



2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by City College Plymouth against targets, objectives and written commitments set out in its 2019-20 access and participation plan. This document is a summary of information submitted by the provider to the OfS. This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

1. Ambition and strategy

City College Plymouth's ambition and strategy as detailed in the 2019-20 access and participation plan:

Positioned at the heart of our community, we have bold ambitions for the College, the City and the region, and our access and participation activities have a significant role within these ambitions. We believe that we have the capacity to make a major contribution and impact positively on individuals, families, employers, our communities and the wider economy through the transformative potential of HE. We work to raise aspirations and create an environment focused on enterprise and employability. As an FE College, City College Plymouth takes a whole institution approach to the student lifecycle. We are aware that every student is an individual and must be treated as such. The College has a long-term commitment to ensure that HE learners are supported, and their achievements celebrated throughout the student lifecycle.

Within the 2019-20 access and participation plan the College committed to facilitating progression through FE and into HE, raising and meeting aspirations. There was a clear focus on raising progression for those who would not normally access HE; with the provision of HE in FE helping to ensure seamless progression, where appropriate. Within the plan it was stated that the College strives to be responsive to the voice of business and industry and more actively engage employers in the development and delivery of its HE provision, and this was an important consideration within our 2019-20 strategic planning. Alongside increasing access and maintaining cost-effectiveness, we continued to develop a new curriculum to respond to emerging local and national priorities. We also continued to develop an improved commercial offer and delivered our provision in increasingly flexible and innovative ways. The events of 2019-20 moved us further along our path with respect to our 2019-20 ambition to ensure greater accessibility and flexibility and adding real value to the learning environment for our students.

Within our strategy we stated that we would ensure that our HE offer responds to changing demographics and enables students to fit their studies in with their busy lives. A strong student focus and student involvement was a priority for the College, and this continues to be a priority. Our ambition was that our students leave the College with a broad set of graduate skills that prepared them for work and life.

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by City College Plymouth of progress against the targets approved in its 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-20 access and participation plans. Full information can be found in **Table 8a – statistical targets and milestones** and **Table 8b – Other milestones and targets** of City College Plymouth's 2019-20 [access and participation plan](#).

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in [Annex B](#).

Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	Improve rates of access into HE for internal level 3 students	2014-15	11%	17%	19%	Percentage	2019-20	26.2	Expected progress
T16a_02 (Access)	Increase number of mature students across HE curriculum	2013-14	102	118	124	Headcount	2019-20	112	Limited progress
T16a_03 (Student success)	Improve success rates for students with declared disabilities/ learning difficulties	2014-15	83%	85%	85.5%	Percentage	2019-20	83.4	Limited progress
T16a_04 (Progression)	Undertake range of activities to support future progression into further study for HE students, including link to employability skills, and improve progression rates onto further study. Target participants for all activities to be Access and participation Plan Accountable - linked to socio-economic group, ethnicity, gender, mature students and disabled students.	2014-15	75%	81%	83%	Percentage	2019-20	87	Expected progress
T16a_05 (Access)	Engage local primary and secondary schools in a range of STEM related activities aimed at raising aspirations with STEM, and supporting attainment within these areas. Activities to include work based skills, and tackling stereotypes within STEM occupations. Activities to include employer involvement. Access and Participation Plan accountable	2016-17	30	42	44	Other	2019-20	72	Expected progress

	data will be captured for all participants.									
T16a_06 (Success)	Reduce the achievement gap for students with declared learning difficulties or disabilities in line with national average	2016-17	8%	5%	3%	Percentage	2019-20	6.2	Limited progress	

Other milestones and targets

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16b_01 (Access)	Provide a range of taster activities aimed at raising awareness of the opportunities available to young people through Higher Education. Activities will be subject based and include involvement from academic staff and current HE student ambassadors. Target participants for all activities to be Access and Participation plan accountable - linked to socio-economic group, ethnicity, gender, mature students and disabled students.	2015-16	200	266	293	Headcount	2019-20	300	Expected progress
T16b_02 (Student success)	Delivery of a peer assisted learning scheme to support current HE students, developing confidence in the requirements of HE study and further development of academic and study skills. Aimed at promoting progression to further study through direct links with students who have progressed themselves	2015-16	10%	16%	18%	Percentage	2019-20	40	Expected progress
T16b_03 (Access)	Engagement with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds between years 9 and 13 in a peer mentor scheme aimed at raising attainment, supported by HE student ambassadors. Activities to be undertaken within local schools, and in College.	2016-17	0	40	50	Headcount	2019-20	0	No progress
T16b_04 (Success)	Delivery of a range of mental health awareness and support sessions to improve the psychological wellbeing and resilience of our HE students throughout their student lifecycle	2017-18	2	6	8	Other	2019-20	25	Expected progress

3. Investment commitments

3.1. Access and participation investment for the last audited year

Please note that some differences in predicted vs actual spend may be due to reporting differences between academic and financial years.

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£21,450.00	£22,000.00	3%
Financial Support	£53,650.00	£49,873.00	-7%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected City College Plymouth has made the following commitments to increase the rate of progress against their targets.

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16a_02	This target does not feature in our 2020-21 APP. This is partly because it is a headcount target rather than a percentage target, and doesn't take into account changing student profiles. The College still continues to have a high % of mature students when comparing with national averages and will continue to undertake work to proactively engage mature students, and support their progression into Higher Education through flexible delivery and robust support structures.
T16a_03	This continues to be an area of importance for the College and is informing our approach to how we provide learning support, particularly during periods of remote delivery. A new communication strategy has been implemented by the HE Learning Support Team after lessons learned during 2019-20, and following further consultation with the student body, we have found ways of ensuring continued personalised support without too much reliance on digital platforms, for example a schedule of telephone meetings which students have responded to (as opposed to online meetings). We are continuing to review our approach to the use of learning technologies, and have received feedback from students that the recording of lectures, and use of recording tutorials and assignment feedback sessions online has greatly supported their learning. We will take the good practice we have gained during the pandemic to support in ensuring inclusive practice with respect to the recording and sharing of information is embedded through all curriculum moving forward, irrespective of remote forms of delivery.

T16a_06	<p>These steps mirror those noted in X21 as there is an overlap in the work undertaken, and to be taken forward, for these targets. This continues to be an area of importance for the College and is informing our approach to how we provide learning support, particularly during periods of remote delivery. A new communication strategy has been implemented by the HE Learning Support Team after lessons learned during 2019-20, and following further consultation with the student body, we have found ways of ensuring continued personalised support without too much reliance on digital platforms, for example a schedule of telephone meetings which students have responded to (as opposed to online meetings). We are continuing to review our approach to the use of learning technologies, and have received feedback from students that the recording of lectures, and use of recording tutorials and assignment feedback sessions online has greatly supported their learning. We will take the good practice we have gained during the pandemic to support in ensuring inclusive practice with respect to the recording and sharing of information is embedded through all curriculum moving forward, irrespective of remote forms of delivery.</p>
T16b_03	<p>The College is reviewing the approach to local buddy schemes following the reduction in funding for the UniConnect programme. However, feedback from schools has been that students have preferred connecting through UniConnect and so it is likely that this work will be channelled through that platform, with College Higher Education students undertaking work through this online system.</p>

5. Confirmation

City College Plymouth confirms that:

Student engagement	
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?	
Yes	
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?	
Yes	
Verification and sign off	
City College Plymouth has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.	
Yes	
Accountable officer sign off	
Name	Jackie Grubb
Position	Principal and CEO

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

City College Plymouth's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16a_02
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
<p>We feel that we have met the commitments in our 2019-20 plan. The College committed to continuing to deliver flexible provision that supports mature students in accessing higher level study. We also committed to working with local employers to support progression of their workforce. These commitments have been met, and are of continued strategic importance. However, the changing landscape does mean that our mature student headcount has declined, with more of our employer sponsored students falling into the young category due to changing workforce profile for key employers, with higher numbers of young apprentices being sponsored to study. In addition we have seen the closure of some part time foundation degrees which historically recruited mature students due to a declining demand linked to increased student fees. However, when comparing our % of mature new entrants with national profiles the College performs very well, with 45% of our 19/20 entrants falling within the mature category in comparison to the national average of 30.2%</p>
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
<p>The College has a high number of Access to HE students, who do not progress internally (and so are not reflected in the data for this target), but do progress to HEIs. The College has been working proactively with these students to ensure they are well informed regarding their progression options, including to College based HE. In addition, to support in raising awareness of the HE opportunities at the College for mature students the College undertook a review of promotional materials to ensure they were representative of the mature student market, and reviewed its approach to recruiting HE Student Ambassadors to support in ensuring representation of mature students in outreach activities.</p>

Target reference number: T16a_03
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
<p>The College commits to supporting its students with declared disabilities, and 2019-20 saw the establishment of a new HE Learning Support team in recognition of the high levels of learning support needs of our HE student population. This team has been established in order to ensure that students with declared learning difficulties and disabilities are supported from the point of application. Unfortunately much of the planned support was in-person, and while the new team adapted to the delivery of support online following lockdown, the pandemic had an impact on the successful outcomes of our entire student body, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities.</p>
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
<p>In addition to the learning support team the College also invested in a number of digital resources to support students with the development of their academic skills, with a view to ensuring that support was accessible to students within their own time and outside of lessons.</p>

Target reference number: T16a_06
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
The College commits to supporting its students with declared disabilities, and our target regarding reducing the achievement gap led to the establishment of a new HE Learning Support team in recognition of the high levels of learning support needs of our HE student population. This team has been established in order to ensure that students with declared learning difficulties and disabilities are supported from the point of application. Unfortunately much of the planned support was in-person, and while the new team adapted to the delivery of support online following lockdown, the pandemic had an impact on the successful outcomes of our entire student body, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
The information contained within cell W21 is also relevant here. The College invested in digital resources aimed at providing additional support to students regarding the development of academic skills.

Target reference number: T16b_03
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
This project has now been suspended due to the work undertaken by the UniConnect Programme that the College is a partner within - Next Steps South West (NSSW). As the work of NSSW has developed this included a core offer of a mentoring programme to the same target young people which our project aimed to target. Feedback from schools has highlighted a saturation in the market now regarding mentoring programmes, and so the decision has been made not to pursue a separate mentoring programme, to avoid confusion, although it should be noted the College's HE Student Ambassadors are still positively engaged with the work through NCOP.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
N/A

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

City College Plymouth's commentary on any of the targets listed in [Section 2](#).

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	
T16a_02	
T16a_03	<p>It should be noted that the College saw a 3.5% increase in the number of students who declared a disability or learning difficulty in 2019-20. When analysing the data relating to the nature of the declared disability/ learning difficulty there are specific trends which the College is using to inform its approach during 2020-21 and beyond. The College saw an increase in the success rates of students with medical/ physical disabilities, autistic spectrum and mental/ social/ emotional disabilities (although this group still remain a concern with far lower than expected rates of success). When comparing 2018-19 and 2019-20. However, there was a decrease in success for students with declared learning difficulties. Work with our student body has highlighted that this is due to difficulties in engaging with remote delivery, and lacking the structure of support that on-campus study provides, particularly with respect to organisation and self/ time management. In awareness of this the learning support team have been providing specific and targeted support and guidance to students within this category during 2020-21.</p>
T16a_04	
T16a_05	
T16a_06	<p>In addition to the addition comments in cell Y21 it should be noted that the student population with the largest achievement gap were those with mental/ emotional/ social disabilities. During 2020-21 the College has invested in mental health first aid training for a group of staff and students to support in better signposting of the support available, and will continue to provide mental health support to HE students in order to support their outcomes, with the impact of the pandemic being a particular concern regarding mental health.</p>
T16b_01	<p>It should be noted that during 2019-20 some of these activities were delivered virtually, rather than in person due to the pandemic.</p>
T16b_02	
T16b_03	
T16b_04	