Harlow College

Access and Participation Statement 2022-2023

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Approved: 29 June 2022 – Standards and Curriculum Committee

Review date - June 2023 – OfS requires an annual update.

1.0   A Brief Description of Harlow College

Harlow College is a medium-sized Further Education College (FEC) currently located on two campuses 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. The College is bidding for Institute of Technology (IOT) status with collaborative partners including Anglia Ruskin University and the lead partner, South Essex College.

2.0   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.

3.0   Our Values

At the core of our strategy are our values:

- Students at the heart
- Work together, achieve together
- Be ambitious, build futures
- Share similarities, celebrate our differences

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.

4.0   Harlow College position on access, success and progression for all our learners

4.1 Access:

Aim 1 2022-23 – maintain our gender balance of 50:50 but improve the gap between gender achievement, presently female achievement is 95% against 78% male.

The College has a good gender balance both in recruitment and retention, however there is a slight gap in achievement that need to be addressed for male achievement.

Aim 2 for 2021-22 – maintain the strong levels of achievement for every age category but aim to narrow the gap between these, closer to the 25+ achievement. Under 21's currently at 85%, age 21-24 at 86% and over 25's at 100%.

Overall the College has strong achievement rates for each age category, all over 85%, however 25+ have exceeded the other age ranges, but numbers are however low, representing only 2% of the HE population.

Aim 3 for 2022-23 – significantly improve the age profile of 25+, this represented 5% of our HE population for 2021-22. However overall numbers were small with 42 starts and 36 leavers.

The age profile for entry in year 2021-22 is very different from usual years (see table overleaf). This is mostly an impact of the Covid pandemic. Our new HE courses of International Travel and Tourism Management and Public Services recruited strong numbers of 18-19 years old. This was due to lack of jobs at the Stansted Airport at the time and other industries such as policing, impacted by Covid. This has skewed our data in favour of under the 21 age range. However the College is committed to continue to recruit across the age profile, with a focus on direct internal recruitment from our Access to HE courses.

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.

Age Band	All HEIs % (Higher Education Institutes)	All FECs % (Further Education Colleges)	Harlow College 17/18*	Harlow College 18/19*	Harlow College 19/20*	Harlow College 20/21*	Harlow College 2021-22*
Under 21	46%	30%	47%	38%	55%	38.5%	78%
21-24	25%	20%	25%	26%	45%	38.5%	17%
25+	29%	50%	28%	37%		23%	5%
Unknown	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

*Harlow college data

Undergraduate HE learners by participation of local area classification POLAR geography classification

The 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-year olds 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).

The TUNDRA index, an enhanced area-based measure, tracks young participation in higher education by state-funded mainstream school pupils in England shows Harlow at Quintile 2. The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (OfS dashboard) shows that for 2019-20 40% of the College's HE students were in quintile 2, with 70% in quintile 2 or 3.

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 higher education institution. 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. This will be achieved 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.

4.2 Pass rate / success:

Aim for 2022-23 – to narrow the gap between the pass rate and the retention rate by 5%

Measures as an overall	Overall Value 2020-21	Overall Value 2021-22
Pass rate	94%	92%
Retention rate	85%	86%

For 2020-21 there have been a small number of extension requests granted to support learners to succeed. The College achieved its 2021-22 target of narrowing the gap between retention and pass rate, but seeks to improve this to ensure the majority of students retained can pass successfully.

4.3 Continuation / progression data for Higher Nationals

Aim for 2021-22 – to improve the positive destinations for students on Public Services to bring it in line with the other HNC courses above 80%.

The College has strong continuation data for our 2021-22 HND students with 80% of Early Years students progressing to top–up degree courses. The College also shows good positive progression into related careers or further study overall at 79%, with Engineering and International Tourism and Management showing strong positive destination at 82% and 83% retrospectively.

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 studies. 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 learners to find top-up to degree courses. The College is lucky to receive National Collaborative Outreach Programme fund money to appoint a dedicated information, advice and guidance careers officer who will work with all our learners considering HE or moving through HE.

The College has a close relation with its nearest higher education institution, Anglia Ruskin University (ARU). Over 2020-21 the College has now in place a progression agreement and continues to seek direct entry to top -ups for our new HN offers of:
- Public Services
- International Travel and Tourism Management

The College has top-up tariffs in place with ARU for the following courses:
- Business Management- HND
- Advance Practise in Early Years – HND
- Engineering – HNC

Course HNC	Employment related to course	Employment not related to course	Move to other HE provider	Other	Positive Destination overall as a %
Early Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Engineering	64%	0	18%	18%	82%
ITTM	83%	17%	0	0	83%
Public Services	70%	0	0	30%	70%
Total	73%	6%	6%	15%	79%

Course HND	Employment related to course	Employment not related to course	Move to other HE provider	Other	Positive Destination overall as a %
Early Years	20%	0	80%	N/A	100%

5.0   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.

6.0   Ethnic group

The College celebrates the lack of difference between ethnic groups and overall success on programme. At Harlow College ethnic minorities make up 16% of our HE student population, locally ethnic minority make up 11% of the population. The pass rates show a 8% difference, however numbers at low in each category. 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.

Ethnicity Grouped (2021-22 data)			
Row Labels	Starts	Completions	Success %
Non-White	5	4	80%
Not Known/Provided	0	0	0%
White	37	32	88%

7.0   Disability

Aim for 2021-22 – to more closely align the success rate for those students with a disability compare to those without.

The College fully supports students with declared needs, enabling them to achieve the successes they seek, reducing the pass rate gap for 2021-22 to just 2%. There is no significant difference now in pass rates between those with a declared disability and those who with no disability. This is also true in the category for those who prefer to 'not to say' showing 100% pass rates. Students should feel confident that the College will fully support them regardless of any disability or not.

Disability Grouped (2021-22 data)			
Row Labels	Starts	Completions	Success %
Disability	5	4	80%
Not known/not provided	10	10	100%
Prefer not to say	0	0	0%
No disability	27	22	82%

8.0   Ambitions and Strategy

Aim 1 2022-23 – to increase the number of internal students including Access to HE students, applying to our HE courses ready for 2023-24 entry.

Aim 2 2022-23 – to increase the number of BAME internal students including Access to HE students, applying to our HE courses ready for 2023-24 entry.

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 students from ethnic groups, the numbers recruited are low in comparison to those with an ethnicity of White British. Work has begun this year to identify, support and more specifically market our course offer to those from BAME backgrounds. For 2022-23 the College is setting up a student BAME group, it is hoped this will inform our recruitment strategy.

9.0 Prospective students still at school

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

10.0 During the application process

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

11.0 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.

12.0 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.

13.0 Support for students

All HE students are gifted an iPad to aid research and workflow, irrespective of income. In 2017 and 2020 respectively Harlow College gained 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:– 29 June 2022 Standards & Curriculum Committee
Review Date: June 2023
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.