

## **Leeds City College**

**UKPRN 10024962**

### **Access Agreement 2018-19**

#### **Introduction**

Leeds City College has approximately 25,000 students. Of these further education and higher education students, 14% are full time and 86% part time students. BME students account for 44% of the total and 15% of this total number are students with disabilities or learning difficulties. Overall, 50% of the students have been identified as meeting widening participation 'ward uplift' criteria.

As a large, diverse organisation, the Leeds City College Group provides benefits to the region, employers, employees, students and the community. Particular advantages for learners are gained through bringing together higher and further education opportunities in a unique way. The College is well placed to offer a vocational higher education (HE) curriculum that articulates well with its further education (FE) curriculum enabling progression from Level 2 and Level 3 apprenticeships and diplomas for 14-19 year olds and increasing progression through HE. Our widening participation strategy promotes awareness and raises aspirations of all learners to support their progress into and through higher education.

The mission of the College

'To be an exceptional College providing life changing education, skills and experiences for individuals, businesses and communities'.

The College's current Strategy for HE and its Widening Participation Strategic Assessment outline objectives, outcomes and actions relating to widening participation.

Leeds City College has a wholly owned subsidiary, Leeds College of Music (LCoM), which also offers higher and further education courses. LCoM is a progressive Conservatoire, renowned for the quality, distinctiveness and relevance of its provision. LCoM offers specialised and attracts a distinctly different target market from LCC. Due to this difference each component of the Leeds City College group has very different widening participation aims and access measures and targets.

The HE provision at LCC is distinct from that provided by traditional HEIs in that it raises the aspirations of those who would not normally consider higher education as part of their career path. By making such provision available to aspiring learners, LCC plays an important role in contributing to the economic development of the local community, the widening participation agenda and the achievement of national targets for HE participation. Within Leeds, the majority of wards fall under Quintile 2 with respect to participation in Higher Education (POLAR3).

#### **1. Assessment of Performance**

Leeds City College has traditionally been very strong regarding widening participation and aims to continue offering flexible delivery and appropriate support to give students from all backgrounds and circumstances the opportunity to succeed at HE level.

## **Access**

Leeds City College has a good track record in widening participation. The College offers modes of delivery which allow students to work around their course commitments therefore allowing students from lower income brackets to continue with their studies.

The College has structures in place to support disabled students both during and after the DSA application. The number of students with declared disabilities or health problems rose from 11% in 2013/14 to 14% in 2014/15

## **Student Success**

In 2015/16 academic year 12% of students studying at LCC declared disabilities or health problems. During 2015/16 academic year the completion rates for students with declared disabilities or health problem 2% lower than for students with no declaration. This demonstrates progress from 2013/14 which had 11% of students declaring disabilities or health problems and a completion rate of 11% lower than those students who had not declared any disability or health problems.

Retention across the higher education provision in 2015/16 improved by 3% but success fell by 1%. This indicates that the retention measures put in place have had an impact but we now need to look at improving success rates for those students.

The College has also developed an online academic skills module for students to undertake either pre- enrolment or during the induction period to ensure that students have the necessary skills to succeed on their chosen course. To further support students whilst on programme a study skills support room is being introduced in the Student Study Zone for 2017/18 academic year. This will be staffed by library staff with expertise in research and academic writing. Students will be able to access drop in workshops and 1:1 academic skills support.

## **Progression**

Employability is embedded within the HE provision at the College. This is reflected in the DLHE statistics. 93% of our students progress to either employment or further study. 65% of our students are in employment and 28% in further study. Feedback from employers and alumni demonstrates that the students are well prepared for employment

## **2. Fee Limits**

This agreement applies to all courses which are prescribed higher education qualifications under the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

The fee charges for indirectly funded provision offered at the College will be determined by the University providing the funding.

Students included within this agreement:

Full-time students who are eligible to pay EU tuition fees.

Part time students and non-EU students recruited to provision offered at Leeds City College are subject to fees determined by the College, which are reviewed annually by the College Board of Governors.

This access agreement is reviewed annually by the College Executive Leadership Team.

In 2018 19 the following charges will apply.

Component	FT Home/EU undergraduate fee	PT Home/EU undergraduate fee
LCC	£7,250	£3,625
LCoM	£9,250	n/a

In future years we anticipate increasing this fee in line with the annual increase set by the Government each year.

For expected student numbers see Annex B

### 3. Access and Student Success Measures

	Proportion of additional fee income	Expenditure 2018/19
Access & Outreach Activities	3.4%	£150,000
Student success	6.2%	£270,000
Progression	0.2%	£10,000
Financial support	13.4%	£583,121
Total expenditure	23.2%	£,1013,121

Estimates for 2019/20 onwards are given in Annex B

The additional fee income over the period will be used to:

Across the Group:

- Provide a bursary for students with household income levels of less than £42,875
- Support progression throughout the student lifecycle.
- Support students with disabilities and learning difficulties, through diagnostic testing; mentoring for students who do not qualify for DSA or whose assessment has been delayed, particularly where there are mental health issues; funding for transition work for disabled students at the start and end of their studies; and funding for specialist educational diagnosis of autism.

At Leeds City College:

- Provide direct support for students during their study at the College (e.g. study skills such as academic writing, enterprise skills, pastoral)
- Provide support for Level 3 students to prepare them for entering HE by providing tuition in academic skills such as referencing, research, academic writing and independent study) See S5 for more details
- Provide academic skills support for those studying degree apprenticeships, in order to ensure that they have the necessary academic skills to succeed in HE Develop progression arrangements with local schools and other providers to promote access to HE particularly in disadvantaged areas
- To provide support to help address the needs of students with mental health problems, specific learning difficulties and/or an autistic spectrum disorder who either do not qualify for DSA or who have been disproportionately disadvantaged by recent changes to DSA.
- To increase the fund available to support students in financial emergencies

At Leeds College of Music:

Access

- Provide an applicants' bursary, refunding audition fees and travel costs for Home applicants who meet specific income-related criteria to ensure that no applicant is deterred on the grounds of cost.
- Provide an accommodation starter voucher for students with very limited resources who have a specific need for basic essential items when moving into student accommodation for the first time.

Success and progression

- Enhance employability of our students through enterprise activities and opportunities within and outside the HE curriculum.
- Provide a hardship fund to provide emergency support

#### **4. Outreach measures**

At Leeds City College:

In addition to our current outreach work for HE students, we have developed a 'Progression to HE' course for current Level 3 students. This will be delivered as part of the tutorial programme for L3 students and will focus on developing academic skills in preparation for entry into HE. This will not only benefit students progressing onto LCC HE courses but all students wishing to progress to HE at other institutions. The course will include the development of research skills and independent learning skills as preparation for the HE system. This can also be delivered in local schools by school teaching staff with input from relevant college staff where appropriate. Progression Officers and the School Liaison team will promote LCC HE opportunities to both internal students and prospective students from local schools.

The Progression to HE course can also be offered as an online summer school to help prepare students for higher education

At Leeds College of Music:

It is acknowledged that the primary and secondary education systems do not always prepare young people for application to a conservatoire, and we recognise that identifying students with potential must begin at a young age. Our outreach activities support a long-term commitment to engaging with young people from a variety of backgrounds to aspire to and reach the standard required to access HE music courses. Much of our outreach work is collaborative, through local and regional partnerships, both working with young people and providing further opportunities for HE students to enhance their employability skills.

Activities and partnerships include:

- A Schools and Outreach Plan, which aims to develop partnerships with schools in the region and across the UK to raise attainment and aspiration to study music at HE level.
- Community Music Project; all undergraduate students can elect to study a Community Music module with placement. We will place a significant focus on young people in under-represented groups, and provide additional funds to extend these projects beyond the 10-week placement. This provides a more sustained intervention that aims to deliver longer-term benefits to the wider community and raise attainment and aspiration to HE,
- Saturday Music School. We provide bursaries for lower-income students to participate in SMS, a two-year programme of musical training to talented musicians aged 10-17, many of whom aspire to HE.
- Leeds Cathedral Choir School partnership, seeking to raise aspiration and attainment amongst children in one of the most underprivileged areas of the city

### **Collaborative Outreach Measures and Raising Attainment**

Leeds City College is committed to the Go Higher West Yorkshire – formerly HEART – partnership, an established consortium started in 2011 by twelve HE providers in West Yorkshire (FE colleges with HE provision, and universities). The Go Higher West Yorkshire partners represent a broad and diverse range of institutions offering a vast array of different courses, subjects, qualifications and modes of study. We are also committed to the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP), secured by Go Higher West Yorkshire, which operates in the first instance until December 2018.

Go Higher West Yorkshire's mission is to work in partnership to act as a single point of contact for information on our Higher Education Provider partners, improving access to, and achievement in, Higher Education to enhance individual and economic development. This is achieved through Go Higher West Yorkshire's internal structures: each of the twelve partners has representation on its governing Board and in two operational groups (the Business Engagement Planning Group, and the Widening Participation Planning Group).

The Board comprises senior members of staff from each institution, to help drive the strategic direction of the partnership, as well as co-opted members from the Leeds City Region LEP, HEFCE, West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges and Yorkshire Universities, to ensure a joined-up approach and to maximise opportunities for partnership working.

The Business Engagement Planning Group has a renewed remit for 2017, around working in partnership to foster an environment which supports partners in meeting the skills needs of the region, including the development of alternative progression routes into HE and qualifications – such as higher and degree apprenticeships – which aim to appeal to a wide range of students.

The Widening Participation Planning Group has a focus on working with specific target groups, which include: Looked-After Young People and Care Leavers, NNCO schools which do not form part of NCOP and Y7 and 8 pupils in NCOP schools, mature and part time learners, young carers, and current HE students from non-traditional backgrounds. Activities include the collaborative summer school, where participants gain exposure to multiple HE providers, and Flood a School activities, where numerous student ambassadors from across the partnership shadow teachers for a day. Through this group, the Partnership has shared Access Agreement targets.

The legacy of the Partnership's NNCO is that Go Higher West Yorkshire remains committed to working with the schools where new relationships were formed under this initiative, by continuing for a further two years the contract of employment of both posts previously funded under NNCO; these have a focus on collaborative outreach and the higher level skills agenda, and will help ensure the Partnership's NCOP acts as counterpart to this continuing activity. To further aid complementarity between the work of our own institution and the NCOP, LCC is represented on the NCOP Steering Group and will be employing and hosting an NCOP member of staff who will sit within our Higher Education Development Office team. This staff member will be our link with the central NCOP team, managed through Go Higher West Yorkshire, and outreach work within our own institution, and a key element of their role will be to develop community links in and work with key influencers from the target wards. To ensure complementarity with the Opportunity Area identified in the region, NCOP Wards Lead Officer will be working closely with those involved in the Opportunity Areas. The NCOP Steering Group has representatives from an academy in this Opportunity Area as well as from both Higher Education institutions which serve this area.

**Increase work to raise attainment in schools and colleges for those from disadvantaged and under-represented groups, including through outreach and/or strategic relationships.**

*Through NCOP and the work with NCOP target schools GHWY will be working to develop resources for teachers and advisers around attainment-raising – with a particular focus on groups where there are identified attainment differentials – as well as CPD. There will also be a focus on subject/qualification choice in these schools as required.*

## **5. Student retention & success**

We will continue to monitor our retention and success rates with a view to maintaining the current levels. All prospective students will have access to initial assessment & guidance together with

diagnostic assessments to ensure that they are on the right course and understand the requirements of the course. Review of retention statistics shows that the lowest retention rates are in the first year of a programme. Research into reasons for the lower retention rate point towards lack of engagement, failure in assessments, financial problems and health-associated problems. The College proposes to introduce the following measures to help improve retention especially in the first year of a programme.

- A revised tutorial programme with enhanced monitoring of students to identify problems at an earlier stage. Research has shown that the personal tutor system can have a positive impact on student engagement. This revised programme will include an induction for personal tutors, ensuring that the personal tutor has the right attributes for the role, a programme of topics to be covered in group tutorials e.g., academic writing, academic misconduct, awareness of safeguarding issues, finding placements etc. The group tutorials will run alongside 1:1 meetings.
- An enhanced programme of academic support. This will include the introduction of a study skills hub in the University Centre which will offer academic support in the form of drop in sessions and scheduled workshops with 1:1 support.
- Enhanced staff development in regard to supporting students with specific needs e.g. autism, dyslexia, ADHD, etc. This will complement the support offered by the specialist HE Learning Support Officer and will also enable tutors to identify additional learning needs earlier.
- The Specialist HE Learning Support Officer to support students with additional needs. This post will support students regardless of whether they qualify for the Disabled Students' Allowance.
- The College will continue to provide chromebooks (or equivalent) to ensure that all students have access to resources and support. Consultation with students has shown that students value the chromebooks and the access to support that they provide.

Many of our higher education students are the first member of their family to enter higher education

LCC believes that the above and the planned outreach activities will have positive impacts on the widening participation of the following under-represented groups:

- Disadvantaged socio-economic localities;
- Looked-after by a local authority or care leavers;
- Those without a family history of Higher Education;
- Mature students (aged 30 years old and above);
- Part-time students;
- Black and Minority (BME) communities.

The Group has replaced the discontinued Access to Learning Fund with a hardship fund, funded with the Student Opportunity funding, in order to provide discretionary assistance in the form of emergency loans and grants for priority groups, where they are at risk of discontinuing their studies or not progressing, due to hardship.

## 6. Student Progression

LCC's strategy in regard to student progression is to offer appropriate support and guidance throughout various stages of the student lifecycle.

We will continue to promote progression from FE to HE through:

- Open days for both internal FE students and local schools
- Applicant days
- Taster sessions for internal students
- A progression module for L3 students which develops the students' academic writing skills and forms a link between the HE & FE courses
- Online summer school for progression to HE

We will continue to promote progression throughout the student lifecycle by:

- Pastoral support for students
- Academic support
- Counselling & welfare support
- Financial support

Our Careers services will support students as they near the end of their course with advice on careers, higher level courses and applications.

## 7. Financial support for students – Bursary

LCC and LCoM will continue to offer bursaries as outlined in the tables below.

At Leeds City College:

Household income	Total Bursary	Semester 1	Semester 2
Less than £25,000	£500	£250	£250
£25,000 to £42, 875	£250	£125	£125

At Leeds College of Music:

Household income	Total Bursary	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Less than £25,000	£1,000	£250	£500	£250
£25,000 to £42, 875	£500	£125	£250	£125

- These will be for Home students and all applicants will be equally eligible. Assessment will be based on need in line with income assessments used for applications to the Student Loan Company. We will also consider other schemes based on assessment of need.
- At LCC the payment of the bursary is also subject to satisfactory completion of work and performance on the course.
- AT LCC the Bursary support has been reduced in order to be able to give more targeted support for students in financial emergencies and to provide increased support on programme.



The more targeted approach to financial support at LCC by lowering the bursary and increasing the hardship fund will help to support students who really need the financial support. The management of the hardship fund over the past year has demonstrated that students require financial assistance immediately and cannot wait for scheduled bursary payments. This more targeted allocation of resources will enable us to support students when they need the support and thereby enabling them to continue with their studies.

## **8. Targets and Milestones**

In line with our current position, we will maintain our current completion rate and, as a minimum, will aim to maintain our levels of mature and part time students as shown in Annex B.

We will continue to review learner feedback and will monitor student profiles as at present.

## **9. Institutional Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements**

There are arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of this agreement through the College's Academic Board, its Executive Leadership Team and its Board of Governors.

The Dean of Higher Education (LCC) and the Director of Curriculum and Research (LCoM) have responsibility to report and monitor compliance with the commitments made within this agreement.

The following data will be collected and used to inform future planning and any amendments to the Access Agreement:

- Internal progression rates for FE into HE
- Average household income of new entrants and payments of bursaries
- Retention and completion rates of students
- Social background of students to monitor participation by those from deprived backgrounds
- Age & profile of students to monitor WP statistics
- Number of FE students participating in free instrumental and music theory tuition (LCoM only)
- EDI profile of students to monitor participation, retention and achievement by under represented groups
- Outcomes and impact of LCoM community music activities

Through NCOP, Go Higher West Yorkshire(GHWY) is utilising a blended research approach to evidence impact, appointing external evaluators as well as employing a Research and Evaluation team. Their remit is to ensure effective research and evaluation of our NCOP work, but also to provide training to GHWY NCOP staff based in partners, and to disseminate research findings and good/best practice to the sector nationally. Longitudinal monitoring will take place through the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT).

## **10. Provision of Information for Prospective Students**

The College uses a number of methods to provide information for students about fees and the associated support. These include:

- Information on fees and support published on the College website
- An insert in all prospectuses
- Information packs prepared for all prospective students
- Information sessions held with prospective students progressing internally
- Information sessions held with prospective students from outside the College

### **11. Student consultation**

We have a range of measures in place for student consultation. Our student course representatives feed back into curriculum areas on a termly basis and appropriate actions are then followed through. We operate a number of student surveys throughout the year. The Students Union President is the student governor on the Leeds City College Board. Higher Education students are also represented on the Higher Education Quality & Enhancement Committee and the HE Academic Board. Student consultation has contributed to the decision to continue to offer a bursary to support students. Consultation with students has led to the change in the distribution of the NSP allocation from pure discounted fee to a proportion being available as a bursary, and a change in the payment schedule for the LCoM bursary to assist with students' cash flow in Term 2.

### **12. Responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010**

In line with our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 we have conducted an impact assessment on this agreement, to determine the potential impact of this on any learner with protected characteristics as defined by the Act.