

Leeds City College

UKPRN 10024962

Access Agreement 2016-17

Introduction

Leeds City College has approximately 45,000 students. Of these further education and higher education students, 14% are full time and 86% part time students. BME students account for 29% of the total and 11% of this total number are students with disabilities or learning difficulties. Overall, 50% of the students have been identified as meeting widening participation 'ward uplift' criteria.

As a large, diverse organisation, the Leeds City College Group provides benefits to the region, employers, employees, students and the community. Particular advantages for learners are being gained through bringing together higher and further education opportunities in a unique way. The College is well placed to offer a vocational higher education (HE) curriculum that articulates well with its further education (FE) curriculum and in the future this will be a positive attribute in enabling progression from Level 2 and Level 3 apprenticeships and diplomas for 14-19 year olds and increasing progression through HE. Our widening participation strategy promotes awareness and raises aspirations of all learners to support their progress into and through higher education.

The mission of the College is:

'To be recognised as an exceptional College providing life changing skills and experiences for individuals, businesses and communities'.

The College's current strategy for HE and its widening participation strategic assessment outline objectives, outcomes and actions relating to widening participation.

Leeds City College has a wholly owned subsidiary, Leeds College of Music (LCoM), which also offers higher and further education courses. LCoM is a progressive Conservatoire, renowned for the quality, distinctiveness and relevance of its provision. LCoM is very specialised and has a different target market from LCC. Due to this difference each component of the Leeds City College group will have very different widening participation aims and access measures and targets.

1. Assessment of Performance

Leeds City College has traditionally been very strong regarding widening participation and aims to continue offering flexible delivery and appropriate support to give students from all backgrounds and circumstances the opportunity to succeed at HE level.

2. Fee Limits

This agreement applies to all courses for which Leeds City College currently receives funding directly from the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

The fee charges for indirectly funded provision offered at the College will be determined by the University providing the funding.

Students included within this agreement:

Full-time students who are eligible to pay EU tuition fees are included within this agreement.

Part time students and non-EU students recruited to provision offered at Leeds City College are subject to fees determined by the College, which are reviewed annually by the College Board of Governors.

This access agreement is reviewed annually by the College Executive Leadership Team.

In 2016-17, the following charges will apply.

Component	FT Home/EU undergraduate fee	PT Home/EU undergraduate fee
LCC	£6,750	£3375
LCoM	£9,000	n/a

In future years we anticipate increasing this fee in line with the annual increase set by the Government each year.

The higher level fee will not apply to current students on programmes commencing before 1 September 2012.

For expected student numbers see Annex B

3. Access and Student Success Measures

	Proportion of additional fee income	Expenditure 2016/17
Financial support for undergraduate students	19.5%	£716,500
Access Expenditure	3.8%	£141,500
Student Success	6.8%	£250,000
Progression Expenditure	0.3%	£10,000
Total expenditure	30.4%	£1,118,000

Estimates for 2015/16 onwards are given in Annex B

The additional fee income over the period of the income will be used to:

- Provide fee waivers for eligible students

- Provide a bursary for students with household income levels of less than £42,600
- Provide direct support for students during their study at the College (e.g. study skills such as academic writing, enterprise skills, pastoral)
- Provide support for Level 3 students to prepare them for entering HE by providing tuition in academic skills such as referencing, research, academic writing and independent study) See S5 for more details
- Provide opportunities for those studying an apprenticeship to enter HE to equip the student with the necessary academic skills to succeed in HE
- Develop progression agreements with local schools and other providers to promote access to HE particularly in disadvantaged areas
- Support progression throughout the student lifecycle.

LCoM-specific access and success measures

- Provide an applicants' bursary, refunding audition fees and travel costs for Home applicants who meet specific income-related criteria to ensure that no applicant is deterred on the grounds of cost.
- Enhance employability of our students through enterprise activities and opportunities within and outside the HE curriculum.

4. Outreach measures

In addition to our current outreach work for HE students, we have developed a 'Progression to HE' course for current Level 3 students. This will be delivered as part of the tutorial programme for L3 students and will focus on developing academic skills in preparation for entry into HE. This will not only benefit students progressing onto LCC HE courses but all students wishing to progress to HE at other institutions. The course will include the development of research skills and independent learning skills as preparation for the HE system. This can also be delivered in local schools by school teaching staff with input from relevant college staff where appropriate. Progression Officers and the School Liaison team will promote LCC HE opportunities to both internal students and prospective students from local schools.

LCoM specific outreach measures

It is acknowledged that the primary and secondary education systems do not always prepare young people for application to a conservatoire, and we recognise that identifying students with potential must begin at a young age. Our outreach activities support a long-term commitment to engaging with young people from a variety of backgrounds to aspire to and reach the standard required to access HE music courses. Much of our outreach work is collaborative, through local and regional partnerships, both working with young people and providing further opportunities for HE students to enhance their employability skills.

Activities and partnerships include:

- Saturday Music School. We provide bursaries for lower-income students to participate in SMS, a two-year programme of musical training to talented musicians aged 10-17, many of whom aspire to HE.
- Leeds Cathedral Choir School partnership, seeking to raise aspiration and attainment amongst children in one of the most underprivileged areas of the city
- Community Music Project; all undergraduate students can elect to study a Community Music module with placement, equipping them with the skills to place their practice in a wider context and delivering longer-term benefits to the wider community. Many projects are focussed on young people.

Collaborative Outreach Measures

Leeds City College is committed to the Higher Education Access Rewarding Transforming (HEART) partnership established by twelve HE providers in West Yorkshire (FE Colleges providing HE, HEIs and Universities) until December 2015. We are also committed to the Single Point of Contact (SPoC) secured by HEART which operates to December 2016.

HEART's mission remains to work in partnership to improve access to, and achievement in, Higher Education to enhance individual and economic development.

Strategic target groups for core HEART activity are established as Looked After Young People (LAYP) and Care Leavers and further strengthening relationships with Leeds City Region (LCR) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and through this addressing issues relating to higher level skills required for economic growth and therefore including mature and part-time learners.

HEART will act as the Single Point of Contact (SPoC) and coordinate the collaborative outreach being provided by partners and contributing to the National Network for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO). We are committed to utilising a proportion of formula funding toward outreach which engages a number of schools in HEFCE Cold Spot areas with targeted collaborative outreach activity.

HEART's approach to engaging with LAYP/Care Leavers working through the intermediaries (local authorities, social workers, foster carers and independent fostering agencies) has strengthened considerably and has led to an increase in activities and attendance at these activities. HEART will continue to manage relationships with local authorities, foster carers and independent fostering agencies leading to a sustained range of activities targeting intermediaries and the young people in care (approximately 3,500 in West Yorkshire)/leaving care. The HEART Manager, in the role as representative for Yorkshire and Humber on the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers, supported the successful application for the NNECL SPoC and continues to ensure that activities in West Yorkshire are reported to the NNECL.

The LCR LEP continues to attract devolved funding and HEART is the representative for all partners on the Leeds City Region Skills Network. HEART continues to lobby for greater emphasis on Higher Level Skills in the LEP Strategy and Skills Plan and has informed development of the LEP Skills Service and the proposed interventions for ESF funding within the European Single Investment Framework including specific mention of outreach and access. We expect HEART to continue performing this role and ensuring the outreach and access agenda remain in the LEP thinking and plans.

HEART Higher Level Skills Ambassador (HLSA) scheme continues to recruit additional business leaders able to disseminate the value of higher education and higher level skills to their own workforce and throughout their business networks.

Mature and part-time learner recruitment and progression remains a concern within West Yorkshire as it is nationally. HEART produces regular reports for the Board advising strengths and weaknesses in partner presentation of part-time courses and this is leading to improvements such that genuine part-time provision is simpler to find for mature and part-time learners. HEART will, subject to the organisers agreeing the new format, continue to sponsor the regional Adult Learners Week awards and to support the Adult Learners' Festival.

HEART continues to be monitored carefully for effectiveness and impact by the Board (comprised of senior managers from all twelve partners and representatives from HEFCE and LCR) with strategy and priority activities informed and agreed by the Board. Operational activity is overseen and guided by members of HEART planning groups (comprised of senior practitioners working in outreach/widening participation and business engagement).

5. Student retention & success

We will continue to monitor our retention and success rates with a view to maintaining the current levels. All prospective students will have access to initial assessment & guidance together with diagnostic assessments to ensure that they are on the right course and understand the requirements of the course.

LCC will replace the discontinued Access to Learning Fund with a hardship fund, funded by the Opportunity funding, in order to provide discretionary assistance in the form of emergency loans and grants for priority groups, where they are at risk of discontinuing their studies or not progressing, due to hardship.

6. Student Progression

LCC's strategy in regard to student progression is to offer appropriate support and guidance throughout various stages of the student lifecycle.

We will continue to promote progression from FE to HE through:

- Open days for both internal FE students and local schools
- Applicant days
- Taster sessions for internal students
- A progression module for L3 students which develops the students' academic writing skills and forms a link between the HE & FE courses

We will continue to promote progression throughout the student lifecycle by:

- Pastoral support for students
- Academic support
- Counselling & welfare support

- Financial support

The HE Careers Guidance Officer will support students as they near the end of their course with advice on careers, higher level courses and applications.

7. Financial support for students – Bursary

LCC and LCoM will continue to offer bursaries as outlined in the table below.

Household income	Total Bursary	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Less than £25,000	£1,000	£250	£250	£500
£25,000 to £42,620	£500	£125	£125	£250

- These will be for Home or EU* students and all applicants will be equally eligible. Assessment will be based on need in line with income assessments used for applications to the Student Loan Company. We will also consider other schemes based on assessment of need.

*EU students eligible at LCC only

8. Targets and Milestones

In line with our current position, we will maintain our current completion rate and, as a minimum, will aim to maintain our levels of mature and part time students as shown in Annex B.

We will continue to review learner feedback and will monitor student profiles as at present.

9. Institutional Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

There are arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of this agreement through the College's Academic Board, its Executive Leadership Team, its Education Standards Committee of the Board of Governors and its Board of Governors.

The Dean of Higher Education (LCC) and the Director of Curriculum and Research (LCoM) have responsibility to report and monitor compliance with the commitments made within this agreement.

The following data will be collected and used to inform future planning and any amendments to the Access Agreement:

- Internal progression rates for FE into HE
- Average household income of new entrants and payments of bursaries
- Retention and completion rates of students
- Social background of students to monitor participation by those from deprived backgrounds
- Age & profile of students to monitor WP statistics
- Number of FE students participating in free instrumental and music theory tuition (LCoM only)

- Equality & diversity

10. Provision of Information for Prospective Students

The College uses a number of methods to provide information for students about fees and the associated support. These include:

- Information on fees and support published on the College website
- An insert in all prospectuses
- Information packs prepared for all prospective students
- Information sessions held with prospective students progressing internally
- Information sessions held with prospective students from outside the College

11. Student consultation

We have a range of measures in place for student consultation. Our student course representatives feed back into curriculum areas on a half termly basis and appropriate actions are then followed through. We operate a number of student surveys throughout the year. The Students Union elects two members as student governors on the Leeds City College Board, at which student matters are discussed. Additionally, there is strong student representation on the College's Education Standards Committee of the Board.

Consultation with students has led to the change in the distribution of the NSP allocation from pure discounted fee to a proportion being available as a bursary.

11. Responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010

In line with our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 we have conducted an impact assessment on this agreement, to determine the potential impact of this on any learner with protected characteristics as defined by the Act.