



**BARKING & DAGENHAM COLLEGE (10000528)**

**ACCESS & PARTICIPATION STATEMENT**

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## Contextual Information

The College's vision is: To be a Truly Great College – Passionate about Success, and its mission is: To create positive life chances for people through training for work that leads to economic independence and prosperity.

Barking & Dagenham College is a large general Further Education college situated on the eastern boundary of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, approximately 11 miles east of Central London. During the academic year 16-17 it enrolled approximately 12,487 students. BDC has five specialist training centres catering for both younger and adult students.

Unemployment in the area is high (11%) with one out of every eight people actively seeking employment or training, making it the fourth highest in London. 16-24 year olds have the highest inactivity rate.

The percentage of school leavers with English and maths A\* - C grades is three percentage points lower for the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham than for London. Attainment outcomes at Level 2 at 57% and at Level 3 non-A level at 53% are amongst the lowest ranked in London. There is a higher absence rate in schools within the borough, six percentage points above the London average.

5.6% of young people within the borough are not involved in Education or Training (NEETS) (2nd worst borough in London). The proportion of residents with Level 4 and above qualifications is 32%, 25% below the London average of 57%. 11% of residents within LBBDD have no qualifications compared to the London average of 7%. 46% of 19 year olds within LBBDD lack qualifications, the second worst borough in London. Approximately 22% of residents have no formal qualifications and, since the closure of the larger manufacturing industries, the majority of firms, at least 83%, are small to medium, employing 10 people or less.

The College remains a positive and dynamic contributor to skills development and social mobility in the area and its surrounds and received considerable external recognition for its innovative approach to business growth and the skills agenda.

- The College holds the following awards/kitemarks:
  - STEM Assured kite mark
  - Quality Assurance Agency Higher Education Review (June 2016)
  - Matrix Standard for Advice and Guidance
  - Beacon award, Association of Colleges in 2016
  - Coding College of the Year 2016
  - Pearson's Vocational Qualification teacher of the year 2016
  - Regional Santander Employability Champion Winner for London and the South East 2017
  - Global Teacher of the year finalist 2017
  - Times Education Supplement Awards 2017 – nominations for Professional Service team of the year; Support for Learners; Community engagement, STEM Enthuse Award, 2017

The College offers an extensive portfolio in the context of an excellently resourced and safe, physical and virtual environment that effectively supported development of T-shaped skills for the vast majority of its diverse cohort. Students enrolled at the college felt welcomed, engage well, behaved well, achieved and made good progress to their destinations.

In 2016-17, the College had 2,848 16 -18 learners on study programmes and 4,038 adults studying a combination of full time and part time programmes. Other groups and funding streams included: 74 14–16 year olds, 433 16-18 apprentices, 513 adult apprentices and 70 traineeships.

The College supported 218 high needs learners.

280 HEFCE funded learners and 1581 full fee paying learners. 55% of 16-18 learners were recruited from minority ethnic groups. 36% of 16–18 year olds were female and 64% were male. 686 received support for a learning difficulty and/or disability.

The College's annual turnover for 2016-17 was 34 million. 46% of funding was derived from the EFA, 22% from the Skills Funding Agency and the remainder from higher education courses, schools, learners' fees and commercial income.

An Ofsted inspection in May 2017 confirmed that the College had developed a clear and sound understanding of its performance through its Self-Assessment Report (SAR) process and that it had effectively developed strong mechanisms to channel and make sustainable improvements.

Overall effectiveness was graded GOOD and the quality of only a very small minority of classes needed to improve.

Financial health and support for students remained outstanding acknowledged by Ofsted in the 2013 inspection report and again in May 2017.

In 2016 –17 the large majority of learners enrolled at the College made good, and over 50%, better than good, progress at the College. A significant proportion of its vocational offer performed, above and well-above national average.

An excellently resourced technological infrastructure, identified as industry best practice by JISC, continued to effectively channel and support a culture of innovation and risk taking. Use of digital resources helped increase the variety of learning experiences on offer. Blended and online components, received well by learners in most cases, grew in prevalence across a broad range of subject areas increasing levels of satisfaction and engagement.

Well-considered and developed industrial and commercial partnerships effectively broadened and innovated learning experiences for the vast majority of learners and incentivized business growth and partnership.

Involvement of local and international employers was extensive and sector opportunities, bids, partnerships and collaboration with employers and other sector players formed the glue with which the College achieved its ambitions for the vast majority of its learners and further consolidated its ethos as a provider of 'more than a qualification' learning and professional development.

A well-honed and learning focussed accommodation strategy effectively contributes to learning design, providing use of alternative learning spaces and commercial outlets form which to map its commitment to development of T shaped skills for all its learners.

In some areas Leaders successfully created a climate in which staff were motivated and trusted to take risks and innovate in ways that benefitted learners. Increasingly more systematic and rigorous, performance management mechanisms helped secure quality of experiences for the vast majority of learners. The final grade profile of lessons graded good or better was 93%.

Higher education remains a vital element of the colleges' strategy to provide its students with the opportunity to progress to local, high quality, affordable higher education. The college is deeply committed to widening participation, it participates in a broad range of WP activities to highlight the opportunities available for progression to higher education and is a contributing member of a

number of networks including Linking London, AccessHE and is part of the Pan London National Collaborative Outreach Project (NCOP).

### **Access & Participation Statement Strategic Aims**

- To provide high quality HE locally and at affordable cost
- To provide progression opportunities at levels 4,5 and 6 and beyond
- To widen access to higher education
- To ensure equality of opportunity for our local people to access higher education
- To encourage participation from all underrepresented groups
- To meet the individual needs of all students in order for them to participate and achieve in higher education
- To consider the needs of students for part-time, day release, short and evening, flexible means of delivery

### **Higher Education Strategic Objectives**

- To expand participation in higher education
- To ensure our admissions process encourages applications from all sectors of the community
- To actively encourage students in local wards identified as having lower than expected participation in higher education to apply
- To ensure that our marketing and outreach activity celebrates the diversity of our student cohorts

The colleges approach to promoting wider access is considered through a range of policies and procedures including outreach activity, admissions, curriculum offer through subjects and duration of study, teaching and learning and assessment strategies, fee levels, tutorial and student support services and our active participation in specific and targeted interventions, for example the National Collaborative Outreach Project (NCOP).

### **Fee Limits**

The college sees its role as vital in offering opportunities for the local community and its further education students to access higher education locally and at affordable cost. The college closely monitors the local and regional context within which it operates; this intelligence helps to inform its strategic direction.

The college plays a key role in helping to improve the educational achievement in the local boroughs, the college is well placed to drive improvements in attainment at all levels and the college sees its commitment to widening participation as a college wide objective. The college recognises its high quality, broad FE provision, that offers progression from level 1 as an important vehicle for improving attainment, building confidence and raising aspirations as well as helping its students achieve their personal educational and employment goals.

Fee levels play a very important role in student participation, students often refer to cost as a potential barrier to participation and the college has consistently maintained its full time undergraduate fee a £5,000.

The college reviews its fee levels on an annual basis, the college recognises that higher education fee levels have increased significantly since the introduction of higher fees and despite these being

covered by fee loans the college is keen to keep fees at a level that encourages participation whilst generating sufficient income maintain high quality teaching facilities and industry standard learning environments.

Barking & Dagenham College operates an admissions policy that, in addition to the necessary tariff points, considers applicants with relevant vocational experience and transfers from other institutions. Applications are considered by the relevant academic staff, the interview and selection processes are adapted according to the subject specialism and for some creative courses portfolios are required which allow students from all backgrounds to have an opportunity to present their creative skills. For performing arts students undertake a performance whilst for more academic subjects students undertake a written task.

The college considers its admissions process demonstrates our commitment to WP and widening access.

### **Consultation with members of the student population**

The college operates a successful student forum which has representatives from across our higher education provision. This Access and Participation Statement will be shared and discussed annually at the higher education student forum.

### **Provision of information to students**

The college will continue to publish its fees via the college website and in printed materials, external websites including UCAS and the Student Loan Company. This information is kept up to date to ensure students can make informed decisions about their course of study. The college reviews its fee policy on an annual basis and this is approved by the Corporation.

The key policies, procedures and internal activities that will impact our WP activity include, marketing, admissions, Accreditation of Prior Experiential and/or Certificated Learning, interview and enrolment processes, learning support, examination concessions, assessment and mitigation.

### **Outreach activity**

The college takes a proactive role in external networks, the Head of Higher Level Skills & Enhancement represents the college at a number of forums including; Linking London, AccessHE and (ACP) Association for Collaborative Provision and for the National Collaborative Project (NCOP).

This externality allows the college to contribute at local, regional and national level, contributing to the discussions on access, partnerships and widening participation.

The college takes a holistic approach to outreach activity and with a broad curriculum offer from level 1 to level 7 the college engages in a diverse range of activities with schools, colleges and universities as well as external recruitment events such as UCAS fairs.

### **Internal progression**

The college aims to increase student awareness of the opportunities available within the college for higher education study, including contemporary qualification, quality of provision, affordability and the benefits for some students to remain living locally.

## **External progression**

Additional to the internal progression above, staff support graduating students with progression to employment and further postgraduate study. This involves providing information, advice and guidance on the opportunities for further study and progression to employment. During the third term staff focus tutorials towards progression to further study and employment.

## **Progression to Higher Education through UCAS**

The college encourages students to make full use of the UCAS process and to ensure students take every opportunity to achieve their aspirational choice for higher education study. The college has hosted university fairs, accompanied trips to universities and put in place UCAS and Student Finance talks to assist students to make informed decisions.

## **Retention**

The college has the baseline retention data for at 84% (2017/18). The college has a strong series of interventions available to support retention including increased tutorial support, financial support as well as academic interventions that can be enacted to support students through difficult times. Interventions are available through academic staff, curriculum leaders, curriculum managers and the head of higher level skills and enhancement to ensure every opportunity is taken to support students.

## **Student Success**

The college will continue to set challenging targets for success rates.

Tutorial support will continue to be strengthened to ensure that indicators of students at risk are identified early and that targeted intervention is provided within a timely manner; this may include indicators such as claims for mitigation, extenuation or referral to additional support. Additional focus will be placed on attendance to ensure that any issues or barriers to attendance and targeted support can be overcome to ensure students remain on course and achieve.

The college will continue to allocate funding for higher education enrichment, including contributing to national and international trips and supporting disabled students through the funding of specialist staff to accompany students when required. Industrial and specialist guest speakers and master classes add value to the student experience, bridging the gap between education and employment, funding for these activities will continue to ensure students can engage with industry at all stages of their studies and the benefits of increased motivation guest speakers generate in the student body.

The key policies, procedures and internal activities that impact in our WP activity include, marketing, admissions, Accreditation of Prior Experiential and/or Certificated Learning, interview and enrolment processes, learning support, examination concessions, assessment and mitigation.

Specialist academic support will continue to ensure that early interventions can be made, not only for those with identified needs but those that can benefit from additional guidance on research techniques, referencing, academic writing as well as English and maths skills development.

Indicators such as student's formative assessment information will assist staff in making referrals as well as a close monitoring of assessment workloads through referred assignments and claims for mitigation.

The higher education academic staff will also continue to promote the drop in facilities already available to students and encourage students to take advantage of the support services at induction but also through group tutorials and 1-1 sessions.

- Tutorial support
- Specialist support staff
- Increased academic support
- Supporting student travel
- To continue to improve facilities and resources that will enhance the student experience

## **BME**

The college has monitored its BAME recruitment since 2009/10. The local borough BME population is at 45 - 50% and as such the college is pleased that it is seen as a preferred choice for BAME students wanting to study HE. The college will carefully monitor applications and acceptances to ensure that any differences are clearly understood and the college aims to retain its current level of 63%. Additionally we will monitor the local population and ensure any potential increase in local BAME population is reflected in our recruitment targets going forward. We will analyse BAME participation at course level to identify if specific targets would be useful in ensuring that course cohorts fully reflect borough data.

## **Students with a learning difficulty and disability**

The baseline data for students with a declared learning difficulty and disability was 12% (2017/18). The college offers excellent support, continuity and consistency of support to those that progress internally from level 3 to levels 4, 5 and 6 (HE). New students are sometimes identified as requiring support once on programme, support and guidance is offered to assist with DSA applications and interim support is put in place whilst the process is completed.

## **Monitoring & Evaluation**

The college has revised its data collection for higher education. Data sets have been broadened to facilitate more in depth monitoring and evaluation both at curriculum and cross college levels. This increased data will facilitate more rigorous target setting and better understanding of student performance and allow for more strategically focussed interventions.

The Head of Higher Level Skills & Enhancement will continue to monitor the progress of the colleges widening participation and access work and will continue to report the progress made through the Higher Education Self Evaluation process. The annual higher education Self Evaluation Document is presented to and approved by a number of college boards including the Higher Education Operational Group, HE Academic Board and the Strategic Leadership Team.

## **Equality & Diversity**

Barking & Dagenham College celebrates and values the diversity brought to its workforce and learners by individuals. Barking & Dagenham College is committed to engaging staff and recruiting students regardless of racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, special educational needs and disability thus allowing it to meet the needs of a diverse college population within a multi-cultural

society. The college will treat all employees, workers and learners with respect and dignity, and seeks to provide a working environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

Barking & Dagenham College seeks to eliminate discrimination on grounds of age, class, colour, employment status, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or special educational needs and disability. The college aims to create a working and learning environment where there are positive relations between members of different racial groups and different abilities. To this end, the college provides training and support for staff and consults with staff and students about their experience of the working environment, and to provide diverse images in any promotional material that it produces.

Barking & Dagenham College is committed to advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it. The College seeks to ensure that individuals and communities have equal access to learning programmes and facilities. The College is aware of the changing demographic of the area and the need to positively encourage and enhance community cohesion.

The BDC single equality scheme covers all issues relating to equality and diversity in Barking & Dagenham College. This policy seeks to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and best practice. Our single equality scheme was developed in consultation with the Corporation, staff, employee representatives and learners. These groups had and continue to have the opportunity to influence the policy at meetings of the Equality and Diversity Committee the Performance and Standards Committee. These groups meet regularly throughout the year.

The single equality scheme is reviewed periodically to ensure that it is up to date, relevant, effective and compliant with current legislation. The scheme is reviewed at the Equality and Diversity Committee and the Performance and Standards Committee of the Corporation. It is approved by the Corporation.

## **Historical Data**

The college carefully tracks its performance across a range of indicators. This ensures that the college can tailor its widening participation and outreach activity to ensure it supports access for the characteristics identified.

The college monitors the following indicators;

- Recruitment
- Internal progression
- Claims for mitigation
- Attendance
- Non-Continuation
- Compliments and complaints
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Age
- Declared Learning Difficulties and Disability
- Percentage of disadvantaged learners from the local area
- Achievement
- Looked after Children (LAC), Care Leavers and Care Experienced