

## **The Northern School of Art** (formerly Cleveland College of Art & Design)

### **2019-20 access and participation plan**

#### **Assessment of current performance**

In this Access and Participation Plan, we will assess our current performance in relation to access, success in and progression from higher education, and the priorities set out by the Office for Students. We will make our assessment against the following key target groups:

- Students from areas of low higher education participation, low household income and low socioeconomic status backgrounds;
- Students of particular ethnicities;
- Mature students;
- Disabled students;
- Care Leavers;
- Other Groups (including white males from lower socioeconomic groups, and students with specific learning difficulties and mental health problems).

In this assessment, we will primarily use the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) 2017-18 metrics data, which provides a national reference point. In particular, we will refer to the Participation of Local Area (POLAR3) and National Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) which are key measures of low participation in higher education and social deprivation. Also, the TEF metrics 2017-18 provides performance indicators for student groups including ethnicity, mature and disabled students. We will also reference data from the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DHLE) Survey, the Student Loan Company, UCAS, the Individualised Learner Record (ILR), and data from our own internal analysis.

It should be noted, that as a further education institution, we are limited to the data we have to make a sector-wide comparison, as we do not appear in statistical information provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

We review data at programme and institutional level on an annual basis through our Annual Programme Review and Annual Overview Report. Within this review process, we aim to include specific data analysis against key target groups, so that we can evaluate the student lifecycle.

#### **Students from areas of low higher education participation, low household income and low socioeconomic status backgrounds.**

In assessing **access**, we have a proven track record of successfully raising aspirations and encouraging people from areas of low higher education participation, low household income and low socioeconomic status backgrounds to access higher education. We have developed successful programmes of outreach activities, which inform a broader population of the opportunities available for specialist art and design study. We are continually building on and seeking out new opportunities to collaborate with other organisations and institutions, in promoting access to higher education.

Our view on access is supported by data from the TEF metrics 2017-18 which shows that 52% of our students are from areas that are least likely to enter into higher education (POLAR3 Q1 & Q2). Also, 51% of our students are from the most deprived areas in England (The National Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Q1 & Q2). Information from the Student Loan Company informs us that in 2017-18, 39% of our students received the full maintenance loan, indicating a household income of less than £25,000.

In assessing **success**, in recent years we have focused on student continuation (retention) and improving attainment, through the implementation of a number of mechanisms to provide support to underrepresented students. The implementation of the post of Progression Tutor in September 2014, was put in place as a means of providing additional academic support to all students, particularly underrepresented students, as we recognise that the attainment rate of these students is often less than that of other students. Also, in addition to programme teams, the Progression Tutor offers support to all students who have referral work to complete. This is another mechanism to ensure that those students who are struggling with their studies have the opportunity of additional academic support. In addition, we also provide pastoral, welfare and financial support. In line with this, we carry out attendance and success monitoring, through scheduled meetings involving programme leaders and business and student support managers. This has resulted considerable improvement in overall continuation rates. However, we are committed to see further improvements for underrepresented students by providing additional information to programme teams and students support services that highlights students who are potentially at risk of non-continuation.

Our view on success is supported by information in the TEF metrics 2017-18 which shows an overall student continuation rate of 89.6%, with a continuation rate of 92.5% for students from POLAR 3 areas (Q1 & Q2) and 88.9% from National IMD areas (Q1 & Q2).

In assessing **progression**, we have recognised the importance of preparing graduates for employment or further study throughout the student life cycle. Through a curriculum with academic rigour and industry focus, along with a dedicated employability and enterprise service we prepare students for employment or further study. We have seen consistently high numbers of graduates entering into employment and further study, and significant improvements in graduates entering into higher skilled employment or further study.

This view is supported by the TEF metrics 2017-18 which shows that 97.3% of graduates go into employment or further study. When looking at graduates from POLAR 3 areas (Q1 & Q2), the figure is marginally lower at 96.2% and marginally higher at 97.7% for National IMD areas (Q1 & Q2).

The picture is very similar for graduates in higher skilled employment or further study, with 71.0% of graduates in highly skilled employment or further study. When looking at graduates from POLAR 3 areas (Q1 & Q2), the figure is virtually the same at 70.7% and higher at 74.1% for graduates from National IMD areas (Q1 & Q2).

### **Students of particular ethnicities**

In assessing **access**, the majority of our student body is classified as White, as shown in the TEF metrics 2017-18, with 5% of our population from other ethnic backgrounds. This figure is consistent with the most recent official statistics from the 2011 Census in the Tees Valley showing that 5.2% of people are from other ethnic backgrounds.

In recent years we have seen greater numbers of applicants applying to study on our programmes from outside the Tees Valley. Therefore we need to ensure that we have an inclusive approach in our recruitment activities, as we would welcome students from other ethnic backgrounds to create greater diversity in our student body. We will be reviewing our methods of evaluation in the admissions cycle for 2018-19 to ensure that there are no barriers to students from other ethnic backgrounds entering into our higher education programmes. We will undertake to always offer students from other ethnic backgrounds who are resident in the EU/UK an interview for a programme of study.

In assessing **success**, for students from other ethnic backgrounds, it is difficult to determine continuation rates, as figures are not reported in the TEF metrics 2017-18, due to the low number of students. However, there is no evidence to suggest that students from other ethnic backgrounds are less likely to succeed in their studies. It is reassuring to note that the continuation rate for students of other ethnic groups for the academic year 2017-18 is currently 100%. From 2018-19 academic year, we will be offering additional academic support to students who do not have English as a first language.

In assessing **progression**, for students from other ethnic backgrounds, it is also difficult to determine progression rates, as figures are not reported in the TEF metrics 2017-18, due to the low number of students. However, there is no evidence to suggest that students from other ethnic backgrounds are less likely to progress in employment or further studies, or higher skilled employment or further study.

### **Mature Students**

In assessing **access**, for many years we have been successful in raising aspirations and encouraging mature people to enter into higher education at a later stage in life. This can be as a result of redundancy, change in career, or those entering study following a career break to raise families, or people who have never been in education, employment or training. Through the application process, we do not expect mature students to have the necessary entry qualification, and would take into consideration life skills and experience in relation to their application. We may also offer students an alternative study route to enable them to access higher education.

This view is supported by the TEF metrics 2017-18 which shows that 30% of our students are classified as mature, with 9% of these students over 30 years of age. In assessing **success**, we recognise that mature students have specific characteristics and individual needs. Their transition into Higher Education can be more stressful. We have put mechanisms in place to support mature students through the student lifecycle. These include helping students to integrate during induction with the rest of the student cohort, tailored academic support with tutors at programme level, one-to-one academic support with our Progression Tutor, and pastoral, welfare and financial support through Student Services.

We believe the measures that we have in place to support mature students have been successful. However, we do recognise that continuation rates as shown in the TEF metrics 2017-18 are marginally lower at 87.2%, compared with 90.9% for young students. This may be due to a range of issues that include financial constraints, family caring responsibilities and health problems. To reduce the gap between young and mature students, from 2018-19 academic year, we will put into place a one day event prior to enrolment for mature students. The event is designed to provide students with an

opportunity to meet their peers and existing mature students from Level 5 and 6. In addition, they will also be able to receive advice and guidance from relevant members of staff. The aim is to help mature students to feel more confident and assured in the early stages of their studies.

In assessing **progression**, figures from the TEF metrics 2017-18 show that 97.2% of mature graduates enter into employment or further study, which is virtually the same as young graduates at 97.4%. The figure for mature graduates entering into higher skilled employment or further study is 74.3% which is higher than young graduates at 69.3%.

### **Disabled students**

In assessing **access**, we believe that there should be no barriers to applicants with disabilities making a successful application to study with us. We intentionally make early interventions through the application process to support applicants who have disclosed that they have a disability. This includes support with any arrangements for interviews, providing information about the Disabled Support Allowance (DSA) and support to students through the whole application process. Our intention is to ensure that all eligible students have funding and support in place at the beginning of their studies or have access to appropriate support in the meantime. We also give priority to purpose-built student accommodation for students with disabilities.

Our view on access is supported by the TEF metrics 2017-18 which shows that 29% of our students have disclosed that they have a disability.

In assessing **success**, we have developed mechanisms to support disabled students. We have a strong relationship between Student Services and the academic staff, working together to best support students. Signposting is an important factor in this respect. Reviews of progress and attendance take place on a regular basis to swiftly identify and address any concerns. Where applicable reasonable adjustments are put into place. Staff training on disability issues ensures that they are equipped with the knowledge required to identify issues and signpost to appropriate support. We recognise that continuation rates shown in the TEF metrics 2017-18 for disabled students is 85.5%, compared with 91.2% for students who have not declared a disability. This could be due to a range of issues that include personal reasons, financial constraints and their health. While this does not give us cause for concern due to the low number of actual students, we continue to monitor and assess this situation.

In assessing **progression**, figures from the TEF metrics 2017-18 show that 96.9% of graduates with a disability enter into employment or further study, which is virtually the same as graduates with no disability at 97.4%. The figure for graduates with a disability entering into higher skilled employment or further study is 73.5%, which is higher than graduates with no disability at 70.3%.

### **Care Leavers**

In assessing **access**, success and progression, we do not have sufficient data to make an assessment. We recognise that students who are care leavers may not be willing to disclose this information. This could be due to concerns over the stigma attached to being a care leaver and that it may have a detrimental impact on their application. Through an

awareness campaign, we will draw attention to the benefit of students disclosing that they are a care leaver, which can include financial benefits.

**Other Groups (including white males from lower socioeconomic groups, and students with specific learning difficulties and mental health problems).**

We recognise that we need to improve evaluation methods to identify if there are gaps or barriers to equal opportunity with other groups. From 2018-19 we will identify students with intersections of underrepresentation through a risk based approach, as a means to identify students who may require additional academic and pastoral support. For example, if they are from a low participation area, have a mental health problem and are a mature student.

We recognise that there are increasing number of students who are reporting that they have mental health issues, this has been identified by more students accessing students services and counselling support, as well as through applications for mitigation. We are currently working with the local authority and other organisations to put into place additional external support for students. In addition, we plan to deliver relevant talks on mental health issues to both staff and students throughout the academic year, in order to promote awareness.

We will continue to promote support available for students with mental health issues at open days, enrolment, during welcome week, and at regular points during the student lifecycle.

We recognised that we have increasing numbers of students that require additional academic support. We are therefore looking at how to better target in-house academic support to make it more flexible and easily accessible for students by intergrating academic support within programme areas.

We also recognise that white males from lower socioeconomic groups, can often struggle in a higher education environment, therefore we will specifically be targeting academic support to this group through our Progression Tutor to improve continuation rates.

## **Ambition and Strategy**

The key indicators through TEF metrics 2017-18 show that the measures that we have in place have proved to be very successful in enabling underrepresented groups to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education. Therefore, we will aim to set goals that are stretching and ambitious, to build on our current access, success and progression activities and support measures that we have in place.

We recognise from our assessment of current performance, we have identified some specific barriers to equality of opportunity across the student lifecycle and for specific groups. The objectives listed below set out our support measures to address these specific needs:

**Students from areas of low higher education participation, low household income and low socioeconomic status backgrounds.**

- Objectives for **access** – to raise aspirations through the development of our outreach activities by continuing to build on, and seek out, new opportunities to collaborate with other organisations and institutions.

- Objectives for **success** – to review and develop existing mechanisms to monitor underrepresented students who are identified as ‘at risk’, through providing additional information to programme teams, student services, and academic support. This approach will better target support to students who are most at risk of non-continuation and enable early intervention to provide targeted support to improve retention. The measures that we put into place will be evaluated through our Annual Programme Review process.
- Objectives for **progression** – to prepare graduates for (higher skilled) employment or further study, with an industry focus and academic rigour in our curriculum offer, and further support students through our dedicated employability and enterprise service.

### **Students of particular ethnicities**

- Objectives for **access** – to assess our admissions process through the admissions cycle for 2018-19, to ensure that there are no barriers to students from other ethnic backgrounds, and to look at strategies to promote applications from other ethnic groups. We will ensure that students from other ethnic backgrounds are fully represented in our digital and printed promotional materials. We also undertake to ensure that all eligible students from other ethnic backgrounds are offered an interview.
- Objectives for **success** – through our mechanisms to monitor underrepresented students who are identified as ‘at risk’ we will ensure that students who are from other ethnic backgrounds have in place the necessary tailored support.

### **Mature students**

- Objectives for **access** - to raise aspirations and encourage mature people to enter into higher education through developing existing outreach activities, and promotion of the Access to HE Course. We will ensure that mature students are fully represented in our digital and printed promotional materials.
- Objectives for **success** – to develop our academic and pastoral support measures to more effectively support mature students. Through our mechanisms to monitor underrepresented students who are identified as ‘at risk’, we will provide tailored pastoral and academic support. Through a specific event prior to enrolment that is for mature students, provide relevant information and to facilitate social interaction and peer support.
- Objectives for **progression** – to prepare mature graduates for (higher skilled) employment or further study, with an industry focus and academic rigour in our curriculum offer, and further support students through a dedicated employability and enterprise service.

### **Disabled students**

- Objectives for **access** - to promote opportunities for disabled students to enter into higher education, and to review and further develop support mechanisms for applicants who disclose that they have a disability.
- Objectives for **success** – to develop further our support measures to support students with disabilities to improve the continuation rate.
- Objectives for **progression** – to further prepare disabled graduates for (higher skilled) employment or further study, with an industry focus and academic rigour in

our curriculum offer, and further support students through a dedicated employability and enterprise service.

### **Care Leavers**

- Objectives for **access** – to gather further information during our admissions cycle for 2018-19, to ensure that there are no barriers to students who are care leavers entering into our higher education programmes. We aim to improve awareness through information, posters and leaflets for all students, that it would be beneficial to disclose that they are a care leaver. This would enable us to put into place tailored support for students through the application process and when the students commence their studies.

### **Other Groups (including white males from lower socioeconomic groups, and students with specific learning difficulties and mental health problems)**

We would always aim to treat students as individuals, and provide support to meet their individual needs. This may mean that students who have intersections of need require greater support, or students who are 'at risk', who may not be classified as from an 'underrepresented group', will still receive the necessary support.

### **Target Groups**

We will be specifically targeting student groups that we have identified in our student population, and from the priority groups identified by the Office for Students, these groups include:

- Students from areas of low higher education participation, low household income and low socioeconomic status backgrounds;
- Students of particular ethnicities;
- Mature students;
- Disabled students;
- Care Leavers;
- Other Groups (including white males from lower socioeconomic groups, and students with specific learning difficulties and mental health problems).

Below is a list of our of student groups who we will be prioritising at each stage of the student lifecycle:

### **Students from areas of low higher education participation, low household income and low socioeconomic status backgrounds.**

- Target for **access** – Recruitment of a minimum of 35% of young, full-time, undergraduate entrants at Level 4 from low participation backgrounds (POLAR 3 Q1)
- Target for **access** – Deliver Saturday clubs for 80 school children aged 8-14 from schools in the local area to promote access to further and higher education.
- Target for **success** – Continuation rates of 90% for young, full-time, undergraduate students from low participation backgrounds (POLAR 3 Q1 & Q2)

- Target for **progression** –Employment or Further Study rates of 90% for young, full-time, undergraduate students from low participation backgrounds. (POLAR 3 Q1 & Q2)

### **Students of particular ethnicities**

- We will be carrying out an evaluation of our access, success and progression activities, and will be setting a target in a future Access and Participation Plan.

### **Mature students**

- Target for **access** – Recruitment of a minimum of 20% of mature, full-time, undergraduate entrants at Level 4.
- Target for **success** – Continuation rates of 90% for mature undergraduate students.
- Target for **progression** – Employment or Further Study rates 90% of mature, full-time, undergraduate students.

### **Disabled students**

- Target for **access** – Recruitment of a minimum of 20% of disabled, full-time, undergraduate entrants at Level 4.
- Target for **success** – Parity of high grades for LLDD students against Non-LLDD students shown as a percentage (with a tolerance of 10%).
- Target for **progression** – Employment or Further Study rates 90% of disabled students

### **Care Leavers**

- We will be carrying out an evaluation of our access, success and progression activities, and will be setting a target in a future Access and Participation Plan.

### **Other Groups (including white males from lower socioeconomic groups, and students with specific learning difficulties and mental health problems).**

We are currently developing our monitoring processes, aiming to identify students who are most at risk. This process will include identifying sub groups or intersections of disadvantage, for example, a student who is from low participation area (POLAR), is mature, and has a disability. We will then ensure that we put into place a tailored plans to support this student through their studies. We will then evaluate the effectiveness of support plans at stages during the student lifecycle.

### **Collaborative Working**

We are committed to working collaboratively in the implementation of our access and participation plan. Outlined below are some of the collaborative activities that we have in place, including the organisations and networks in which we are involved:

- We have developed and maintain an extensive collaborative network with over 70 schools in the Tees Valley and a strong liaison network with over 400



educators/advisers in colleges within the North East. We are currently building links with a further 350 college-level contacts nationally. All of these schools and colleges are regularly kept up-to-date with the latest outreach events and activities that we offer.

- North East Collaborative Outreach Programme (NECOP) – We have used NECOP funding to target 33 students to assist them with focused interventions to support progression into higher education.
- Festival of Illustration – an award-winning biennial festival which we lead in partnership with Hartlepool Council and Northern Print, offers workshops for young people and adults across the Tees Valley area together with a major three-month exhibition(s). This includes collaboration with the Crossing the Tees Literary Festival where we offer illustration workshops in libraries in each of the 5 Tees Valley council areas.
- Community Arts Project - For some years, we have been involved in a community arts project devised for a special needs and behaviour primary school. Our students involved learn transferable skills needed for employment. They touch upon how socioeconomic factors influence educational pathways, especially in the North. It offers learners the opportunity to work in a school, leading to a proportion wanting to go into further study to train as teachers. This project helps give them a real insight into working in a school. The project allows students to learn about themselves and to appreciate their strengths and their areas for development, allowing them to mature and appreciate the value of education.
- Teacher Network Events: We have an established network for teachers and advisors working within art and design in the local area. Help and support are provided in gaining new skills/techniques and knowledge relating to teaching and learning, as well as talks on wider issues in the creative sector and a platform for networking and discussion around sector-wide projects. We are also working with careers advisors to develop their understanding of the creative industries and routes available, so they are better equipped to advise young people. We also contribute to students' portfolio development by offering specific guidance to the curriculum which contributes to raising attainment levels in schools.
- Relationship building with Senior Leaders in Schools/6th Forms: The Recruitment team acts as an education liaison function and the Recruitment Manager has initiated dialogue with Heads and Senior Leaders to strengthen the relationship and explore opportunities for collaboration to help raise attainment, for example, workshops for pupils. A stretching target, which has spun out from this is the need to develop a wider and more accessible free Saturday Club offer to over 80 school children. This will help in providing disadvantaged groups with the opportunity for extra-curricular art and design portfolio development.
- To support student progression we have two key collaborations in place. Firstly we work with Hartlepool Council Enterprise services to offer start up business support and from September 2018 will jointly operate a fully serviced start up workspace for up to 100 graduates and early career creatives. Secondly we have a collaborative relationship with the school of education at Northumbria University regarding access to initial teacher training for our graduates (who are guaranteed an interview for a PGCE place) we jointly run 'Get into Creative Teaching' workshops for our undergraduates each year.

- We support both success and progression through our very extensive and high profile industry links which see world class creative professionals work with students and deliver career based advice lectures. In terms of progression when high profile creatives are delivering evening lectures on our HE campus we provide transport for FE students to be able to get an HE experience.
- We work with a range of external organisations to ensure students are safe during their time with us and also so that we are be able to provide them with specialist pastoral and welfare support according to their individual needs. Staff contribute to local Prevent and Safeguarding networks and maintain links with the Community Neighbourhood Police and Fire Brigade. A close working relationship has been developed with Thirteen Housing to ensure our students in halls are safe. Links have also been established with specialist community organisations such as Hartgables, Transaware, Halo, Sarc and Brook, to name but a few, allowing us to support our students who are transgender, from the LGBT community or need support with domestic violence, sexual health etc.

We view these partnerships as an essential way of promoting higher education to under-represented groups and supporting their ability to gain a higher education place.

## **Evaluation**

In our strategic approach to evaluation and planning, we have a long term goal to have robust evaluation mechanisms to effectively monitor access, success and progression for underrepresented groups as identified by the Office for Students. In the short term we aim to reflect on our current evaluation methods, to formulate a more effective evaluation strategy, which will better identify students who are 'at risk' throughout the student lifecycle, so that we can put into place tailored support to meet their individual needs. Below are the mechanism that we are currently using and will seek to develop further:

## **Access**

We will aim to further develop our mechanisms for statistical analysis to include all underrepresented groups as defined by the Office for Students. This is to ensure that our outreach activities that are aimed at different underrepresented groups are effective in raising aspirations of people to enter into further and higher education. In particular our outreach work in local schools and colleges aimed at students from low participation areas.

We monitor student applications, offers made, and firm acceptances during the application cycle. We pay particular attention to student decisions from our own further education provision, with high proportion of students from low participation areas. In recent years, this has influenced the work that we carry out to encourage students to enter into higher education, through various activities that we have outlined.

We also monitor our further education student progress to higher education, through 'End Destinations'. This is to ensure that the work that we carry out with our further education students, in encouraging students to progress into higher education is working. In recent years it is encouraging to see that an average 88.7% of our students enter into higher education, either within our own provision or with other higher education institutions.

We have applicant feedback mechanisms in place to measure the effectiveness of our application systems and processes. These include a decliner survey for applicants who

decide to withdraw or decline an offer, student focus groups to improve the applicant experience, questionnaires to teachers and advisors in schools and colleges, and open day surveys.

Through these mechanisms, we are able to identify areas relating to recruitment, selection and admission of students which are consistent with good practice as defined in the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the Schwartz recommendations.

### **Success**

We will aim to improve our of evaluation mechanism for underrepresented students, in areas including continuation and attainment. Through statistical analysis of relevant data for underrepresented students as defined by the Office for Students, in comparison with students who are not classified as underrepresented. This is to ensure that there is equality of opportunity to achieve.

We will continue to monitor student retention throughout the academic year to identify any patterns and reasons why students decide not to continue their studies, with particular attention to underrepresented groups. In recent years we have put in place additional measures to improve retention. These measures include monitoring:

- Attendance through weekly reports to programme teams to identify patterns of low attendance, so that students can be provided with additional pastoral support if they are experiencing personal problems or need additional academic support.
- Module submissions and grade profiles through regular informal examination boards. These boards involve all programme leaders, relevant managers, and academic support, to review students' progress and identify students who are potentially at risk and agree on any interventions for individual students.
- Success and achievement measures through annual programme reviews, and our annual overview report that provides data analysis of individual programmes and for the institution.

We also evaluate the effectiveness of our support measures through feedback that we receive from students through internal student perception surveys, student assemblies, programme boards, and student representatives on our Academic Board and Board of Governors.

From 2018-2019, there will be a section within the Annual Programme Review that provide statistical analysis that will inform evaluation of the effectiveness of measures to support underrepresented Groups at programme and institutional level.

### **Progression**

We monitor student progression into employment or further study through the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) to ensure that the measures that we have in place to support progression at programme and institutional level are effective.

### **Monitoring**

We will aim to satisfy Condition A1 of the Regulatory Framework through ensuring that we deliver the objectives and target that we have outlined in this plan, engage with the

Governing Body in regard to the monitoring and performance of this plan, and take reasonable steps to comply with the provisions of the plan and take reasonable steps if it appears that the Plan may not be delivered.

We will monitor progress of the plan through our deliberative structures, including the Principalship, Academic Board, Equality and Diversity Committee, and Board of Governors. In addition, to our monitoring returns with the Office for Students.

## **Equality and Diversity**

Our access and participation plan supports our broader equality and diversity strategy. This is evident in our principles of equality and diversity in which we are committed to the principles of equality and diversity and aims to ensure that all employees and the School users are treated fairly and equally regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Our Equality and Diversity Policy is applied to all areas of the student lifecycle including:

- Marketing and promotion of courses and services
- Information, advice and guidance – both verbal and written
- Recruitment and selection
- Access to and admission to courses
- Delivery of student support services
- Content of curriculum and teaching styles
- Production of learning materials
- Access to extra-curricular activities
- Dealings with the Student Union and Student Union Activities
- Access to work placements
- Assessment
- Allocation of accommodation
- Disciplinary, appeals and grievance procedures

Through our Equality and Diversity Committee we intend to review the way in which our Access and participation Plan is aligned to our Equality and Diversity Strategy. Particularly in relation to students with protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

## **Student Consultation and Involvement**

In the preparation of this plan we have consulted with students from a range of backgrounds on the content of the plan and how we aim to deliver it, as we acknowledge that student make a significant personal and financial investment in their studies.

We have consulted with students through a formal meeting with a group of students from various backgrounds on the content of the Plan. The meeting explored how we can involve students in its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Through discussion with student members of the Academic Board and wider consultation, we have adjusted the financial support that we offer to students. Financial support is now specifically targeted at underrepresented student groups.

We will explore ways in which students can have a meaningful and informative opportunity to feed into our Plan going forward. This will be achieved through existing mechanisms including Student Assemblies (all students), Programme Boards (student representatives), the Academic Board (three student members), and the Board of Governors (two student members). We also carry out a Student Perception Survey Annually covering a range of topics. In addition we have student focus groups who provide valuable feedback on specific issues including the development of this Plan.

## **Access, student success and progression measures**

In this section of the Access and Participation Plan, we will give an overview of activities and support that we will undertake in 2019-20 across the student lifecycle to achieve our goals and contribute to the priorities that have been identified by the OfS for access and participation which includes the financial support packages available to students.

### **Access**

We have for many years developed a successful programme of outreach activities. In 2019-20 the College will be involved in the following access activities and support measures.

### **Internal Progression**

We believe that all of our further education students should be encouraged to take the opportunity to access higher education. This approach is embedded in our ethos and culture and is imparted to students throughout their further education studies.

Through taught sessions and activities students are encouraged to research and identify higher education institutions where they would like to study and a open days at different institutions. Students are provided with guidance on how to complete a UCAS application; prepare a portfolio of their work for interviews and helped with interview techniques and communication skills.

Through our Recruitment Team, we also have a cohesive and robust progression programme for further education students, which encourages students to explore opportunities available in higher education, these activities include:

- Talks about the creative industry from employers and alumni;
- Talks about entering into higher education, which also helps to dispel common myths about the 'barriers to higher education';
- Visits to our own higher education campus, which provide the opportunity to experience a higher education environment;
- A comprehensive higher education workshop offer, for students to learn new and higher level skills;
- Interviews and portfolio advice sessions.

This approach has proven successful with 88.6% for all our further education completers in the academic year 2016-17 progressing onto a higher education degree programme in 2017-18. The figure of students classified as POLAR 3 (Q1 & 2) was higher at 90.2%.

We aim to further refine this approach to develop greater collaboration between our further and higher education teams, to help students realise their potential, particularly amongst the most underrepresented groups in our own further education student body.

### **School and Colleges**

In the academic year 2019-20, we propose to continue to undertake and further develop activities in schools and colleges, primarily in the Tees Valley that include:

- Creative Placements: We will offer work experience for year 10 and 11 pupils on Campus. Participating pupils will be given expert advice and guidance on their school projects while having the benefit of being immersed in a specialist creative environment.
- Progression events: We will attend progression events in schools, during parents' evenings, careers fairs, or lunchtime drop-ins. At HE level, we will attend FE-level careers events, with attendance and outreach increasing year-on-year.
- External Skills and Careers events: We will attend events such as North East Skills, Tees Valley Skills, and the Big Bang Event, which are generally targeted at primary and secondary schools. These events are usually interactive allowing pupils to learn about the creative courses available and to participate in workshops.
- Workshops: We will deliver workshops either on campus or at schools, and target pupils from primary to post-16 level. Workshops are delivered to teach new skills and promote the creative opportunities available in the sector.
- Creative Careers Talks: We will give career talks in secondary schools and colleges to raise awareness and aspiration.
- Group tours: We will offer group tours to schools from primary to secondary and up to post-16 level. We will welcome large groups of pupils from various backgrounds, particularly during the end-of-year shows which provides an opportunity to inspire young people regarding higher education opportunities that are available.
- National Saturday Art and Design Club (Formerly the Sorrell Foundation) – Working in partnership with the National Saturday Club, we will offer young people aged 13–16, the unique opportunity to participate in art classes free of charge on a Saturday morning at our Further Education Campus in Middlesbrough and in the Centre for Excellence in Creative Arts in Hartlepool.
- Saturday Art Classes for 6-11 and 12-14 year old school children – working in partnership with local schools, we will offer art clubs for children and young people from the local community the opportunity to participate in art classes on a Saturday morning for a small fee.

Following each of these activities, we will ask participants to complete a survey to assess the impact. We are encouraged by the positive responses that we have received and this has helped us in the way we enhance our approach.

In recent years, our student intake remains consistent even though demographics for the Tees Valley has shown decreasing numbers of school leavers. This has been achieved through our outreach activities in local schools and the wider community.

### **Students from other ethnic groups**

We do not currently have activities specifically targeted toward particular ethnic groups, however, in the 2019-20 application cycle, we will aim to undertake outreach work amongst schools with higher proportions of pupils from other ethnic groups. We will report this activity in future Access and Participation Plans.

### **Mature Students**

Through our recruitment activities, we will specifically target mature applicants, through open days, UCAS events, access to HE events, and through our website and literature. We will intentionally make early interventions through the application process to support mature applicants who may not have the necessary academic qualification but do have life skills and experience.

We will promote our Access to HE course which is designed for people who have been out of education for some time, especially those who left school with too few qualifications to be able to go straight to university. Students who undertake the Access to HE Course will be provided with support in making an application into higher education in a similar way as students on our Extended Diploma Course.

### **Disabled Students**

We believe that there should be no barriers to applicants with disabilities making a successful application. We will, therefore, make early interventions through the application process to support any applicants who have disclosed that they have a disability or learning difficulty which includes:

- Providing support with any arrangements for their interview;
- Providing information, advice and guidance, regarding the Disabled Support Allowance (DSA), and through the application process, to ensure that all eligible students have funding in place, and for them to be able to access support as soon as possible;
- Priority to purpose-built student accommodation for students with disabilities.

We are continually reviewing our support to disabled students through our Applicant Journey Group, taking on board feedback from applicants, students and staff about their experience.

### **Other Groups (including white males from lower socioeconomic groups, and students with specific learning difficulties and mental health problems).**

We recognise white British male students from the lowest socioeconomic status backgrounds are less likely than any other group to access higher education. We have specifically taken action to target this group in our access activities, through:

- White male students in roles as student ambassadors;
- White male students participating in recruitment talks, workshops and fairs;
- White male representative images used in recruitment materials, both online and in printed literature;

We will continue to develop our outreach activities toward white British males from the lowest socioeconomic status backgrounds. It is encouraging to see that of the 111 male

students who are currently enrolled in 2017-18, 52.3% are from POLAR 3 (Q1 & Q2). This is consistent with overall enrolments for the academic year.

## **Success**

We are committed to ensuring that students from underrepresented groups have the opportunity to succeed in their studies and progress into employment or further study and have put into place the following activities and support measures:

### **Student transition**

We are aware that the first few weeks in which a student moves from further to higher education is very important, and this is even more so for students from underrepresented groups, where support mechanisms may not have been established.

During induction, we will put into place a range of activities that will contribute to a student's transition and adaptation to their learning environment and their ability to progress and complete their programme of study. As such, induction is not, and should not, be completed within a defined period at the beginning of the programme, and needs to continue between semesters and levels with activities and information that is relevant to each stage of development.

'Welcome Week' is the first stage of induction and takes place in the week before the commencement of teaching. This is primarily aimed at helping new Level 4 students to settle in and understand their learning environment and its resources, to meet academic staff and other students, and to receive information about their programme of study in preparation for module delivery.

This is also a period in which students are signposted to different support mechanisms, include Academic Support, Academic Services, Student Services, and programme specific support measures.

### **Academic Support**

In addition to academic support from our programme teams, we will also have in place academic support provided by our Progression Tutor. This academic support will be in place to assist students at all levels to progress their learning in a higher education environment and successfully complete a degree route of study. The academic support service is primarily aimed at students from disadvantaged backgrounds, mature students, and disabled students. The Progression Tutor provides support to students to help them adapt to the demands of higher education, particularly with regard to adopting a more autonomous approach towards their learning and developing the ability to think critically.

In addition to focusing on the needs of new students, the transition of students into the second year of study (known as the 'lost year' or 'slump year'), and students into the final year of study towards graduation and employment or post-graduate study is also addressed. The Progression Tutor provides support for academic study and transferable skills, related to lifelong learning and employability. Information about academic support and accompanying study handouts will be available to all students via a virtual learning environment.

The Progression Tutor is responsible for delivering Study Skills Sessions and providing one-to-one/group academic support tutorials for all students as part of this process.



### **Identification of students at risk of academic failure**

We have developed and implemented systems to identify students 'at risk' of academic failure, through monitoring attendance and grades. Student who we identify as being at risk will be provided with additional support, which may include appropriate academic and pastoral support.

### **Student Services**

We take a proactive approach to ensuring the student experience is enjoyable and one of value. Through a variety of different processes, we seek to provide relevant support on a pastoral as well as an academic basis.

Our Student Advisers offer a range of support services to students such as advice on student loans, accommodation and disability services. They also liaise with a wide range of external agencies to offer specialist help and support where required. We provide an in-house counselling service and a specialist Dyslexia Tutor to support students with dyslexia and additional learning needs.

### **Activities targeted to support students with disabilities and learning difficulties**

We take a proactive approach to both disclosure of disabilities, learning difficulties, mental health conditions or long-term health conditions, and the provision of individual support. We support students in the following ways:

- **Identification of Needs (IoN)** – We have a clear and robust IoN procedure to ensure that there is a clear response and support mechanism in place to support any student requiring additional support needs.
- **Proactive promotion of Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) funding** – We actively promote applications for DSA, to ensure that all eligible students have funding in place to enable them to access support.
- **Learning technologies** – We offer students the opportunity to complete a computer-based screening programme to identify learning difficulties, and have software packages as standard on student computers to aid learning.
- **Specialist one to one support and tuition** – Through our diagnostic assessment, we offer specialist one-to-one support and tuition to students with dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism and Asperger's Syndrome who are eligible for DSA, to support with study skills, reading, writing, organisational skills, and memory techniques, according to individual needs.
- **Funding of reasonable adjustments required to support disabled students** – We have recognised, and are responding to, the effects of the changes in DSA. We fund any reasonable adjustments required to support disabled students. Other measures will be considered to support achievement of those in underrepresented groups and to bridge the gap in funding to allow students to access support and equipment that may have previously been provided through DSA funding.

### **Progression**

We offer a dedicated employability and enterprise service, Folio, to support the progression of students and graduates into employment, self-employment, or post-graduate studies. Since the introduction of this dedicated enhancement service, our

graduate employability (as measured through the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) Survey annually) has been at 96% (or above) for the past four years.

We use fine-grained analysis of destinations data to inform the development of the service; notably, as many art and design graduates move into self-employment, we now offer specialist extra-curricular seminars in Art as a Business, giving practical and theoretical guidance on marketing, finance and fundraising. We also provide access to free business support and mentoring, and a test selling facility through the town art gallery. We will offer support to graduates and students moving into a new creative start-up facility with 32 fully serviced low-cost studio/workspaces. All alumni have ongoing full access to the Employability & Enterprise service.

On a day-to-day basis, Folio supports students and graduates in managing and planning their development, setting goals for learning and experience; reflecting on and evaluating their development and learning needs, and identifying ways to meet them; and researching their chosen industry and career options. Students can access one-to-one mentoring sessions receiving practical advice on getting a job, preparing a CV, mock interviews or developing a business plan. The team also brings in experts to work with students. As the Whitby Street Workplace Studios open in September 2018, we will manage and deliver a regular series of networking events, offering specialist advice as well as an expanded range of business support workshops and seminar programmes.

Networking is essential in the creative sector, so we provide regular networking opportunities where students can meet creative professionals in an informal setting to build their contacts for future work. Under our Creative banner, we run a series of open lectures, seminars and masterclasses, which are free and open to all.

Folio is all about helping students to help themselves. Folio's support is impartial, confidential and designed to meet personal needs and complement each programme of study. Folio is open as a drop-in centre and a place to do research.

## **Financial Support**

We will also offer a range of financial support to students from underrepresented groups as defined by the Office for Students. As we believe that financial support for students from low income backgrounds promotes attendance and student engagement in their studies. The financial support that we offer includes:

- **Maintenance Grant** - Students in receipt of the maximum maintenance loan will be eligible for a grant of £500 pa for the duration of their programme. In the final year of study, this will increase to £750, to assist with the costs associated with the final major project. This is to provide additional support to students from low-income backgrounds.
- **Tees Valley Progression Award** - Young students, under the age of 21 years from the Tees Valley who live in areas with low participation in higher education POLAR 3 (Qunitile1) will be eligible for a one-off award of £500. This award is to provide additional support to students from low participation areas.

In support of the **Tees Valley Progression Award**, we will be piloting a scheme through our 2018-19 recruitment cycle to provide a financial incentive to schools and colleges in the Tees Valley area in promoting access for students from low participation in higher education areas POLAR 3 (Qunitile1). The **Tees Valley**

**Incentive Scheme** will involve a payment to schools and colleges of £200 for each student who enrolls on one of our programmes in 2019-20. The payments are intended to be used for art materials, educational visits to cultural centres or CPD to assist them with their work amongst underrepresented groups in higher education. In 2018-19 we will work with schools to identify students that would qualify under the scheme and in 2019-20 evaluate the effectiveness of the scheme.

- **Care Leavers Bursary** - Students who are care leavers will be eligible for a bursary of £500 pa for the duration of their programme. This is to provide additional support to students who may lack support structures.
- **Mature Students Award** - Students aged 21 years or over who have not previously undertaken a higher education programme of study will be eligible for a one-off award of £500. This is to provide initial support to students re-entering education.

Funds are intended to help towards costs relating to student accommodation, study materials, and educational visits depending on the student's choice. Students will be eligible for a maximum of £1,000 financial support in any academic year. It is intended that we will release funds to students, subject to satisfactory student engagement and attendance of 80% across all registered sessions, and the final term bursary payment is subject to successful progression to the next level of study, or successful completion of studies.

We aim to measure the success of our financial support through the statistical analysis, by measuring student retention into second and third year (continuation), attendance, level of attainment, and completion of degree. In addition, as in previous years, we will carry out a survey of students to understand how students are using the financial support.

## Investment

We propose to charge tuition fees of £9,250 to new fee regulated full-time entrants in 2019-20. We will not be offering new part-time programmes, Erasmus+ years abroad, sandwich placements, or programmes provided by an overseas institution. We may be offering postgraduate programmes, but cannot at this stage make projections on fee income.

Through our Strategic Plan, we determine the balance between spending on access, student success, progression and financial support. As we have limited resources, we aim to direct our financial resources into areas that have the most impact, in particular where a specific need is identified.

We estimate a total fee above the basic fee level of £6,165 for full-time students in 2019-20 will be £2,070,300. We would, therefore, project our spend through our access and participation plan in 2019-20, to be £508,743 in cash terms which is 33.7% investment as a proportion of higher fee income.

This spend is further disaggregated in projected spend in the following areas:

- Access – £75,345 (3.6%)
- Success – £260,722 (12.6%)
- Progression – £172,676 (8.3%)
- Financial Support – £189,800 (9.2%)

The figure for 2019-20 is based on our projection of growth in higher education student number of the next five years.

## **Provision of information to students**

We provide details of our tuition fees and financial support to prospective students in the following ways, through our website and through UCAS at the beginning of the recruitment cycle, printed and online prospectus, printed information during open days, and printed and electronic information in response to an enquiry and when making an offer to prospective students.

Students are provided with details of tuition fees and financial support at the beginning of their studies in Student Finance Handbook. We advise students that their tuition fees will not increase for the duration of their studies.

We also confirm with students their entitlement to financial support, any conditions relating to the financial support (i.e. minimum attendance requirements) and the duration of the financial support.

For continuing students, at the start of each academic year, details of tuition fees and financial support is confirmed by email to students.

We will publish the Access and Participation Plan 2019-20 on our website along with previous Access Agreements for continuing students.

\* course type not listed.

Full-time and part-time course fee levels for 2019-20 entrants.

Please enter inflationary statement in the free text box below.

For full-time undergraduate students with a Home fee status (which includes EU students) who commenced their studies at The Northern School of Art in the 2019-20 academic year, fees may increase for each academic year of study. Any fee increases during your programme of study will be limited to the annual increase in the RPI-X index. Increases in fees for full-time undergraduate students with a Home fee status remain subject to UK Government approval.

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree		£9,250
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		£6,000
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Franchise 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		*
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		*

Table 8a - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body													
Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu)	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu)	Baseline year (drop-down menu)	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16a_01	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Low-income backgrounds (please give details in the next column)	POLAR 3 - Level 4 Entrants (Quintile 1)	No	2017-18	34.4	35	35	35	35	35	The College would aim to maintain this figure to ensure that there is a good balance within the student cohort.
T16a_02	Access	Mature	<b>Other statistic</b> - Mature (please give details in the next column)	Percentage of full time mature first degree entrants at Level 4	No	2014-15	22.4	20	20	20	20	20	The increase in mature entrant, would be as a direct result of the effectiveness of the Access to HE Course.
T16a_03	Student success	Disabled	<b>Other statistic</b> - Disabled (please give details in the next column)	Parity of high grades for LLDD students against Non-LLDD shown as a percentage	No	2014-15	Parity of High grades with a tolerance of 10%	Parity of High grades with a tolerance of 10%	Parity of High grades with a tolerance of 10%	Parity of High grades with a tolerance of 10%	Parity of High grades with a tolerance of 10%	Parity of High grades with a tolerance of 10%	The College aim to have achieve parity in the high grades between LLDD and Non-LLDD students.
T16a_04	Student success	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Other (please give details in the next column)	Level 4 Retention percentage figures	No	2014-15	85	88	89	90	90	90	The College will aim to achieve Level 4 retention of 90% by 2020-21
T16a_05	Progression	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DHLE)	No	2013-14	57%	58.5%	59%	60%	60%	60%	Graduate s in employment who are working at a managerial or professional level.

Table 8b - Other milestones and targets.													
Reference Number	Select stage of the lifecycle	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16b_01	Access	Attainment raising	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Saturday Clubs for 8-14 year olds	Yes	2015-16	80	80	80	80	80	80	Saturday Art Class for school children from local schools to promote access into further and higher education.
T16b_02	Access	Attainment raising	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	The College will work through the NECOP funding to enhance its outreach activity in low participation schools offering taster workshops and HE progression talks. As part of NECOP, the College will develop its programme of continuing professional development support and advice in Art and Design HE for 20 schools based careers advisers or teachers.	Yes	2017-18	20	20	20	20	20	20	