

Kirklees College Access Agreement 2018-19

SUMMARY

This Access Agreement sets out how Kirklees College plans to widen access to Higher Education for students from under-represented groups and support such students during their studies.

Overall monitoring and evaluation of the Access Agreement will be undertaken by the Higher Education Committee which reports to the Quality, Performance and Standards group.

This Access Agreement and associated support measures aims to widen and increase participation in Higher Education in general, and with particular focus on those individual and groups which continue to be under-represented in Higher Education.

In 2018-19 the College will spend 5% of the tuition fee income above the basic fee on access, 3% on student success, 2% on progression measures and 20% on financial support to underpin its commitment to widening participation.

CONTEXT

The College firmly locates its Higher Education provision at the core of its mission.

Our mission is simple; "Creating Opportunity, Changing Lives". This is underpinned by the following Strategic Objectives.

Strategic Objectives

- To deliver enterprising, responsive and efficient education and training;
- To provide an inclusive, student-centred learning environment focussed on development, success and progression;
- To provide modern, safe, estate and resources;
- To promote effective communications and customer services;
- To attract, nurture and develop a highly skilled, efficient and professional workforce;
- To ensure the solvency of the College and generate resources to continuously invest in learning and staff;
- To deliver creative and effective decision making, learning and risk management.

These translate into the following aims for our Higher Education provision at Kirklees College.

Aims for Higher Education at Kirklees College

- To provide a coherent range of Higher Education and Higher Levels Skills which is both efficient and effective, offers appropriate progression routes, and widens participation.
- To be responsive and flexible in response to employer demands and higher level skills gaps to support the regeneration of Kirklees, with employer satisfaction and employment outcomes high on the criteria for success.
- To engage in partnerships that adds value to the experience of the students and improves their ability to become economically active.
- To offer teaching staff opportunities for research and scholarly activity that directly relates to improvements in teaching and learning and the vocational relevance and currency of the curriculum offer.

- To provide high quality teaching and learning which effectively utilises ILT and provides enterprise opportunities for our students, which will enhance their employability skills.
- To develop the VLE to support “blended learning” and distance learning strategies.
- To strive continuously to improve student satisfaction, retention, pass and overall completion rates.

The College recognises that it has a key role to play (within the communities it serves) in the achievement of national targets for HE participation.

Kirklees College is the only general further education in the Kirklees district. There are two sixth form colleges both judged by Ofsted as outstanding and together their 16-18 student numbers equal those of Kirklees College.

There are significant concentrations of deprivation in Kirklees. One in five young people live in poverty in Kirklees. Youth unemployment (18-24) remains high (24%), with a claimant rate of 12%¹. Kirklees is a relatively low wage economy (second lowest in the Leeds City Region), 60,000 households are classed as being in poverty (one in three households) with one in four households having an annual income of less than £10,000.² Overall, in Kirklees 9% of the population live within Lower Super Output Areas which rank in the worst 10% in England; lower than the average for England.³

Although the proportion of the workforce with no or low qualifications is reducing, 22% of the population of Kirklees (60,700 individuals) have a level one or no qualification. Kirklees is above the Yorkshire and Humberside regional average but below the national average in terms of the percentage of the 16-64 who are qualified to level 3 and 4. Kirklees has 32.6% of its population qualified to Level 4 and 54.9% qualified to Level 3 (NOMIS – National Office of Statistics 2015).

The vast majority of our students enrol at 16 without a grade C or above in English and maths. Whilst the average A* to C English and maths pass rate was 58.9% in Kirklees schools, the College recruits only 14% of those students (379). Only 24.8% of 16 year olds in 2015-16 had GCSE A* to C in both English and maths, **putting the College in the bottom 25% of colleges nationally and in the bottom 20% of colleges regionally for English and maths starting points.** For Higher Education at the College, this is reflected in our entry qualifications (TEF2 Metrics) and prior educational attainment of our Higher Education cohort (non-tariff).

The College has a long history of providing high quality vocationally related Higher Education in North and South Kirklees and seeks to address the need to provide higher level courses and qualifications for the local community and employers. It recognises the advantages to some students of studying near to home, reducing the costs of accommodation and travel, making Higher Education a viable option. In some circumstances there are domestic or cultural reasons for studying locally. Higher Education within a Further Education setting supports vocational progression and access in this context. Within the Leeds City Region 82% of higher education students studying in Further Education Colleges grew up in the area (2012-2013 to 2013-2014).

The nature of HE provision at Kirklees College is distinct from that provided by traditional HEI's in that it raises the aspirations of those who would not normally consider higher education as part of their career path. By making such provision available to aspiring learners, Kirklees College 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 Kirklees, the majority of wards fall under Quintile 2 with respect to participation in Higher Education (POLAR3).

¹ Kirklees Council (2014) *Kirklees Economic Strategy 2014-20*

² Kirklees Council (2016) *Tackling Poverty in Kirklees: Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2018*

³ Kirklees Council (2015) *Kirklees Social Profile*

Student profile

In 2016-17 there were approximately 360 students studying both full-time and part-time prescribed Higher Education programmes. Our current provision ranges from Higher National Certificates and Diplomas to Foundation Degrees and Honours Degrees, including top-up awards. The College is a Partner College with Teesside University for the validation of our Foundation Degree and Honours Degrees, but this partnership is ending and the College has opted to deliver only Higher Nationals with a firm focus on developing technical and vocational skills up to Level 5. The College also delivers PGCE and Certificates in Education under a franchised arrangement with the University of Huddersfield.

Of entrants to Higher Education programmes at the College in 2016-17:

- **45% were mature (21+); 16% were very mature (30+);**
- **27% were from ethnic minority groups;** (this mirrors our FE student population)
- **17% had a declared disability or identified learning support need;**
- **24% were studying on a part-time basis;**
- **45% of entrants were male.**

Student retention and achievement of level are consistently good at 95% and 94% respectively, with progression rates between levels at 96%. The latest published non-continuation rates for the College (TEF2 Metrics) were also good at 12.7% (3 year measure) against a 14.4% sector-adjusted benchmark

Attainment is also good; in 2015-16 56% of all final Honours year students achieved either a First Class or 2:1, while 42% received Distinction or Merit in their Foundation Degree and 54% of students on Higher National Certificate and Diploma programmes achieved a Merit or Distinction grade.

55% of students completing their studies at the College were in "graduate" employment 6 months after graduation (78% overall are employed, many in roles suitable following Level 5 study), with the significant remainder continuing to study either full or part-time following graduation (DLHE 2014-15 dataset).

Overall student satisfaction has further increased (NSS 2015-16) at 92% (6% above national benchmark), and remains amongst the highest in the region.

Internal progression to full-time Higher Education programmes at the College constitutes around **84%** of our student profile.

FEES, STUDENT NUMBERS AND FEE INCOME

Fees in 2018-19

Kirklees College proposes to charge the following fees for its Higher National programmes.

Annual Fees for full-time programmes:

BTEC Higher Nationals in Process Manufacturing	£9000
BTEC Higher Nationals in Engineering (Mechanical and Electrical)	£8000
BTEC Higher Nationals (all other subjects)	£6950

All full-time fees will be notified to applicants on the UCAS website and will form part of the Key Information Set. In addition the College will also inform Student Finance England. The College will display fee information on the College website and prospectus.

Kirklees College intends to charge all part-time students a pro-rata figure (based on the academic credits being studied) of the equivalent full-time fee.

No part-time student will pay more than £6935 (the maximum part-time fee cap) in any academic year.

The College through its Fees Group, will consider on an annual basis, the needs of students on part-time programmes where there are skills shortages, or where provision is particularly price sensitive.

Fees for programmes not at the maximum fee cap may increase annually in line with inflation.

ACCESS, STUDENT SUCCESS AND PROGRESS MEASURES

Kirklees College will direct a proportion of the income generated above the basic fee to promote participation in Higher Education through outreach activity via partnerships (including NCOP) and collaboration with schools, colleges and employers. This will include focus on areas of local strategic importance such as STEM, in particular Process Manufacturing. The College will continue to work with its' existing Level 3 students on access to higher education and will track and monitor applications to all institutions.

The College also works closely with its local networks and is part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP), Go Higher West Yorkshire.

Since this is only the second Access Agreement that Kirklees College has produced, the balance of spend between access, student success and progression has been based on the current proportion of Student Opportunity Monitoring funding as a baseline. This will be monitored and evaluated with respect to future Access Agreements produced by the College.

In 2018-19 the College will spend the 5% of the tuition fee income above the basic fee income on outreach activities. These will further focus on the widening participation of 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 (aged 30 years old and above);
- Part-time students;
- Black and Minority (BME) communities.

Kirklees College has a strong performance with internal progressing students from Level 3 vocational programmes (84%) and students with a declared disability or identified learning support need (17%). Our TEF metrics highlight the strong performance of students with a declared disability, along with BME students.

The College acknowledges it needs to increase participation from appropriate Access to Higher Education programmes, Carers and Care Leavers and also to increase participation from low participant neighbourhoods. Differential performance of students is monitored at the end of each semester by the Higher Education Committee and reported to the Quality Performance and Standards group. The Equality and Diversity Strategy group monitors a separate quality improvement plan to close any achievement gaps.

Internal activities will include:

- Working with further education students within the College at all levels to promote progression options to vocational Higher Education programmes including Higher Apprenticeships.
- Providing internal progression events across the College which utilise student curriculum area ambassadors.
- Utilising the College's Early Offer Scheme with internal applicants.
- Providing 1:1 support for students researching HE opportunities, completing UCAS applications and interview preparation (via Progress Coaches as part of the PAD programme).
- Providing 1:1 support for students researching job opportunities, compiling CVs and interview skills (via Progress Coaches as part of the PAD programme).
- Jointly marketing HE programmes, with other providers in the local area with low HE participation.
- Applicants meeting the minimum entry criteria are interviewed, providing an opportunity to discuss programme suitability, individual support needs and associated plans.
- Providing appropriate pre-entry support to both potential students and students progressing to "top up" awards within the College (for example, Summer Schools).
- "Extended induction" and mentoring for late applicants.
- Refinement of our HE dashboard that will monitor student progress and identify those "at risk", with associated intervention strategies.
- Smaller class sizes aiding continuation and completion rates.
- Offering additional study skills support throughout their studies (including Ethics).
- Developing Progression Agreements (where needed) with appropriate institutions to enable progression to level 6 study (for example, Land based provision).
- Offering appropriate advice and support regarding progression to other institutions (for example, APL if needed).
- Providing additional employment-related support to all final year students.
- Effective utilisation of the College VLE to support part-time students outside of formal teaching (for example, the use of augmented reality to support Engineering students).

Outreach Activities, Raising Aspirations and Awareness – Go Higher West Yorkshire

Kirklees College is committed to the Go Higher West Yorkshire (formerly HEART) partnership, an established consortium started in 2011 by twelve HE providers in West Yorkshire (FE colleges with HE provision, and universities). The Go Higher West Yorkshire partners represent a broad and 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 Go Higher West Yorkshire, which operates in the first instance until December 2018. Go Higher West Yorkshire will be working to develop resources for teachers and advisers around attainment-raising for NCOP target schools, with a particular focus on groups where there are identified attainment differentials, together with CPD.

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 Go Higher West Yorkshire's internal structures: each of the twelve partners has representation on the governing Board and in the 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, HEFCE, West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges and Yorkshire Universities, to ensure a joined-up approach and to maximise opportunities for partnership working.

The Business Engagement Planning Group had a renewed remit for 2017, around working in partnership to foster an environment which supports partners in meeting the skills needs of our region, including the development of alternative progression routes into HE and qualifications – such as higher and degree apprenticeships – which aim to appeal to a wide range of students.

The Widening Participation Planning Group has a focus on working with specific target groups, which include: Looked-After Young People and Care Leavers, NNCO schools which do not form part of NCOP and Y7 and 8 pupils in NCOP schools, mature and part time learners, young carers, and current HE students from non-traditional backgrounds. Activities include the collaborative summer school, where participants gain exposure to multiple HE providers, and Flood a School activities, where numerous student ambassadors from across the partnership shadow teachers for a day. Through this group, the Partnership has shared Access Agreement targets.

The legacy of the Partnership's NNCO is that Go Higher West Yorkshire and Kirklees College remain committed to working with the schools where new relationships were formed under this initiative, by continuing for a further two years the contract of employment of both posts previously funded under NNCO; these have a focus on collaborative outreach and the higher level skills agenda, and will help ensure our Partnership's NCOP acts as counterpart to this continuing activity. To further aid complementarity between the work of our institution and the NCOP, Kirklees College *is represented on the NCOP Steering Group* and will be employing and hosting an NCOP member of staff who will sit within our Higher Education team. This staff member will be 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 will be to develop community links in and work with key influencers from the target wards. To ensure complementarity with the Opportunity Area identified in our region, the Wards Lead Officer will be working closely with those involved in the Opportunity Areas. The NCOP Steering Group has representatives from an academy in this Opportunity Area as well as from both Higher Education institutions which serve this area.

In addition to the work undertaken by Go Higher West Yorkshire, the College also has its own Schools Liaison team, primarily undertaking activity concerning entrance to Further Education. Raising attainment is monitored at the College in terms of the volume of internal progression to Higher Education, and reflected in our TEF2 Metrics (non-tariff entrants). Their subsequent performance is monitored using the mechanisms described in Monitoring and Performance.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Kirklees College's approach to financial support measures aims to widen access and participation by addressing potential barriers to participation. Financial difficulty is cited as the most common reason for our current students withdrawing or suspending their studies. The College also aims to retain care leavers, carers and those completing Access programmes at the college by offering financial support.

The College intends to contribute 20% of the tuition fee income above the basic fee on financial support and intends to offer the following progression, subject-related and widening access bursaries. These will be offered pro-rata for students studying part-time (based on the number of credits being studied).

Students will only be eligible for one financial bursary under this Access Agreement. These bursaries will not be available to employer-sponsored students.

a) Progression Bursaries

The College will introduce Progression Bursaries to students progressing within the College from a Level 3 programme on to a full-time Higher Education programme. A phased cash payment of £500 is made in the first year of study only.

Students must have successfully completed a Level 3 programme at the College that is appropriate to allow progression to a full-time Higher Education programme. This award will be available to Kirklees College home students in receipt of the full HE maintenance grant or student support grant.

b) Local Student Bursaries

This bursary will target local students accepted on to a Higher Education programme at the College with a permanent home address in the local area (all West Yorkshire postcodes). A phased cash payment of £500 is made in the first year of study only. This award will be available to home students in receipt of the full HE maintenance grant or student support grant.

c) STEM Bursaries

This bursary will be available to any home student on Engineering or Process Manufacturing programmes only. A phased cash payment of £500 will be made during each year of study (excluding any repeat year). This award will be available to home students in receipt of the full HE maintenance grant or student support grant. Students receiving this bursary are not eligible for any other bursary outlined in this Access Agreement.

d) Kirklees College Widening Access Bursaries

The following bursaries will be available to the following student groups:

Care Leaver Bursary – This bursary will offer support to any home student during each year of study (excluding any repeat year) and will be available to students who have left local authority care in the two years prior to enrolment on the first year of study, irrespective of postcode. A phased cash payment of £1000 is made during each year of study. Attendance must be 85% or above during the first the first three months on programme (other than mitigating circumstances).

Full-time Carer Bursary – This bursary will offer support to any home student during each year of study (excluding any repeat year) and will be available to applicants who have full-time carer responsibilities. A phased cash payment of £1000 is made during each year of study. This award will be available to home students in receipt of the full HE maintenance grant or student support grant.

Access to HE Diploma Bursary – This bursary will offer support to students during their first year of study and will be available to students who have success fully completed an Access to HE Diploma programme.

Students must have successfully completed an Access programme that is appropriate to allow progression to a Higher Education programme. A phased cash payment of £1000 is made during the first year of study only. This award will be available to home students in receipt of the full HE maintenance grant or student support grant.

Following the changes to the Disabled Students Allowance, Kirklees College is committed that no student will be disadvantaged.

TARGETS AND MILESTONES

- a) To **increase overall progression** from Further Education to Higher Education by **2%** year on year (baseline 356 students progressed to Higher Education in 2017).
- b) To continue to **maintain our full-time participation via internal progression** from Level 3 programmes year on year (at **84%**).

- c) To continue to **maintain the number of students with a declared disability** or identified learning support need at a minimum of **15%** year on year.
- d) To **increase** the number of students from **ethnic minority groups** by **1%** year on year (baseline 27%).
- e) To **increase participation** from appropriate Access to Higher Education programmes (currently 2), Carers (currently 2) and Care Leavers (currently 0) by 20% year on year overall.
- f) To **increase participation from low participant neighbourhoods** by **2%** year on year. 2012-13 participation from low participant neighbourhoods (POLAR3) was 9.5% (sector adjusted average = 17.9%; location adjusted benchmark 26.2%)⁴. 44% of entrants in 2016-17 fell into the ward uplift category.
- g) **To maintain overall retention** at **94%** year on year.
- h) To **improve continuation** rates by **1%** year on year (baseline 87%)⁴.
Non-continuation rates for 2011-12 (nationally 14% for College Higher Education):
 - First degree 11.5% (10.9% sector adjusted average)⁴
 - Other undergraduate programmes 14.9% (16.5% sector adjusted average)⁴
- i) **Improve** employment indicators by **1%** year on year for first degree and other undergraduate programmes.
Employment indicators for 2012-13 (nationally 83.6% for College Higher Education):
 - First degree 87.1% (88.4% sector adjusted average)⁴
 - Other undergraduate programmes 90.6% (93.6% sector adjusted average)⁴

⁴ HEFCE 2016 Higher education indicators for further education colleges.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS

The aims and targets for widening access and student success are planned as part of the College's overall Higher Education strategy. Overall evaluation of these activities will be used to shape future Access Agreements.

Monitoring of the overall Higher Education strategy, including the implementation of this Access Agreement is undertaken by the Quality, Performance and Standards group.

The Higher Education Team (part of Quality, Performance and Standards) are responsible for monitoring and the achievement of student retention, continuers, and completion targets (attainment). They are also responsible for producing and monitoring the Higher Education dashboard metrics. Review and evaluation will be through in-year and annual programme and service review activities both at College and curriculum level as part of its Quality Cycle and assurances to Governors. The College is committed to reviewing the performance of its target priority groups.

Fees and associate bursary arrangements are monitored by the Fees Group. This group will evaluate the effectiveness of each of the named bursaries with respect to access from named under-represented groups at the College, along with reason for student withdrawals. Each student receiving a bursary will be individually tracked with respect to attendance and performance (retention between levels and attainment) and compared to the rest of our Higher Education cohort.

The Higher Education Student Consultative Committee will also monitor this Access Agreement.

The College will also take part in evaluation activities within the structured NNCO and NCOP partnership (Go Higher West Yorkshire). Through NCOP, Go Higher West Yorkshire 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 the NCOP staff based in the College, 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).

The Equality and Diversity Strategy Group monitor any gaps in achievements in our target groups.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Kirklees College operates in a diverse community. As a college we are committed to the development of a balanced, inclusive and diverse community which is open and accessible to all students, staff, visitors and members of the public. Kirklees College believes that there should be no barriers in the College for students and staff as defined by any equality measure; we aim to celebrate differences, promote equality and diversity and embrace and recognise the talents of all staff and students.

As a college we will:

- Comply with the law in promoting equality and where appropriate go beyond legal requirements.
- Ensure that all learners succeed and can progress in ways that match their abilities and aspirations
- Be an organisation that embraces and recognises the talents of all and does not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment.

The College has a Single Equity Scheme and action plan included within its Equality and Diversity Strategy. The scheme covers all nine protected characteristics or strands of diversity: disability, age, gender, gender reassignment, ethnicity, religion and belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and sexual orientation. The action plan and scheme form the terms of reference and remit of the Equality and Diversity Strategic Group.

The College has developed a separate quality improvement plan closing the achievement gap to embed equality and diversity within teaching, learning and assessment and to ensure we continue to close any achievement gaps.

The Equality and Diversity Strategy Group, chaired by the Principal, monitors progress against our priorities defined in the Equality and Diversity action plan. Relevant sub-groups (EDI Data and EDI Teaching) also contribute to this monitoring. This includes analysis of participation and success rate trends by gender, ethnicity, learning difficulty and disability; apparent achievement gaps are followed up. The College also produces an Equality and Diversity Annual Report. The Strategic Group meets termly and reports to the Governing Body through the Quality Performance and Standards committee.

This Access Agreement has been developed with consideration of our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and has undergone Equality Impact Assessment.

The College publishes an Annual Report detailing the work undertaken during each academic year with respect to equality and diversity and also provides the results of relevant monitoring taken during this period.

PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Kirklees College will provide clear and accurate information to students and prospective students with respect to fees and the financial support available. This will be compliant in meeting our obligations under the Consumer Protection Law.

The College will continue to engage in collaborative events with partners in West Yorkshire aimed at offering clear and comprehensive information to students, potential students, their families and carers, employers and other stakeholders to promote Higher Education opportunities.

The College will ensure that information on outreach, financial and student support arrangements are provided in a timely manner to partner agencies, Go Higher West Yorkshire, UCAS, Student Finance England and are presented in a clear and consistent manner in all publications and web-based information.

CONSULTING WITH STUDENTS

This Access Agreement has been shared by with the Higher Education Student Consultative Committee. Feedback has been used to shape the bursaries contained in this Agreement. This group meets termly at each of the College's campuses.