

## [Derby College Group]

### Summary of 2021-22 – 2025-26 access and participation plan

#### What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

You can see the full access and participation plan for Derby College Group at [Higher Education - DCG \(derby-college.ac.uk\)](https://www.derby-college.ac.uk/higher-education/)

#### Key points

Derby College Group includes: four colleges, delivering Key Stage 5, Adult, Higher Education, Apprenticeship and Key Stage 4 education; a nursery; community learning venues across the city, services to Business including in-company levy apprenticeships and leadership and management commercial training and two subsidiary companies. We deliver a range of foundation degrees, higher nationals, and level 6 top up years, utilising a mixture of part, and full-time delivery. We also have an expanding number of higher level and degree apprentices

Our main targets in our Access and Participation Plan are as follows:

- Access of ethnically diverse students
- Access for full time students from deprived areas as measured by the deprivation quintiles, a system of measurement that classifies local areas into five groups based on the number of young people who enter higher education
- Access of students with a known disability
- Continuation of students with a known disability
- Reducing the attainment gap of students from underrepresented groups

#### Fees we charge

Our maximum fee for full time courses at Derby College Group is £7, 500 and our maximum fee for our part-time courses is £5, 625. For full course fee information, please look at the 2022-23 fee information document published on our Higher Education webpage, which can be accessed here: [2022-23 fee information \(derby-college.ac.uk\)](https://www.derby-college.ac.uk/higher-education/2022-23-fee-information/)

#### Financial help available

There are a number of ways students are able to access financial help for their course. Students are able to take out a student loan from Student Finance England. Students are also able to be sponsored by an employer or there is the option to self-fund through contacting our student services team at [studentservices@derby-college.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@derby-college.ac.uk). Finally, eligible students are able to apply for Disabled Students Allowance. For more information, and key links to the financial help available please look at the HE Course Fee tab on the Derby College Group Higher Education webpage which can be accessed here: <https://www.derby-college.ac.uk/course-types/higher-education/>

#### Information for students

The college has published a tuition fee policy which can be accessed on the Higher Education webpages. Students are able to access key financial information through the Higher Education webpages, as well as support being offered through student services throughout the duration of their course as well as before application. Should students require any information, they are encouraged to contact student services at the following email: [studentservices@derby-college.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@derby-college.ac.uk).

## **What we are aiming to achieve**

As highlighted, there are five key target areas which our plan focuses on in terms of improving students' participation in Higher Education. There are different areas where we can enable students to have the best experience possible, and these areas are referred to in the student lifecycle. This is where we consider how best to support students from the moment they decide to go into Higher Education to starting their first job. These lifecycle targets are detailed below:

### *Access*

When looking at access, we take into account the profile of the students who attend our Higher Education courses, for example age, where they live and if they are the first member of their immediate family to attend higher education. This allows the targeting of specific groups who may have barriers that prevent them from accessing higher education. The targets for this part of the student lifecycle are as follows:

- Access of ethnically diverse students – we aim to achieve a representation of ethnically diverse students to a minimum of 21% in the next five years
- Access for full time students from deprived areas as measured by the deprivation quintiles, a system of measurement that classifies local areas into five groups based on the number of young people who enter higher education – we aim to reduce the gap between students in deprivation quintiles to 14% or less in the next five years
- Access of students with a known disability – aim to improve the percentage representation of students accessing our courses with a known disability to above 20%

It is important that we focus on ensuring that we allow all students the same access to Higher Education enabling them to make the first step on that journey.

### *Continuation*

Continuation refers to the number of students who remain on our Higher Education courses for the full duration of their course. This can also be referred to as retention. We have one target specific group in this area:

- Continuation of students with a known disability – we aim to have a continuation rate that has minimal gaps between students without a disability and students with a known disability. We aim in the next five years to have a 90% continuation rate, meaning that 90% of students who start a course are still present at the end of the course, with 0.5 or less percentage points between students with a known disability and students with no disability.

### *Attainment*

Attainment refers to the number of students who have been able to achieve a pass grade or above in their Higher Education course. However, this can sometimes be used to refer to students who have received a 2:1 grade or higher, data collected by Derby College Group looks at the pass rate of students, There is one target in this area:

- Reducing the attainment gap of students from underrepresented groups – we aim to focus on ethnically diverse students for this target. We aim to reduce the gap between ethnically diverse students that pass compared to White British students who pass to 3 percentage points or less.

## **What we are doing to achieve our aims**

There are a number of key actions that we will take to address the targets outlined above as well as key priorities that are provided by agencies that monitor our progress, such as the Office for

Students. The list below provides some, but not all, of the key actions we plan to take over the lifespan of our plan:

- we aim to increase knowledge and capabilities around data, meaning that we will have more information that will be used to target areas where we can see that there are issues with accessing and participating in higher education
- We will review our application and admissions process to ensure all decisions are fair, free from bias and promote equal opportunity
- Development of Higher Technical Qualifications, Higher Apprenticeships and Micro Credentials to create a more accessible, responsive and flexible Higher Education offering for all.
- Our staff working in Marketing will use data to target students appropriately
- Using our Academy Study Support Coaches to provide group, individual and bespoke training sessions on areas such as research, literacy skills and good academic practice
- Use current research to understand potential and current barriers that are faced by students which will be used to guide our actions and aims.
- Our programmes will be designed with other Higher Education providers
- Focus on an internal approach to achieving GCSE qualifications
- Develop key resources and supporting activities for students to develop and enhance knowledge around access and inclusion

### **How students can get involved**

The student voice is strong at DCG, and has the opportunity to participate and inform all Higher Education programmes in terms of the student experience and expectations on all programmes. Each HE programme has a student representative and there are regular internal quality meetings for students to articulate their views and inform on access and participation. In addition, we have a dedicated HE inclusion specialist who works with programme teams to facilitate access for all students and ensure they have the opportunity to study and be supported throughout their course.

### **Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved**

We will continue to monitor our progress towards our targets outlined above through our own data and data provided by other organisations such as the Office for Students. We are working on our data collection to ensure we are collecting the most informative data, as well as providing regular analysis to both our own management and organisations responsible for monitoring Higher Education institutions.

Students will be able to provide feedback and updates through the Student Voice process, which we will continue to monitor and evaluate. We will continue with course review monitoring and work with agencies within the college such as marketing, Widening Participation Committee to enable and promote the access and participation plan.

### **Contact details for further information**

If you require further information, please contact Heather Withington, at the following email address: [richard.bell@derby-college.ac.uk](mailto:richard.bell@derby-college.ac.uk)