education and their intention to apply, and **evaluate individual interventions** to understand 'what works'. This will inform delivery across the partnership.

Governance

The partnership is governed by a strategic board which consists of an independent chair and senior leaders from universities, schools and colleges.

The Office for Students expect regional partnerships to play a key role in ensuring that higher education access within a region is aligned with regional economic needs and other regional careers education, information, advice and guidance efforts.

To achieve this we aim to further strengthen our board by adding two representatives from not for profit organisations or local authorities.

Three sub committees report to the strategic board; management, finance and funding and monitoring, reporting and evaluation.



We aim to further strengthen our board by adding two representatives from not for profit organisations or local authorities.





KMPF

Core Unit

A KMPF core unit will support the delivery of the partnership strategy by coordinating collaboration between partners and sectors, evaluating the partnership's overall impact and the effectiveness of collaborative interventions.

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