



Barking & Dagenham College

Access and Participation Statement

2021/22

October 2021

## A. Scope

This Access and Participation Statement (APS) has been drafted in line with the Office for Students (OfS) [Regulatory Advice 7: Advice on preparing your 2019-20 access and participation statement](#) (OfS 2018.07) (which at the time of drafting this Statement was the latest published guidance by the OfS). It, together with Condition A2 of the [OfS Regulatory Framework](#) (OfS 2018.01), commits approved or approved (fee cap) Higher Education Providers (HEP's) charging up to the basic tuition fee amount for qualifying HE courses to publish an access and participation statement and to update and republish this statement on an annual basis. This Statement is published on the College's website at: <https://www.barkingdagenhamcollege.ac.uk/find/courses-for-me/higher-education-policies> and will be updated and re-published annually on the Higher Education section of the College website.

The data considered in this APS is from the OfS Access and Participation (AP) data set issued to HEP's and analysed using the interactive AP dashboard provided to the College through the OfS portal. This is distinct from the other sources of data and metrics that the College uses to meet OfS regulations, such as Condition B3 numerical baseline metrics, Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) metrics (undergoing review), National Student Survey (NSS) metrics, Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) performance indicators, UCAS national and provider statistics, any relevant data from the College's validation partners, and any other relevant student outcomes internal data (including 'in-year' data).

## B. Background and context

Barking & Dagenham College is a Further Education College (FEC) and a HEP for the purposes of OfS regulation, offering vocational, technical and professional education and training pathways from Entry level through to level 7. The College is located in the East London Borough of Barking & Dagenham (LBBD), with the OfS regulated HE provision delivered primarily at the Rush Green Campus in Romford.

The borough is one of the fastest changing communities in Britain both in terms of growth and diversity. It is a growth borough, expected to reach 275,000 residents by 2037 with the highest birth rate in London and the largest proportion of under 16-year-olds anywhere in the UK (accounting for 27% of the overall population in the borough). The proportion of people living with declared disabilities or long-term health conditions is increasing, 26.9% of households have a person with a long-term health condition or disability. The population is becoming more ethnically and culturally diverse with growth in representation from people of Black African, Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani heritage. 30% of the population was born outside of the UK and 18.5% of the population's home language is not English.

LBBD is ranked the most deprived borough in London against the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 and has the 21<sup>st</sup> highest IMD score in England. In addition, it has one of the highest scores of income deprivation in the country, and the highest score in London for employment deprivation.

The average attainment at key stage 5 is 46.7%, which is 2.2 percentage points below the London average of 48.9%. 13.7% of local residents have no qualifications, while 74.2% have a level 1 qualification and only 30.7% hold a level 4 qualification, which is 53.4 percentage points below the London average of 84.1%. LBBD is identified as having wards where progression to higher education is significantly lower than predicted based on GCSE attainment.

The role of the College in addressing these local issues is critical. The College plays an essential role in the borough and surrounding areas in providing opportunities for progression to further and higher education, skills development and employment, as well as the wider social benefits these bring. Increasing social mobility and meeting the needs of the local and London economy is one of its key strategic priorities.

The majority of our student population is enrolled on provision below level 4. However, the College has developed clearly defined progression pathways at level 4 and above, particularly in STEM areas in order to ensure that we continue to be a valued learning provider to our community, meeting local needs. This provides alternative progression routes into HE for College students studying at level 3. The overall aim is to ensure we offer as many opportunities to our students as possible, widening access and participation as we do so.

## C. HE Offer

The College's HE offer is relatively small (in terms of student numbers), yet becoming increasingly diverse (in terms of qualifications being offered) and is awarded by a range of awarding bodies and awarding organisations. In terms of university education, the College has longstanding validation arrangements with University of East London and Wrexham Glyndŵr University. The HE subjects (and associated feeder provision) offered are responsive to local and London priorities and aligned accordingly. Higher Education is strategically significant to BDC to meet local community needs and for its local community in improving its socio-economic mobility. In 2020, the College was awarded Institute of Technology Status: the East London Institute of Technology (East London IoT). The East London IoT has a well-formed level 4 and above curriculum offer, developed in partnership with global, national and regional employers, focused on providing essential digital and technical skills training.

## D. Student outcomes

The College has analysed its OfS Access and Participation (AP) data set for 2021 in order to identify gaps in relative student outcomes between different groups of students across the student-life-cycle (namely across 'access', 'success' (including continuation and attainment) and 'progression'). In addition, relative student rates are also considered where relevant (i.e. in relation to access and participation and where there are intersections with competing under-represented student characteristics). Within the student-life-cycle categories, both 'positive' gaps and gaps have been identified (i.e. where the gaps are in favour of under-represented or OfS-priority student groups (i.e. those groups' outcomes are better than students that are not under-represented or OfS-priority student groups) (these are classed as 'positive' gaps) and where the gaps are in favour of students that are not under-represented or not OfS-priority student groups (these are classed as gaps). The data and information presented below are for 'first degree' (i.e. undergraduate degree) and 'other undergraduate' programmes (i.e. sub-degree programmes, such as foundation degrees and Pearson BTEC Higher National programmes).

### 1. First degree programmes

The OfS AP data set shows no gaps in relative full-time and part-time first degree student outcomes for under-represented or OfS-priority student groups across the student-life-cycle.

### 2. Other undergraduate programmes

#### (a) Access

##### *Positive gaps:*

The College is committed to increasing access for students from under-represented and OfS-priority groups. This is evident from the positive access gap for full-time students from deprivation quintile 5 when compared with full-time students from deprivation quintile 1 for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College). This positive gap out-performed the HEP sector average during the same period.

##### *Gaps:*

The OfS AP data show no access gaps for full-time or part-time other undergraduate students for the period 2017/18 to 2019/20.

##### *Rates:*

The access rates (based on OfS AP data) for the under-represented or OfS-priority other undergraduate student groups noted below have exceeded the HEP sector average for the same period or year(s):

- Full-time students from Deprivation quintiles 1 and 2 for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College).
- Full-time students of Black and Mixed heritage for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College).
- Full-time students of Asian heritage for the period 2016/17 to 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College).
- Full-time students of Other heritage for the years 2015/16, 2017/18 and 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College).
- Full-time students that are classified as POLAR4 quintile 2 for the years 2015/16 and 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College).
- Full-time students from deprivation quintiles 1 or 2 and comprised of students from BAME backgrounds for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College).

The access rates (based on OfS AP data) for the under-represented or OfS-priority other undergraduate student groups noted below have under-performed the HEP sector average for the same period or year(s):

- Full-time mature students for the period 2016/17 to 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College)
- Full-time students with one or more declared disabilities for the years 2015/16, 2017/18 and 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College) (the under-performance is less than 2 percentage points).
- Full-time students classified as POLAR4 quintiles 1 or 2 and comprised of students from BAME backgrounds for 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College).
- Full-time female students classified as POLAR4 quintiles 1 or 2 for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College).
- Full-time female students from deprivation quintiles 1 or 2 for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19 (the latest year of available data for the College).

#### *Response to access data*

The College will seek:

- to maintain positive access gaps and narrow or close access gaps
- to maintain access rates in line with or exceeding the HEP sector average, also taking account of, where relevant, local demographics
- to monitor access (positive) gaps and access rates annually using the OfS AP data set and respond accordingly to such gaps and rates
- to explore the HE curriculum offer and mix with a view to increasing institutional level access rates for under-represented or OfS-priority student groups on full-time other undergraduate programmes
- (in the case of gaps relating to intersections with competing under-represented or OfS-priority groups of students or those with associated personal characteristics), to consider the relative rates of student outcomes and seek to maintain or improve those rates (as opposed to narrow or close the gap) in order to avoid unintended consequences for these groups of students.

#### (b) Success

##### *(i) Continuation*

##### *Positive gaps:*

The College is committed to closing continuation gaps between under-represented and OfS-priority other undergraduate student groups. There are indications from OfS AP data of success in this regard in the form of positive continuation gaps for the following groups of students:

- Full-time students from BAME backgrounds compared with full-time white students for 2018/19. This compared very favourably to the equivalent HEP sector average for the same year.
- Full-time students from deprivation quintiles 3, 4 or 5 compared with students from deprivation quintiles 1 or 2 for 2017/18. This compared favourably to the HEP sector average for the same year.

*Gaps:*

The OfS AP data show no continuation gaps for full-time students from deprivation quintile 5 compared with those from deprivation quintile 1, nor are there gaps for full-time students from POLAR4 quintile 5 compared with those from POLAR4 quintile 1. (No OfS AP continuation data are available for part-time other undergraduate students and therefore by implication there are no gaps.)

There are, however, continuation gaps according to OfS AP data between under-represented or OfS-priority other undergraduate student groups as noted below.

- Young (under 21) full-time students compared with mature (21 and over) full-time students for the years 2014/15, 2015/16, 2017/18 and 2018/19. This continuation gap under-performed the HEP sector average for the same years.
- Full-time white students compared with black students for 2017/18 (the latest year of available data for the College). This continuation gap under-performed the HEP sector average for 2017/18.
- Full-time white students from deprivation quintiles 1 or 2 compared to full-time BAME students from deprivation quintiles 1 or 2 for the years 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2017/18. This continuation gap under-performed the HEP sector average for the same years.

*(ii) Attainment*

There are no available OfS AP data associated with attainment gaps for first degree programmes (namely 1<sup>st</sup> and 2.1 degree classifications), and by implication there are no gaps for attainment based on this data.

*Response to success data*

The College will seek:

- to maintain positive continuation gaps and narrow or close continuation gaps
- to monitor attainment gaps annually using the OfS AP data set and respond accordingly to (positive) gaps
- to identify and respond to any underlying causes for continuation gaps
- (in the case of gaps relating to intersections with competing under-represented or OfS-priority groups of students or those with associated personal characteristics), to consider the relative rates of student outcomes and seek to maintain or improve those rates (as opposed to narrow or close the gap) in order to avoid unintended consequences for these groups of students.

Progression

*Positive gaps:*

The College is committed to narrowing progression gaps for under-represented and OfS-priority other undergraduate student groups. This is evidenced in part by the progression gap for young full-time students compared with mature full-time students for 2015/16 and 2016/17 (the latest year of available data for the College), according to OfS AP data. This positive progression gap out-performed the HEP sector average for 2015/16 and was broadly comparable with it for 2016/17.

### *Gaps:*

The OfS AP data show a progression gap in 2016/17 for full-time white students compared with BAME students. This progression gap under-performed the HEP sector average for the same year.

## **E. Ambitions and Strategy**

The College intends to add significant value to the local communities it serves by providing life-altering opportunities to increase their knowledge, employability skills and progression pathways (through education, focusing career trajectory and financial independence (through progression into self-employment, freelance work and business start-up)).

In this regard, the starting point for the College (in the context of the student-life-cycle) is to promote wider access and participation by adopting (or enhancing) a range of approaches, including but not limited to:

- outreach and transition support activity, including active engagement with Linking London Uni Connect funded activity with the College's level 2 and 3 young and adult learners (Uni Connect, funded by the OfS, were formerly NCOP)
- admissions and induction (with associated information, advice, guidance and support for (prospective) applicants and students)
- a responsive curriculum offer (including a range of subjects that potentially increase progression pathways and which are valued by the associated sectors and employers, as well as being of a more flexible duration than a conventional sub-degree or undergraduate degree, with annual milestones that provide a qualification certificate and therefore ensure that students are free to pursue work, further study at the College or elsewhere or follow other choices at various points in their education)
- HE-focused teaching, learning and assessment strategies
- value for money (e.g. relatively lower tuition fees, yet without compromising on quality and resources, and increasing development of technical skills and employability)
- sharing good practice through recognised sector networks (such as [Linking London](#))
- East London IoT: there is a clear strategy targeting increased participation for under-represented groups in higher level STEM programmes. A detailed series of targets and actions are focused on increasing access and participation of mature part-time students, females and those with LLDD. These are monitored by the College's governing body to ensure targets are achieved.

In relation to improving or further improving student success (including continuation and attainment), the following are approaches being adopted (or enhanced):

- a continuously improving tutorial system and student support service that are responsive to the needs of the College's students and seek to be informed by best practice in the sector (including but not limited to sharing good practice with the College's validation partners, through staff development activities and through external organisations, including Linking London's student retention and success work-strand)
- increased emphasis on HE study skills and induction at each stage of transition (i.e. from level 3 to level 4, from level 4 to level 5, from level 5 to level 6 and from level 6 to level 7)
- East London IoT: access to specialist and 'cutting-edge' resources
- early and targeted intervention strategies for students at risk of withdrawing and/or not making sufficient academic progress
- focused, sector valued and sustainable staff development that is expected to contribute to improved or enhanced HE programme design and delivery in collaboration with [Advance HE](#) and validation partners
- increasing student engagement, with greater integration of virtual learning environments (such as Moodle and MS Teams) and their interaction with learning, teaching and assessment
- monitoring of student engagement (including monitoring of engagement with online resources and activities and attendance at sessions)

- monitoring of late and missed assessment submissions and requests for extenuating circumstances to identify existing or emerging student support needs.

In relation to improving or further improving employability skills or progression to work (including employment, self-employment, freelance work or business start-up) and/or the next level of study or post-graduate study, the following are approaches being adopted (or enhanced):

- East London IoT: access to employability skills and technical skills development
- additionality (in this case, additional short qualifications or workshops that enhance employability and/or technical skills demanded by the associated sectors)
- allocation of funding for:
  - national and international trips
  - industrial and specialist guest speakers
  - master classes
  - relevant software subscriptions for up to a year after completion of a level 6 qualification
  - developing an alumni-type database in Unit E (the College's student record system) so that graduating students from a level 5, 6 or 7 programme can continue to receive relevant careers advice and be able to access associated resources
- exploring the use of [Abintegro](#) and/or [Gradintelligence](#) by the College's careers service.

#### **F. Student consultation**

A group of students, as part of a focus group, were consulted on the latest draft of this Statement. They were happy with the content and approach taken by the College, including the Ambitions and Strategy section above. They provided no further feedback or suggestions for changes to the Statement and therefore this Statement remained unaltered following the student consultation.