



Harlow College

Access and Participation Statement 2020-2021

Author: Executive team member with responsibility for HE

Review date - June 2021 – OfS requires an annual update.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HARLOW COLLEGE

Harlow College is a medium-sized Further Education College (FEC) currently located on one campus in Essex. The College offers a wide curriculum at all levels including 16 to 19 provision, adult, Apprenticeships and Higher Education (HE).

In 2019 the College undertook a strategic review of its HE provision. This review identified issues and opportunities relating to the nature of the provision, the level of recruitment and identified a need for the College's HE provision to more closely align with its overall strategic plan. In particular this review identified a need to provide a niche range of HE courses that could be used to deliver Higher Apprenticeships to meet local needs.

In 2018 the College secured its OfS registration to fund a range of HNC/D courses.

As stated in our Strategic Plan (Vision 2019-2024) one of our main aims is to change and transform the lives of young people and adults in our community. We want all our learners to achieve their ambitions, to contribute significantly to the productivity of the economy and to have happy and purposeful lives. We want to do this by providing the opportunity to access learning, delivered to the highest standards and levels, in subjects that match local growth sectors and to address skills gaps. We work closely with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and other local and national stakeholders to assist in the growth of a workforce with higher qualifications and skills.

Mission and Values Vision

Harlow College is recognised for providing education of the highest quality to its local community. Our Mission and Values Vision outlines our strategic intentions for the next 5 years and lays out the key principles for our next strategic plan.

We are ready to move into our next phase of development and are committed to ensuring that we change and transform the lives of young people and adults in our community. We want all our learners to achieve their ambitions, to contribute significantly to the productivity of the economy and to have happy and purposeful lives.

Our Values

At the core of our strategy are our values:

- ✓ Students at the heart
- ✓ Be your best, be your future
- ✓ Work hard, work together
- ✓ Be innovative and enterprising

The College is made up of a wide range of people with diverse backgrounds and circumstances, which we value and regard as a great asset.

We are aware that some groups may experience treatment from time to time that has a negative effect on their quality of life. Specific legislation is in place to protect the rights of individuals and groups to ensure that discrimination is prevented and that they are given equal access to employment, education and other services.

Those most often affected are people who fall into the "Protected Characteristics" groups which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Gender re-assignment
- Marital and Civil Partner status
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

The College recognises the barriers faced by people with disabilities in accessing and achieving Education. Our vision is to create an accessible and supportive environment for staff and students. We aim to provide equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, in line with the Equality Act 2010 and Children and Families Act 2014.

Harlow College position on Access, Success and Progression for all our learners

Access:

Aim for 2020-21 – Increase the % of mature learners into HE courses at Harlow College, closer to HEI average of 54% age 21+.

The Education and Training Foundation Report (2016) on the local impact of college based Higher Education states that Further Education Colleges delivering HE have a significant proportion of students aged over 25 years. Harlow College actively supports mature learners returning to education through our broad Access to Education offer which feeds into our suite of HNC and HND qualifications. Based on the figures from the OfS Access and Participation Dashboard Harlow College age intake has shown a balancing out of age profile, with significantly more age Under 21's, at 55%. This moves Harlow College closer to the All HEI's age profile. Harlow College continues to more actively recruit a wider age range across its Higher National provision. However the majority of our Higher National learners are recruited from our own FE student body, which helps to improve young participation rates in the local area.

Age Band	All HEIs % (Higher Education Institutes)	All FECs % (Further Education Colleges)	Harlow College 17/18*	Harlow College 18/19*	Harlow College 19/20*
Under 21	46%	30%	47%	38%	55%
21-24	25%	20%	25%	26%	45%
25+	29%	50%	28%	37%	
Unknown	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

*Harlow college data 2017-18, 2018-19 & 2019-20

Undergraduate HE Learners by POLAR Geography Classification

The Participation of Local Area Classification (POLAR) looks at how likely young people are to enter HE across the UK, and by region. POLAR classifies 5 groups which are based on the number of 18 entering HE, these range from quintile 1 to quintile 5, with quintile 1 as the least likely.

Harlow College serves a local area that that exists in POLAR 4 quintile 1:

- for Young Participation age 18 or 19 into HE
- Adult HE qualification
- Participation gaps by ethnicity based on GCSE
- Gaps GCSE
(2019 POLAR and gaps by postcode, Office for Students website).

TUNDRA – a new experimental measure that tracks young participation in higher education by state-funded mainstream school pupils in England shows Harlow at Quintile 2.

The College, by its very existence, encourages and facilitates the transition of young people in the local area into HE, either within The College or with another HEI. The College should continue to seek ways to encourage learners of all ages, ethnicity and GCSE profile into HE through actively helping to reduce the barriers to study though more flexible courses that are work relevant and can be studied either part time or full time or through blended learning, or that support students to continue with paid employment to enable them to continue their education. The College supports all its students into positive destinations, either be it into HE or employment.

POLAR	All HEI's	All FEC's	Harlow College -based on OfS Access and Participation key performance measures data published 2020*
1	12%	20%	25% - 2017-18 constant for the last 3 years
2	16%	21%	40%
3	21%	22%	15%
4	23%	20%	10%
5	28%	17%	0% - 2017-18 fallen by 15%

* <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/>

Success:

Aim for 2020-21 – continue to improve the non-continuation rates of learners completing HND courses through the promotion and further development of top-up tariff arrangements with ARU for Sport and Engineering. Target 50%.

Harlow College has strong destination data for our HE learners, in 2018-19, 97% of our HE learners moved into further related study or employment relevant to their higher level course. Continuation rates improved for 2018-19 at 46% entering Top-up years after completing their HND. The College endeavours to provide high quality vocational courses that enable all our HE students to enter into positive destinations at the end of their study. Our courses are aligned to local LEP needs and future planning of new courses takes full consideration of the skill requirements locally, regionally and nationally.

The College actively encourages learners to sign up to the Pearson Global facility and promotes their Top-up search tool with our learner to find Top-up to degree courses. The College is lucky to receive NCOP fund money to appoint a dedicated IAG careers officer who will work with all our learners considering HE or moving through HE.

The College now has Top-up tariffs in place with ARU for the following courses:

Business Management
Advance Practise in Early Years

Progression Data Higher Nationals from 2018-19:

Overall positive destination = 75%

Overall Continuation rates = 44%

Row Labels	% Continuation to higher education	% of known Positive progressions to employment or other	% of progression other (not positive)	% of progressions collected
APEY	60%	20%	0%	100%
Business	25%	25%	0.08%	100%
Engineering	0%	100%	0%	100%
Sport	100%	0%	0%	100%
Grand Total	46%	97%	25%	100%

Success Data

Care leavers

The College supports care leavers, but identifies this is an area where more work can be done to ensure students complete their programme. There were no care leavers in this year.

Ethnic group

The College celebrates the lack of difference between ethnic groups and overall success on programme. At Harlow College ethnic minorities make up 26% of our student population, success rates over a 3 year aggregate show that ethnic minority groups (91%), are more successful than those students who categorise themselves as White British (71%). This supports our mission of every learner at the heart, celebrating the wide range diverse backgrounds and circumstances, which we value and regard as a great asset. White students make up 74% of the student HE population, the retention rate is poor, with 25% of students not succeeding compared to 9% for non-white.

Ethnicity Grouped (2018-19 data)			
Row Labels	Starts	Completions	Success %
Non White	11	10	91%
Not Known/Provided	1	1	0%
White	41	29	71%
Grand Total	53	40	75%

Disability

The College is proud that there is very little difference for the third year running in overall success for students with a declared disability (75%) and those without (73%), supporting our mission to create an accessible and supportive environment for all our students.

Disability Grouped (2018-19 data)			
Row Labels	Starts	Completions	Success %
Disability	12	9	75%
Not known/not provided	1	1	100%
Prefer not to say	0	0	0%
No disability	40	29	73%
Grand Total	53	39	74%

Ambitions and Strategy

The College wishes to commit to improve the access into HE for mature students in the local area. While success and progression are high for our mature learners, the numbers recruited are low in comparison (28%) with all FECs (50%) according to the Education and Training Foundation's report on the local impact of college based Higher Education (2016). Work has begun this year to identify our target age group and more specifically market our Access to HE courses and Higher Nationals offer to this age group. Targeted social media advertising is being used via Facebook by age category. In addition, the interview process for our Access to HE offer has been re-branded as an information event, as current students report that the term 'interview' increased stress levels and may have been a barrier to attending for some mature learners. In January 2018 the College was accepted into the UCAS system for Admissions and clearing will be used to reach a larger target audience.

The College is also committed to continue its work to encourage and enable all learners that have had an Education Health & Care Plan, current learning difficulty or disability to apply for a higher education place. This is enabled by staff working closely with individuals to provide the best Information, Advice and Guidance prior to enrolment and thereafter.

Prospective students still at school

Appointments can be made with us directly or through the school.

During the application process

During the completion of the application form/UCAS, if students have completed the section about 'Learning Support/disability' this will enable support needs to be discussed at interview. All learners are welcome to bring along a person to support them during this process.

On programme

At any stage of the College cycle, students can inform us of any change and or new support needs. Students are actively supported to disclose any aspects they feel they need additional help with.

Student involvement and collaboration

The process for student engagement is well established at Harlow College. Students are consulted on ways to improve their experience across the whole cycle of their HE experience, including recruitment and marketing. There are multiple opportunities for this engagement across the academic year; students are our best advocate so their views are of great importance in seeking ways to continually improve access rates at Harlow College.

The College works closely with all feeder secondary schools and local primary schools. The College provides taster days for both secondary and primary students; the schools facilitate the communication of our marketing information through their parent mail system.

Support for students

All HE students are gifted an iPad to aid research and workflow, irrespective of income. In 201& 2020 respectively Harlow College won Apple Distinguished Schools status for FECs in the UK for its innovative teaching and learning using iPads. We firmly believe this aids progression and skills for future employment, and by using up to date applications used in industry will improve job outcomes for our learners.

The College has support systems to help students in hardship, including a food cupboard to support students when needed. There is a Chaplin on site as well as access to counselling and safeguarding services.

The College remains committed to reducing the barriers for all our learners to enable them to be happy, work ready and above all successful, achieving their ambitions and reaching their full potential.

This statement is published on the Harlow College website in the following location:

- <https://www.harlow-college.ac.uk/about/student-policies>

TRACKING and REFERENCE INFORMATION

Date Approved: 18 June 2018 – Standards & Curriculum Committee

Reviewed July 2020

Review Date: June 2021

Author/Responsibility: Executive team member with responsibility for HE

Equality Impact Assessment: tba

List of related policies, procedures and other documents:

Equality & Diversity Policy

Academic Misconduct HE-FE Policy

HE Student Engagement Policy

HE Student Recruitment Selection and Admissions Policy

HE Teaching Learning & Assessment Policy

Complaints: If you wish to submit a complaint about the application of this policy or the procedure of it, please send your request in accordance with the provisions of the Grievance Procedure.

Monitoring: The application of this policy and associated procedure will be monitored by The Executive Team Member with Responsibility for HE.

Easy reading: To receive this policy/procedure in a different format, please contact HR Services.