

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.

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Access and participation plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

1. Assessment of performance

Introduction and Context

The Nelson and Colne College Group was formed by the merger on 30 November 2018 of Nelson and Colne College and Accrington and Rossendale College. Formally, the name of the Further Education Corporation remains Nelson and Colne College, so in the remainder of this document the combined College is referred to as NCC. It should be noted that the merger combined two colleges with significantly different current and historic student profiles. This analysis is based on the combined profiles of the two historic Colleges and for that reason is significantly different from previous analyses of the Colleges separately.

Notes on the data presented:

- NCC has historically had a relatively small higher education student population. A consequence of this is that in any given year disadvantaged sub-groups within its students may have very few students within them. This results in a number of metrics being so sensitive to small variations in student numbers that they lack validity as indicators. This is especially true of part-time students, where numbers were historically particularly small. To assist with judgements on the significance of the data presented, the sizes of the relevant cohorts are given in each section. In some instances, numbers are so small that the publication of data could result in a risk that individual students could be identified. To prevent this, some data points have been omitted from the charts that follow.
- Published OfS data alone did not provide sufficient information for valid performance assessments to be drawn, so in the discussion that follows this has been supplemented with data from internal College records taken from the previous five years' Individualised Learner Record returns for the two pre-merger colleges.
- Published data for achievement covers attainment at level 6 only. While the College does have many students studying to level 6, significant numbers in its intake are studying towards target awards at levels 4 or 5. In order that the attainment data presented reflects the nature of the College's provision, attainment has been calculated on the basis of achievement of students' target awards. Where there are students who are still continuing their planned studies and have not yet had the opportunity to complete their target awards these have been excluded from the calculation of the data presented.
- A significant proportion of the College's students are engaged in studies for awards at levels 4 and 5 so consideration of grade profiles only at level 6 significantly distorts any comparisons of the proportions of each intake who achieve high grades. In this analysis of grade performance:
 - Students studying for target awards that are ungraded (pass / fail only), such as the Certificate in Education and Professional Graduate Certificate in Education have been excluded from high-grades calculations.
 - For students whose target award is an honours degree, firsts and upper seconds are considered high grades, other classifications are not.
 - For awards graded Pass, Merit and Distinction, Merit and Distinction are considered high grades. Pass is not.
- A very important consequence of the exclusion of continuing students from attainment and high-grades data is that the mix of students included in these results in each year is significantly different as students on many longer courses are excluded from data about results for 2015/16 and 2016/17 entrants. These excluded courses include disproportionate numbers of students on higher entry tariff three year degree courses, which can have no final results within the relevant time-frame. A consequence of this is that the average entry tariff of those students who do have results to compare in later years is lower than earlier years and a corresponding progressive reduction in the proportion of high grades can be expected. This effect is indeed seen in the data and needs to be borne in mind when drawing conclusions from the results presented.
- The proportion of NCC entrants from POLAR4 quintile 1 is volatile. With relatively small student cohorts small variations in absolute student numbers from low participation quintiles produce large

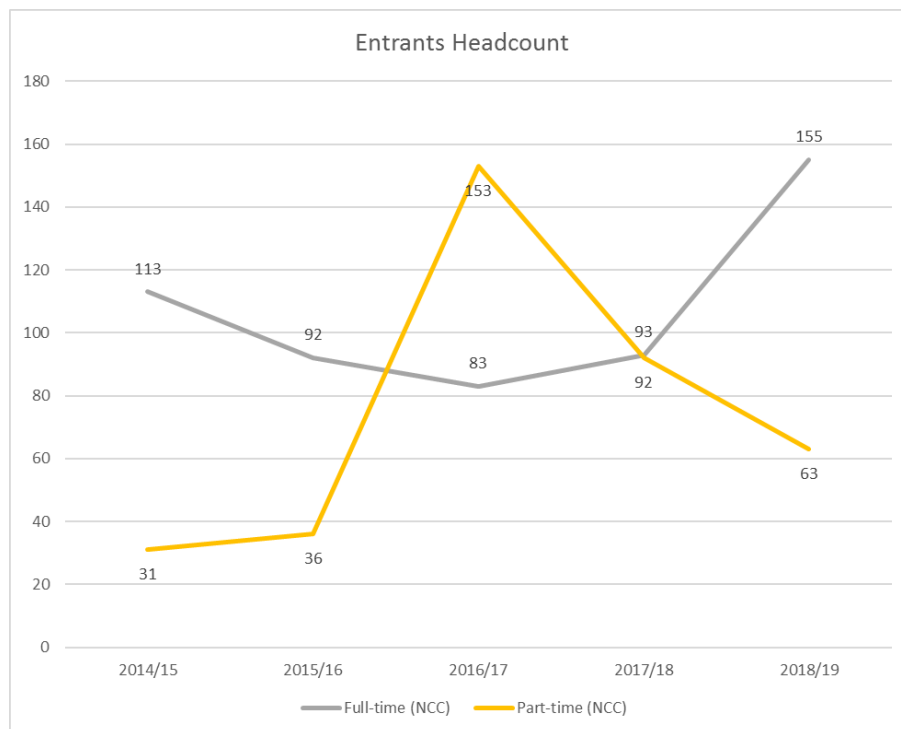
swings in percentages. For this reason, in the data presented here, POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2 have been aggregated to produce a less volatile measure of participation by residents in low participation postcodes.

Two exceptional factors have had a major impact on the statistics for part-time students.

The first of these is a surge in part-time entrants in 2016-17. In that year the College took over responsibility for the returns for Initial Teacher Training students who had previously been taught at the College but recorded in the returns of a franchising university. In the same year the College received a large number of inward transfers of part-time students from another provider that was discontinuing delivery of some higher education courses. These influxes account for the very large part-time intake in that year. They also inflate part-time success rates, as the data reported here record only students who entered NCC, not all of the students who started these courses with other providers. These students were from catchment areas with less disadvantaged profiles than the College's normal intake, contributing to a rise in that year of the numbers of entrants from Index of Multiple Deprivation Quintile 5. The impact of these factors is not calculable from the available data.

The second factor is a very high part-time drop-out rate in 2015/16. This was the result of internal issues within local construction employers and led to students being withdrawn to meet the urgent needs of their employers. On a relatively small cohort size of 36 part-time entrants, the unexpected loss of 9 construction students seriously depressed success and continuation rates for that intake.

The absolute numbers of entrants in each year are as follows.



Destinations data

Both pre-merger colleges were participants in the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) surveys and are participants in future Graduate Outcomes surveys. However, the range of students included in these surveys is not fully representative of the whole student body, the volume of destinations data available is poor and does not contain information that would allow analysis by student characteristics. The numbers of students within these surveys who would fall within some disadvantage groups are comparatively small and consequently even if cross-referenced data was available the likelihood is much of it would be unusable for reasons of either GDPR considerations or limited statistical validity.

As a result, there is insufficient data to comment on College-specific progression to employment or further study in the sections below. The College can, however, report on the overall DLHE survey results, which are as follows.

| Exit Year | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Total surveyed | 81 (100%) | 150 (100%) |
| Further Study | 25 (31%) | 52 (35%) |
| In employment | 61 (75%) | 120 (80%) |
| In employment and/or further study | 70 (87%) | 135 (90%) |
| In professional or managerial roles | 19 (23%) | 83 (55%) |
| Average Salary | £16,820 | £23,887 |

The very large swing in these figures is a result of the fact that the 2015/16 figures are for Accrington and Rossendale College only, because Nelson and Colne College had no students within the scope of the survey methodology in that year, whereas the 2016/17 data is for both institutions. The Nelson and Colne College students included in the 2016/17 data included a very large proportion of engineering and education students. Their employment data was much stronger than that for Accrington and Rossendale College, which had a curriculum offer heavily biased towards subjects allied to health, such as social care and early years care. Nevertheless, the disaggregated Accrington and Rossendale College data for that year had an improved average salary of £21,000 and a percentage of employees in professional and managerial roles of 32%.

It should be noted that in order to meet local employment needs there has been significant expansion in 2018/19 into areas, such as foundation degrees for teaching assistants, where employment prospects are very good but that lead to roles that are not categorised as professional or managerial and where average salaries are slightly below UK median earnings. The College expects that the proportion of students working or progressing to further study will remain high but that the percentage categorised as in professional or managerial roles will decrease over time as will their average salaries immediately after qualification.

Very little can be concluded from the available destinations data beyond the fact that leavers are highly successful in entering employment or further study. The College recognises that the lack of a satisfactory data set from which to draw detailed conclusions is an important gap in its management information. The creation of data sets for this purpose is a priority for the future.

Starting with the cohort completing in 2019/20, the College will collect additional destinations data to supplement the information gathered through Graduate Outcome surveys so that it can reflect on the progression of all of its leavers. In order to align with the Graduate Outcome surveys, this data will be collated approximately 15 months in arrears. Consequently, the College expects to have its first meaningful progression data, that for 2019/20 leavers, during 2021/22.

It will conduct an analyses of progression outcomes by target group as part of its annual monitoring from 2021/22 on. Progression outcomes for students in target groups will be compared to those of students not in the relevant groups and, if significant gaps are revealed it, will devise appropriate actions and add these to its action plans. The first such actions can be expected to be identified in 2021/22 and implemented in 2022/23.

The effectiveness of any actions taken will form part of the monitoring and evaluation process annually thereafter.

In the discussions that follow, Progression to employment or further study is considered on the basis of reasonable judgements of national data in the light of what is known of the College's intake.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access

The areas served by the College, principally the boroughs of Pendle, Burnley and Hyndburn all have below average higher education participation rates, low levels of higher education in the working population and high levels of deprivation. The relevant statistics for the proportion of employees with a qualification at level 4 or higher, (Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics, 2018), are given overleaf.

| Area | % |
|------------|------|
| Pendle | 26.3 |
| Burnley | 26.0 |
| Hyndburn | 16.8 |
| Lancashire | 35.5 |
| England | 39.3 |

One of the College's priorities is to offer opportunities for students from low participation and/or deprived postcodes to participate in higher education within the local area. The absolute numbers of students taken from these groups are as shown below.

POLAR4 Q1&2 Entry Cohort Sizes

| | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Full-time | 69 | 45 | 41 | 41 |
| Part-time | 21 | 19 | 72 | 60 |

As was stated in the introduction, the numbers of student in POLAR4 Quintile 1 is highly volatile and provides little basis for statistical analysis. In order to provide valid comparisons, in this analysis quintiles 1 and 2 have been aggregated and compared with students in quintiles 3 to 5.

Index of Multiple Deprivation quintiles are also volatile, but the numbers of entrants from quintile 1 are sufficient and the proportions sufficiently stable to be used in comparisons. The numbers of entrants from quintile 5 are, however, very small. For this reason, it is impractical to success statistics for Quintiles 1 and 5 and the statistics presented here compare Quintile 1 with all other students.

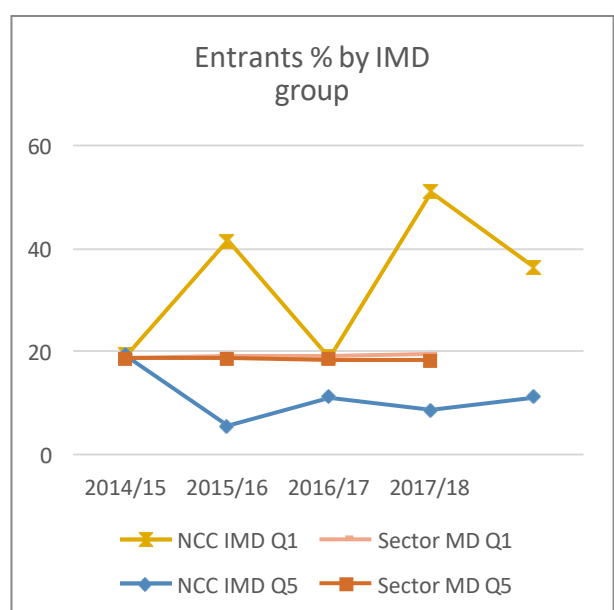
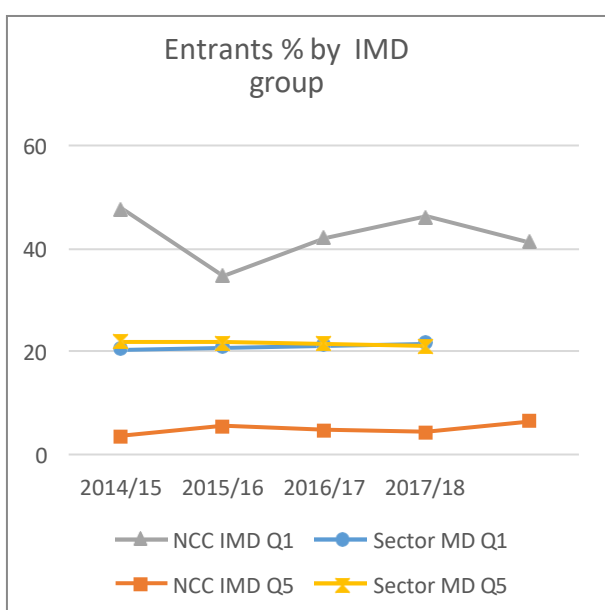
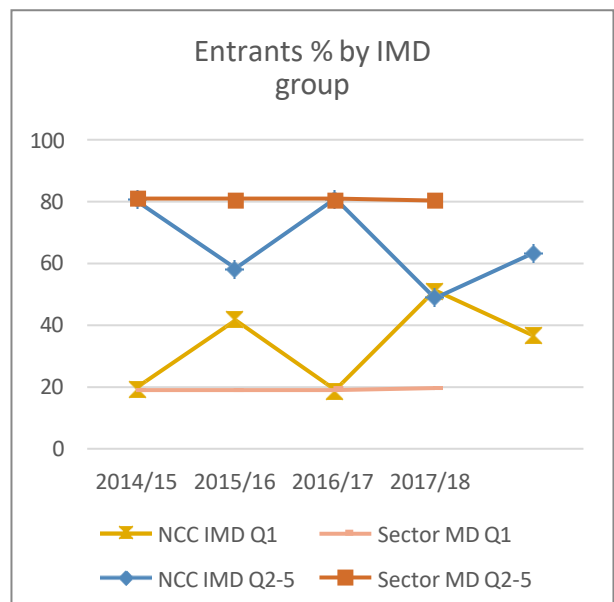
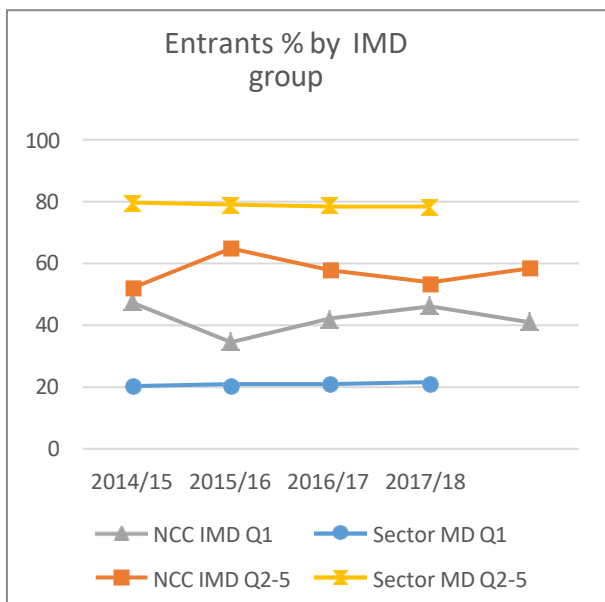
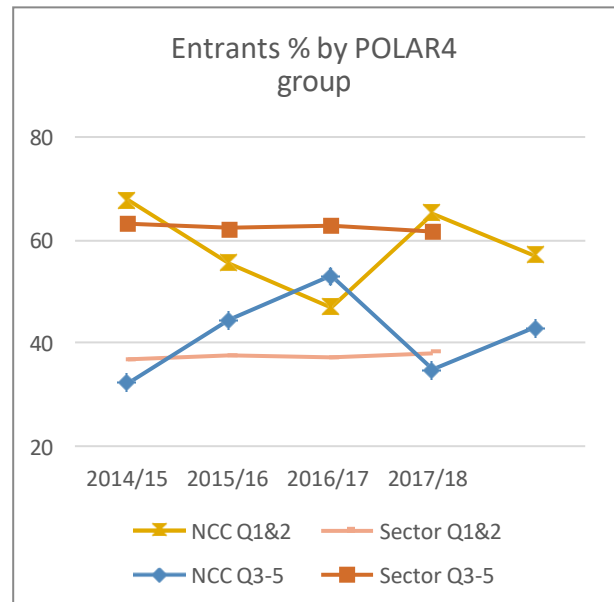
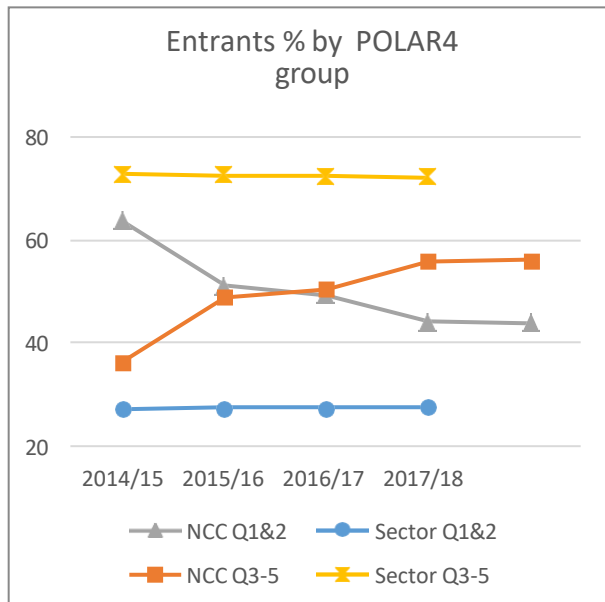
IMD Q1 Entry Cohort Sizes

| | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Full-time | 54 | 32 | 35 | 43 |
| Part-time | 6 | 15 | 29 | 47 |

IMD Q5 Entry Cohort Sizes

| | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------|
| Full-time | 5 | Not reportable | Not reportable | 10 |
| Part-time | Not reportable | 17 | 8 | 7 |

As can be seen from the charts below, the College consistently recruits a greater proportion of its intake from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2 and from IMD Quintile 1 than does the sector as a whole.



In common with many industrial areas, levels of deprivation in postcodes very close to the College's two sites is much greater than in areas further from the town centres. The populations of close-by areas are finite and as the size of the College's intake increases the catchment area for its full-time courses is widening.

Consequently, the proportion of full-time students from Quintiles 1 & 2 is falling as the number of students recruited from outlying areas grows. There is a similar trend in the ratios of entrants from IMD quintiles 1 and 5.

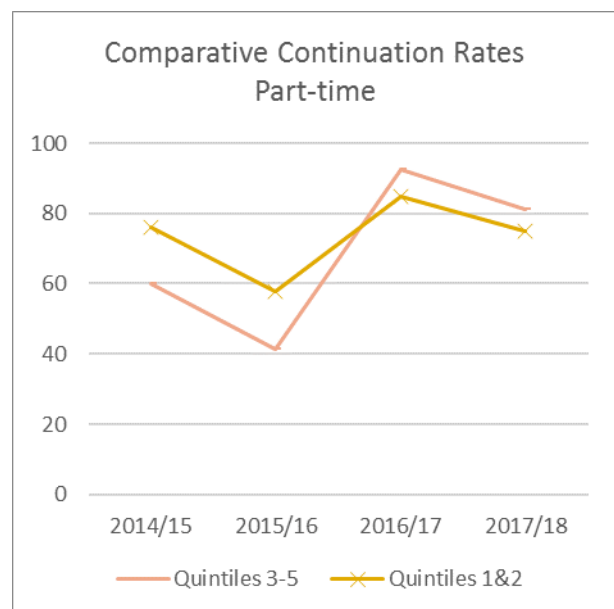
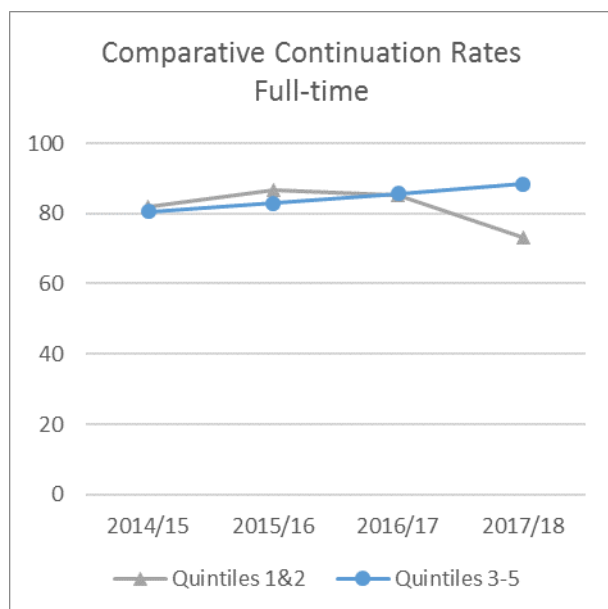
The College aims to serve the whole of its communities and so will not be discouraging recruitment from high participation areas or areas of low deprivation. In the absence of positive action to support recruitment from low participation and disadvantaged areas, the proportion of students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2 and IMD Quintile 1 could be expected to continue to fall as total full-time numbers grow.

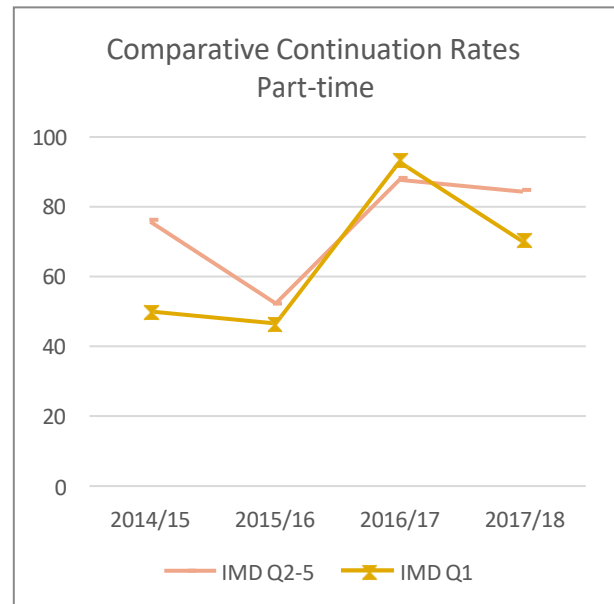
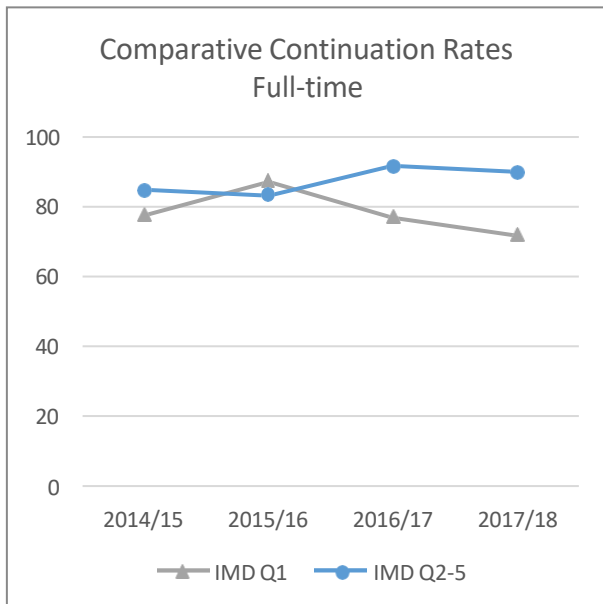
The historic level of part-time participation by students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2 has typically been in the 55%-65% range, though the influx of students from other providers in 2016/17 diluted this in that year. The proportion of part-time entrants from IMD Quintile 1 has been extremely volatile and no clear picture has yet emerged of what target could be set in this area.

While not part of the formal targets for this plan, it is worth recording here that the College is keen to support these groups and commits to positive actions to maintain the proportion of full-time POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2 and IMD Quintile 1 entrants at 40% or higher and of part-time students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2 at 50% or higher throughout the life of this plan. It is not yet clear what target could be set for the sustainable level of IMD Quintile 1 entrants. For the years 2021/22 and 2022/23 the College commits to actions to maintain the proportion of part-time entrants from IMD Quintile at 30% or higher, but may revise its targets for subsequent years as better information becomes available.

Success

Non-continuation

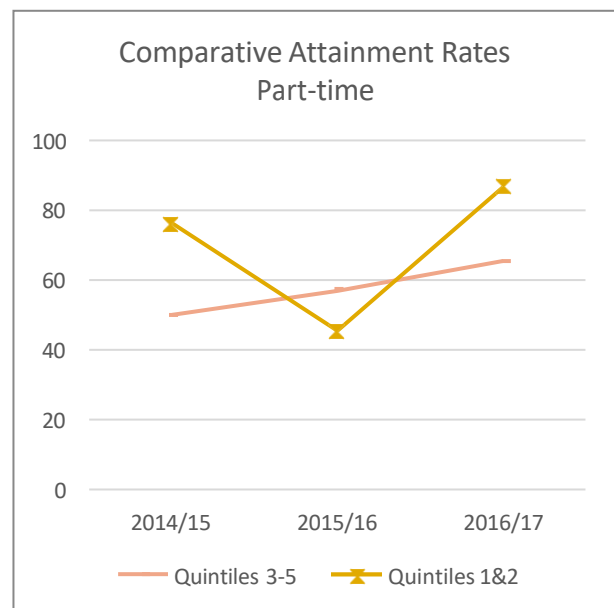
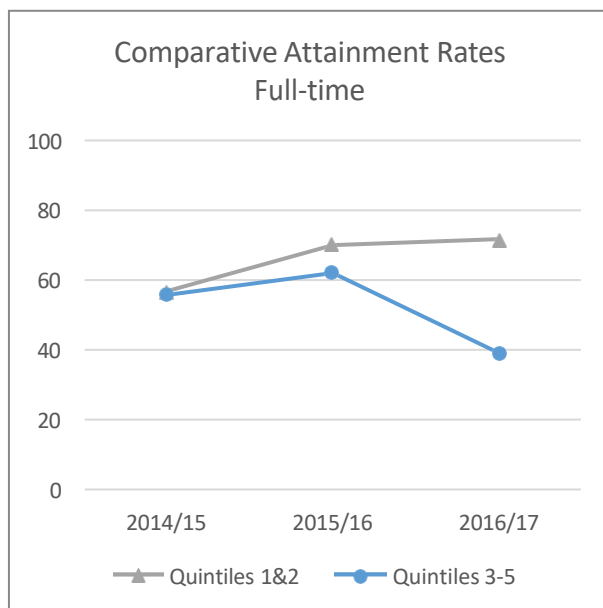




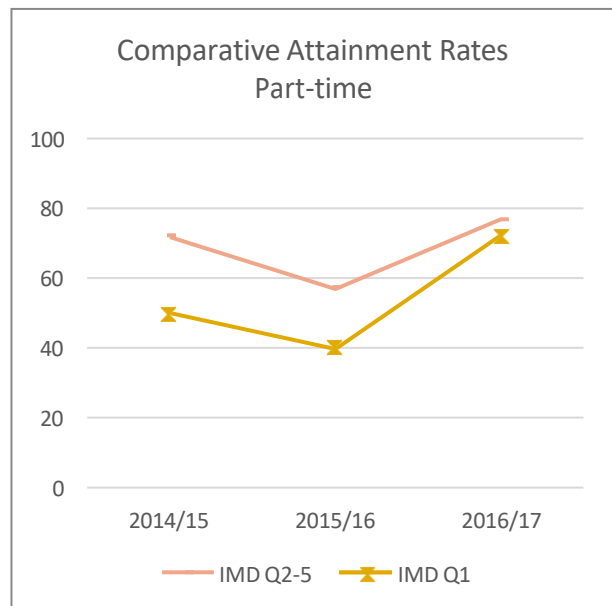
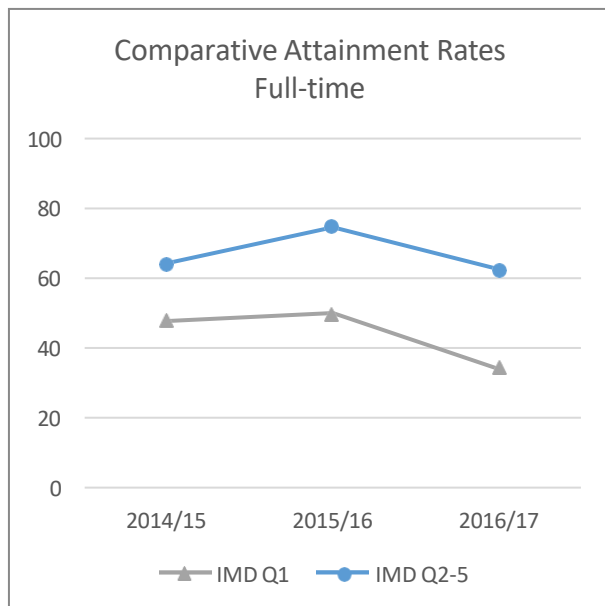
These figures show an emerging gap between continuation rates for POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2 and those for Quintiles 3-5, and a similar gap for IMD Quintile 1 and Quintiles 2-5..

Attainment

POLAR4 Quintiles



Index of Multiple Deprivation Quintiles

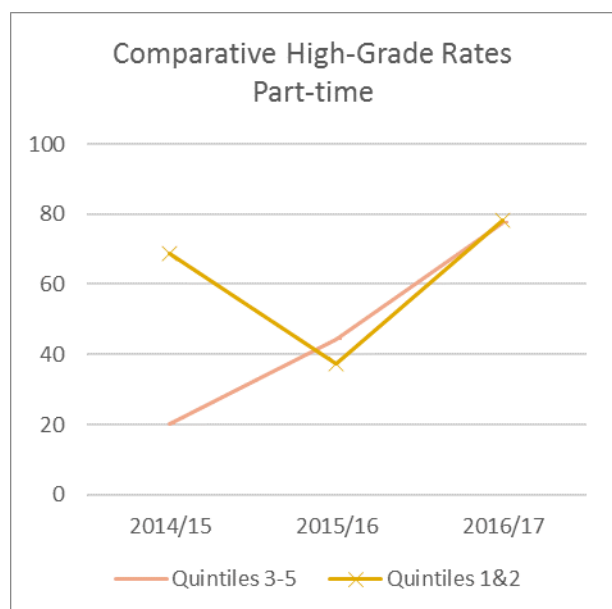
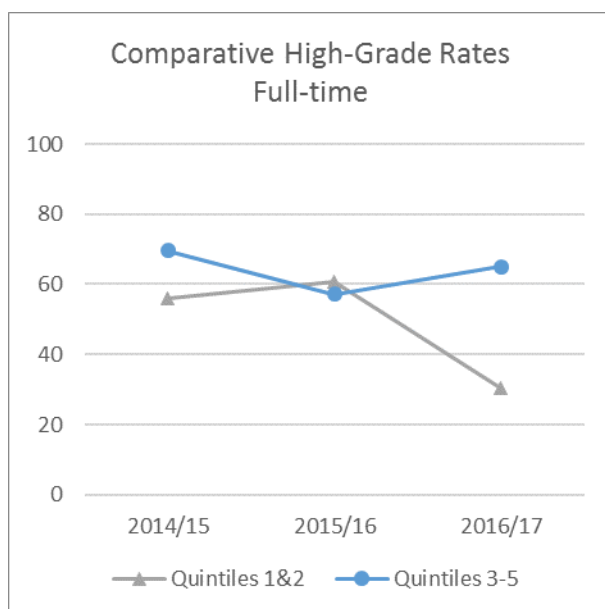


As a result of the support already provided, students from POLAR4 Q1&2 postcodes slightly out-perform the overall student body in gaining their target qualifications, though the figures for part-time students are somewhat variable.

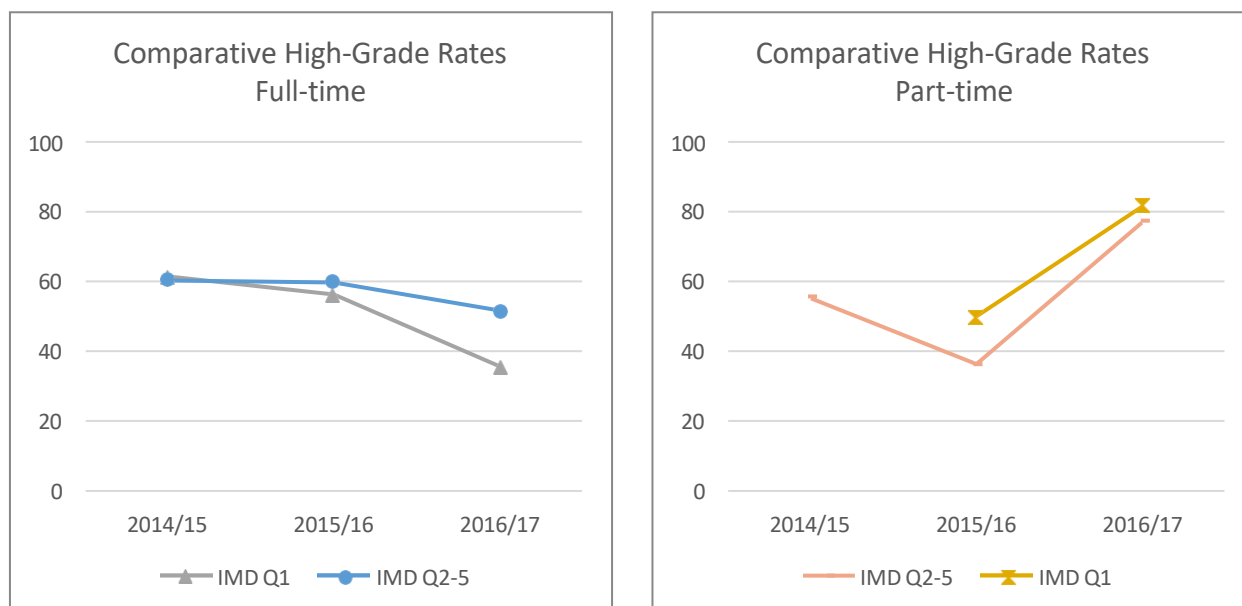
In contrast, there is a gap between the rates for IMD Quintile 1 and for Quintiles 2-5.

High Grades

POLAR4 Quintiles



Index of Multiple Deprivation Quintiles



The falling trend in full-time high grades percentages for full-time students for both POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2 and IMD Quintile 1 is a result of the student and programme mix captured in the data, as commented on above. The apparent differences in part-time high-grade rates for 2014/15 entrants is the result of a small difference in absolute numbers on a small entry cohorts and are not believed to be significant.

Progression to employment or further study

Nationally, graduates from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2 are less likely than others to progress into further study at a higher level or into graduate jobs. The gap is slightly wider for full-time students (2016/17: 4.9%) than for part-time (2016/17: 4.2%). The College's students fare well in employment and further study (see

'Destinations Data' above), but it has no data to support conclusions about whether or not graduates from these quintiles fare as well as those from other quintiles. Without underpinning evidence, no targets can be set for progression for these students. Until such time as clear evidence is available, the College will assume that a progression gap does exist and provide support under this plan to support these students' progression.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

The College's ambition is to serve its local community. Its students are drawn principally from the boroughs in which it operates (Hyndburn and Pendle) and surrounding areas. Detailed annual ethnicity data is not available for the whole of the College's catchment; however estimates can be derived from the results of the 2011 census and the March 2019 annual reports of the two boroughs. These show the following results.

| | 2011 | | | | 2019 | | | |
|----------|------------|--------|---------|-------------|------------|--------|---------|-------------|
| | Population | White | % White | % Non-white | Population | White | % White | % Non-white |
| Hyndburn | 80734 | 70681 | 87.5 | 12.5 | 80410 | 70520 | 87.7 | 12.3 |
| Pendle | 89452 | 71411 | 79.9 | 20.1 | 90696 | 72466 | 79.9 | 20.1 |
| Total | 170186 | 142092 | 83.5 | 16.5 | 171106 | 142986 | 83.6 | 16.4 |

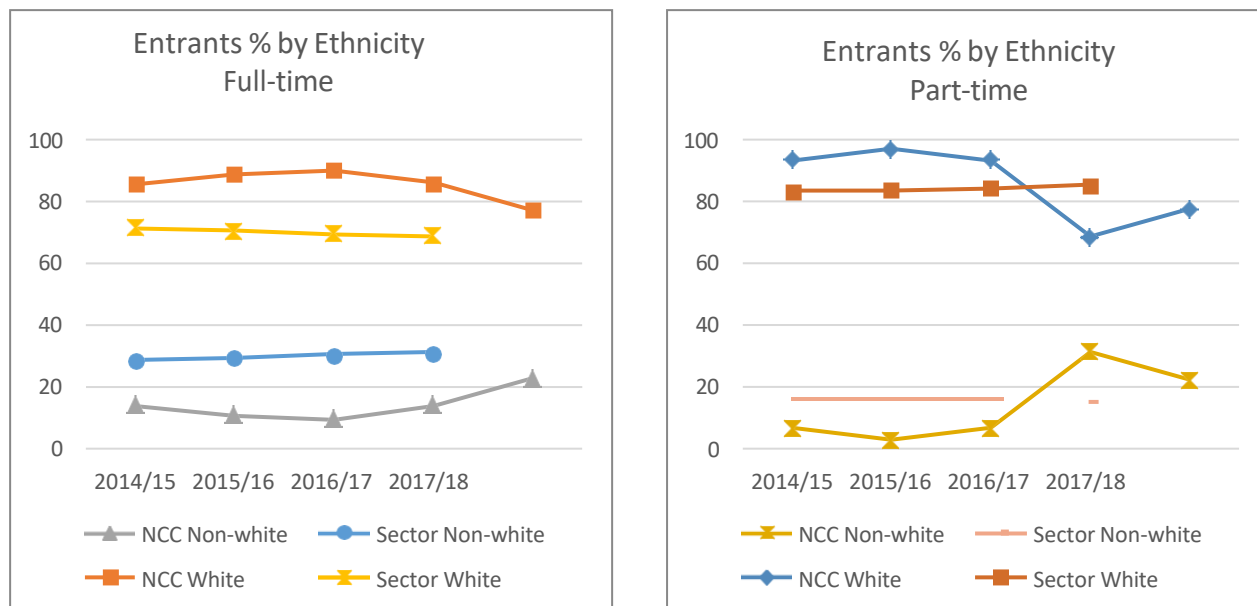
These ethnicity percentages are relatively stable and are believed to be broadly similar to the College's wider catchment area.

The 2011 Census data shows that within the non-white population 92.3% are from Asian heritage ethnicities and only 7.2% from mixed or other ethnicities.

Approximately 80% of the College's ethnic minority students are from Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage. When other Asian Heritage ethnicities are added to this, the College's non-white intake is in line with the ethnic mix of its local communities.

Some elements within the available OfS data show gaps for non-Asian heritage ethnic minorities but the numbers of students from these groups are very small. Any attempt to disaggregate the College's non-white minorities into individual ethnic groups results in no statistically significant data for the difference between these ethnicities and the overall statistics for ethnic minorities as a whole, and no meaningful data at all for any individual non-Asian ethnic minority group. For that reason data is presented only for all white and non-white ethnicities.

Access



The College's full-time intake has historically been significantly more ethnically white than the average of the higher education sector. However, the College does not hold a Tier 4 licence and has no overseas domiciled students, so the best comparison is with the populations of its communities rather than national HE statistics.

Until 2017/18, ethnic minorities were under-represented in the College's intake, but since that time actions to encourage participation by minority groups have significantly increased the proportion of non-white students recruited.

The College has some evidence that the mix of programmes and subjects offered limits participation by some ethnic groups. There are plans to address this as new programmes are developed, but the timescales of programme development mean that it will be a number of years before any results of these changes will be seen in the College's data,

Ethnic minority participation in higher education has not yet reached the same proportion as in the College's further education provision and action is planned to further increase entry by non-white students.

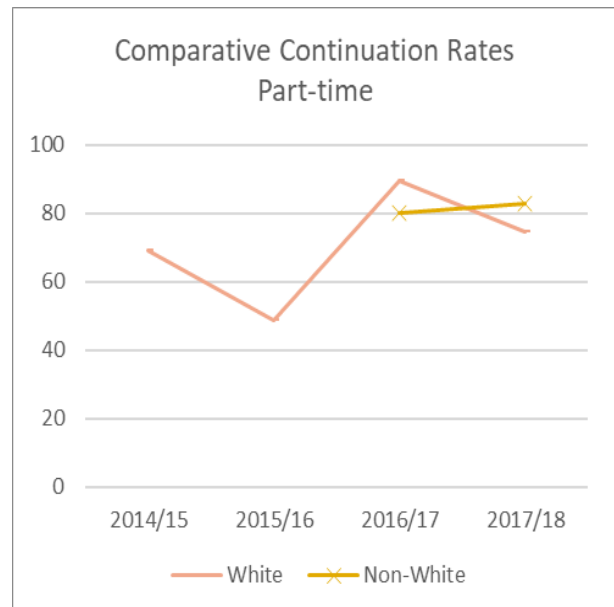
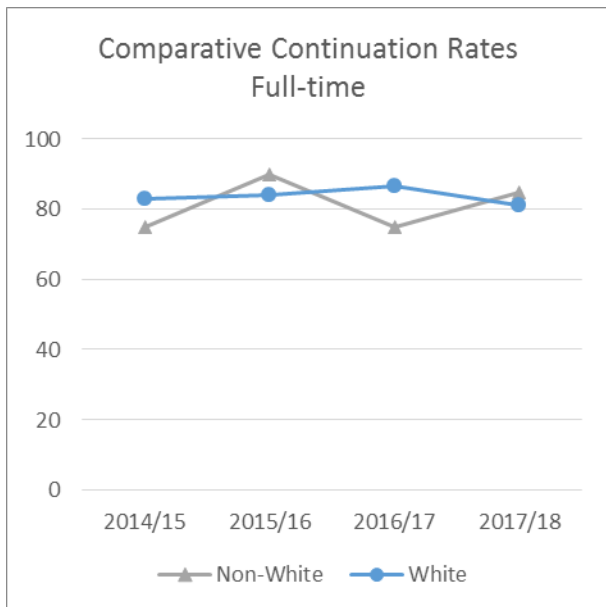
Success

Non-White Entry Cohort Sizes

| | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|---------|---------|
| Full-time | 20 | 10 | 8 | 13 |
| Part-time | Not reportable | Not reportable | 10 | 29 |

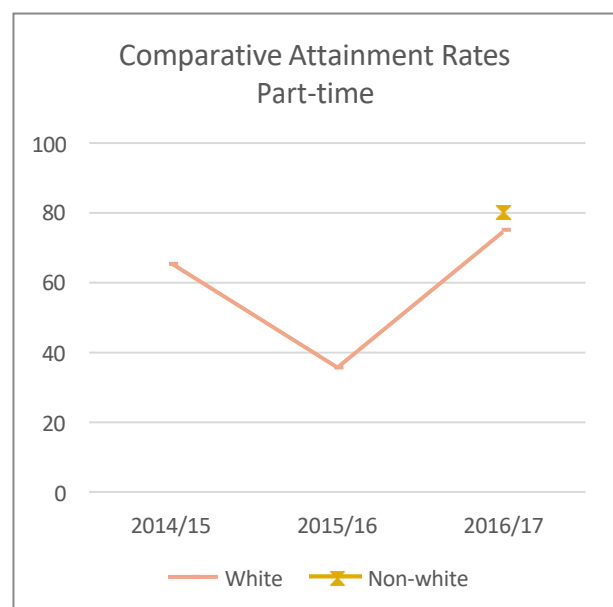
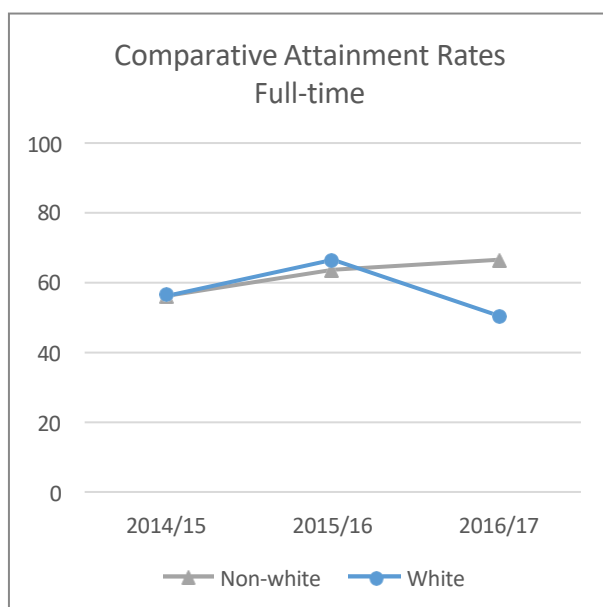
The very small numbers of non-white students within the 2014/15 and 2015/16 part-time entry cohorts lead to an unacceptable risk that students could be identified from any published data. The small numbers also mean that no statistically significant conclusions could be drawn from this data. For these reasons, data for part-time entrants for these years have been removed from the charts below.

Non-continuation



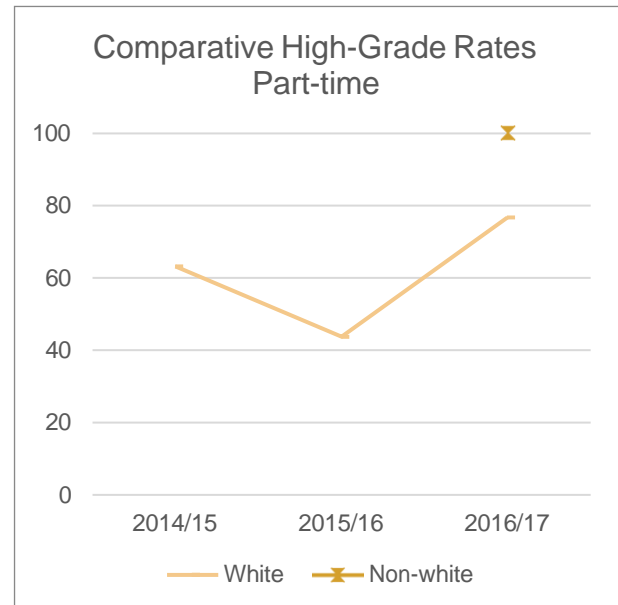
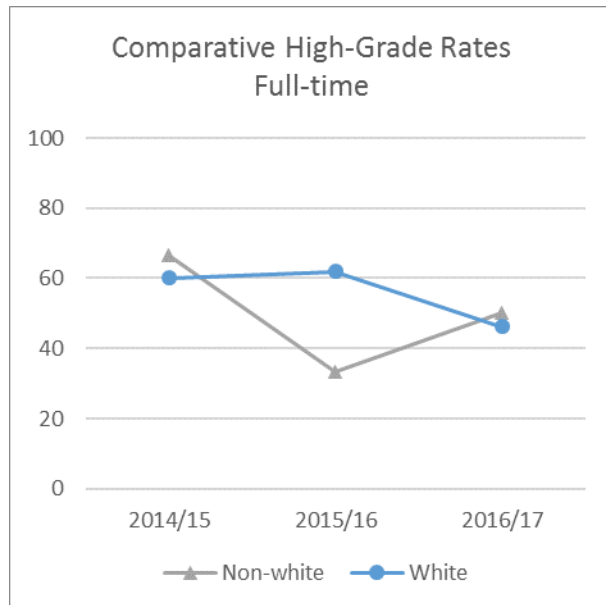
The continuation rates in these charts suggest that rates for non-white students are not materially different from those of the student body as a whole.

Attainment



Note that only one result (80% for the 2016/17 entry cohort) is given for part-time students for the reasons stated above. In these figures, attainment rates for non-white students are similar to or better than those for the whole of their intakes, but these differences are not felt to be significant.

High Grades



Note that only one result (100% for the 2016/17 entry cohort) is given for part-time students for the reasons stated above. Overall, the College's view is that the performance of non-white students, once recruited, is as good as or better than their colleagues, but that more effort is needed to eliminate gaps in access for these students.

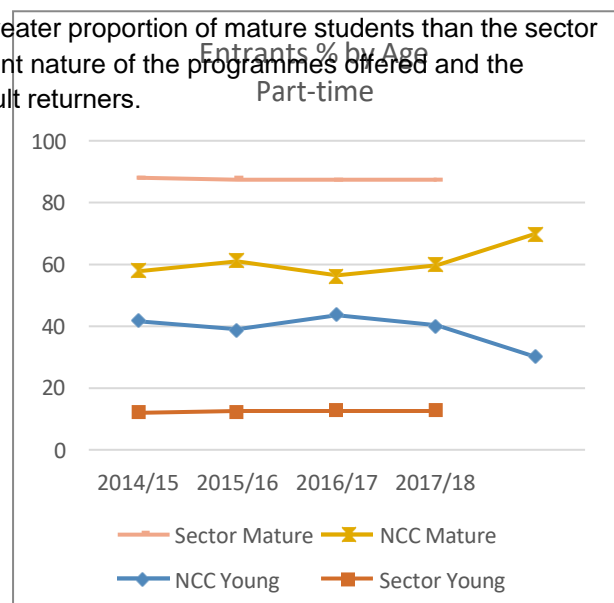
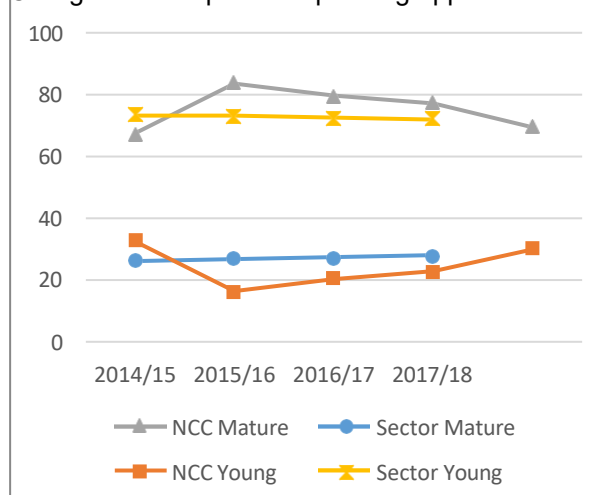
Progression to employment or further study

As was the case for POLAR4 Quintile 1 & 2 students above, there is a national progression gap for non-white graduates. In 2016/17 this was 3.9% for full-time students and 6.2% for part-time. As has been stated before, there is insufficient data to establish whether there are such gaps in progression for the College's graduates, but in the absence of such data the College will assume that gaps do exist and will provide support to address them.

1.3 Mature students

Access

The College's full-time intake consistently contains a greater proportion of mature students than the sector as a whole. This in part reflects the vocationally-relevant nature of the programmes offered and the College's aim to provide upskilling opportunities for adult returners.



There is a gradual reduction in the proportion of full-time mature students as it launches additional programmes aimed at its own level 3 leavers. These aim to persuade more young people to remain in the area during and after their higher education studies. The proportion of mature students in the College can therefore be expected to fall somewhat over time. Nevertheless, the College's view is that its recruitment of full-time mature students is strong and no actions are needed to promote this further.

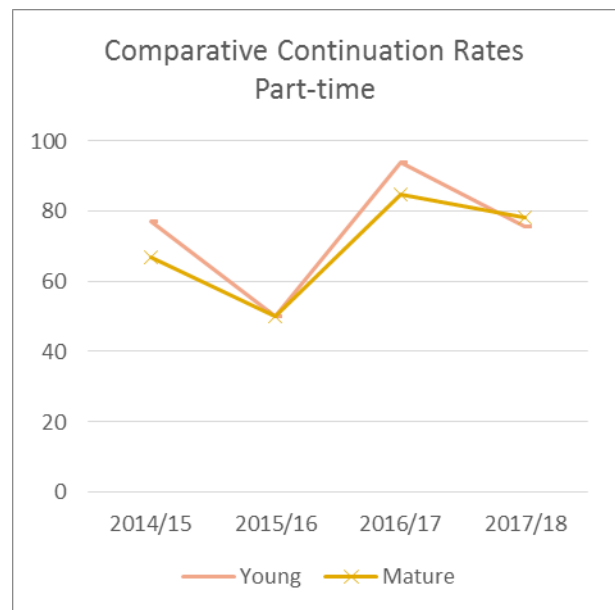
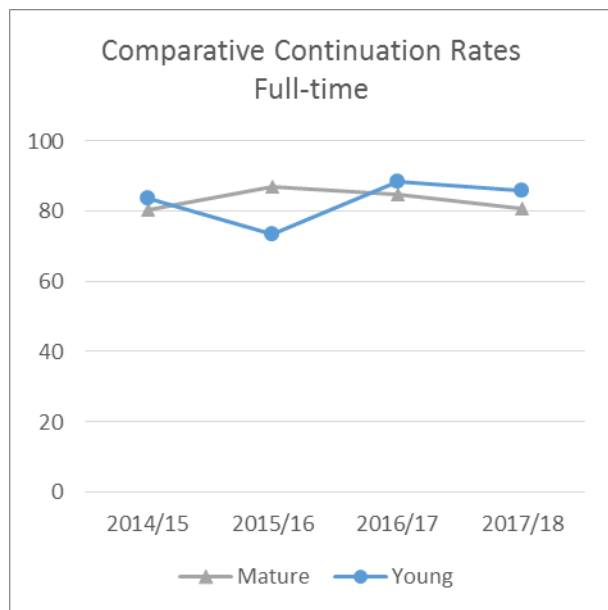
The proportion of mature students in the part-time intakes is below national norms. This is the result of the progression opportunities offered to young level 3 students who want to combine a vocational career with further part-time study or through higher level apprenticeships. The College views this as a benefit to students and its local communities and has no plans to seek to increase further the proportion of part-time mature students.

Success

Mature Entry Cohort Sizes

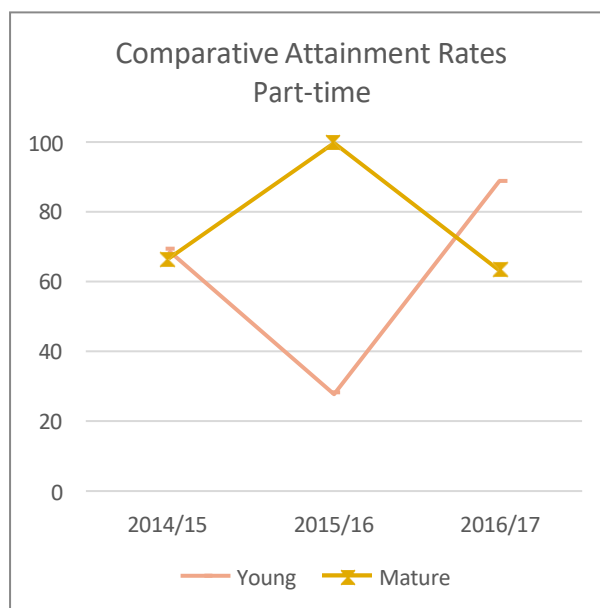
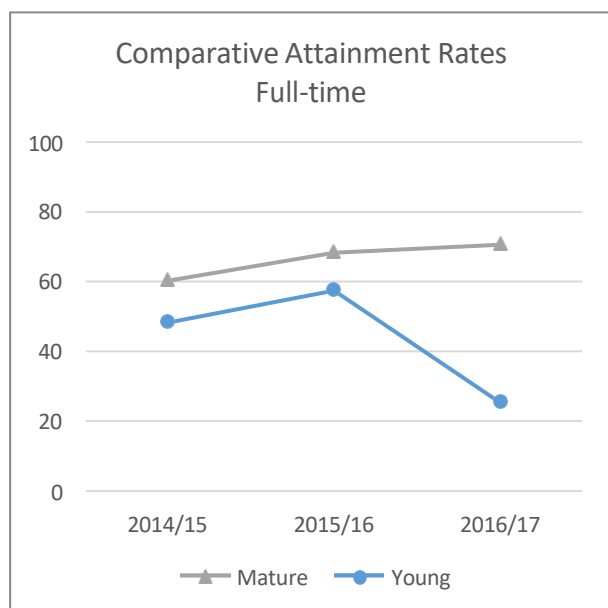
| | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Full-time | 76 | 77 | 66 | 72 |
| Part-time | 18 | 22 | 86 | 55 |

Non-continuation



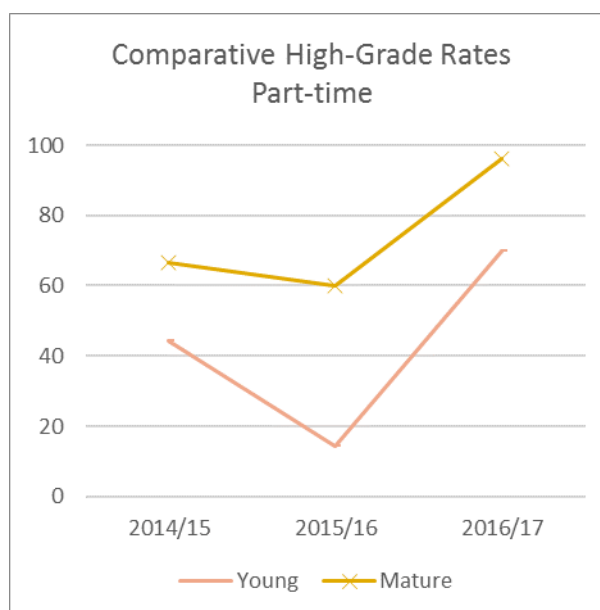
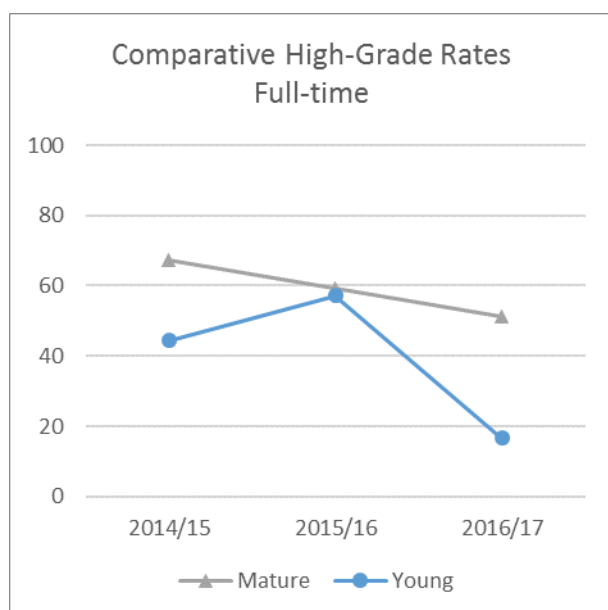
The College's view is that, given the relatively small number of young students in its intakes, the differences between the young and mature lines in these charts is statistically insignificant. However, improvements in continuation rates for all students is a College priority and mature students will benefit from actions taken to support the student body as a whole.

Attainment



Mature full-time students consistently outperform their young colleagues and, while mature students will benefit from general actions to promote attainment for all students, no specific actions are proposed for mature students. Part-time attainment rates shown for 2015/16 have been affected by the large intake of transferred students in that year and the comparative rates cannot be relied upon as accurate indicators. However, there is a gap between young and mature attainment rates. This is largely driven by difficulties that students with jobs and families have in coping with the demands of the final years of their courses.

High Grades



The apparent decline in full-time high grade proportions in these figures is the result of the student mix in the data discussed above. The programmes included in the part-time data contain more short programmes and are less distorted by this effect. Despite this distortion, the relative rates are a good indicator of comparative achievements. Overall, mature students achieve better grades than their young colleagues and no supportive action is deemed necessary.

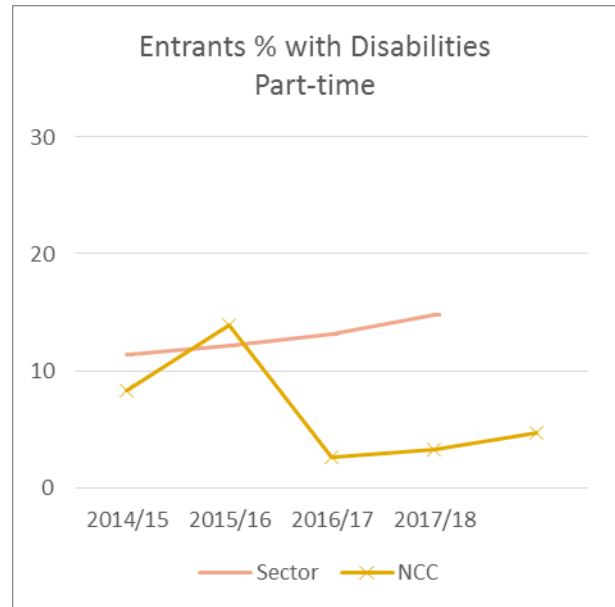
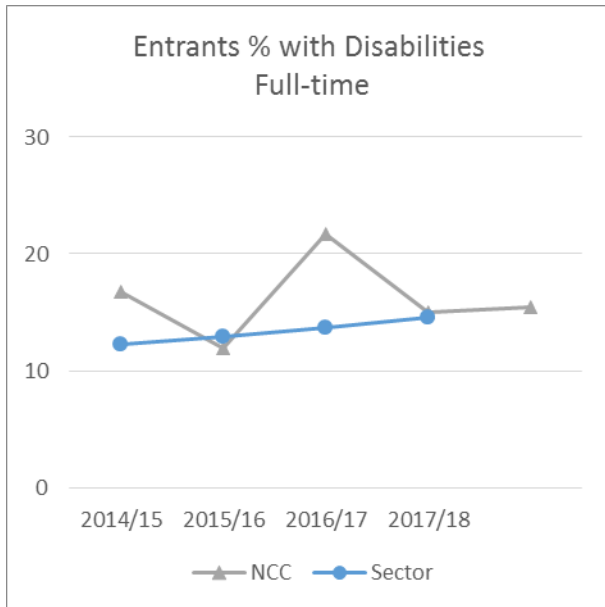
Progression to employment or further study

The gaps in national progression rates for mature and young graduates (2016/17) show that full-time mature graduates have progression rates 3.4% higher than those of young graduates, but that part-time mature

students have a progression rate 11.6% lower than for young graduates. The College's student mix contains many more mature part-time students than typical providers and yet its progression rates are high. This suggests that the College is an exception to the national trend in this area. However, it has too little data to be able to make definitive judgements on this issue.

1.4 Disabled students

Access



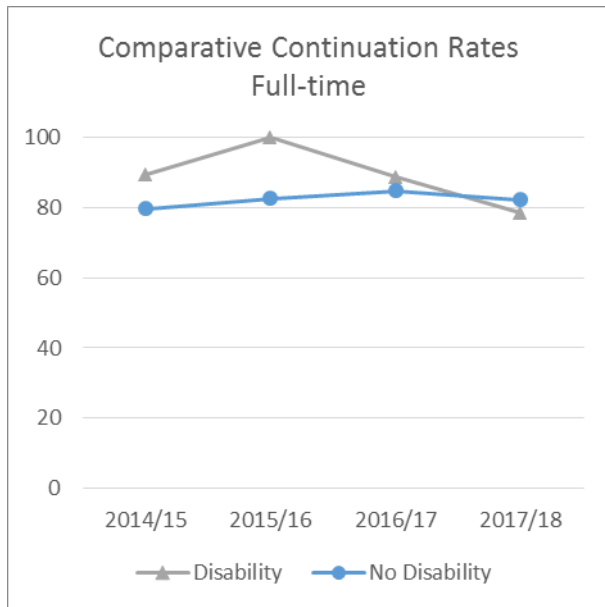
Success

Disability Entry Cohort Sizes

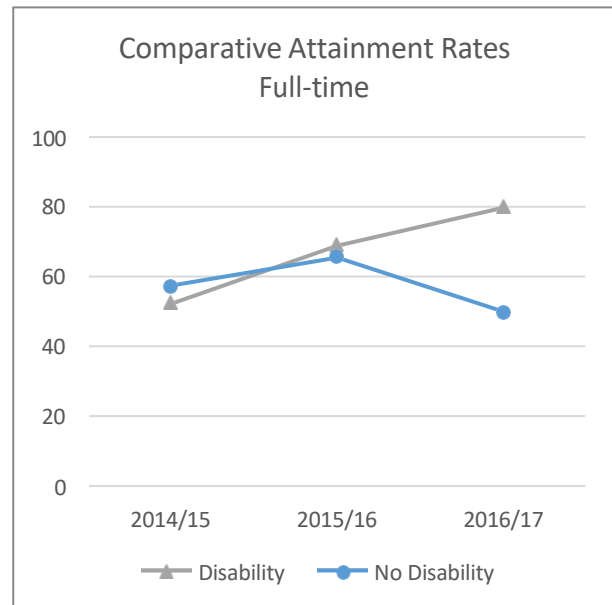
| | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|-----------|----------------|---------|----------------|----------------|
| Full-time | 19 | 11 | 18 | 14 |
| Part-time | Not reportable | 6 | Not reportable | Not reportable |

The very small numbers of students with disabilities within these part-time cohorts leads to an unacceptable risk that students could be identified from any published data. The small numbers also mean that no statistically significant conclusions could be drawn from this data. For these reasons, part-time students have been excluded from the discussions below.

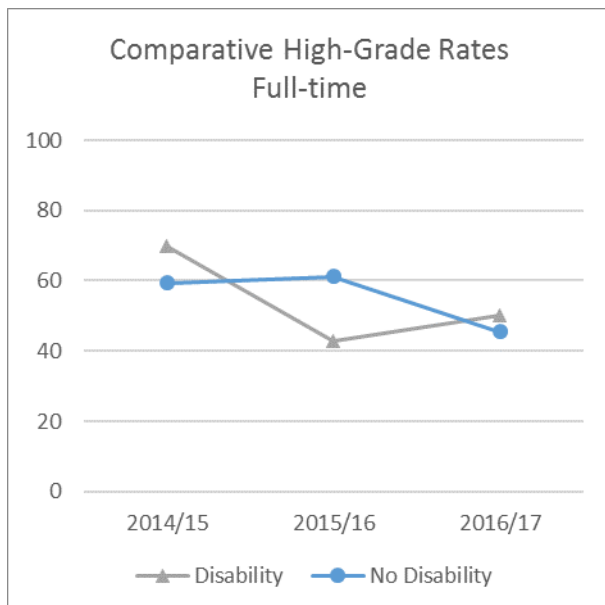
Non-continuation



Attainment



High Grades



As can be seen above, given the small numbers of disabled students in the College's full-time intakes, none of these charts suggests any statistically significant differences in the performance of disabled students that would require specific actions.

The College's part-time programmes include a number of subject areas that are linked to employment sectors, such as Construction, where opportunities for disabled students may be restricted. Consequently, the College does not expect that the proportion of disabled students in its part-time intake will match the sector average unless there is a significant change in its subject offer. However, some additional support is believed necessary to promote disabled access to other part-time programmes. Students with disabilities already benefit from significant levels of support from the College, which contributes to their achievement rates. However, there is some internal evidence that some disabled students may need even more support than is on offer and some funding from this Plan will be allocated to meeting this additional need.

During the student consultation for this plan it emerged that there might be some under-reporting of the numbers of students with disabilities resulting either from non-disclosure by the student and/or by late

identifications, particularly in second or subsequent years, that may not have been captured in the dataset used for this analysis. The College will strengthen its efforts to persuade students to make timely full disclosure of disabilities and will increase its audit checks to make sure late identifications are captured from the 2020/21 intake onwards.

Progression to employment or further study

The College has insufficient data to comment on the progression of its disabled students and the numbers of such students are so small that it does not expect to be able to produce statistically valid analyses even when full data is available. Consequently, for the foreseeable future it does not expect to be able to draw conclusions about progression of these students or the support they may need to progress. It will ensure that disabled students are provided with additional support for progression, but is unlikely to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of such measures.

1.5 Care leavers

The College identifies students who are in care, or are care leavers, on entry to its Further Education provision. From this entry data it knows that approximately 1.7% of its Further Education students have some history of being in care. Historically, it has not asked entrants to its Higher Education provision to declare whether or not they have ever been in care. It will do so for new entrants from 2019/20 onwards in order to accumulate sufficient data to support future judgements on their progress.

At present, the lack of historical data in this area means that detailed judgements about care-leavers cannot be made on the basis of hard evidence. However, it would be reasonable to assume that the proportion of care leavers within its Higher Education provision is unlikely to be significantly different from that in its Further Education provision. If this is the case, the numbers of students in this category would be too small for any statistically valid analysis to be made and therefore no specific targets are set below.

The College will review this in future should the emerging data relating to care-leavers suggest that specific targets should be set.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

The College has no statistical evidence of any areas of intersections of disadvantage being significant in access, success or progression. There is, however, limited qualitative evidence that certain intersection groups would benefit from further actions. These are principally:

- Access and success for young, white males from low participation postcodes
- Access by young, non-white males.

There being too little available data to set meaningful targets for these groups, they are not addressed further in this plan. However, data about participation from these groups will form part of the College's monitoring from 2019/20 onwards. Should monitoring show that there are gaps in participation, success and/or progression from these groups these will be added to targets and addressed through actions taken under this plan.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

There are some areas of interest where the College has insufficient data to be able reflect reliably. These include:

- Carers
- People estranged from their families
- People from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- Refugees
- People with mental health problems, specific learning difficulties and/or who are on the autism spectrum
- Children from military families.

As part of the implementation of this plan, the College will gather data on entrants from these groups beginning with the September 2020 intake. It will reflect on their access as part of the 2020/21 evaluations, and on their success and progression as students identified from these groups move through their studies.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

Widening participation underpins all College activity and is core to the College's vision. It is determined to ensure that students from under-represented groups and those from disadvantaged backgrounds have fair access to higher education. A key aspect of this is to build aspiration and achievement through a continuing focus on access, participation, student success and progression. The College has a proactive approach to supporting students to maximise their achievements.

The College's ambition is to increase the volume of its higher education and at the same time substantially reduce disparities between access and outcomes for students with different characteristics over a period of five years from the introduction of this Plan.

In preparing this plan, the College has considered the national key performance measures for participation. While the College already meets many of the national key performance measures, there are areas where its performance could be improved to better serve its communities and contribute to improving national performance.

2.1 Target Groups

In particular, the College aims to target disadvantaged groups as follows:

| Target Group | Access | Success | Progression |
|--|--------|---------|-------------|
| Students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2 | No | Yes | N/A |
| Students from IMD Quintile 1 | No | Yes | N/A |
| Students from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minorities | Yes | No | N/A |
| Mature Students | No | Yes | N/A |
| Disabled Students | Yes | No | N/A |
| Other groups | N/A | No | N/A |

In the above table, areas where the College has to date insufficient data to be able to draw conclusions about its performance have been marked 'N/A'. The College will reflect on these areas as better data emerges and if it becomes clear that there are gaps in its performance these will be addressed throughout the life of this plan.

2.2 Aims and Objectives

Access

- Increase the proportion of non-white entrants to better reflect the participation rates of different ethnicities in the College's Further Education provision, raising the proportion of non-white entrants from 23% in 2018/19 to 29% by 2024/25.
- Increase participation by part-time students with disabilities year on year from 5% in 2018/19 to 11% in 2024/25 in order to better reflect the proportion of disabled adults living within the College's catchment area.

Success

- Annually reduce the gaps in continuation rates year on year between:
 - students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1&2 and those from Quintiles 3-5

and

- mature and young students

eliminating all gaps by 2024/25

- Annually reduce the gaps in continuation rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5, reducing the gap for full-time students to 8% by 2024/25 and that for part-time students to 6% over the same period.
- Annually reduce the gaps in attainment rates between:
 - students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5

and

- mature and young students

in both cases eliminating gaps by 2024/25

Progression

Because of the shortage of underpinning data for comparisons, the College has not yet set targets for improving the progression of disadvantaged students into further study or graduate employment. If evidence of significant gaps emerges when fuller data becomes available in 2021/22, the College will set targets for progression for the years from 2022/23 onwards.

2.3 Wider Aims

Schools Partnerships

The College recognises the importance of working with schools and other education providers to raise the ambition and attainment of pre-16 learners in order to maximise opportunities for disadvantaged learner to progress to and benefit from Higher Education at the College or elsewhere.

Nelson and Colne College is the sponsor of the Pendle Education Trust, which includes five local schools, two secondary and three primary. The Trust has had a very strong track record of raising educational standards and attainment in the area. The College will seek further opportunities to work with the Trust, and with other pre-16 providers in its catchment area, to assist in their ambition to raise attainment further.

Flexibility of Study

The College also recognises that

- there are many valuable employment opportunities that do not require a full honours degree and for which employers prefer candidates with higher education awards at level 4 or level 5
- employers are increasingly interested in supporting their employees to gain higher education qualifications as part of apprenticeships
- many students' career or personal circumstances mean that it would be an advantage to them to be able to switch between delivery modes as they progress through higher education.

The majority of the College's higher education programmes are already available as a ladder of progression where a student can progress incrementally to gain valuable level 4 or level 5 awards and then have the option to top-up to honours should they wish to.

The exact progression route varies by subject area but is typically:

- Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma and Honours Degree for subjects such as Engineering and Construction where the Higher National awards are the employers' preferred qualifications
- Higher National Certificate, Foundation Degree and Honours Degree other technical subjects
- Certificate of Higher Education, Foundation Degree and Honours Degree in non-technical subjects.

Within these ladders students can leave College with an award and then can return at a later date to further their education if they wish.

Many of the College's programmes are available both full- and part-time, and some are available as flexible or blended learning. This enables students to continue in education when their employment or personal circumstances change.

Several of the College's higher education programmes are available as part of apprenticeships.

The College is committed to providing flexibility to its students and will continue to design the maximum practicable level of flexibility into its programmes.

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overview

The College is committed to widening participation across all its Further and Higher Education provision, to maintaining high levels of participation by students from disadvantaged groups and to supporting them to succeed and progress. It is committed to meeting the objectives and targets of this plan, working across the whole College.

The College uses a number of methods to attract students, raise aspiration and reduce barriers to access and success in higher education.

- **Employer engagement**

Outreach activities ensure that its higher education remains relevant and up to date, and underpin activities to ensure that our higher education leavers are employment-ready. Particular examples of this include the extensive use of Foundation Degree placements and workplace visits, employer involvement in curriculum design and review, and employer-focused higher and degree apprenticeships.

- **Internal student progression**

Students at level 3 are provided with timely information, advice and guidance on access to higher education. This is done through tutorials through special events at which higher education providers visit the College to speak to students, and through the College's higher education partnerships.

- **External target market and outreach work**

The College promotes its HE offer using all forms of social media, including our own dedicated website, a dedicated prospectus, the UCAS website, radio advertising and local advocates in order to reach the widest possible group of potential participants, including those from disadvantaged groups who might not otherwise be aware of their opportunities.

As part of this awareness raising campaign we publicise our fees and the associated bursaries and support in an effort to attract those students who would not normally consider higher education.

The College **currently** works with students in secondary schools with a history of low participation to develop links with both further and higher education. **As part of its ongoing prioritizing of enhancing aspirations and attainment in pre-16 education, it will extend this work to a wider range of secondary schools, to local Colleges and to selected primary schools within its catchment area.**

We have strong relationships with community centres, particularly in the educationally deprived wards of the boroughs served by the College. We use these relationships to distribute information about the programmes available, career opportunities and available student support, both personal and financial.

Other activities include:

- masterclass delivery in schools

- student workshops for level 3 learners encouraging research into higher education opportunities, the advantages of studying locally and the College higher education offer
- higher education representation at year 9, 10 and 11 options and parents evenings to offer advice and guidance to post-entry students and parents
- link activities with local schools, particularly through the College's sponsorship of the Pendle Education Trust, to promote an understanding of higher education in students studying at key stage 4.
- support for staff who tutor level 3 groups within the College in understanding the opportunities for their students to progress to higher education and the requirements for progression
- participation of higher education teaching staff in level 3 tutorial programmes to raise aspiration, ambition and achievement to support the transition to higher education
- attendance at a range of local and regional higher education events
- open events that involve community engagement from local employers, impartial careers information, advice and guidance offered through a specialist team
- assistance with UCAS applications, personal statements and financial support

Within these activities the College actively promotes opportunities to underrepresented groups. In particular, using its contacts with schools, employers and community groups in areas of low participation and high deprivation to promote higher education programmes and Access to Higher Education courses and to promote participation by students from black, Asian and ethnic minority groups by targeting external activities on schools and community groups in majority ethnic minority areas.

Once at the College, students benefit from a wide range of support mechanisms, including:

- Underpinning Skills Support:
- Support for Students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities:
- Language Support:
- Individual Transition Links:
- Mentoring for Achievement
- Academic and Pastoral Tutorials
- Small group sizes
- Diagnosis of individual learning support needs
- Students for whom learning needs are identified through DSA support are provided with appropriate learning support by the college learning support team.
- Students for whom additional needs are identified but who do not have a DSA can also access additional learning support

In addition, Learner Services arranges individually negotiated packages of support that enable students to achieve their potential.

For example, support may include:

- Pre entry advice and guidance.
- Transition links to College.
- Screening for Essential skills.
- Personal initial assessment and specialist second level assessments.
- Support for curriculum staff, with LS acting as a consultancy, to enable them to meet their students learning needs more effectively.
- 1:1 teaching support for example dyslexia support, language support including bi - lingual support and teacher of the deaf.

- Taught workshop support.
- Support in class – such as note taking, signing, facilitation and physical care/ mobility support.
- Specialist curriculum teaching.
- 1:1 mentoring support (Mentoring for Achievement).
- Assistive equipment and software.
- Consideration of alternative assessment arrangements

The College has found that underrepresented and disadvantaged groups have additional support needs during their studies. These needs breaking down into two categories:

- Academic support with study skills, academic writing, numeracy, etc.
- Access to IT and other resources, especially when not on campus.

In order to address these needs, the College will provide additional staffing dedicated to academic support and will provide funding to enable students to access necessary resources.

Alignment with other strategies

Inclusivity is a core value that underpins the College's approach to its admissions and student support processes, and is a component of its processes for programme monitoring and review. This Access and Participation Plan is one of a broad suite of College policies and procedures that form a holistic approach to equality. This Plan has been devised in the context of other policies and strategies, including those set out below.

Equality and Diversity

This Plan has been produced with due regard for all College policies, the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (2011). The college is committed to the active pursuit of an equality and diversity policy, as set out in its Single Equality Scheme, which addresses the need and right of everyone in College to be treated with respect and dignity, in an environment in which a diversity of backgrounds experience is valued. It aims to ensure that all staff and students whether existing or potential receive fair and equal treatment when applying to, studying or working as members of the College, and to counter any attitudes and behaviour which deny opportunities to people simply or primarily because of their protected characteristics.

Teaching and Learning

Ensuring effective student learning takes place is paramount and a priority. The aims contained in the NCC strategy for teaching and learning outline actions and targets to help us achieve innovative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment that fully meet our students' needs whatever background and prior life experience they bring.

We will:

- welcome students from diverse backgrounds and aspire to support our local people to play an active role in the regeneration of their communities by developing higher skills levels
- provide our students with flexible attendance patterns and accommodate their learning styles by designing purposeful learning environments that are responsive to the needs of individuals
- support our students to become active, independent, responsible learners, achieving their maximum potential
- provide learning opportunities that are positive, enabling, knowledge-building, transformative and hopefully life-changing
- provide additional extracurricular academic support to disadvantaged students as necessary
- provide help to access necessary resources

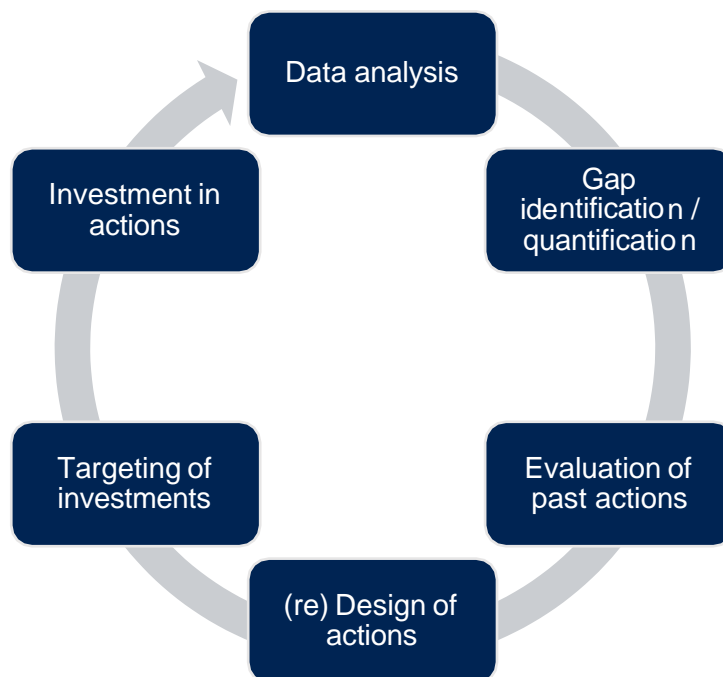
eLearning

The College has an eLearning culture that is encouraged to evolve creatively. It makes extensive use of its Virtual Learning Environment to ensure that students have access to materials on- and off-site and at all times. This is a particular benefit to disadvantaged students who may be fitting study around extensive out-of-College responsibilities. The College makes use of adaptive technologies to support students with disabilities and is constantly updating its eLearning resources.

Through eLearning, creative spaces and practices will be encouraged and shared, with a mantra of constant improvement and development. Staff and students are encouraged to learn new skills with technology from one another, creating an immersive learning experience.

Change mechanisms

The fundamental theory of change underpinning the College's strategic measures is a six-point cycle as illustrated below.



Change Cycle

Having analysed past performance, identified gaps and evaluated past actions, it has designed targeted investments in actions that it has good qualitative and/or quantitative reasons to believe will be effective. It will implement these actions and monitor their effect through continuing analysis of data. It will determine whether or not known gaps are closing satisfactorily and whether any previously unknown gaps are emerging. From this analysis it will evaluate the effectiveness of past actions, redesign them and retarget investments as appropriate, implement the revised actions before beginning again with data analysis.

Strategic Measures

It is worth noting that there are some limitations to the evidence base for the strategic measures set out below. The College's first ever Access and Participation Plan came into effect with the 2019/20 academic year. Consequently, there is limited history of specific interventions and outcomes from which it can develop an evidence-based, quantitative understanding of which actions are most likely to produce benefits for disadvantaged groups.

The College's context in terms of its local markets, subject mix and delivery modes is sufficiently distinctive that information available from other providers is of only limited value. This has informed this Plan mainly by excluding some actions that the College believes are not sufficiently supported by evidence, such as the use of near-universal student bursaries.

The College is, however, already engaged in a number of activities to support participation across its Further and Higher Education provision that provide a qualitative understanding of which actions are likely to be effective. Some of the activities that the College would wish to undertake are currently excluded, or severely limited, by the available funding. The strategy in this Plan focusses on the application of a proportion of the revenue generated under this Plan to support these activities and to monitoring and evaluating their impact.

By the end of 2019/20 the College will have data related to the impact of its 2019/20 Access and Participation Plan and further data will become available over the life of this Plan. As a result, it is likely that the areas of action set out below will be revised regularly, and that the proportions of funds applied to each activity may vary in the light of emerging evidence.

Curriculum

The College's curriculum strategy for Higher Education is to focus on the design of highly vocationally relevant qualifications and apprenticeships at levels 4 to 7. The design of all programmes includes a strong focus on employability and, through consultation, is closely linked to the needs of local and sub-regional employers.

As noted above, it is already College practice to prioritise the flexibility of its curricula both in terms of the awards offered and how these provide a ladder of progression, and in terms of study modes. The College is committed to offering students the maximum flexibility that is both practicable while maintaining the academic integrity of its programmes.

There are some other actions that the College will undertake independently of this Plan but that may have some impact on it.

The College's existing annual cycle of consideration of its curriculum offer, which is managed through its Higher Education Academic Board, has two aims that link to this plan. These are:

- Continuing to develop the vocational-relevance of, embedding of employability skills within, and delivery pedagogy of its curricula both through new validations and in programme updating.
- Reviewing its subject offer in order to ensure it does not discourage applications from candidates from disadvantaged groups.

These areas are not discussed further below, but any significant impact of these actions on the matters covered by this Plan will be included in its monitoring and evaluation.

Collaboration

The College has academic partnerships with:

- The University of Bolton
- The University of Cumbria
- The University of Huddersfield
- Liverpool John Moores University

The College values these links and actively engages in opportunities to work with the Universities to support inclusivity.

Access

Non-white entry

The College will promote its higher education programmes to ethnic minority groups by:

- promotion of the benefits of higher education to ethnic minorities within its own further education students.
- outreach to ethnic minority groups in the locality through community groups
- promotion of higher education through its school links, particularly in schools with large ethnic minority intakes

and

- through the promotion of and advice offered within open events targeted at encouraging participation in higher education.

Part-time disabled entry

The College will promote disabled access to part-time programmes by:

- use of relevant role models and case studies in marketing materials
- adaptations to its physical estate to eliminate access difficulties and being pro-active in assessing and addressing disability support issues during the application process.

Success

Experience suggests that there are two major factors that impact on disadvantaged students' capacity to succeed. The first is that a proportion of these students do not complete their studies. The majority of those who drop out of the College's higher education programmes declare they have done so for non-academic reasons. The College aims, among other measures, to support continuation by doing what it can to address non-academic reasons for withdrawals.

While some reasons for withdrawals are intensely personal (e.g. ill health or employment changes) for which the College can offer little mitigation, the largest known preventable reason for non-continuation is financial stress. We have a significant number of students who have no access to funding beyond student loans and struggle to afford to continue with their studies. This is especially the case for students in the targeted disadvantage groups.

The College has therefore decided to provide a flexible means to address financial stress and will commit a proportion of the income generated by this plan to a Higher Education Support Fund. This fund will provide emergency loans and grants to higher education students suffering financial stress to assist them to remain fully engaged in their studies. The hardship criteria used to judge eligibility mean that the overwhelming majority of successful applicants will come from disadvantaged groups covered by this plan.

This decision is based on the experiences of current and previous College students and the many instances where external events have caused students to abandon their studies. This element of the Plan is based on the College's best understanding of the factors affecting its students, but the effectiveness of this Fund in supporting continuation will be evaluated as part of the routine monitoring of the plan.

The College has noted that a significant number of students from disadvantaged groups have problems with accessing appropriate resources, such as IT equipment, software and/or broadband access. The College will allocate a proportion of the funding generated by this Plan to remedying these issues by the loan of equipment or help with accessing other resources.

The College is also committed to supporting learners with additional needs. There are sometimes gaps between students' needs and the resources provided through the Disabled Students Allowance. Students in difficulties as a result of any such shortfall will be able to apply to the Higher Education Support Fund for assistance.

The second factor impacting success is students' capacities to flourish while on-programme. Experience has shown that disadvantaged students often do not have the support infrastructure that typical university students might be able to access. The College will seek to mitigate this lack by funding the costs of providing additional extra-curricula academic support.

The College has targeted three disadvantaged groups for both full- and part-time continuation and success.

These are: mature students, students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2 and students from IMD Quintile 1. It proposes to use the same measures to support all groups for both continuation and success. These include:

- Use of target setting in tutorials, coaching and mentoring to support disadvantaged students to aspire, continue and achieve their potential.
- Provision of extra-curricular activities and experiences for disadvantaged students in order to widen their horizons and promote ambition to succeed and progress.
- Provide additional tutorial and other support for disadvantaged students where there is no or little experience of higher education, or valuing of it, within their social networks.
- **Provision of additional, dedicated academic support staff**
- Providing IT and Internet access facilities to disadvantaged students who may not have these resources at home.
- Professional development of staff to recognise the additional support needs of disadvantaged students.

Progression

The College aims to promote progression through higher education to level 6 and beyond, and to promote progression to graduate or professional employment on an equal-esteem basis.

Historically, College students have had high levels of success in gaining employment or places for further study. However, some students accept lower levels of employment than their qualifications would imply. Some students do so in order to remain, for family or other reasons, within a particular locality but others appear to do so because of a lack of aspirations to progress as far as possible in education and/or employment.

While the lack of empirical supporting evidence has led to no specific targets being set for progression, the College believes that more could be done to support disadvantaged students in this area. In order to promote progression we will encourage aspiration to post graduate study and provide careers guidance for graduate employment. This will be achieved through internal processes in tutorials, etc. and through close collaboration with its partner employers and universities, supported from the additional income generated under this plan.

3.2 Student consultation

The College highly values student participation in academic decision-making and has student representation at all levels of its deliberative structures.

As part of this, the College has an active Higher Education Student Council made up of student representatives of all its higher education provision. The initial proposals for this plan were discussed with the whole Council at its meeting on 03 April 2019. Following that meeting, student representatives have been members of the staff and student task group drafting documentation. The task group met on 25 April 2019 to consider the statistical basis for proposals and the broad outline of the plan, and on 28 June 2019 to consider the version to be submitted. A further meeting on 26 September 2019 considered revisions made to the plan before its final submission.

Student input in these meetings assisted in the identification of addressable gaps and the setting of targets. Student views strongly influenced the provisions for a Higher Education Support Fund. In discussions, students strongly supported the College's view that financial stress was a major contributor to non-continuation and that a mechanism for the alleviation of short-term hardship would support continuation and success.

Discussions in the meeting on the 26 September 2019 resulted in the inclusion of additional student success targets, the removal of two targets from earlier drafts that were considered redundant, and significant changes to the strategic measures in this plan.

Students will be involved at every stage of the monitoring and evaluation of this plan as set out below.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

The College recognises that in some areas of access and participation evaluation its practice is emerging, rather than established. In its own self-evaluation using the OfS Self Assessment Tool, it scored itself as 'Advanced' for Strategic Context, 'Good' for evaluation and learning from evaluation but only 'Emerging' for access and participation programme design and evaluation design. This reflects its sophisticated understanding of context, evaluation and self-learning but the emerging nature of its understanding of the design of programmes of actions to support disadvantaged groups and the evaluation of these actions. It has set an evaluation strategy designed to support robust, evidence-based decision making, but recognises that its strategy will evolve over time.

The College will use the criteria of the OfS Self-Evaluation tool in order to guide its development in the two areas of 'emerging' practice. Progress in these areas will be included in internal monitoring reports, evaluation and action planning.

The College's evaluation strategy is designed to 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

The College's Management Information Systems contain several years' historic data on students' personal characteristics, their studies and their achievements. They also contain limited data on progression to further study where this is within the College. This historic data will provide a baseline assessment of performance against which progress towards the targets stated above can be measured and the absolute level of progress established. This data is sufficient to identify progress in access and success to good levels of accuracy.

The available historic external data relating to destinations is limited to a subset of successful students and will not fully support detailed analysis of progress. As stated above, the College will act to build up sufficient records in this area to support quantitative analysis of progress but in the early years of this Plan this will be possible only for those students included in the Graduate Outcomes surveys. For other groups, analyses may be restricted to qualitative studies until a sufficient body of historic data is accumulated.

The identification of progress, or lack of progress, towards the College's goals is not of itself an identification of causality. Further study is required to identify the extent to which outcomes are the result of actions taken and to disaggregate the effects of multiple actions that bear on a single target.

The methods used will include the following:

| Target Group | Target | Methods |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2 | Close the gap in continuation rates between students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1&2 and those from Quintiles 3-5 (full and part-time) | Quantitative analysis of continuation rates Student feedback through programme committees and student representatives on deliberative committees Discussions with the Higher Education Student Council Interviews with withdrawing students to identify the key factors affecting their decisions and any possible mitigations Focus groups with continuing students |

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Students from IMD Quintile 1 | Reduce the gap in part-time continuation rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5 (full and part-time) | <p>Quantitative analysis of continuation rates</p> <p>Student feedback through programme committees and student representatives on deliberative committees</p> <p>Discussions with the Higher Education Student Council</p> <p>Interviews with withdrawing students to identify the key factors affecting their decisions and any possible mitigations</p> <p>Focus groups with continuing students</p> |
| | Close the gap in full-time attainment rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5 (full and part-time) | <p>Quantitative analysis of achievement rates and results profiles</p> <p>Student feedback through programme committees and student representatives on deliberative committees</p> <p>Discussions with the Higher Education Student Council</p> <p>Interviews with completing students to identify the key factors affecting their levels of achievement</p> <p>Discussions with the Higher Education Student Council</p> |

| Target Group | Target | Methods |
|---|---|---|
| Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority students | Increase the proportion of non-white entrants by 1% year on year, from 23% in 2018/19 to 29% in 2024/25 | Quantitative analysis of admissions data Consideration of public, especially local authority and labour market, information relating to the College's catchment Comparative data for other providers operating in similar contexts Analysis of data for students not admitted to determine any significant patterns / factors Surveys of students and applicants not accepting offered places to determine the factors affecting their decisions Feedback from / focus groups with targeted community groups to establish their perceptions of College actions Discussions with the Higher Education Student Council |
| Mature Students: | Completely close the gap between continuation rates of young and mature part-time students by 2024/25 | Quantitative analysis of continuation rates Student feedback through programme committees and student representatives on deliberative committees Discussions with the Higher Education Student Council Interviews with withdrawing students to identify the key factors affecting their decisions and any possible mitigations Focus groups with continuing students |
| | Completely close the gap between attainment rates of part-time young and mature students by 2024/25 | Quantitative analysis of achievement rates and results profiles Student feedback through programme committees and student representatives on deliberative committees Discussions with the Higher Education Student Council Interviews with completing students to identify the key factors affecting their levels of achievement Discussions with the Higher Education Student Council |
| Disabled Students: | Increase participation by part-time students with disabilities by 1% year on year, from 5% in 2018/19 to 11% by 2024/25 | Quantitative analysis of admissions data Consideration of public, especially local authority and labour market, information relating to the College's catchment Comparative data for other providers operating in similar contexts Analysis of data for students not admitted to determine any significant patterns / factors Surveys of students and applicants not accepting offered places to determine the factors affecting their decisions Feedback from / focus groups with targeted disability groups to establish their perceptions of College actions Discussions with the Higher Education Student Council |

By means of triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data the College will endeavour to separate evidence from opinion and will use the understandings gained to determine whether, and to what extent, there are causal links between the actions taken under this Plan and the progress, or lack of progress, identified in its data. These conclusions will be used to inform its monitoring and evaluation of progress, and to determine any variations in plans required to deliver its intended outcomes.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The implementation and operation of this plan will be monitored by a committee of staff and students made up of staff selected by the College's Higher Education Academic Board and student representatives selected by the Higher Education Student Council.

If the student representatives selected by the Higher Education Student Council do not include the range of backgrounds of the wider student body, additional members will be appointed by the Higher Education Academic Board to ensure satisfactory representation.

Staff and student representatives on this committee will be provided with training on equality and diversity issues and on the analysis and interpretation of data.

The terms of reference of this committee will ensure that its deliberations are focused on impact in terms of:

- improved access
- continuation
- attainment
- progression to postgraduate study and graduate employment
- expenditure from hardship funds

Progress towards the targets of this plan will be measured annually by analysis of College student data and comparison, where relevant, with published data for other institutions and data relating to its local communities.

The College takes its GDPR responsibilities seriously so all/any personal data provided to the committee will be anonymised.

This analysis will make use of all/any tools provided by the Office for Students in the assessment of the impact of the measures taken under this plan.

The committee will meet once in each semester to consider progress and will produce an annual evaluative report. This will cover all forms of disadvantage across the whole student lifecycle and will identify performance in absolute terms and the results of evaluations. Should any performance in any area of disadvantage worsen in absolute terms, or progress fall significantly below targeted levels, the report will include a detailed plan of remedial actions.

This report will be presented to the Higher Education Student Council. The desired outcome is for the final version to be jointly authored and approved by staff and student representatives. Should this not be possible, the Higher Education Student Council will have the right to create its own report or commentary. The report will then be submitted, together with any student report or commentary, to the Higher Education Academic Board for discussion.

Following consideration by the Higher Education Academic Board, the report will be submitted to the Curriculum and Quality Committee of governors.

The Higher Education Academic Board will ensure that conclusions drawn from monitoring and evaluation are disseminated to academic and support staff to inform future practice. This Board will determine whether specific actions are needed to reinforce this dissemination and will action plan accordingly.

Independent Review

The College understands that if all review processes are entirely contained within its staff and students there is a possibility that parochial understanding of the effectiveness of its evaluation might develop over time.

For this reason, the College will ensure that an independent view of its performance is included in the reports presented to the HESC and HEAB. This will be undertaken by a suitably qualified individual sourced from within the UK Higher Education sector.

4. Provision of information to students

Prospective students will be informed of the fees for all years of their courses:

- On the course information pages of the College website
- On course leaflets and in college brochures
- In letters / emails confirming offers of places
- At the time of enrolment

The information on the College website and contained in brochures will include details of the College policy relating to inflationary increases and all/any support available to students.

Details of the Higher Education Student Support Fund availability, the criteria to be used to determine grants / loans from the fund, and application forms for grants will be available to students online from the College

website and/or Virtual Learning Environment.

The approved Access and Participation Plan will be published on the College website.

Current students will have access to all of this information via the College website and through the College's Virtual Learning Environment. Details of where this information can be found will be signposted in course handbooks and in tutorials.

5. Appendix

The OfS will append the following items from the fees and targets and investment documents when an access and participation plan is published:

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)
 2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)
- Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

Access and participation plan

Fee information 2020-21

Provider name: Nelson and Colne College

Provider UKPRN: 10004552

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 | All new entrants | £7,725 |
| Foundation degree | All new entrants | £7,725 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | All new entrants | £7,725 |
| HNC/HND | All new entrants | £7,725 |
| CertHE/DipHE | All new entrants | £7,725 |
| Postgraduate ITT | All new entrants | £7,725 |
| Accelerated degree | All new entrants | £9,270 |
| Sandwich year | All new entrants | £1,545 |
| 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 | All new admissions | £6,000 |
| Foundation degree | All new admissions | £6,000 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | All new admissions | £4,500 |
| HNC/HND | HNC/D - partner employers | £3,000 |
| HNC/HND | Non-employer new admissions | £6,000 |
| CertHE/DipHE | All new admissions | £6,000 |
| Postgraduate ITT | All new admissions | £6,000 |
| Accelerated degree | All new admissions | £6,750 |
| Sandwich year | All new admissions | £1,200 |
| 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: Nelson and Colne College

Provider UKPRN: 10004552

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 (£) | £76,515.00 | £108,601.00 | £118,789.00 | £122,122.00 | £126,019.00 |
| Access (pre-16) | £11,772.00 | £16,708.00 | £18,275.00 | £18,788.00 | £19,388.00 |
| Access (post-16) | £17,657.00 | £25,062.00 | £27,413.00 | £28,182.00 | £29,081.00 |
| Access (adults and the community) | £41,200.00 | £58,477.00 | £63,963.00 | £65,758.00 | £67,856.00 |
| Access (other) | £5,886.00 | £8,354.00 | £9,138.00 | £9,394.00 | £9,694.00 |
| Financial support (£) | £29,429.00 | £41,769.00 | £45,688.00 | £46,970.00 | £48,469.00 |
| Research and evaluation (£) | £11,772.00 | £16,708.00 | £18,275.00 | £18,788.00 | £19,388.00 |

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) | £470,860.00 | £668,310.00 | £731,000.00 | £751,525.00 | £775,500.00 |
| Access investment | 16.3% | 16.3% | 16.3% | 16.2% | 16.3% |
| Financial support | 6.3% | 6.2% | 6.3% | 6.2% | 6.3% |
| Research and evaluation | 2.5% | 2.5% | 2.5% | 2.5% | 2.5% |
| Total investment (as %HFI) | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% |

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Nelson and Colne College

Provider UKPRN: 10004552

Targets

Table 2a - Access

| Aim (500 characters maximum) | Reference number | Target group | Description (500 characters maximum) | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Baseline data | Yearly milestones | | | | | Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum) |
|------------------------------|------------------|--------------|---|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|
| | | | | | | | | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | |
| To increase non-white entry | PTA_1 | Ethnicity | Increase the proportion of non-white full-time entrants | No | Other data source | 2018-19 | 23% | 25% | 26% | 27% | 28% | 29% | The other data source referred to is internal data extracted from the historic ILRs of both pre-merger Colleges. The College will target all miority ethnicities, differentiating its approach where appropriate, but the very large predominance of Asian Heritage within the non-white ethnicities within the College's catchment area means that it is not meaningful to attempt to further subdivide this target by ethnicity. |
| To improve disabled access | PTA_2 | Disabled | Increase participation by part-time students with disabilities by 1% year on year, from 5% in 2018/19 to 11% by 2024/25 | No | Other data source | 2018-19 | 5% | 7% | 8% | 9% | 10% | 11% | The other data source referred to is internal data extracted from the historic ILRs of both pre-merger Colleges. |
| | PTA_3 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_4 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_5 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_6 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_7 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_8 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Table 2b - Success

| Aim (500 characters maximum) | Reference number | Target group | Description | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Baseline data | Yearly milestones | | | | | Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum) |
|---|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|
| | | | | | | | | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | |
| Close the gap in full-time continuation rates between students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1&2 and those from Quintiles 3-5 | PTS_1 | Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN) | Close the gap in continuation rates between students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1&2 and those from Quintiles 3-5 | No | Other data source | 2017-18 | 15% | 12% | 9% | 6% | 3% | 0% | The other data source referred to is internal data extracted from the historic ILRs of both pre-merger Colleges. |
| Close the gap in part-time continuation rates between students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1&2 and those from Quintiles 3-5 | PTS_2 | Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN) | Close the gap in continuation rates between students from POLAR4 Quintiles 1&2 and those from Quintiles 3-5 | No | Other data source | 2017-18 | 6% | 4% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 0% | The other data source referred to is internal data extracted from the historic ILRs of both pre-merger Colleges. |
| Close the gap in full-time continuation rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5 | PTS_3 | Socio-economic | Reduce the gap in full-time continuation rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5 | No | Other data source | 2017-18 | 18% | 16% | 14% | 12% | 10% | 8% | The other data source referred to is internal data extracted from the historic ILRs of both pre-merger Colleges The College believes that this target is affected by matters, such as social attitudes and school performance, that will take longer to address than the life of this plan. It anticipates that it may take until 2029/30 to close the gap completely. |
| Close the gap in part-time continuation rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5 | PTS_4 | Socio-economic | Reduce the gap in part-time continuation rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5 | No | Other data source | 2017-18 | 14% | 12% | 10% | 8% | 7% | 6% | The other data source referred to is internal data extracted from the historic ILRs of both pre-merger Colleges The College believes that this target is affected by matters, such as social attitudes and school performance, that will take longer to address than the life of this plan. It anticipates that it may take until 2029/30 to close the gap completely. |
| Close the gap in full-time attainment rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5 | PTS_5 | Socio-economic | Close the gap in full-time attainment rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5 | No | Other data source | 2015-16 | 25% | 20% | 15% | 10% | 5% | 0% | The other data source referred to is internal data extracted from the historic ILRs of both pre-merger Colleges. 2015/6 has been used as a base year in order to reduce the distortion in these figures from the exclusion of continuing students |
| Close the gap in part-time attainment rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5 | PTS_6 | Socio-economic | Close the gap in part-time attainment rates between students from IMD Quintile 1 and those from Quintiles 2-5 | No | Other data source | 2015-16 | 17% | 14% | 9% | 6% | 3% | 0% | The other data source referred to is internal data extracted from the historic ILRs of both pre-merger Colleges. 2015/6 has been used as a base year in order to reduce the distortion in these figures from the exclusion of continuing students |
| To close the gap between continuation rates of young and mature full-time students | PTS_7 | Mature | Completely close the gap between continuation rates of young and mature part-time students by 2024/25 | No | Other data source | 2017-18 | 5% | 4% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 0% | The other data source referred to is internal data extracted from the historic ILRs of both pre-merger Colleges. |
| To close the gap between attainment rates of young and mature part-time students | PTS_8 | Mature | Completely close the gap between attainment rates of young and mature part-time students by 2024/25 | No | Other data source | 2017-18 | 25% | 20% | 15% | 10% | 5% | 0% | The other data source referred to is internal data extracted from the historic ILRs of both pre-merger Colleges. There are comparatively small numbers of students in the data underpinning the calculation of this gap. As a result the year-on-year figures can be expected to be more volatile than these targtes suggest. |

Table 2c - Progression

[illegible]