

New College Swindon 10004579: Summary of 2022-23 to 2026-27 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

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



You can see the full access and participation plan for New College Swindon at <https://he.newcollege.ac.uk/students/policies>

Key points

The focus of our access and participation plan is on encouraging participation in higher education within Swindon. Data shows that some groups of students will experience barriers to entering higher education, which will be greater than in other groups. This data has helped us identify these challenges:

See pages 1 to 11 for the full plan

- There is a low uptake of higher education in Swindon and the following reasons influence this:
 - Young people are less likely to enter into higher education, if none of their family members has a higher education qualification.
 - High employment rates in the area mean many families work instead of studying
- Low numbers of students with disabilities access higher education within Swindon
- Those with Black and Asian heritage are less likely to go into higher education in Swindon and are less likely to complete their studies.

We are also ensuring our work supports the priorities set out in the Office for Students Next Steps in Access and Participation [Next steps in access and participation - Office for Students](#) which are referenced to the relevant content in the full Plan, within this summary document.

Fees we charge

At New College Swindon, the maximum fees charged are:

- £7500 for full-time students.
- £3500 for part-time students



You can see a full list of fee's for courses at the College here: <https://he.newcollege.ac.uk/courses>

Financial help available

We offer financial support to students from underrepresented groups, to encourage participation in Higher Education and to provide support to continue and complete their studies. (Priority C; pg. 10,11,22,23)

See pages 23 & 24 for the full plan

The support includes:

- **HE Diagnostic Support Fund:** grant for the cost of the diagnostic test required in order to apply for Disabled Student Allowance.
- **HE Bursary – Low income:** For students who are from households earning less than £25000 a year – Students will receive £750 per year, paid in 3 termly instalments.
- **HE Bursary – Care Experienced and Carers:** For all students who have experienced living in care, or who are in receipt of carer's allowance – Students will receive £1000 per year or pro rata if studying part time.

- **HE Hardship Fund:** For all students who can evidence an acute episode of hardship that could mean they cannot carry on studying – amount determined on a case-by-case basis, but not likely to exceed £250 in a single payment.

Information for students

See page 32 for further information

- **Prospective students** receive information on fees and financial support, in person at events such as open days, during interviews, and from our prospectus and website, or by emailing HEAdmissions@newcollege.ac.uk.
- **Current students** receive information on the fees and financial support available to them through our student portal, the website or by visiting the HE office in person at North Star Campus or by emailing HESupport@newcollege.ac.uk.



For the most up-to-date information, please see the [New College Swindon website](#).

What we are aiming to achieve

See pages 12 to 14 for the full plan

Develop a College wide approach to access and participation to ensure that we consider all stages of the student lifecycle – talking to our staff and students about their experiences and working together to improve these

Ensure that access to higher-level study is available to all regardless of their background or protected characteristic by:

- Working to remove as many barriers as possible so that students from all backgrounds can study higher education. We aim to increase the number of students from Black, Asian minority backgrounds; students who have disabilities. Also to increase numbers from other underrepresented groups including, care experienced, carers, military families and those who qualify for free school meals. (Priority B; pages 25, 26) (Priority C; pg. 10, 27)
- Working with schools to support the attainment of young people and to support their access and transition into higher education.(Priority B; pg. 12,13,17-21)
- Making sure that we offer a range of routes into higher-level study to support students who have barriers to their participation.(Priority D; pg. 13,22)

To support all students to achieve their full potential - by ensuring that there is early identification of any gaps in continuation and attainment, and reduce gaps in particular for students from Black, Asian and mixed minority backgrounds

Support students into higher skilled jobs or further study by:

- Ensuring employability is embedded in all programmes
- Ensuring that there are no gaps in progression into highly skilled employment for any disadvantaged groups by 2024/25.
- To improve student progression to employment or further study for all students by 2027/28.

What we are doing to achieve our aims

See pages 17 to 27 for the full plan

We will be implementing the actions below to help support and achieve our aims within our Access and Participation Plan:

- **Recruiting a HE Outreach & Transition Officer to our team** - they will have a key role in working with schools to support attainment and improving access and participation for our underrepresented groups, as well as working with other organisations such as Uni Connect to maximise our activities. They will also evaluate these activities against our targets.

(Priority B, C: pg. 22)

- **Developing outreach activities to support underrepresented groups** - e.g. offering a 'Women in Engineering' Day to local schoolchildren to help to raise awareness of the types of roles available. (Priority B: pg.19, 25)
- **Tailoring the support available to help underrepresented groups with specific needs** - e.g. offering recorded lectures that are accessible online, which may be beneficial for carers and disabled students who may miss some lectures. (Priority D: pg. 13,15,24)
- **Offering bursaries from 2022/23** - aimed particularly at students with low household incomes and from other targeted underrepresented groups. (Priority C: pg. 23)
- **Making information about the support for students readily available on our website** - e.g. clearly signposting how we support young carers, care experienced and mental health needs, and encourage openness and disclosure of mental health needs (Priority A: pg. 22)
- **Focussing on higher and degree apprenticeships within The Institute of Technology** – enabling students to upskill without financial strain or the need to take out a loan. (Priority D: pg.13,22)
- **Introducing more staff development opportunities** - focussing on understanding the barriers experienced by underrepresented groups, and how we can work together to remove them.(Priority C: pg. 14,15)
- **Recruiting student ambassadors** - to represent our current student population. (Priority B, C: pg. 13,21,28)

How students can get involved

See pages 28 & 29
for the full plan

We gathered feedback from students on our proposals at the time of writing our Access and Participation Plan.

Our HE students take part in focus groups where they can tell us what is working well and what is not working, which will help to shape their experience at the college. They can tell us about their own experiences of accessing HE and any barriers experienced, which informs our plans and work on access and participation. A student representative can join our Access & Participation Group, to work with us on achieving our aims and targets within our plan.



To provide further feedback students can email HE@newcollege.ac.uk

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

See page 31 for
further information

All of the progress we make toward the aims and targets in our Plan will be monitored and measured by collecting data and feedback from our students and this will be used to evaluate:

- If the programme design and content is appropriate for **all** of our students.
- If the work outlined above has been implemented successfully.
- If we are making enough progress to meet the targets we set in our plan.
- The impact that achieving those targets is having on HE students, our processes and environments

The Access and Participation Group will use this evaluation and determine progress made towards the aims of our plan. A report on progress will be provided to the Principalship team and Governing body, and a summary added to the website annually, including updated action plan.

Contact details for further information

You can contact the HE office by emailing HE@newcollege.ac.uk for further information.