

Nelson and Colne College Group

Summary of 2023-24 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

An 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 the Nelson and Colne College Group at

<https://www.nelsongroup.ac.uk/about-us/policies-procedures/>

Key points

Nelson and Colne College Group is very successful in recruiting students from underrepresented groups and supporting them to gain valuable qualifications and onward into worthwhile careers. The majority of our students are from these groups, whether because of their ages, their ethnicity, their geographical location or some other factor, and yet their achievements are outstanding.

While we celebrate this success, there is always more that can be done to ensure that candidates from these groups are able to reach their full potentials.

This Plan sets out how the College uses a proportion of its fee income to:

- Work with schools, other colleges and with its own further education students to raise the aspirations and attainment of students from underrepresented groups and to prepare them for entry to higher education;
- Support students from these groups to be successful in higher education and beyond into worthwhile careers
- Support flexibility of study by:
 - offering as many as possible of its programmes as ladders of opportunity made up of programmes at levels 4 to 7, with employment-valuable exit qualifications at each level
 - offering as many as possible of its programmes in more than one study mode so that students can, for example, switch between full- and part-time study as their employment or personal circumstances demand.

The College is particularly committed to offering programmes at level 4 (Higher National Certificate or Certificate of Higher Education) and level 5 (Foundation Degree, Higher National Diploma or Diploma of Higher Education) in vocational and technical subjects to enable students to access highly-skilled employment without needing to complete a full honours degree.

Fees we charge

Type of programme	Full-time Fee	Part-time Fee per 120 credits	Maximum Part-time Fee
Accelerated degree*	£10,800	N/A	N/A
CertHE / DipHE	£9,000	£9,000	£6,750
First degree	£9,000	£9,000	£6,750
Foundation degree	£9,000	£9,000	£6,750
Foundation year / Year 0*	£9,000	£9,000	£6,750
HNC / HND	£9,000	£9,000	£6,750
Postgraduate ITT	£9,000	£9,000	£6,750
Sandwich year*	£1,850	N/A	N/A

* The College does not currently offer programmes of these types

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Part-time programmes are charged pro-rata for the volume of study undertaken. For example, a first-degree student undertaking 60 credits in 2023/24 will be charged $\text{£}9000 \times 60 / 120 = \text{£}4500$. Part-time study is where a student undertakes not more than 90 credits in an academic year, so the maximum part-time fee chargeable is three quarters of the relevant full-time fee.

Subject to any statutory limits, fees for all students may rise in line with inflation during their studies. The inflation measure used for this purpose will be the Retail Prices Index Excluding Mortgage Interest (RPIX).

Financial help available

A part of the funding allocated to this Plan is available to students in need by means of a means-tested hardship fund. Many of our students qualify for help from this fund, details can be obtained by email to the HE Office he@nelsongroup.ac.uk

Information for students

Information on fees and financial support is available to prospective students from our web page <https://universitycentre.nelsongroup.ac.uk/>, current students can access even more information via our Virtual Learning Environment at <https://mymoodle.nelsongroup.ac.uk/> and in their Programme Handbooks.

What we are aiming to achieve

Our analysis of our student body indicates that the primary focus of our Access and Participation work should be:

- increasing the proportion of admissions from ethnic minority groups so that these students make up 29% of our intake by 2024/25
- increasing participation by part-time students with disabilities year on year to 11% in 2024/25
- reducing the gap in continuation rates for students from postcodes with low participation in Higher Education and those with high participation so that the gap is eliminated by 2024/25.
- reducing the gap in continuation and attainment rates for mature students and those entering Higher Education under 21 years of age so that the gap is eliminated by 2024/25.
- reducing the gaps in continuation and attainment rates for students from the most deprived areas and the least deprived so that the gap is eliminated by 2024/25.
- reducing the gaps in attainment rates between young and mature part-time students.

What we are doing to achieve our aims

We will promote access by

- working with employers to ensure that our higher education remains relevant and up to date, and that our higher education leavers are employment-ready.
- providing the College's own students at level 3 with timely information, advice and guidance on access to higher education.
- promoting our HE offer through social media, the UCAS website, radio advertising and local advocates and employer groups in order to reach the widest possible group of potential participants.
- working through our strong relationships with community centres and organisations to distribute information about the programmes available, career opportunities and available student support, both personal and financial.

We will support students to succeed by providing:

- Underpinning Skills Support:
- Support for Students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities
- Language Support
- Individual Transition Links
- Mentoring for Achievement

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- Academic and Pastoral Tutorials
- Small group sizes (typically fewer than 25)
- Diagnosis of individual learning support needs
- academic support with study skills, academic writing, numeracy, etc.
- Means tested funding to support students in hardship
- access to IT and other resources, especially when not on campus.

In addition, we will:

- work with schools and other providers of pre-16 education to improve aspirations and attainment rates
- continue to focus our curriculum development and delivery plans to provide our students with the maximum practicable flexibility of study in terms of the range of awards we offer and the study modes by which they are offered.

How students can get involved

The College's Higher Education Student Council is the student body involved in the planning, monitoring, evaluation and delivery of the priorities of this Plan. The HESC is made up of representatives from every higher education programme the College offers. Students can get involved in this work either by discussing their thoughts with their programmes' representatives on the HESC or by becoming a programme representative themselves.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

We will establish:

- what the positive or negative impacts of its activities under this Plan have been
- the extent to which these represent benefits to disadvantaged groups
- whether they have provided, or can reasonably be expected to provide, benefits commensurate with the resources deployed
- whether there is evidence to suggest that changes to its activities would result in improved outcomes
- whether, in particular, the Higher Education Support Fund is effective in supporting continuation

By means of:

- Quantitative analysis of continuation rates, achievement rates and results profiles
- Student feedback through programme committees, annual programme reviews and student representatives on deliberative committees
- Interviews with withdrawing students to identify the key factors affecting their decisions and any possible mitigations
- Focus groups with continuing students
- Interviews with completing students to identify the key factors affecting their levels of achievement
- Discussions with the Higher Education Student Council
- Independent review of our performance

Contact details for further information

If you would like further information about this Plan, please contact the College's Higher Education Office by email at hesupport@nelsongroup.ac.uk or by phone at 01254 354047.