

New College Durham

Summary of dates for which this plan applies, e.g. 2020-21 to 2024-25 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

A access and participation plan sets out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

You can access the full access and participation plan for New College Durham [here](#).

Key points (further information can be found page 1 -11)

New College Durham Higher Education (HE) Strategy has a clear focus on delivering high quality professional and technical programmes which clearly align to employer demand and student needs in the North East region. The focus of our access and participation plan is to eliminate gaps in equality of opportunity throughout the College's student lifecycle focusing on specific groups of students.

Data and evaluation of performance identified the following target groups of students the plan is focusing on improving outcomes for:

- Gender and low participation neighbourhoods' groups with a focus on narrowing the gap between these groups of students
- Students' performance and outcomes from Low participation neighbourhoods
- A focus on mature students who are choosing to study part time as data shows they are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment.

Overall success rates for our students are very good. However, we still can further improve with the above groups of students.

Fees we charge

At the New College Durham our fees charges range from:

- from £9,000 up to 9,250 for full-time students and
- from £2,400 up to £4,000 for part-time students.

You can see a full list of fees for courses for New College Durham HE provision at [Higher Education/Fees](#)

Financial help available

The College offers a financial support package which has been shaped on the basis of feedback from our HE students. The key aspects of support are:

- bursary to support college/non-college related expenditure.
- childcare funds
- emergency loans and
- hardship support.

Access to the financial support package is open to all eligible HE students (full and part-time) via an application process. The allocation of the funds is based on UK residential requirements and

seeks to focus the support provided by targeting the funds to those with greatest need and/or face significant social/caring challenges to engage in HE.

For the most up-to-date information, see our [university centre information webpage](#).

Information for students

- **Prospective students** receive information on fees and financial support at in-person events, such as our open days, and by email communications. Prospective students can also receive a wide range of information regarding the New college provision via our [website](#).
- **For current students** the College operates and financially supports a Students' Union which is led by a Student President and supported by a team of student reps drawn from across the student community. Information about fees and the financial support available is available through our student portal, internal communications, Higher Education Forums, and emails.

For the most up-to-date information, see our [university centre information webpage](#).

What we are aiming to achieve (further information can be found page 9-11)

Our overall aim is to support students and eliminate any gaps in equality of opportunity throughout the College's student lifecycle. Based on assessment of our performance, we have identified the following areas on which we are focusing our work:

- By 2024-25 we aim to improve the continuation rate (the proportion of students progressing to the next year of their studies) by 9% for students from low participation neighbourhoods.
- By 2023-24 we aim to close the continuation gap between males and females from low participation neighbourhoods
- By 2024-25 we aim to close the progression gap between part time males and part time females in the 5-year lifetime of this plan
- further develop our programme of work for 2023-24 with schools and 3rd party organisations to help raise the pre-16 attainment of young people from underrepresented groups.
- Improve gender imbalances in specific subject areas
- Develop flexible learning modes of delivery to allow mature PT students more opportunities to choose in how they study

What we are doing to achieve our aims (further information can be found page 18 - 19)

We have identified the following measures to support our achievement of our aims and targets within our Access and participation plan. A strong focus on equality is maintained across the College and training events regularly reinforce good practice such as use of images, language and in-course examples/scenarios that challenge stereotypes and promote positive ethnic, gender, disability, and age characteristics.

The College Admissions (HE) Policy promotes transparent processes that seek to minimise barriers to applicants and ensure all applicants receive clear and accurate information that will support them in making an informed decision about their course of study.

Once on course, the College Learning Support Policy supports an inclusive approach to learning that enables all individuals to reach their academic potential.

There are three general and inter-related principles which inform our approach to learning and teaching:

- the student should be at the centre of everything we do;
- everything we do should promote inclusive learning;
- everything we do should be guided by evidence-based practice which enhances successful learning.

Student feedback is considered a vital process which ensures that the College continues to deliver high quality and accessible HE provision to all our students.

Progression to employment or further study is covered within the Career, Education and Guidance Policy and ensures all HE students are provided with guidance and opportunities to further their learning or gain employment within their chosen sector.

We continue to work on approaches to further develop our monitoring and evaluation methods to ensure a whole College approach to progress against targets identified within our Access and Participation Plan.

Continue to offer financial support, including hardship funding and childcare support for eligible students, as well practical support for students applying through Student Finance.

How students can get involved (further information can be found page 15)

We have worked closely with the Students' Union to gather student feedback and activity contribute to the design and content of our access and participation plan. The Student President is supported by a team of student representatives nominated from across the student community. Students' representatives are in attendance at all our formal HE committees and make up the membership of our Access and Participation Plan Working Group which is responsible for overseeing and implementing the plans aims and objectives.

All Students are encouraged to provide feedback by contacting their [student union representative](#). To become involved in this work, contact our [Head of Higher Education](#)

Evaluation (further information can be found page (15 - 17))

We measure what we have achieved through strong evidence-based activities and evaluate for impact on both the aims and objectives. This has enabled New College Durham to understand the overall impact and critically review our targeted focus on underrepresented groups and the cost effectiveness of activities identified within the Access and Participation Plan, across the student lifecycle.

The Access and Participation Plan Working Group monitors and reports on this progress through the formal HE Committees. The corporation board will oversee implementation of actions to ensure ongoing progress against yearly milestones are met in our access and participation plan. We are developing robust evaluation methods and will publish evidence from this evaluation in the on our website by 2023.

Contact details for further information

You can contact our [Head of Higher Education](#) if you like any further information regarding the Access and Participation plan.