

City College Norwich

Summary of our 2025-26 to 2028-29 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

An access and participation plan sets out meaningful and effective provisions to promote equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups, as determined by the Office for Students. City College Norwich's full plan can be found [here](#).

Key points (See pages 3-6 of the access and participation plan for more information)

Analysis identified impact to groups of underrepresented students across their journey from application, degree completion and progression in their chosen career, or onto further study.

- Students from more deprived backgrounds are less likely to access courses, succeed in their course or progress into graduate level careers or further study than those less-deprived.
- Students with Mental Health conditions withdraw more frequently than other students
- Apprentices with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are less likely to complete their apprenticeship than other apprentices
- Students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities on degree programmes have lower levels of attainment (achieving First or Upper Second, degree classifications) than their peers
- Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Other Ethnicity students at City College Norwich are less likely to attain First or Upper Second, degree classifications than their white student peers.

Fees we charge (See page 30 of the access and participation plan)

Information on our approved course fees is published on our website as part of our material information (see [HE Student Information](#)) and against individual course pages. Course pages also include expected additional costs (for books, trips, etc) that students are likely to incur over the course of their studies.

Financial help available (See page 30 of the access and participation plan, and our website see [HE Financial Support](#))

Additional financial support is offered to students (both new and continuing students) through:

- **HE Hardship Fund** - supporting students experiencing financial difficulties to continue with and be successful in their studies.
- **HE Progression Bursary** - targeted at progressors from City College Norwich (including Easton & Paston) who have successfully completed a level 3 qualification in the previous academic year. This £1,000 bursary is paid in two equal instalments in February and June of Year One of their HE course at City College Norwich. To remain eligible students need to remain active on their programme of study at the two payment dates.
- **Low-income bursary** - available to all enrolled higher education students with a household income of at or below £20,000 per annum. The £500 bursary per year, will be paid during each year of undergraduate study at City College Norwich, up to a maximum of 4 years.

Students will only be able to claim one of either the HE Progression or Low-income bursary in any one academic year.

Information for students (See page 30 of our access and participation plan)

We publish information about our courses on our website, prospectus, and through course flyers to enable prospective students visiting the college, our website, or careers events to make informed choices. Course pages include the fees that will be charged for each course along with additional costs that they are likely to incur.

We also provide prospective and current students with access to relevant regulations, policies and procedures that will apply to them on our Higher Education Student Information page (see our [Student Information](#)) and our financial support (see [HE Financial Support](#))

What we are aiming to achieve (See pages 9-26 of the access and participation plan)

The table below provides a summary of the areas of focus in our plan.

| Lifecycle Stage and Target Group(s) | Targets (to be met by 2030 unless otherwise stated) |
|--|--|
| <p>Access <i>Full-time Undergraduate entrants from more deprived backgrounds.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To close the gap of access by full-time undergraduate entrants from IMD Q1 and Q2 to within 5% of the current sector average • To increase the access rate of full-time undergraduate male students from the most deprived backgrounds (males from IMD Quintiles 1 and 2) from a 4-year aggregate rate of 13.4% to 16% |
| <p>Continuation and Completion</p> <p><i>Students from more deprived backgrounds, including those in receipt of Free School Meals.</i></p> <p><i>Students with Black, Asian, Mixed or other ethnicities.</i></p> <p><i>Apprentices with Learning difficulties and/or disabilities.</i></p> <p><i>Students with declared Mental Health Conditions.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce the continuation gap for full-time male students from deprived backgrounds (IMD Quintiles 1 and 2) from 4.5 percentage points to 2.0 percentage points • To reduce the continuation gap for full-time undergraduate students with Mental Health Conditions from 5.7 percentage points (based on 4-year aggregated data) to 2.5 percentage points • To reduce the gap in completion of full-time undergraduate male students from deprived backgrounds (IMD Quintiles 1 and 2) to within 2 percentage points of the average for all other groups. • To reduce the gap in completion rates for apprentices with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities, compared to the non-disabled apprentices at City College Norwich from 3.2 percentage points to 1 percentage point • To reduce the completion gap for full-time undergraduates, who were in receipt of Free-School Meals, from 16.5 percentage points to 10 percentage points, compared to full-time undergraduates at City College Norwich who were ineligible for Free School Meals • To reduce the completion gap for full-time undergraduate Black, Asian and other minority ethnicity students, from more disadvantaged backgrounds, compared to white students from similar backgrounds from a 5.1 percentage point gap to within a 1.00 percentage point gap |
| <p>Attainment</p> <p><i>Students from more deprived backgrounds, who were in receipt of Free School Meals.</i></p> <p><i>Students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities, including those with declared Cognitive or Learning Difficulties.</i></p> <p><i>Asian, Black, Minority Ethnic and Other Ethnicity students.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce the attainment gap (1st or 2:1 awards) for full-time undergraduate students who were eligible for Free School Meals to within 10 percentage points, from a current gap of 19.1 percentage points (based on 4-year aggregate data) • To reduce the attainment gap for students with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities on Full-time undergraduate degrees from 8.4 percentage points to 5 percentage points • To reduce the attainment gap for full-time undergraduate students with declared Cognitive or Learning Difficulties from 19.4 percentage points to 10 percentage points • To reduce the attainment gap for full-time undergraduate Black, Asian and other minority ethnicity students compared to their white counterparts from 23.99 percentage points to 10 percentage points • To reduce the attainment gap for first-degree undergraduate male students, from more deprived backgrounds from 16.9 percentage points to 8 percentage points, compared to less disadvantaged males |
| <p>Progression</p> <p><i>Students from more deprived backgrounds.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce the progression gap for female full-time undergraduate students from more deprived backgrounds from 17.33 percentage points to 10 percentage points compared to less deprived females • To increase the rates of progression into Highly Skilled roles / Further study for full-time undergraduate students from the most deprived backgrounds from 44% to 50% • To reduce the progression gap for male full-time undergraduate students, from the most deprived backgrounds compared to their male peers from 8.6 percentage points to 5 percentage points |

What we are doing to address keys risks to equality of opportunity (See pages 8-26 of the access and participation plan)

We have identified five intervention strategies to address risks to equality of opportunity identified in our plan. These intervention strategies cover all stages of a student's studies with us from their access into higher education, success on their programme, and their progression into suitable careers or further study after their course.

Each intervention strategy is targeted at specific underrepresented groups and is supported by activities to reduce risks to equality of opportunity. Examples of these activities include: -

- A low-income bursary for students with a household income of £20,000 or less.
- Targeted outreach to areas/schools with low rates of progression to higher education.
- Introduction of a buddying/mentoring scheme, with 2nd and 3rd year students being Buddies to 1st Years)
- Changes to policies around reasonable adjustments to make policies more inclusive to students with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities.
- City College Norwich signing up to the Association of Colleges (AoC) Mental Health Charter
- Access to 24/7 Student Wellbeing Services, via an online app, and access to professional counselling services, in addition to our existing wellbeing services.
- Introduction of the CCN Professional Skills Award – to help students build a portfolio of transferrable and professional skills that they have developed during their time at City College Norwich, to support students to progress into or within their chosen career.

How students can get involved (See pages 28-29 of the access and participation plan)

We have engaged with our students to help develop and review our plan, with students taking an active role in shaping our proposed activities to address equality of opportunity risks.

We intend to involve representative students in the evaluation of our intervention strategies, working alongside academic and evaluation staff. Students who wish to get involved in this work can contact Simon Rhodes (see contact details below) for further details. We will also use other channels of communication to engage with students in this important work.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved (See pages 28-29 of the access and participation plan).

We have created an Access and Participation Evaluation role to help develop our evaluation strategy and to keep abreast of research developments in the field, and the experience of other providers in dealing with similar equality of opportunity issues to City College Norwich.

Progress against the intervention strategies will be reported to our Senior Leadership, including the Governing Body, through our Curriculum and Standards sub-committee of the Board of the Corporation. We also commit to producing interim evaluation reports at the end of each academic year, with these progress reports published on our website.

Students will continue to be involved in monitoring the plan, with a number of students already volunteering to be involved in the evaluation of our intervention activities.

Contact details for further information

Please contact Simon Rhodes, simon.rhodes@ccn.ac.uk for more information.