



Leeds City College

**Leeds City College**

**UKPRN 10024962**

**Access & Participation Plan 2019-20**

## **Introduction**

Leeds City College Group (LCC) has approximately 27,000 students. Of these further education and higher education students, 14% are full time and 86% part time students. BME students account for 45% of the total and 16% of this total number are students with disabilities or learning difficulties. Overall, 46 % 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 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 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

'Creating learning environments where every student can achieve their full potential'

Both the College's current Strategy for HE and its Widening Participation Strategic Assessment outline objectives, outcomes and actions relating to widening participation. Widening participation is at the core of our ethos and mission and is embedded in everything that we do.

The HE provision at LCC is distinct from that provided by many traditional HEIs in that it raises the aspirations of those who would not normally consider higher education as part of their career path and offers an alternative approach to supporting students that is not evidence in traditional HEIs. By making such provision available to aspiring learners, LCC plays an important role in contributing to the economic development of the local community, the widening participation agenda and the achievement of national targets for HE participation. Within Leeds, the majority of wards fall under Quintile 2 with respect to participation in Higher Education (POLAR3).

### **1. Assessment of Performance**

Leeds City College has a strong history of 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.

## **1.1 Access**

Leeds City College has a proven track record in widening participation. The College offers modes of delivery which allow students to work around their course commitments therefore allowing students from lower income brackets to combine studies with work. To further develop and refine our approaches we need to further develop our data capability in terms of analysing the intersections of equality and access characteristics and making use of multiple measures of deprivation. We plan to do this by developing more sophisticated reports which allow greater and deeper analysis.

The number of students with declared disabilities or health problems rose from 11% in 2013/14 to 14% in 2014/15. The College has structures in place to support disabled students both during and after the DSA application.

### **POLAR**

Over the past 3 years approximately 50% of our students come from POLAR 1 & 2, with a 3 year average of 26% from POLAR 1. This is 15 percentage points above the HESA average for UK HE (11%).

### **Ethnicity**

The proportion of Black, Asian & Ethnic Minority (BAME) students has increased over the past 3 years from 34% to 41%. This is currently 19% above the HESA average for UK HE (22%)

### **Disabled Students**

The number of students declaring a disability averages out at 13% over the last the 3 years. This is slightly above the HESA average for UK HE (11%). The average of 13% does not include those who do not declare a disability but still require support. This is an additional 5%.

### **Mature Students**

The College, with 56%, has a high level of mature students compared with the HESA average of 20% (Part time and full time).

## **1.2 Student Success**

### **POLAR**

The continuation rates for students from POLAR quintiles 1 & 2 is 2.4% lower than that for students from other quintiles. The success rates for polar quintiles 1&2 has improved by 4% since 2014/15 and has improved from 2% below that of other quintiles to 2% above.

### **Disability**

Continuation for disabled students is 6% lower than that of students with no declared disability.

In 2016/17 academic year 13% of students studying at LCC declared disabilities or health problems. The success rate for these students was 2% higher than students with no disability. This

demonstrates progress from 2013/14 which had 11% of students declaring disabilities or health problems and a success rate of 11% lower than those students who had not declared any disability or health problems. The success rates for students who do not declare a disability but do require additional learning support also compares favourably with those who do not with a 3% difference in 2016/17.

We have appointed a HE Learning Support Officer whose role is to support students through the DSA process and to provide on programme support. The effect of this on continuation is not yet demonstrated in the TEF metrics but it does appear to have had a positive impact on the success of disabled students.

### **Ethnicity**

The continuation rates for BAME students is 6% lower than that of white students.

In both 15/16 & 16/17 BAME student success was 6% lower than that of white students. When this is broken down into specific ethnic groups white students have a 6% higher success rate when compared with that of both Asian and black students. The number of mixed race students is too low to provide any significant indicators.

### **Entry Qualifications**

Students entering with qualifications classed as high risk qualification have completion rates of 3% lower than those with medium and low risk entry qualifications.

### **Mature Students**

The continuation rate for mature students is 1.7% lower than that of young students.

Mature students have a success rate of 3% higher than younger students compared with 3% below in 2014/15.

### **1.3 Progression**

Employability is embedded within the HE provision at the College. The success of this approach is reflected in the DLHE statistics. 95.7% of our full time and 99.2% of our part time students progress to either employment or further study which is above the TEF benchmark. Feedback from employers and alumni demonstrates that the students are well prepared for employment. It must be noted that a large proportion of the student population at the College leave after the completion of the Level 5 foundation degree or higher national qualification as they do not require the full degree for their profession. This will impact upon the LEO and Graduate Outcomes income data.

### **Care Leavers**

The access and success of care leavers has not been specifically monitored by the College due to the very low numbers. However, the College has signed up to the Care Leaver Covenant with Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY) and has promised to provide specific support for Care Leavers including support in finding and negotiating accommodation and financial support whilst on programme. The monitoring of care leavers will be included in the College's plans to develop more detailed reporting and monitoring.

### **Summary of Performance**

The College is working to improve the data collection and monitoring and has appointed a HE Data Analyst. This role is to provide more detailed data to enable us to identify trends and to direct support more effectively. This more detailed data collection will include the collection and monitoring of attainment across all underrepresented groups rather than just across the whole of the student population.

The College will continue to review the access arrangements for all students and the specific needs of underrepresented groups.

Improvement is required in relation to continuation rates from Level 4 to Level 5 across the student population and in particular in relation to underrepresented groups. The impact of the introduction of the HE Learning Support Officer during the 2016-17 academic year appears to have had a positive impact on the success of disabled students but there may be other factors which have contributed to this improvement. Further investigation will be conducted and the impact will be monitored.

The College will continue to review the continuation and success rates of all underrepresented groups and to investigate appropriate measures to be put in place to better support these students.

### **2 Ambition and Strategy**

The College will continue to promote social mobility through improving access and outcomes for all students. Priorities include improving access and outcomes for BAME, disabled students and students from low participation areas. Measures will be put in place throughout the whole student lifecycle. The College is working with Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY) through the NCOP funding to raise aspirations in low participation areas. This involves working with school children and so the full impact of this will take a number of years to work through to HE.

The College will continue its inclusive practices to support all students. These include:

- Small class sizes – these allow both staff and students to develop supportive relationships
- Provision of a chrome book (or equivalent) to ensure that all students have access to electronic resources
- Timetabling over 2-3 days to enable students to work to help support themselves
- Tutor support outside of formal lecture times – in surveys students always say that this is a real strength of the College and something that they really value
- Academic writing support – To ensure that all students have the academic skills to succeed on the course. This is available not only during induction but throughout the whole course.
- Pre entry summer school
- Workshops and guidance on wellbeing and resilience
- Dedicated HE Learning Support Officer
- Pastoral tutorials

## 2.1 Access

The College will continue to promote access from FE to HE through:

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

The College's strategy to access and participation is based on a sustained programme of interventions working with both GHWY and also our own community links. The collaboration through GHWY enables us to better target resources and will provide more sophisticated monitoring of the impact of the interventions.

The College wishes to improve access to higher education in areas where participation is low and to provide support to enable students from these areas to achieve. The College will work with communities to promote awareness of higher education and to work with potential students to prepare them for higher education. We have begun to focus on developing sustained and long term programmes of outreach and recruitment activity in community settings and with community organisations. These are in particularly deprived areas where there is a lot of disengagement with HE and education in general. We currently have 5 programmes of activity in development and out for consultation. It is planned that the evaluation of each activity will provide data in regard to some of the above but also in terms of the activity content. However, whole-programme evaluation is planned to assess the overall impact in terms of raising aspirations for HE, changes in attitudes and motivation, raising confidence, and brand awareness of University Centre.

LCC is committed to the GHWY partnership, an established consortium of twelve HE providers in West Yorkshire (comprising FE colleges with HE provision, and universities). The partner members represent a diverse range of institutions offering a vast array of different courses, subjects, qualifications and modes of study. We are also committed to the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP), secured by GHWY.

Go Higher West Yorkshire's mission is to work in partnership to act as a single point of contact for information on our Higher Education Provider partners, improving access to, and achievement in, Higher Education to enhance individual and economic development. This is achieved through the consortium's internal structures: each of the twelve partners has representation on our Governing Board and in our two operational groups (the Business Engagement Planning Group, and the Widening Participation Planning Group).

The Board comprises senior members of staff from each institution, to help drive the strategic direction of the partnership, as well as co-opted members from the Leeds City Region LEP and West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges, to ensure a joined-up approach and to maximise opportunities for partnership working.



The Business Engagement Planning Group has a remit to work in partnership to open up higher education options to underrepresented groups, with a particular focus on employers and their employees, including prospective mature and part-time students. Our partners have worked together to develop higher and degree apprenticeships which aim to appeal to a wide range of students, and seeks to investigate the social mobility potential of this emerging area of work.

The Widening Participation Planning Group has a focus on working with specific target groups which have been identified using national data, and contributes towards the meeting of our collaborative access and participation plan targets. The work covers: looked-after young people and care leavers, Estranged Students, former NNCO schools (which do not form part of NCOP) in HE cold-spot areas, and current students from non-traditional backgrounds.

We are proud that our partnership has worked together to develop and sign the first collaborative Care Leaver Covenant, showcasing the commitment across our partnership to this group of students (<http://www.gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk/care-leaver-covenant/>). Our work in this area covers the student lifecycle and includes access work such as collaborative Foster Family Fun Days and engagement with foster carer networks/Children in Care and Care Leaver Councils, as well as progression work such as a pilot Professional Mentoring project we are developing to support care leavers currently in higher education to progress into graduate-level employment. Our partnership is also working towards the development of a collaborative Stand Alone pledge, to showcase the commitment we have towards this equally vulnerable group of students. Other activities include our collaborative Y10 summer school, where young people from low-participation neighbourhoods gain exposure to multiple HE providers to aid informed choices, and a series of workshops to share good practice across the partnership in areas such as supporting current students from non-traditional backgrounds.

We measure our success through assessment of the data we collect; this evidences that the care-experienced students with whom we work feel their confidence has increased through their experiences with us. Further, evaluation of our annual collaborative Y10 summer school via the Learning Gain tool<sup>1</sup> demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of the participants leave the residential experience feeling that HE is for people like them, feel more confident about their future and have a good plan for progressing into HE; this is combined with continuous improvement in practice through feedback from teachers and student hosts who are present throughout the event, and debrief of staff from across the partnership who run the event. Monitoring of this work takes place termly and is reported to the GHWY Board.

Our strong partnership work supports complementarity between the work of our own institution, the work of Go Higher West Yorkshire and NCOP, and other local initiatives. To aid complementarity between the work of our own institution and the NCOP, LCC is represented on the NCOP Steering Group and employs three NCOP staff members. These staff members are our link with the central NCOP team, managed through Go Higher West Yorkshire, and outreach work within our own institution, and a key element of their role is to develop community links in and work with key

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<sup>1</sup> <https://research-toolkit.co.uk/#learning>



influencers from the target wards. To ensure complementarity with the Opportunity Area identified in our region – Bradford – the Partnership Manager for GHWY is a member of the Opportunity Area Working Group 'Access to Rewarding Careers' and our NCOP Area Manager for Bradford and Calderdale works closely with those involved in the Opportunity Areas. Our partnership has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Bradford Pathways, part of Bradford Council, which is a service offering free advice and support to primary and secondary schools on developing a careers framework within the school's curriculum; Bradford Pathways is also responsible for setting up and delivering Bradford's Education Covenant and has strong links with the Opportunity Area.

The College will work with GHWY to improve the outcomes of looked-after young people by exposure to different forms of higher education through new experiences, at the access stage of the student lifecycle, as well as improve the outcomes of care leavers through the GHWY pilot Professional Mentoring project.

We will provide support for estranged students by providing advice regarding finance opportunities and accommodation and general support in regard to their well-being.

## **2.2 Success**

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 student success throughout the student lifecycle by providing:

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

Our Careers services will support students as they near the end of their course with advice on careers, higher level courses and applications.

A priority for the College is to improve continuation rates particularly in the first year of study. To do this we are reviewing the support available to students both before entry and on programme. The College has also developed an online academic skills module for students to undertake either pre-enrolment or during the induction period to ensure that they have the necessary skills to succeed on their chosen course. The introduction of the Academic Skills Hub in the University Centre in 2017/18 was well received by students and we are looking to extend the support provided. This support is not only in relation to improving academic research skills but also to work with students on strategies they can employ to improve their classifications. Other areas of support are presently being considered by the College.

The College will work with students from BAME backgrounds and with protected characteristics to ensure that they have the correct support to enable them to achieve. The College will undertake more detailed analysis of data to identify specific groups of BAME students who may be at risk of under achievement.



We will continue to work with a range of employers in each of the curriculum areas to provide a range of employability activities including placements, visiting speakers from industry and to review our provision to ensure that the skills and knowledge being developed are current and desired by the specific industry.

### **2.3 Progression**

The College will continue to provide career and employability support to all students. Employability skills are embedded within our curriculum to ensure that students have the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed.

### **3. Support for Students**

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

- Provide a bursary for students with household income levels of less than £42,875
- Support progression throughout the student lifecycle.
- Support students with disabilities and learning difficulties, through diagnostic testing; mentoring for students who do not qualify for DSA or whose assessment has been delayed, particularly where there are mental health issues; funding for transition work for disabled students at the start and end of their studies; and funding for specialist educational diagnosis of autism.
- 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)
- Provide academic skills support for those studying degree apprenticeships, in order to ensure that they have the necessary academic skills to succeed in HE Develop progression arrangements with local schools and other providers to promote access to HE particularly in disadvantaged areas
- Provide support to help address the needs of students with mental health problems, specific learning difficulties and/or an autistic spectrum disorders who either do not qualify for DSA or who have been disproportionately disadvantaged by recent changes to DSA.
- Increase the fund available to support students in financial emergencies
- Provide a revised tutorial programme with enhanced monitoring of students to identify problems at an earlier stage. Research has shown that the personal tutor system can have a positive impact on student engagement. This revised programme will include an induction for personal tutors, ensuring that the personal tutor has the right attributes for the role, a programme of topics to be covered in group tutorials e.g., academic writing, academic misconduct, awareness of safeguarding issues, finding placements etc. The group tutorials will run alongside 1:1 meetings.
- Enhanced staff development in regard to supporting students with specific needs e.g. autism, dyslexia, ADHD, etc. This will complement the support offered by the specialist HE



Learning Support Officer and will also enable tutors to identify additional learning needs earlier.

- Provide a specialised HE Learning Support Officer who will support students with additional needs regardless of whether they qualify for the Disabled Students' Allowance.
- Provide chromebooks (or equivalent) to ensure that all students have access to resources and support. Consultation with students has shown that they value the chromebooks and the access to support that they provide.

Many of our higher education students are the first member of their family to enter higher education. LCC believes that the above and the planned outreach activities will have positive impacts on the widening participation of the following under-represented groups:

- Disadvantaged socio-economic localities;
- Looked-after by a local authority or care leavers;
- Those without a family history of Higher Education;
- Mature students;
- Black, Asian and Minority (BAME) communities.

The College will continue to assist students through the hardship fund, funded through the Student 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.

#### 4. Financial support for students – Bursary

We will continue to offer bursaries as outlined in the tables below.

Household income	Total Bursary	Semester 1	Semester 2
Less than £25,000	£500	£250	£250
£25,000 to £42, 875	£250	£125	£125

- These will be for Home 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.
- The payment of the bursary is also subject to attendance above 80% and satisfactory completion of work and performance on the course.
- To ensure that our financial support measures continue to target students' needs we will continue to consult with students regarding the frequency and amount. We will also monitor the impact of financial support on retention and achievement.

This agreement applies to all courses which are prescribed higher education qualifications under the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

## **5. Investment**

We will invest £500,000 (37.7%) of annual higher fee income on access and participation.

To support access, we will invest £60,000 (2%) of the higher fee income to support outreach activities.

To support success we will invest £100,000 (4.4%) of the higher fee income to support students on programme and to target support for disabled and BAME students.

We will also invest £310,000 (30.3%) of the higher fee income in financial support for students whilst on programme, which will hopefully have a positive impact on continuation and success.

To support progression we will invest £30,000 (1%) of the higher fee income to enable us to continue to offer enterprise and career development activities and support.

## **6. Targets and Milestones**

Our targets include:

- Maintaining completion rates
- Maintaining the percentage of mature students
- Increasing the percentage of part time students
- Increasing the progression from internal FE to HE
- Collaborative target with GHWY to provide bespoke support for young people in care and care leavers
- Collaborative target with GHWY to engage learners in low participation areas
- To raise attainment in schools

These targets have not been amended this year but the College has decided to introduce two new targets:

- To reduce the gap in continuation between BAME and white students
- To reduce the gap in success between BAME and white students

We will endeavour to improve the performance on certain groups of students

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

## **7. Institutional Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements**



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 course requirements of the course. Review of retention statistics shows that the lowest retention rates are in the first year of a programme. Research into reasons for the lower retention rate point towards lack of engagement, failure in assessments, financial problems and health-associated problems. The College proposes to introduce measures to help improve retention especially in the first year of a programme. The College will use more detailed data to provide a greater depth to the analysis of performance on the measures.

We are collecting qualitative and quantitative data from each outreach activity (eg HE Information Session, subject-specific taster, screen printing workshop, pop-up photoshoots, media make-up demonstrations, etc) to evaluate how participants' knowledge and/or attitudes changed from before to after the session. This will provide feedback around the quality of the activity as well as the impact and effectiveness in raising aspirations for HE and raising awareness of HE options and the University Centre offering. This participant data is then tracked through LCC student record system so longer term impact can be assessed by way of measuring if the participants attended further activities, applied, interviewed, enrolled, retained, and completed. Some of this will give us short term impact reports but more so long term evaluation to assess a sustained programme of outreach activity. This will then provide support for early pre-entry intervention (for example in Year 10) and how this helps the forming of HE related aspirations and informed choices.

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

The Dean of Higher Education (LCC) has 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 and Participation Plan:

- 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
- EDI profile of students to monitor participation, retention, attainment and achievement by under-represented groups

Through NCOP, Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY) is utilising a blended research approach to evidence impact, appointing external evaluators as well as employing a Research and Evaluation team. Their remit is to ensure effective research and evaluation of our NCOP work, but also to provide training to GHWY NCOP staff based in partners, and to disseminate research findings and good/best practice to the sector nationally. Longitudinal monitoring will take place through the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT).

## **8. 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

## **9. Student consultation**

We have a range of measures in place for student consultation. Our student course representatives feed back into curriculum areas on a termly basis and appropriate actions are then followed through. We operate a number of student surveys throughout the year. The Students Union President is the student governor on the Leeds City College Board. Higher Education students are also represented on the Higher Education Quality & Enhancement Committee and the HE Academic Board. Student consultation has contributed to the decision to review the type of support offered throughout the academic year.

## **10. 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.

\* course type not listed.

Full-time and part-time course fee levels for 2019-20 entrants.

Please enter inflationary statement in the free text box below.

LCC may increase tuition fees in line with inflation in subsequent years. This will be linked to the Retail Prices Index.

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	all excluding Acting, Dance & Fashion, Theatrical and Media Hair and Make up	£7,250
First degree	Acting & Dance & Fashion, Theatrical and Media Hair and Make up	£9,250
Foundation degree	all excluding Acting , Dance & Fashion, Theatrical and Media Hair and Make up	£7,250
Foundation degree	Acting, Dance & Fashion, Theatrical and Media Hair and Make up	£9,250
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		£7,250
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		£7,250
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Franchise full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		*
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£3,625
Foundation degree		£3,625
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		£3,625
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		£3,625
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		£3,625

