

Moorlands College

Access and participation plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

1. Assessment of performance

Moorlands College is a relatively small HE provider with student numbers of 190 to 210 FTE in recent years. The profile of current undergraduates can be summarised in access and participation terms as follows:

POLAR4 quintiles 1-2	37%
Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic	9%
Mature (first-time entrants)	52%
with disability	35%

Overall, by these categories 80% of current students are being enabled to access HE from at least one of the main disadvantaged groups.

Data reliability is treated as a fundamental precondition for the College's entire Access and Participation work. Here, "reliability" is used in its standard statistical sense: the College's data is entirely accurate, but when numbers are small, a summarising percentage will not be a "reliable" indicator of the situation. This is due to natural variation: just as an unbiased coin tossed ten times produces either more or less than the expected five heads on (very slightly more than) three out of four occasions, so in Access and Participation year on year changes in small populations cannot be used as reliable indicators of the underlying situation.

The OfS dataset provides heavily rounded values for access by ethnicity, age and disability. This plan is based on the underlying, unrounded data, which is internally available. This allows for a much more accurate analysis. The rest of the data in the OfS dataset is suppressed, so cannot be used, except for one year's worth of unsuppressed data for mature attainment and progression, which on its own is not sufficient to identify trends or sustained gaps.

Where the standard OfS data is not usable, this evaluation uses reliable internal data and aggregates data across years as required to give moving averages where appropriate. The evaluation uses a rule of thumb that populations expected to be under 25 need to be aggregated.¹

The College is eager to have thoroughly useful annual statistics, and looks forward to the point where it is meaningful to disaggregate groups. To ensure that this is done only when the data allows it, the first year of Access and Participation will include training in statistics, particularly in pertinent topics as probability and T-tests, for three key members of the Access and Participation team.

It should also be noted that all the College data evaluated here refers to years before any Access and Participation Plan was operational.

¹ This follows the OfS dataset practice of suppressing figures below 25, labelling them "N". The "population" is the number of the disadvantaged group entering or capable of continuing, attaining or progressing well.

The sector data is from the Office for Students Access and Participation data resources supplied except for the disability data disaggregated by type, which is from the Office for Students online Access and Participation dashboard using indicators from the 2016-17 academic year.

The evaluation presents data in tables where appropriate.

- Where the population is less than 25, this is indicated by “N” , following OfS practice, to indicate unacceptable reliability. Neither data nor percentages are presented in this case, though where trends may be suggested, some guarded comments may be made.
- A RAG rating is indicated where possible. Green and Red indicate respectively that the data for the College is significantly better or worse than for the sector; Amber indicates data in line with sector norms. The three colours are also indicated by their initial letter. Where no conclusion can reliably be drawn, no colour is shown.
- Where there is a gap for a disadvantaged group greater than the sector gap, this is indicated by the addition of “gap” to the primary letter.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Data for these disadvantaged students are presented using both POLAR4 and Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) postcode quintiles.

Access

To achieve a reliable population size for Q1² by both POLAR4 and IMD measures, it is necessary to aggregate all the College’s available data into four-year moving averages.

Variable	National	2014-18	RAG
POLAR4 Q5 : Q1 access	2.2 : 1	2.0 : 1	G
IMD Q5 : Q1 access	1.8 : 1	2.9 : 1	R

The data suggest a mixed picture where recruitment is strong for disadvantaged areas, as indicated by POLAR4 access, but weak for those indicated by IMD. The difference is explained by the different recruitment patterns for young and mature students at the College (there are few non-English UK students). Although the College’s performance exceeds the sector’s according to the measure that the sector focuses on, i.e., POLAR4, this is a national concern and so will be taken further.

Success

Continuation

The College has complete, internal continuation data for POLAR4 and IMD for four years. The Q1 populations are too small for reliable analysis, and so Q1 and Q2 are aggregated. The POLAR4 population is not sufficiently large to create two three-year moving averages, so a four-year figure is given. The IMD data is sufficient to use two-year figures.

² That is, quintile 1, students from the most disadvantaged geographical quintile.

Variable	National	2014-18	RAG
continuation by POLAR4	Q1-2: 90% Q3-5: 93%	Q1-2: 92% Q3-5: 100%	G-gap

Variable	National	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	RAG
continuation by IMD	Q1-2: 88% Q3-5: 93%	Q1-2: 94% Q3-5: 93%	Q1-2: 91% Q3-5: 97%	Q1-2: 79% Q3-5: 94%	R-gap

There is evidence of a gap by the POLAR4 analysis in the overall positive continuation rates. The IMD data paints a somewhat different picture, with above sector results initially, followed by a significant downturn in the most recent period. This will be taken forward.

Attainment

The College has complete, internal attainment data for four years. Sufficient basis for reliable analysis is found by aggregating data for Q1 and Q2 for POLAR4 for four years, and for IMD three years.

Variable	National	2014-18	RAG
attainment by POLAR4	Q1-2: 74% Q3-5: 79%	Q1-2: 73% Q3-5: 72%	A

Variable	National	2014-17	2015-18	RAG
attainment by IMD	Q1-2: 68% Q3-5: 80%	Q1-2: 61% Q3-5: 79%	Q1-2: 75% Q3-5: 78%	A

While the later years for IMD attainment is considerably stronger than the national average, this is rated at Amber because the earlier years were below sector norms. The College will continue to monitor this area with interest, but at this point deems the results to be no more than in line with sector norms.

Progression to employment or further study

The College has complete, internal progression geographical data for three years. By aggregating Q1 and Q2, IMD, but not POLAR4, can be reliably analysed.

Variable	National	2014-17	RAG
progression by POLAR4 <i>employment/further study</i>	No sector data available	Q1-2: N Q3-5: 96%	
progression by POLAR4 <i>highly skilled employ/further study</i>	Q1-2: 65% Q3-5: 69%	Q1-2: N Q3-5: 70%	
progression by IMD <i>employment/further study</i>	No sector data available	Q1-2: 85% Q3-5: 94%	
progression by IMD <i>highly skilled employ/further study</i>	Q1-2: 65% Q3-5: 71%	Q1-2: 67% Q3-5: 74%	G

Regarding progression to employment and further study, comparative national figures by IMD have not been accessed, so no RAG letter is indicated. Regarding progression to highly skilled employment and

further study, the College's students do better than the national average, and the gap between the quintiles is similar to national figures.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students

Because of the very low numbers included in the subcategories by ethnicity, the College can only report on all BAME students as a single category.

Access

After aggregating the number of BAME entrants for four years of available internal data, the population is still under 25.

Variable	National	2014-18	RAG
percentage BAME	21%	10%	R

The College recruits significantly fewer BAME students than the national average. This is an issue to take forward.

Success

Continuation

The College's four years of available data is aggregated together to create a reliable dataset.

Variable	National	2014-18	RAG
continuation by ethnicity	BAME: 89% White: 92%	BAME: 96% White: 92%	G

BAME students have better statistics for continuation than others.

Attainment

The College's four years of data is aggregated together but still is too small in number to allow reliable analysis.

Variable	National	2014-18	RAG
attainment for BAME	BAME: 66% White: 80%	BAME: N White: 76%	

The College's evidence is too weak to comment on sensibly, but is not concerning. This is a national priority, however, and will be taken forward.

Progression to employment or further study

Variable	National	2014-17	RAG
progression by ethnicity <i>employment/further study</i>	No sector data available	BAME: N White: 92%	
progression by ethnicity <i>highly skilled employ/further study</i>	BAME: 65% White: 70%	BAME: N White: 73%	

BAME students progression results are better than those of other students, but the population is too small to allow reliable conclusions to be drawn.

1.3 Mature students

Access

Variable	National	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	RAG
percentage mature	27%	52%	56%	47%	60%	G

The College is very successful in enabling mature students to access HE for the first time, and has been increasingly so. The relative trough in 2016-17 and the recovery in 2017-18 are believed to be the result of certain changes in the marketing of the College.

Success

Continuation

Reliable data can be used for mature students for each separate year. Younger students do not make the threshold for reliability in 2016-17 or 2017-18, so have been aggregated.

Variable	National	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	RAG
continuation mature	85%	85%	94%	91%	83%	A-gap
continuation young	92%	95%	100%	96%		

The internal data for young students in 2016-17 and 2017-18 is very similar, so the drop for mature students in 2017-18 does not reflect a general drop that year. There is the suggestion of a downward trend for mature students in recent years. This therefore is an issue to take forward.

Attainment

Since the focus of Access and Participation is on mature students and those annual populations are large enough for reliable analysis, annual figures are given. However, the comparative data for young students hovers around the critical point for reliability, so two-year running averages are given for those figures.

Variable	National	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	RAG
attainment mature	68%	76%	68%	83%	83%	G
			2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	
attainment young	78%		73%	69%	75%	

The College is very successful in enabling mature students' attainment. The gap is reversed from that of the sector, that is, it favours the usually disadvantaged group. The College understands this to be a reflection of the relatively higher levels of professional readiness shown by older students for the type of training offered by the College.

Progression to employment or further study

To achieve meaningful populations two-year averages are used.

Variable	National	2014-16	2015-17	RAG
progression by age <i>employment/further study</i>	No sector data available	mature: 95% young: 92%	mature: 94% young: 91%	
progression by age <i>Highly skilled employ/further study</i>	mature: 73% young: 68%	mature: 72% young: 61%	mature: 81% young: 73%	G

There is evidence that the College is successful in enabling mature students to gain (highly skilled) employment or further study. The improvement between the two periods may be a result of greater focus on encouraging students' vocational aspirations.

1.4 Students with disabilities

Access

Students with disabilities, taken as a single group, can be reliably analysed per year.

Variable	National	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	RAG
percentage w. disability	13%	9%	26%	27%	25%	G

The College is succeeding in enabling students with disabilities to access HE.

There are insufficient numbers in the subcategories to indicate the access percentages for each one. The College's own data records the proportion of current active students with a disability as follows:

physical disability	7%
mental health issue	9%
Specific Learning Difficulty	19%
other	3%

There is a significant occurrence of multiple disabilities.

Success

Continuation

The College has four years of data, which is reliable when aggregated into two years with the exception of the data involving 2014-15, which has an exceptionally small population. A three-year aggregate is given for this year, with the expectation that in future, all two-year periods will be sufficient to give reliable data.

Considering types of disability, there are too few people with mental health issues or physical disabilities to create a reliable population (even over four years), but three-year moving averages can be given for people with Specific Learning Difficulties.

Variable	National	2014-17	2015-17	2016-18	RAG
continuation by disability	w. disability: 90% without: 91%	w. disability: 93% without: 93%	w. disability: 97% without: 94%	w. disability: 89% without: 91%	A

Variable	National	2014-17	2015-18	RAG
continuation by disability type	ment. health: 87% SpLD: 91% physical: 89%	ment. health: N SpLD: 88% physical: N	ment. health: N SpLD: 93% physical: N	A

The College's data is very similar to the national averages, with some additional success in one two-year period.

Attainment

The College has four years of data for this variable and reliable populations of students with disabilities can be produced over three years. The populations for students with mental health issues or physical disabilities are too small to allow reliable analysis, but a four-year aggregate population for students with Specific Learning Difficulties reaches the threshold.

Variable	National	2014-17	2015-18	RAG
attainment for disability	w. disability: 73% without: 76%	w. disability: 55% without: 78%	w. disability: 67% without: 78%	R

Variable	National	2014-18	RAG
attainment by disability type	mental health: 78% SpLD: 75% physical: 76%	mental health: N SpLD: 65% physical: N:	R

Attainment rates are clearly below the national average and will be taken forward. The issue is particularly associated with the largest group of students in this category: those with Specific Learning Difficulties.

Progression to employment or further study

The College has three years of data, but even when aggregated together it is not reliable.

Variable	National	2014-17	RAG
progression by disability <i>employment/further study</i>	No sector data available	w. disability: N without: 91%	
progression by disability <i>highly skill employ/further study</i>	67% disabled 69% non-disabled	w. disability: N without: 73%	
progression by disability type <i>employment/further study</i>	No sector data available	mental health: N SpLD: N physical: N	
progression by disability type <i>highly skill employ/further study</i>	69% mental health 73% SPLD 71% physical	mental health: N SpLD: N physical: N	

The data which is available suggests that at the College students with disabilities may outperform students without disabilities by both measures of progression.

1.5 Care leavers

The College has had no self-declared care leavers in the last four years. Since the national figure is that 64 per 10,000 children are care leavers,³ all other things being equal, the College might expect to recruit one such person every 2.3 years. Statistically, no conclusions about the College's engagement with this group may justifiably be drawn. However, the College is well aware of the sector-wide challenges faced by this group of people at all three stages of access, success and progression.⁴

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

As the College has relatively low numbers of students, there are no populations of sufficient size to make an analysis of intersections of disadvantage valid. (This is also true of intersections of disadvantage with sex.) The intersection closest to having reliable data is mature students with disabilities. The College will take every valid opportunity to investigate such intersections.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

For the four cohorts from 2015 onwards, the total numbers of students entering undergraduate studies in the following categories of "others who experience barriers" are as given below:

³ Department for Education, Children looked after in England (including adoption), year ending 31 March 2018, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/757922/Children_looked_after_in_England_2018_Text_revised.pdf

⁴ Office for Students, "Care leavers and looked-after children", <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/care-leavers-and-looked-after-children/>

Characteristic	Total over 4 years
Young carers	1
Estranged	0
Gypsy/Roma/traveller	0
Refugees	1
Children from military families	0

None of these populations is sufficient to allow valid analysis at this time. Therefore, these groups are not included in the strategic measures presented below, lest the focus of those measures be broadened and their impact lessened. Nevertheless, national data indicates the particular challenges faced by members of these different groups.⁵ The College applies its successful, supportive, inclusive approach in admissions to all students (including for efficiency's sake the relatively small proportion not from any disadvantaged group). The College identifies representatives of any of the disadvantaged groups listed above during admissions and ensures that once accepted they are supported in a way which is appropriate to the challenges they face.

The College has also performed the analyses above on its data for men and women, though neither group is underrepresented nationally. This indicated no areas of concern in access or success, but did flag an issue in progression for women. This has led to the creation internally of a relevant aim, objective and strategic measure, which are beyond the scope of this plan.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups/stages

Recalling that 80% of the current student body is disadvantaged by one or more definition, the data for the College can be summarised graphically by re-presenting the RAG rating of each variable in tabular form. In addition, the national concerns for access and continuation are indicated by adding an asterisk to the RAG rating.

RAG rating	Access	Success		Progression
		Continuation	Attainment	
Socioeconomics POLAR4 IMD	G*	G-gap*	A	
	R	R-gap	A	G
Ethnicity	R	G	*	
Age	G	A-gap	G	G
Disability	G	A	R*	

On the basis of the above evaluation of the College's performance and in the light of the overarching goal of improving equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and

⁵ Office for Students, "A to Z of Effective Practice in Access and Participation".
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/a-to-z-of-effective-practice-in-access-and-participation/>

progress from higher education, a number of categories/stages can be identified as appropriate aims that the College will focus on:

- Aim A access for students from disadvantaged socioeconomic and ethnic groups
- Aim B success for students disadvantaged by socioeconomics, ethnicity, age and disability

In addition, recognising the diverse challenges faced by the typical care leaver, the College will pay appropriate attention to the needs of any such people that are recruited. This is not expressed as an aim of this plan as it is not expected that the College would be able to demonstrably meet any such aim given the likelihood of very low numbers of relevant students, and the aims are focused on areas where the College can make greatest impact relative to our context.⁶ So, while no objectives or strategic measures relating to care leavers are proposed, any care leavers recruited will be included in relevant measures.

2.2 Aims and objectives

Aim A. Access for students from disadvantaged socioeconomic and ethnic groups

Nationally, it is recognised that people from both these backgrounds experience significant barriers to accessing Higher Education. Indeed, access by the POLAR4 measure is a national concern. The College includes an objective based on IMD as this is a more significant issue internally. Access to the College for people of BAME backgrounds is included as the College's enabling of participation is much lower than the national average.

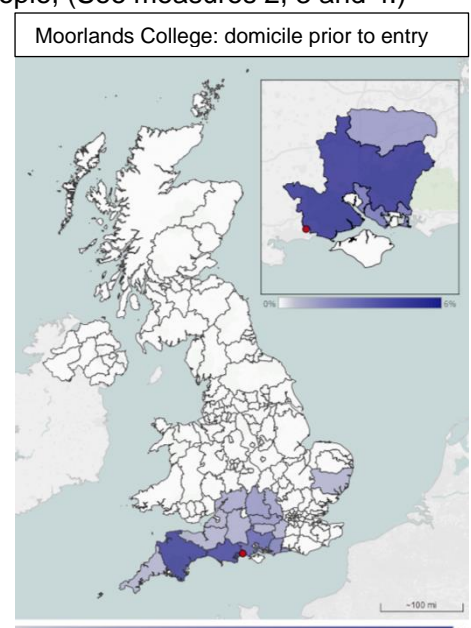
Some barriers faced by these groups relate to issues of previous attainment, and the College is not in a position to impact this greatly because of its small size and its niche market. Other barriers relate to perceptions of suitability and perceptions of support, and, particularly, geographical accessibility.

The College's internal research shows that the critical factor in recruitment to the College is the personal recommendation of a candidate's community leaders. Perceptions of suitability and support can be addressed through marketing, particularly focusing on such people, (See measures 2, 3 and 4.)

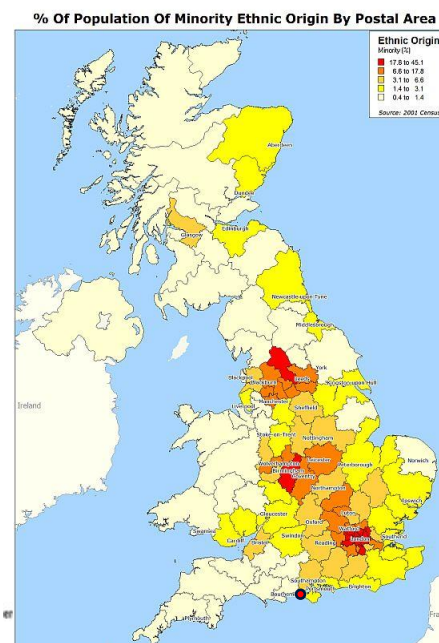
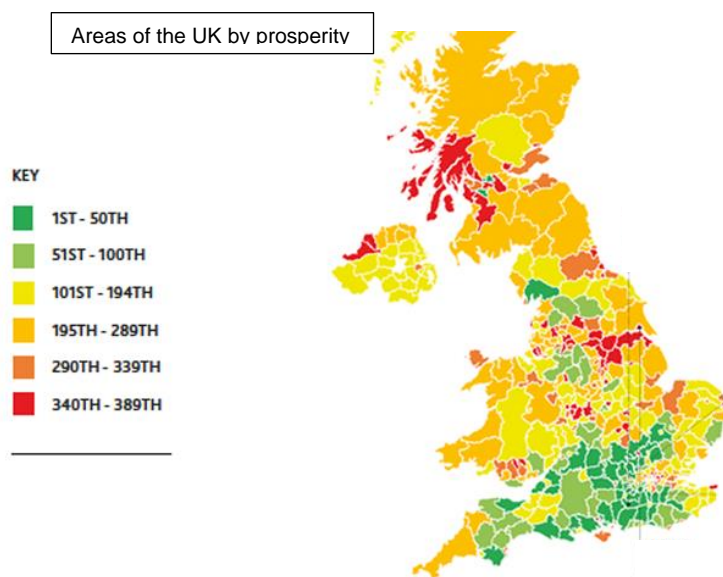
Regarding geographical accessibility, the graphics indicate that this is a barrier the College is not well placed to address from within its current situation. The first graphic shows domicile prior to entry to the College and indicates just how geographically limited the College's draw is. The second and third graphics demonstrate, respectively, how relatively wealthy and ethnically non-diverse this area is. (See measures 1, 2 and 4.)

The College's POLAR4 access data is ahead of the national average, and a slight improvement is expected due to the measures to be proposed.

The IMD access data is weaker, and the College estimates a period of 8 years to resolve it.



⁶ OfS, "Regulatory Advice 6: How to Prepare your Access and Participation Plan", 43, 46.



The issues underlying the recruitment of BAME students are viewed as deeper-rooted and less amenable to change, so a twenty-year span is required to eliminate them.

The objectives below are all based on moving averages of four years because in each case this is the period required for reliable data for that variable. It should be noted that the targets in the accompanying Target and Investment Plan are required to use a single year's data as a baseline, rather than the reliable figure shown below. The year chosen there for the baseline is the most recent year with a figure closest to the reliable figure and not above the sensible but stretching objective.

	Indicator	2014-18	2021-25
Objective Ai	POLAR4 Q5 : Q1 ratio	2.0 : 1	1.8 : 1
Objective Aii	IMD Q5 : Q1 ratio	2.9 : 1	2.3 : 1
Objective Aiii	BAME ethnicity	10%	12%

Aim B. Success for students disadvantaged by socioeconomics, ethnicity, age and disability

The College is a relatively “low-tariff” institution, so the fact that its overall success rates conform to sector averages indicates the high quality of the enabling of learning in the provision. However, these positive results are not shared equally by all groups. There is evidence of underperformance in continuation for students with socioeconomic disadvantages and mature students and in attainment for students with disabilities. The College does not have reliable evidence relating to BAME students, although the data suggests no issues, but these students are included under this aim, because this is a national concern (as also is attainment for students with disabilities).

The College’s internal research and analysis of NSS results suggest that the chief barriers for these students at the College are not to do with pastoral support, but a combination of academic support and financial challenges. Systems for academic support of disadvantaged students will be strengthened. (See measures 7 and 8.) That students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds might face financial

challenges is obvious, because of lack of income. Students with disabilities face similar challenges because of the greater costs they may face in mitigating the challenges of their disabilities. Financial issues may also be a negative factor for many mature students, who are more likely to have complex family situations than younger ones are. (See measures 5 and 6.)

The College's POLAR4 continuation figures are strong, but there is a gap between Q1-2 and Q3-5, which should be addressed. The College believes this is possible to resolve within five years.

	Continuation	2014-18	2021-25
Objective Bi	POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2	92%	95%

The College's IMD continuation figures are weaker but the College believes that they should be resolvable within an eight-year period, and sets a target accordingly.

	Continuation	2016-18	2023-25
Objective Bii	IMD quintiles 1 and 2	79%	86%

The continuation rates of mature students are close to sector norms, but lag behind those for younger students. The College believes this gap can be closed in five years.

	Continuation	2017-18	2024-25
Objective Biii	mature students	83%	92%

There is a significant gap in the College's data for attainment where students with disabilities attain less well than in the sector, while those without disabilities do better. The College recognises the challenges faced by its students with Specific Learning Difficulties and/or mental health issues in particular, and so sets a ten year target to resolve this situation.

	Attainment	2015-18	2022-25
Objective Biv	disability	67%	73%

Regarding success by ethnicity, the College's continuation data shows BAME students outperforming others. The BAME attainment data is insufficient to draw any conclusions, but raises no concerns. No objectives are, therefore, set for this group, but its representatives will be included in relevant measures. Should the situation change and sufficient data become available, the College would set objectives and potentially devise new measures for these students.

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

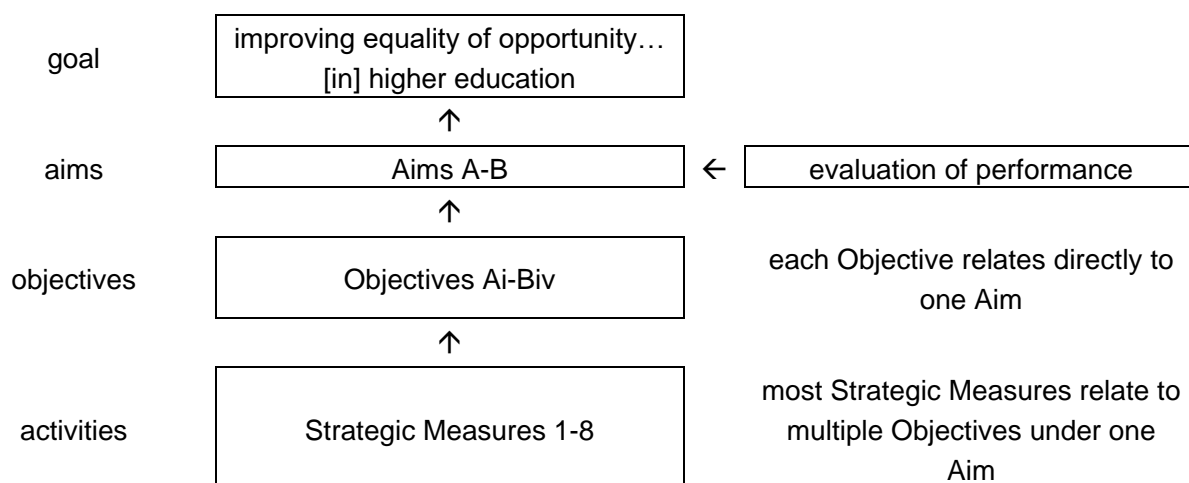
Overview

As the College has moved over the last fifteen months towards implementing its first Access and Participation Plan, presentations on the topic have been made to relevant groups of staff at the annual summit for academic teaching and support staff, various further meetings have been held with those involved in admissions and pastoral and vocational support, so that all understand the impact of the area of work on their roles. The Board of Trustees has been kept up to date with developments and has approved a new Governance Policy that securely embeds Access and Participation at the highest level

and gives it the responsibility to ensure that Access and Participation is fully and naturally integrated throughout the whole institution. For details of student involvement, see 3.2.

The College uses a theory of change model to plan its Access and Participation activity. In this approach, an overarching goal (in this case, improving equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education) and a current situation (the evaluation of the College’s performance) are used to create a set of high-level aims (the Aims above). Thought is given to the conditions that must be met for each aim to be fulfilled, leading to the creation of measurable objectives in this plan/targets in the Target and Investment Plan. Finally, activities are devised such that they can be expected to fulfil those conditions (the Strategic Measures and financial support packages below) and thereby achieve the aims.

In comparison to many implementations of a theory of change approach, this plan presents a very simple chain of logic, in that there are neither feedback loops nor series of sub-goals. This can be shown in the following diagram.



The impacts of specific activities and support packages on the objectives are evaluated by robust and realistic methods, drawing on qualitative and quantitative evidence as appropriate, and including the testing of assumptions about the causality of each strategic measure on the relevant data and the impact of the measures on those who do and those who do not benefit from them (see 3.4 below). The implementation of the plan is the responsibility of the Vice-Principal (Quality), who is responsible for the Academic Services department. Reflecting the College’s value of interdependence (discussed shortly), it is natural to involve students at various stages in this activity (see 3.3 below).

In developing strategic measures to promote equality of opportunity, the College remains aware not only of the potential impact of the measures for disadvantaged groups of students, but the perception of the measures by those who would not benefit from them. This is done in order to foster good relations between the different groups.

Alignment with other strategies

The goal of improving access to, success in and progression from HE is a natural consequence of the College’s ethos and values. The College is founded as a charity with a Christian basis. It draws inspiration for all it does, including for its approach to education and its ambitions for less advantaged groups, from the example of Jesus Christ. The Gospels portray him as seeking to bring benefit to the marginalised and excluded of his society, including the poor and vulnerable, people of other

nationalities, and those with long-term illnesses or disabilities. The College seeks to reflect the same attitudes in its own practice. Three of the College’s values found in the current strategy documentation — respect, service and interdependence — are particularly relevant to Access and Participation.⁷

- Respect “builds effective communities by offering dignity, accepting diversity, encouraging inclusiveness and ensuring fairness.” This value indicates the core commitment of the College to the disadvantaged.
- Service puts “the interest of others above our own through selfless commitment. It is the attitude of the servant exemplified in Jesus Christ who came not to be served, but to serve. It requires humility, hard work and perseverance and is demonstrated in compassion and care. It often demands a degree of personal self-sacrifice.” The College, by engaging in Access and Participation activities, serves and shows compassion.
- Interdependence “promotes accountability, cohesion, teamwork, leadership and followership.” The College believes that the greatest good is attained when all are enabled to flourish and participate in society. Access and Participation is approached, not with a patronising or disengaged attitude, but through coming alongside as equals and enabling others towards positive outcomes.

The College, thus, has a clear, internal rationale for its commitment to the widely shared ambition of addressing exclusion, including for its commitment to meeting the requirements and general duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty and its own Equal Opportunities Policy.

The College’s current strategy document highlights particular activities under the twin banners of lengthening (including increasing student recruitment and expanding the geographical reach of the College through additional locations of delivery) and strengthening (primarily improving the quality of governance and activities, including through participation in NSS, TEF, registration with the OfS, which involved developing the College’s first Access and Participation Plan, for 2019-20). The College’s strategy for Access and Participation flows from its ethos and values and is integrated into the College’s highest-level planning. This includes the commitment to ensure sufficient resourcing so that the following Public Interest Governance Values are consistently demonstrated in the College’s approach to Access and Participation:

- accountability — see sections 3.2-3.4 below;
- student engagement — see sections 3.2 and 4 below;
- value for money — see sections 3.3-3.4.

The College is currently developing new strategy documentation to take the institution through to 2024. (This will be presented for adoption at the Board of Trustees meeting in September 2019.) The strategy documentation includes eight, highest-level Key Performance Outcomes (KPO). Each of these is then fleshed out through a number of lower-level Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The outcomes and indicators that are particularly relevant to access and participation concerns are as follows.⁸

KPO	Objective
<p>1 By 2023-4 we shall see student undergraduates at current locations increase by 5% based on 2019-20 numbers.</p> <p><i>Related KPI:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the overall relative increase there should be an increase in absolute numbers of students from all disadvantaged groups. 	<p>Ai-Aiii</p>

⁷ The College’s five values are completed by integrity and resilience.

⁸ The KPOs listed here have other KPIs below them that are not recited above.

KPO		Objective
2	<p>By 2023-4 we shall open two more regional centres in the UK that are viable both educationally and financially.</p> <p><i>Related KPIs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one of the new regional centres should be in an area of significantly greater socio-economic disadvantage than Christchurch. • At least one of the new regional centres should be in an area of significantly greater ethnic diversity than Christchurch. 	<p>Ai, Aii</p> <p>Aiii</p>
8	<p>By 2023 we will have grown in the quality of our academic delivery, reflected in external benchmarking, including NSS and TEF metrics.</p> <p><i>Related KPIs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the current average across all NSS scores. • Improve continuation, attainment and progression statistics for disadvantaged groups in accordance with the Access and Participation Plan, while at least maintaining continuation, attainment and progression statistics at current levels for other groups. 	<p>Bi-iv</p>

Relevant to the enabling of access to disadvantaged people, the College has a long-standing commitment to assist students whose schooling failed to enable them to demonstrate their potential: there are four-year versions of the undergraduate programmes, which enable such students to overcome the challenges they have previously faced. The College is building up sufficient statistics to be able to analyse the specific impact of this activity.

The College's current bursary system will be overhauled in accordance with the plan for 2019-20, and a new system for financial support packages will be introduced. Applications for most situationally-based funds will be invited by 15 October each year, and by 1 November students will be informed of the allocations made from the fund. Allocations will be for a single academic year. Receipt of a financial award in one year will have no impact on decisions in subsequent years. The eligibility criteria will include the potential for the award to impact the College's access and participation aims set out above. A panel, comprised of two staff members and one student from the Student Representative Association, will consider anonymised applications and make decisions.

Strategic measures

Measure 1: Opening a regional centre

Relates to: Aim A access socioeconomics

Measured by: Ai (POLAR4) Aii (IMD)

Recognising the tendency for recruitment to the College to have a strong geographical focus and the relatively wealthy nature of the Dorset/Hampshire area, the College aims to open a regional centre in Tyne and Wear. This is according to a previously established, successful model where the College already has two regional centres, in Devon (opened 2013) and Birmingham (opened 2014). In this approach students access undergraduate programmes in a work-based mode, with some teaching delivered in intensive study blocks at the main campus at Christchurch and other teaching delivered locally. Tyne and Wear gives greater access to applicants from a relatively socioeconomically disadvantaged area. The College has made a commitment of substantial resources to this measure over the next two years, including fifteen days per year in the workload plan for one of the College's vice-principals.

Measure 2: Targeted marketing in key locations

Relates to: Aim A access socioeconomics, ethnicity

Measured by: Ai (POLAR4) Aii (IMD) Aiii (ethnicity)

This new measure is to engage in geographically-focused marketing, primarily around the two current Regional Centres, which have more areas of socioeconomic disadvantage and a higher mix of ethnic groups than the area of the main campus. The new spend on this measure will be relatively very small, and will relate to staffing of open days at organisations where potential students undertake gap year programmes and in networking with key leaders of organisations in ethnic communities from which applicants might come (in the College's niche market, some organisational leaders from ethnic minorities have historically not placed great value on HE-level training for vocational preparation).

Measure 3: "Book bundle" scheme

Relates to: Aim A access socioeconomics, ethnicity

Measured by: Ai (POLAR4) Aii (IMD) Aiii (ethnicity)

First-time entrants to HE from disadvantaged socioeconomic and ethnic groups (and any care leavers) will be provided with a set of key texts for the first year of their studies. This will be awarded to all in the relevant categories and promoted energetically to ensure it is able to have an impact on recruitment. It is primarily intended to raise awareness and encourage the replacement of negative expectations. *This measure may also have secondary impact on Objectives Bi and Bii (continuation by POLAR4 and IMD).*

Measure 4: Promotion of sub-HE provision in targeted areas

Relates to: Aim A access socioeconomics, ethnicity

Measured by: Ai (POLAR4) Aii (IMD) Aiii (ethnicity)

The College offers a small amount of non-validated studies and level 3 awards. Some of this provision is at the Regional Centre locations in Birmingham and Devon. The College will continue to develop this provision, and make a small additional investment in targeting the promotion of the provision within disadvantaged communities. This investment will take the form of five days in the annual workload plan of one of the College's vice-principals and of additional resourcing to enable the work.

Measure 5: Study grants

Relates to: Aim B success socioeconomics, ethnicity, age, disability

Measured by: Bi (POLAR4 continuation) Bii (IMD continuation)

Biii (mature continuation) Biv (disability attainment)

The College will award study grants for students disadvantaged by socioeconomics, ethnicity, age or disability (and for any care leavers). This is an extension of the proposals in the plan for 2019-20, which included a system for similar grants but only for students with disabilities. These awards will be focused on enabling greater success in study through providing financial support for eligible students to assist them to overcome specific challenges to study. It is envisaged that the support will be used for such things as technological study aids, travel expenses or child care costs. Eligibility will be determined by the College's financial support committee. Awards of up to £1000 may be given to a student in any year. The criteria for an award are:

- a. membership of one of the relevant categories;
- b. the likelihood of the grant to impact the student's studies.

Measure 6: Support service grants

Relates to: Aim B success disability

Measured by: Biv (disability attainment)

The College will introduce grants for support services not covered by DSA for students disadvantaged by disability. There are students who are nationally recognised as disadvantaged, e.g., on the basis of enduring mental health issues, but for whom DSA support is not available. The College will provide a contribution towards such services as counselling, mentoring, or up to two sessions with a qualified Learning Assistance tutor, where there is an evidenced need and clear likelihood of positive impact. As part of the application for the support service grant, students will be required to submit confirmation of their condition and the likelihood of its negative impact on their studies from either a medical doctor or an appropriate registered health professional such as an Occupational Therapist or Mental Health Practitioner. The panel making the decision will consider among other factors the probability of significant positive impact of the support service to facilitate the student's studies.

Measure 7: Study skills provision

Relates to: Aim B success socioeconomics, ethnicity, age, disability

Measured by: Bi (POLAR4 continuation) Bii (IMD continuation)

Biii (mature continuation) Biv (disability attainment)

The College's current approach to the teaching of study skills has facilitated sector-average attainment levels, despite being a "low-tariff" institution. On the grounds that 80% of the student body is in at least one disadvantaged group, the College will further develop the study skills provision for all students, expecting this to impact the disadvantaged majority, and 80% of the resources invested in the measure will to be related to Access and Participation. This will involve the employment of a member of staff for an additional day per week.

Measure 8: Supplementary study skills

Relates to: Aim B success socioeconomics, ethnicity, age, disability

Measured by: Bi (POLAR4 continuation) Bii (IMD continuation)

Biii (mature continuation) Biv (disability attainment)

The College will continue to offer supplementary study skills as laid out in the plan for 2019-20. Members of all disadvantaged groups who fail an assessment will be eligible for two half-hour additional study support sessions with a qualified tutor: the first, to reflect on the piece of work that failed; the second, to prepare to produce their next piece of assessed work. (For students already in receipt of DSA, this will be additional to the services funded by that allowance.)

3.2 Student consultation

The current performance data and a draft set of strategic measures were discussed with a group of eight students, from a range of backgrounds representing the different categories of disadvantage. Amendments were made to the strategic measures in the light of the group's input.

The College's Student Journey Enhancement Group is the primary body involved in the monitoring of data and evaluation of strategic measures. This group has members appointed by the Student Representative Association (experience suggests that in this small humanities college, there may not be sufficient student-elected representatives who have the skillset to contribute confidently to the work of this group: if the student members of this group are not elected representatives, they will be appointees of elected representatives). Student members are trained for the role by the Vice-Principal (Quality).

3.3 Evaluation strategy

In order to ensure that the evaluation of strategic measures is robust and impact-focused, evaluative reports for each measure will be produced according to the expectations of OfS's "Evaluation Self-Assessment Tool" and "Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit". (One of the early stages of the implementation of the College's first Access and Participation Plan, for 2019-20, will be the application of the Evaluation Self-Assessment Tool to the arrangements agreed as part of that plan.)

The evaluative reports will be based upon evidence that is high quality, robust and appropriate, as determined by standard statistical understanding. Staff will be appropriately trained to understand the data. Because of the low numbers in each population, the evaluation of the direct impact of activities will be based exclusively on narrative evidence. The low numbers also means that responses can and will be sought from all those served by the measures, and not just a sample. The evidence will be produced according to the criteria identified in the OfS document "Access and Participation Standards of Evidence".

The evaluative reports will use the evidence to determine:

- an assessment of the strategic measure in question's efficiency;
- a comparative assessment of its effectiveness;
- an indication of whether any group is being harmed by the strategic measure.

These individual measure-by-measure evaluative reports on the strategic measures together with an overview Access and Participation Status Report will be submitted to the quarterly meetings of the Student Journey Enhancement Group, which is chaired by the Vice-Principal (Quality). This will enable the group to learn about the impact of the measures and to make any appropriate recommendations to the Senior Management Team of the College. This body will assess the quality and content of the reporting, paying particular attention to any recommendations in the light of the evidence. It has authority to direct the altering of the activities undertaken, subject to the current Access and Participation Plan and the College's broader strategic commitments, particularly its commitment to the effectiveness and efficiency of the College's Access and Participation work. The Senior Management Team's powers include the abilities to change individuals' responsibilities and to increase resourcing, within the parameters set by the Board of Trustees.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The quarterly Access and Participation Status Report and the Senior Management Team response to it will be submitted to the Audit and Risk Committee, which is the subgroup of the Board of Trustees that the College's Governance Policy indicates as responsible for monitoring this area. The student representative on SJEG will be expected to submit a parallel commentary, to confirm, challenge or comment on any parts of the report, and to raise any relevant issues directly to the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Audit and Risk Committee will provide objective, independent monitoring of performance against the plan on a regular basis, with the opportunity to raise any concerns to the Board of Trustees quarterly, and giving an annual summary report to the Board of Trustees, where, again, student representatives are full participants in meetings. The committee does not have delegated authority to act independently since Access and Participation is a responsibility of the whole governing body.

Rather, it is the Board of Trustees as a whole which is responsible to ensure that plans are properly executed, that strategic goals in this area are attained, and that appropriate actions are taken so that any weaknesses are addressed.

4. Provision of information to students

Fees for programmes are easily accessible to a potential applicant on the website. This includes information about the expected inflationary rises. Details of the annually revised fees are published to students at least three months before the start of each academic year.

The College's Access and Participation current statement and plan for 2019-20 are published on the College's public website in readily findable locations. In addition, the statement and plan are included within the Programme Handbooks on the College's VLE for all relevant students. Information about financial support available, the eligibility conditions for their receipt, including any requirements to share financial information, and procedures for application will be published on the website, for potential applicants, and the VLE, for students. (In accordance with the 2019-20 plan, there were no financial packages requiring details to be published before 2019-20.)

Annex: Variation and explanation, 2023-24

Following (a) the request of the Director of Fair Access and Participation (12 April 2022) and the setting of new Office for Students priorities regarding access and participation, and (b) the notification by the Office for Students that it had completed its monitoring of the College's implementation of the plan for the 2020-21 academic year and had no concerns to draw to the College's attention, this annex was added to the plan in autumn 2022. It explains the College's alignment to the four new priorities, gives further detail of two aspects of activities in this area not made explicit in the original plan, and clarifies some terminological changes in the management of the College.

Priority A: Accessibility of plans

A summary of this plan has been uploaded to the Office for Students portal.

Priority B: Academic attainment of school-age young people

The College's provides training that prepares students for professional roles that support the holistic well-being of people, and, through the structures of its programmes, ensures a positive impact on the broad-based flourishing of school-age young people so that, amongst other things, they reach their academic potential and are more likely to enter higher education.

The youth and community work undergraduate programme, recognised by the National Youth Agency (NYA) as bearing professional qualification and to which typically around a third of each cohort of the College's undergraduates are recruited, is heavily practice-based and, by means of the NYA's professional standards to which the programme is aligned, it requires students to demonstrate that they can, among other things:

- assist young people to learn...
- enable young people to identify, reflect and use their learning to enhance their future development.⁹

While the College's only other undergraduate programme is not by its definition focused on young people in the same way, a survey of its 30 2021-22 level 5 students' placement paperwork showed that 26 (87%) students' placements required students to engage with the flourishing of school-age young people, with 4 students being directly involved in schools and 4 involved with mentoring at-risk young people (2 through school and 2 externally).

The College's academic processes ensure that it makes a very significant contribution to the holistic flourishing of a great number of young people, and thereby to their academic attainment.

Priority C: Successful participation

The College is committed to the successful participation of students from disadvantaged categories, and has been taking appropriate action towards this goal for some time.

The College's most recent NSS results evidence the quality of support systems: the three NSS statements under the "academic support" heading have an average positive response rate of 89%,

⁹ National Youth Agency, *Youth Work in England: Policy, Practice and the National Occupational Standards* (available online, 2022), 9.

which is 9%-points above benchmark and 15%-points above the sector average. The College has a strong profile, used in its marketing, in this area. Given the predominance of students from disadvantaged backgrounds within the College's student body, all the College's excellent systems for enabling student success are designed with these students in mind.

The College's commitment to the quality and standards of its provision is evidenced by its participation in TEF at the earliest possible opportunity, receiving a (strong) Silver TEF award in 2019, and by its progress towards a degree awarding powers application. The College's policies and practice for academic governance and management ensuring appropriate quality of delivery and maintenance of standards, such that the College's trustees believe it is ready to apply for degree awarding powers, and that an application should be made after a new principal is appointed and any changes to strategic direction are determined.

The plan commits the College to three measures targeting the support of students with disadvantaged backgrounds. The annual, evidence-based, evaluations of these measures are that they have been effective in assisting the College towards its aim of promoting success for the appropriate groups of students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Priority D: More flexible and diverse provision

The College is seeking to make its undergraduate provision more flexible so that it can be accessed by a more diverse group of students. This is being conducted by means of a major review of the undergraduate provision, one of the goals of which is to introduce a new mode of delivery for the College, a hybrid mode, that would reduce the significant dependence of current recruitment patterns on geography, opening up the College's unique learning opportunities to people in other parts of the country, including less advantaged regions. With an eye on this, considerable effort has been put into developing links in the South West and North East of England, areas where there is no independent provider equivalent to the College.

Another aspect of the review of the undergraduate provision is also seeking to address the priority. While currently the College's undergraduate programmes do have intermediate exit points at levels 4 and 5, they were designed with an expectation of level 6 being concluded. The review of the undergraduate provision is bringing greater coherence and attractiveness to the exit points at levels 4 and 5.

Regarding degree apprenticeships, the Executive Leadership Team and Academic Board recently considered a paper on the topic (20 May 2022 and 6 July 2022 respectively). It was noted that the university that validates all the College's higher education provision has no place in its regulations for degree apprenticeships, and there were also questions raised about (a) the likelihood that the College could recruit enough degree apprentices to underwrite the overheads of the additional mode of study and (b) the fit of the mode in the niche in which the College operates. It was decided to stay alert to changes but not to pursue degree apprenticeships at this time.

Financial support available to all students

In addition to the financial support specifically for students in various categories of disadvantage (measures 5 and 6, pages 16 and 17), the College operates a hardship fund that all students may seek support from when specific financial needs arise.

Information to prospective and current students

Not only is information for prospective students about fees available on the website, as described in the plan (p.19), it is also made available at in-person open days.

Not only is information for current students about financial support packages on the VLE, as described in the plan (p.19), they are also publicised by email.

Changes of terminology

Certain job and management body titles have changed in the College and the plan should be read in that light.

<i>Location</i>	<i>Old terminology</i>	<i>New terminology</i>
3.1/Overview, 3.2 and 3.3	Vice-Principal (Quality)	Director of Academic Quality
3.3/last paragraph (twice) and 3.4/first paragraph	Senior Management Team	Executive Leadership Team
3.1/Strategic measures #1 and #4	one of the College's vice-principals	a member of the College's Executive Leadership Team

Appendix

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations we intend to increase fees each year using the RPI-X

Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£8,190
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0		£8,190
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Sub-contractual 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	*	*

Table 4c - Part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£4,950
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Sub-contractual part-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	*	*

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Moorlands College

Provider UKPRN: 10023454

Investment summary

The OfS requires providers to report on their planned investment in access, financial support and research and evaluation in their access and participation plan. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in student success and progression in the access and participation plans and therefore investment in these areas is not recorded here.

Note about the data:

The investment forecasts below in access, financial support and research and evaluation does not represent not the total amount spent by providers in these areas. It is the additional amount that providers have committed following the introduction of variable fees in 2006-07. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

The figures below are not comparable to previous access and participation plans or access agreements as data published in previous years does not reflect latest provider projections on student numbers.

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£12,826.60	£13,211.40	£13,607.74	£14,015.97	£14,436.45
Access (pre-16)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Access (post-16)	£12,826.60	£13,211.40	£13,607.74	£14,015.97	£14,436.45
Access (adults and the community)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£14,000.00	£14,420.00	£14,852.60	£15,298.18	£15,757.13
Research and evaluation (£)	£19,742.65	£20,334.93	£20,944.98	£16,109.69	£16,592.98

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£263,250.00	£423,225.00	£477,900.00	£498,150.00	£498,150.00
Access investment	4.9%	3.1%	2.8%	2.8%	2.9%
Financial support	3.8%	2.4%	2.2%	2.2%	2.3%
Research and evaluation	7.5%	4.8%	4.4%	3.2%	3.3%
Total investment (as %HFI)	16.2%	10.4%	9.5%	8.2%	8.5%

