

# New City College

## Access and Participation [2022-23 to 2026-27]

### Introduction and Context

New City College (NCC) is a group of 6 further education (FE) colleges that have merged over the last 6 years. NCC has campuses in 5 geographical areas of East London and Essex, each with different communities and different education offers, although not all sites currently offer Higher Education (HE). Each campus aims to work closely with education stakeholders such as local authorities and schools. Part of this work is liaising with local schools, offering taster opportunities to their students to experience a range of career and course opportunities, covering the breadth of provision offered by NCC.

The largest amount of (HE) programmes within the group is delivered at the Ardleigh Green Campus (previously Havering College) within the London Borough of Havering. The data presented in this plan refers to HE students who studied at the Ardleigh Green Campus.

NCC plays an important role in providing local HE provision, with internal progression routes and actively seeks to widen access. Havering's HE access has always included and purposefully targeted non-traditional participants into HE. Within Havering there are several wards of the lowest access of local areas (POLAR) classification, for example Heaton, Havering Park and Gooshays. Havering is also ranked the second lowest borough in London for residents holding a degree level qualification (Trust for London)

Havering also differs from the combined general London profile in regards to its ethnicity, where 88% are classified as White, compared to 60% for London. The Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups (BAME) is also significantly lower at 10%, compared to 32% for London (Havering Data Intelligence Hub)

The data set in the APP excludes students on Pearson HE programmes who were based at our partner organisation as the partnership has ceased. Also, excluded from the data set are the College's in-house Pearson HE programmes, the majority of students on this provision are College staff upskilling their education qualifications. The APP focusses on full time programmes, these are clearly marked as first degree within the report.

#### HE Programmes Offered at NCC

Awarding Body / Organisation	Type of Awards	Sectors
Open University (all programmes now on a teach out)	FdA BA(Hons) MA	Education, Counselling, Social Work, Pastoral Care, Early Years
Bath Spa University	FdA BA(Hons) MA	Education, Counselling
University of East London	Cert Ed PGCE	Education
Pearson Education	HNC/HND L5 Diploma	Sport, Science, Art & Design Construction, Engineering, Education

# 1. Assessment of Performance

## 1.1 Higher education access household income, or socioeconomic status

### Access

NCC's HE provision is modest. The HE headcount for 2021-22 is 216 students, of which 157 identify themselves as female and 59 as males, with a 3-year aggregate of 89% female and 11% males (OfS APP data set). This gender difference is largely because the majority of NCCs' degrees offered are within the care and education sectors, for example, social work, teaching and counselling, these are known to attract a high proportion of female students. This is within the context of declining HE numbers across NCC over a period of five years and removal of some programmes from the HE offer. The student profile is predominately adults or mature students, those who are 21+ at 92%, therefore mature students form the focus of this plan. NCC is planning on growing its mature HE students, incrementally over the course of the APP, thus meeting wider national targets to increase the number of mature students HE.

The participation of local areas (POLAR) classification groups, which is the proportion of young people (18-19 years old) who enter higher education shows that NCC's young participation rates are low and statistically not significant. There are no students identified in Polar 4 quintiles 1-5 (a quintile is one of five values that divide a range of data into five equal parts, each being 1/5th or 20 percent, with quintile one showing the lowest rate of participation and quintile five the highest participation rate). Therefore, the focus of this plan is on mature students. In terms of BAME profile, NCC non-White student population is 37% over the last 5 years.

Student performance is reviewed and analysed at individual programme level within annual progress monitoring review documents. These are summarised and reported to the Higher Education Committee (HEC) which meets regularly to review all strategic and quality HE issues. Where groups are underperforming actions are noted and implemented.

Table 1 Student Profile – IMD

Level of Study	IMD	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Aggregate Last 3 Years	Aggregate Last 5 Years
		15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20		
Full Time First Degree	IMDQ1	29%	13%	14%	9%	15%	13%	17%
Full Time First Degree	IMDQ2	31%	38%	29%	30%	25%	28%	31%
Full Time First Degree	IMDQ3	18%	14%	35%	32%	25%	31%	24%
Full Time First Degree	IMDQ4	9%	23%	10%	11%	20%	12%	14%
Full Time First Degree	IMDQ5	13%	12%	12%	18%	20%	16%	14%

Source: OfS APP Data Set

Table 1 represents Indices of multiple deprivation (IMD), a measure of relative deprivation for geographical area by quintiles 1-5, with quintile 1 being the most deprived and quintile 5 the least

deprived area. The data shows that over the last 5 years nearly half of NCC's student population at 48% were residing in quintiles 1 and 2, the highest levels of deprivation, this compares to 43% nationally (OfS APP data set).

The high level of IMDQ1 access rates in 2015-16 was primarily due to a large social work degree programme, with 87 learners, which included numerous students from Q1. This programme is no longer running, due to year on year decrease in enrolments. The last intake was 2019 - a small group of 14 students, and this is reflected in Q1 student profile in year 2 from 2016-17 data onwards. However, NCC recognises that there is still 5 percentage points (ppt) gap in access for students residing in IMDQ1 compared with those residing in IMDQ5 (2019-20 data) and will be monitoring this gap annually and action planning as required.

Success

Non-continuation

Table 2 Non-Continuation - Overall

Level of Study	Non Continuation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Aggregate Last 3 Years	Aggregate Last 5 Years
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19		
Full Time First Degree	Overall	8%	18%	6%	17%	10%	10%	11%

Source: OfS APP Data Set

Overall non-continuation of students is at 10 % over the last three years. This is 4 % below the national benchmark of 14 % for mature students (OfS APP dashboard).

Attainment

Table 3 – Overall Student Attainment

Level of Study	Attainment	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Aggregate Last 3 Years	Aggregate Last 5 Years
		15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20		
Full Time First Degree	Overall	61%	72%	65%	57%	45%	58%	62%

Source: OfS APP Data Set

Table 3 data shows that the overall attainment rate, defined as the proportion of first and upper second-class degrees awarded, on average over the last three to five-years is 58% and 62% respectively. Table 3 also highlights a 3-year growing attainment gap of 25 ppt against a national average of 83%.

It should be noted that NCC students have high pass rates for their degree programmes, however NCC acknowledges that the number of high degree classifications is low. A possible explanation for this could be that the majority of NCC students are mature students, working with family commitments, for whom the completion of a degree is a significant achievement in itself. Nevertheless, the College is committed to reducing this attainment gap, as 92% of the student population are mature students, the overall attainment gap will be addressed in line with the reduction in the mature attainment gap, refer to section 1.3.

## Progression to employment or further study

The APP progression data set shows progression for 2016/17 at 61% (progression is defined as the students are in employment or further study), with a three-year progression aggregate of 53%. The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) data consultation data, which is more current, shows a progression of 86% against a benchmark of 74%. This positive gap is due to the fact that a high proportion of mature HE students at NCC are in work during their studies, largely due to the very vocational nature of the programmes offered.

## Summary of Assessment of Performance

To summarise, the data presented here indicates that the majority of students are mature students, White females who tend to be from socially deprived areas.

### 1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Table 4 Access – Ethnicity

Level of Study	Ethnicity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Aggregate Last 3 Years	Aggregate Last 5 Years
		15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20		
Full Time First Degree	White	65%	57%	62%	75%	60%	65%	63%
Full Time First Degree	Black	23%	28%	31%	15%	25%	25%	25%
Full Time First Degree	Asian	7%	10%	DP	5%	10%	5%	7%
Full Time First Degree	Mixed	DP	6%	DP	DP	DP	4%	3%
Full Time First Degree	Other	5%	DP	DP	DP	DP	2%	2%

Source: OfS APP Data Set. DP- denotes data protection

Over the last three and five years the student access profile by ethnicity shows that the majority of NCC students are White at 65% and 63% respectively, while those from an Asian, Black, Mixed and Other (BAME) background constitute just over a third of the student population.

This data set shows that BAME students are underrepresented when compared to White students on HE programmes at NCC, however this needs to be viewed in context of the wider Havering demographics highlighted in the introduction and the national data. When comparing the student ethnicity profile to the wider London Borough of Havering ethnicity profile, NCC is capturing proportionately more. NCC is committed to monitoring the gap in the number of BAME students studying at HE level, which we will review regularly and if gaps in access widen then NCC will action plan as appropriate and amend the APP accordingly in subsequent years.

Table 5 Non-continuation – Ethnicity

Level of Study	Ethnicity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Aggregate Last 3 Years	Aggregate Last 5 Years
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19		
Full Time First Degree	White	6%	10%	10%	10%	10%	9%	8%
Full Time First Degree	BAME	15%	N	DP	30%	DP	15%	19%

Source: OfS APP Data Set

After disaggregation of the data, non-continuation rates for White students are consistently at or below 9% over the aggregate of the last three years, for BAME students the rates are marginally lower at 15%, there is therefore a 6 ppt gap in BAME non-continuation compared to White students.

Table 6 Student Attainment – Ethnicity

Level of Study	Ethnicity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Aggregate Last 3 Years	Aggregate Last 5 Years
		15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20		
Full Time First Degree	White	71%	75%	75%	65%	N	72%	72%
Full Time First Degree	BAME	35%	N	N	40%	DP	32%	36%

Source: OfS APP Data Set

There is an attainment gap for BAME students of 40 ppt compared with White students over the aggregate of the previous three years, NCC is committed to narrowing the gap as detailed within the aim and objectives section of this plan.

#### Progression to employment or further study

Progression data by ethnicity is limited and it is therefore difficult to make accurate judgements. NCC will, however, review data sets going forward and set targets as appropriate.

Following the analysis of performance data, one of the key focuses of this plan is to reduce the non-continuation and attainment gaps of BAME students, as detailed later.

### 1.3 Mature students

Table 7 Access– Mature

Level of Study	Age	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Aggregate Last 3 Years	Aggregate Last 5 Years
		15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20		
Full Time First Degree	Mature	87%	87%	92%	95%	85%	92%	90%

Source: OfS APP Data Set

Table 7 shows that NCC’s HE students are predominately mature students over the last three years at 92%, and over 90% in the last 5 years. Historically as stated previously NCC has always recruited mature students and the profile of programmes offered has reflected this.

Table 8 Non-Continuation – Mature

Level of Study	Age	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Aggregate Last 3 Years	Aggregate Last 5 Years
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19		
Full Time First Degree	Mature	9%	17%	5%	17%	DP	9%	11%

Source: OfS APP Data Set

The above Table 8 shows that the non-continuation rate of mature students at NCC is lower than national average rate of 14% (OfS APP data)

Table 9 Attainment – Mature

Level of Study	Age	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Aggregate Last 3 Years	Aggregate Last 5 Years
		15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20		
Full Time First Degree	Mature	55%	75%	70%	57%	40%	59%	60%

Source: OfS APP Data Set

Table 9 shows that over the last four years there has been a year-on-year decrease in the attainment rates of mature students. There is an attainment gap for mature students of 14.5% over the aggregate of the last 5 years compared to the national average rate of 74.5% (OfS APP data). NCC is committed to reducing this gap, the actions to address this are detailed later in the strategic aims and objectives.

#### Progression to employment or further study

Progression rates of mature students are slightly higher than young students (under 21 years of age) at a three-year aggregate of 54%, compared to 50% for young students.

### 1.4 Disabled students

On average, over the last three years, 9% of NCC HE students had declared disability (College data), this is below the national average of 16%. Analysis of the data shows that the most common conditions reported are mental health at 3% and visual impairment at 2%. Over the last three years non-continuation of disabled students is 10%, this mirrors the national average and is in line with the College average. Attainment rates for disabled students show there is a gap of 15ppt with the rest of the student population. NCC are committed to closing the gap in-line with the commitment in reducing the overall attainment rate, by targeting support for disabled students. Progression rates for our disabled students are better than the students without a declared disability over three years.

### 1.5 Care leavers

The number of care leavers is statistically insignificant and is currently under 0.5 % of the current cohort, however NCC is committed to monitoring access, non-continuation, attainment and progression of care leavers.

## 1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

After analysing the data, it is apparent that due to the small cohort size, it is not possible to draw out meaningful intersections of disadvantage. However, we will continue to monitor access and participation data of BAME students, by IMD, as the limited data set indicated that there was a potential gap. NCC will continue to monitor this group and will action plan accordingly.

## 1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

NCC currently does not collect data on other under-represented groups:

- Carers
- People estranged from your family
- Refugees
- Gypsy Roma and Traveller communities
- Children from military families

We aim to start collecting this data from September 2022-23.

## 2. Strategic Aims and Objectives

At the heart of NCC's educational vision is *creating opportunities through inspiring teaching and learning*, and one of its core values is *the celebration of equality and diversity*. NCC educational vision and values demonstrates its commitment to increasing access to high quality education for all, which includes raising access to HE through widening participation in its curriculum offer and delivery model.

Equality of Opportunity is a key objective of NCC's overarching strategic intent, which is not a static plan but a set of aspirations which allows NCC to be a responsive organisation to a constantly evolving external environment.

To ensure that NCC delivers equality of opportunity it has a strategic working group with a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion. The group reviews equity matters throughout the student lifecycle and reports on these to the senior management team and the corporation governing body. Key aspects monitored include:

- Marketing activities
- Student admissions
- Student support
- Student outcomes
- Student complaints and appeals

Equality of opportunity permeates throughout the whole organisation, it is discussed in the agendas of the senior management team, operational group curriculum director meetings and in individual programme team meetings. Programme managers review the demographic profile and success of students engaging in programmes during annual monitoring reviews. Actions and outcomes are then

recorded in the programme review report and these are monitored through the Higher Education Committee (HEC), see section 3 for a description of this group.

NCC has an overarching strategic aim to grow its HE student cohort including mature and those in employment which supports the national agenda to increase access to HE for adults. NCC is committed to widening access, and also high levels of attainment for all our HE students this includes progression to graduate level employment and further study.

## **2.1 Equality Act 2010**

The College ensures throughout its policies, procedures and practice that the Equality Act 2010 is adhered to. This APP and the strategic measures were developed with due regard for the key requirements of the act.

Throughout the student lifecycle from application to graduation NCC strives to ensure that no discriminatory practice occurs and has due mechanisms in place to challenge any potential discriminatory behaviour towards students and staff.

## **2.2 Target groups**

After analysis of the current performance NCC has identified the following target group to achieve equality of opportunity and to eliminate gaps:

- BAME students

We have developed the following targets:

- Non-continuation rates for BAME students
- Attainment rates for BAME students

## **2.3 Aims and objectives**

### Aims

After a thorough analysis of assessment of current performance NCC has identified that there are performance gaps for certain groups of students. NCC is committed to reducing these gaps in performance. NCC is committed to reducing the overall mature attainment gap, the attainment gap of disabled students and monitoring access and participation of BAME students by IMD. NCC believes strategic measures will impact these commitments. However, specifically the overall aims of this APP are to eliminate the non-continuation and the attainment gaps for BAME students over the lifespan of this plan (5 years). NCC chose these specific aims because from the performance data analysis these were the two most significant gaps.

### Objectives

- Eliminating the gap in non-continuation rates for BAME students, currently at 6ppt, by 2025
- Eliminating the gap in attainment rates for BAME students, currently 40ppt, by 2027 - to note this current cohort is small, so this aspirational target is stretching but should be achievable.

NCC has not formulated any access and progression objectives due to data constraints, however the College will continue to monitor access and progression rates and action plan in needed as appropriate. That said, as highlighted earlier in the document NCC is intending to grow incrementally the number of mature HE students.

### **3. Strategic Measures**

#### **3.1 Whole provider strategic approach**

##### Overview

NCC is committed to empower all students, regardless of their background to access HE provision and succeed on their programmes. NCC's processes, policies, procedures and ethos reflect this commitment.

The strategic measures identified and developed are evidence based and informed by the theory of change model. Strategic measures have been developed carefully and targeted to maximise impact in meeting the identified APP objectives, and this is reflected in Table 10 APP Overview.

NCC has the following values that shape, underpin and inform its work:

- Effort, determination and aspiration in our students and ourselves
- Continuous improvement in high quality education and training
- Deep-seated support for student wellbeing and success
- Local priorities within a regional and national landscape
- Sharing knowledge and skills, working productively together across the group
- The celebration of equality and diversity

To achieve this NCC will:

- Use the scale and strength of our group to drive educational excellence and innovation
- Continue improving student outcomes and achievement. We will inspire and support every student, whatever their background, to maximise their potential within an environment of challenging targets
- Support our staff to develop their skills and talents and look after their wellbeing
- Make a positive impact on our local communities and the local economy by meeting the unique needs of all the areas in which we work, within a group structure
- Have an influential position locally and nationally

#### **3.2 Alignment with other Strategies**

The APP complements a number of wider NCC strategies. The key one being NCC's strategic intent plan 2020-2025. Within which there is an objective to enhance the overall quality and student experience. The key strategies of this document centre on:

- Student support
- A curriculum offer well matched to equip students for the emerging economy and the

4<sup>th</sup> Industrial revolution

- Improving pedagogy – through a focussed teaching and learning laboratory
- Meeting the needs of local communities and economies

The APP also aligns with the College's equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) strategy, which focuses on ensuring equality of opportunity. The EDI action is reviewed and monitored by a working group of senior managers ensuring equity of experience for all students.

Furthermore, this APP is aligned to the College's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Developmental Strategy the focus of which includes the link between the quality of teaching, student continuation and attainment.

The College's HE strategy aligns with its wider objective to provide education and training that meets the needs of its local communities, employers and individuals. It provides different succinct pathways for the communities and employers it serves to access higher education. Firstly, by providing progression routes to the College's students on Level 3 programmes and secondly by providing opportunities to mature students to access higher education whilst at work. The latter is achieved by flexible timetabling to meet adult and employer needs.

NCC is committed to progressing more of its level 3 students into higher education, this will meet national wider access to HE targets as many of NCC students coming from widening participation postcodes. These are students from areas of low higher education participation, low household income or low socioeconomic status.

## **Other Actions**

### Financial Support

NCC is committed to ensuring students are supported both academically and financially, through a dedicated HE student hardship fund. In order to receive an allocation from this fund students must undergo a means test. The criteria currently is:

- Student's household income is under £26,000 gross per year
- Students are in receipt of funding from Student Finance England

Under exceptional circumstances, financial support may be awarded to a student nominated by the academic support tutor, who does not meet the above threshold, this is subject to the discretion of the finance director.

The fund is available to all HE cohorts and will support in closing the identified continuation and attainment gaps. Information on financial support is available on the College website and is also covered during pre-enrolment activities (information, advice, and guidance activities).

The fund used for a range of support for example childcare costs, household bills and study materials, if successful are given a sum of up to £500. The current fund is £15,000 and we aim to increase this using the additional tuition fee income to £25,000 in the first year, and then increase incrementally over the duration of the APP.

We have historically used this action based on evidence from the Senior Student Services Officer that this fund supports approximately 10% of HE students annually, enabling them to remain on their programme and to achieve their award.

### 3.3 Strategic Measures

In order to achieve the aim and objectives of this plan, we will be taking the following strategic measures:

a) Partnership and Collaborative Working

The College is committed to working with and developing robust strategic partnerships that will benefit students throughout their studies. This includes a range of national employers such as MIND and more local employers - 'you and me counselling'. Local schools and colleges for example assisting with work placements for education programmes. NCC is planning a week of employer focussed events in w/c 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2023 and during the same period in subsequent years of the plan. During these weeks' employers will be giving input in student seminars on workplace practices, skills, knowledge and expectations. These interactions with employers will:

- engage the students
- motivate them to continue their programme
- expose them to employment opportunities their degree may lead to

This contributes, as part of all the strategic measures working cumulatively together, in reducing the non-continuation gap of all students including the specific group identified in the objective: BAME. Each of these employer events will be evaluated by students, through a range of mechanisms, for example, a survey and feedback at course boards. NCC Staff will contribute feedback through an evaluation meeting, after each event. Positive and negative feedback on employers will be used to inform further interactions with them.

Exposure to employers and professional practice will further support students to enrich their assignment work with practice and support their application of theory to practice, thus contributing to narrowing the attainment gap, for both mature and BAME students.

The College also works with local education authorities on various activities to increase access, such as hosting schools transition events for all its local providers. These events are held annually in the third term usually June, the aim of which is to give students an exciting taste of the type of provision the College specialises in.

#### Evaluation

At the end of each of these events students will be asked to complete a survey with their views on the usefulness of these activities in supporting them on their programme and the impact on their academic studies. Programme teams will then analyse the survey responses, distil them into themes and these will then be presented and discussed at the course boards. Based on the feedback on the effectiveness of this strategic measure some events and activities will continue in the following year and some will not. New activities will also be considered and implemented as appropriate.

Outcome data of students who attended these events will be mapped against those who did not attend focussing on module outcomes, non-continuation and attainment. This will enable NCC to evaluate the impact of this strategic measure, and action plan appropriately.

NCC also works with higher education representative groups such as Linking London and their Uni-Connect project (formally known as NCOP). Linking London brings education partners together, to work more collaboratively, and widen access to HE for those living in areas with traditionally low access to HE. NCC engages two Uni-connect workers covering Havering campuses. The Uni Connect engagement co-ordinators will be used to target mature students at the College working on level 3 programmes, to encourage them to consider progressing into HE. BAME students can also be prioritised. This commitment does not meet a specific APP objective, however it does contribute to meeting NCC's broader strategic priority - to grow the number of HE students.

#### b) Progression Opportunities to Employment & Further Study

To further support progression into work NCC has a dedicated careers advisory team on all its campuses where students can book appointments with a qualified advisor. The service includes support and guidance in CV writing, creating an online profile and using social media to build professional networks.

In terms of further study, students are provided with information on progression opportunities, for example foundation degree education students attend an information event regarding the level 6 top up Education degree, where they have an opportunity to meet the teachers and discuss the programme content.

These opportunities for students to explore next programme progression steps will ensure that students are fully aware of course rigor and expectations, which will in turn reduce the non-continuation gap.

Programme teams run employer forums and events, two weeks of planned activities delivered in March 2023 and in subsequent years, some of these are aimed particularly for level 6 students, giving them the opportunity to network with potential employers, supporting career development opportunities and providing general advice. These events offer opportunities for students to engage with employers, ask questions, seek advice and guidance on a range of employment related issues.

We have selected measures b and c based on student feedback gathered from a variety of sources, including course boards and module feedback. In which students assert that having employer engagement is very helpful for them to understand and apply their theoretical knowledge to workplace practice. They state that employer input makes the programme interesting, stimulates good discussion, and better prepares students for their next steps and progression.

#### Evaluation

All students at the end of their programme will have a dedicated meeting with their programme tutor to discuss progression and next steps. During this meeting the students will be asked to comment on the benefits of the College's careers advisory team and the dedicated employer events. This will be supplemented by analysis of attainment data of those students who have engaged with the

career's advisors and the employer events against those who did not engage. The relative outcomes of this feedback will inform any potential changes of this strategic measure that may be required.

c) HE Academic Tutor and Pastoral Support

The College aims to employ a dedicated full-time academic tutor to offer and lead on academic and pastoral support. The new postholder's duties will include:

- Run workshops for higher level academic skills including support and advice in completing research
- Support academic tutors with study skills sessions
- Monitor students' academic progress and intervene as necessary if a student falls behind, any tutor can refer students to the HE academic tutor
- One to one support for low level mental health issues
- One to one support for students with a disability
- Supporting allocation of the HE hardship fund
- Facilitating drop-in sessions for pastoral and academic support
- Organising enrichment workshop - resilience, mindfulness
- Lead on and manage the preparation for study 'transition module',
- Collect regular feedback from students on their support needs and make recommendations to NCC
- Training of student mentors
- Students are made aware of this support during student induction

Currently these duties are carried out by a student advisory/support role which is part time. The full time post has been advertised, candidates have been shortlisted and an appointment is expected to be made in July 2022.

The proposal for a dedicated full time academic and support tutor role was discussed at the APP student consultation meeting, where students highlighted the growing need for additional academic and pastoral support.

#### Evaluation

At course boards, representative students will be asked to feedback on the effectiveness, usefulness and impact of this role. Specifically, with regards to module grade outcomes, continuation on the programme and therefore improve academic attainment.

Data analysis will also be used as a measure of impact. The continuation and attainment rates of those students who attended or engaged with the postholder and associated activities will be compared to this who did not.

NCC expects a modest degree of impact from this role in year 1 2022-23, in particular it is expected to support the new intake of level 4 (year 1) in their continuation to level 5 (year 2) especially the BAME target group. However, in year 2 onwards of the plan NCC expects a greater degree of impact from this role, as it will be embedded and a greater number of students will be engaging. Specifically, there will be an impact on mature and BAME student attainment as continuing students who have received more prolonged engagement will be completing their programmes.

The impact of this measure will be evaluated after year 1 (end of the 2022/23 academic year) and annually thereafter. If after evaluation of the impact made to date revisions are recommended to the job role in term of student support duties these will reviewed and made as appropriate. If the student cohort grows considerably a further tutor will be recruited.

d) Preparation for HE Study – transition module

NCC recognises the significant challenge students face returning to education after a gap in study, therefore NCC proposes to develop a transition module preparing all students, but especially mature students for HE study.

Students and teachers have highlighted the need for mature students, returning to education, to have a greater understanding of the rigor and expectation of HE study, this module will better prepare students for their programmes.

Students will be enrolled on this module prior to commencing their formal programmes. This module will cover the following:

- Critical reading skills
- Academic writing
- Research skills
- Referencing
- Planning and organising time
- Independent study

This preparation module will be developed throughout 2022-23, therefore the impact will of this on BAME non-continuation rates will not be realised until year 2 of the plan 2023-24. Regarding impact on attainment for mature and BAME students this measure will impact in different ways depending on length of study of the programme. The full impact on attainment will be realised by the end of year 4 of the plan 2025-26.

#### Evaluation

We will evaluate the impact of this module annually in two different ways. Firstly, NCC will compare non-continuation rates of students who engaged with the transition module with those who did not, to ascertain its impact. The second measure will be analysis of feedback from students at the first course board of their programme, where they will be asked specific questions on the overall effectiveness of the transition module in preparing students for HE study.

Following annual evaluation of the module, refer to Table 10 APP Overview. If required, we will be updating the module content to ensure the module continues to be effective.

In terms of timescales, the module is currently being developed, primarily through gathering established resources and bringing them together into a cohesive module of study. New students will be able to access these resources after enrolment in 2023 and before they commence their programme.

e) Mentoring programme for HE students

NCC plans to implement a mentoring scheme, starting in year 1 of the plan (2022-23). This will be open to all level 4 students, and if required at level 5. The aim is to support students in the first year of their programme; this will help orient students to the programme and the College, thereby contributing to their overall progress. The mentoring process will:

- Allocate a level 6 mentor to level 4 students
- Facilitate regular meetings with students and mentors, monitored by the HE academic tutor
- Mentors will be trained to enable them to model good academic practice to students
- NCC will create a dedicated mentoring webpage on the VLE for resources and information sharing

Within the wider mentoring process there will be a dedicated BAME student forum or group to support these students, the aim of which is to support the students in their progress, continuation and attainment. We aim to incentivise student mentors and ensure their mentoring activities are recorded within their student record.

The full impact of the programme will take place over the life span of this plan as the cohorts complete their programmes. However, a year-on-year reduction in the gap of non-continuation rates for BAME students and attainment gaps for all students is expected, refer to Table 10 APP Overview.

There will be an annual evaluation on the effectiveness of the programme in meeting the aim to close the non-continuation and attainment gaps. Depending on the evaluation of the impact of the scheme appropriate amendments may be made.

The rationale for this measure has come from feedback from students has indicated that there is a need for greater support and a mentoring scheme will facilitate this.

NCC aims to assign each new level 4 student, and if required level 5 students, a mentor within the first 3-4 weeks and by week 6 all targeted students will be assigned a mentor. Students will be made aware of this mentoring scheme at induction. Evaluation see below under section f.

f) Academic Support Groups

The College will establish academic support groups, within the first year of the APP plan (2022-23) available to all students facilitated by the HE academic tutor and pastoral support. The rationale for this measure was feedback received from students in the APP student forum.

These groups aim to:

- Offer support and encouragement
- Sharing ideas strategies for progress
- Peer to peer development
- Opportunities to share research and ideas

The expected impact of these groups is a year-on-year reduction in the non-continuation rate gaps for BAME students and attainment gaps for all students including BAME students, refer to Table 10 APP Overview.

Academic support groups covering all students will be established during the first term during academic year 2022-23 and will continue throughout the lifecycle of this APP.

## Evaluation

The evaluation of mentoring and academic support groups will involve student feedback at course boards and through a data analysis. At course boards students will be asked specifically on the effectiveness of student mentoring and academic support, in continuing on their programmes and achieving higher grades. NCC will compare continuation rates and student outcome data (annual module grades) for those who engaged with these measures and those that did not engage. Following evaluation, amendments to this strategic measure will be made as necessary.

Table 10 APP Overview

Aim Target Groups	Objective	Strategic Measures	Expected Impact	Responsibility for Monitoring & Evaluation
<p><b>Non-Continuation of BAME Students</b></p>	<p>To eliminate the non-continuation gap, currently 6ppt, of BAME students by 2025</p>	<p>d) Preparation for HE study transition module</p> <p>c) HE Academic Tutor and Pastoral Support</p> <p>e) Mentoring Programme</p> <p>f) Academic Support Groups</p>	<p>This transition module will cover academic writing, referencing, research, planning and structuring assignments and organisational skills.</p> <p>This will ensure students have a better understanding of the expectations and rigor of their programme</p> <p>Students will be screened after enrolment and where deemed necessary offered targeted support from the academic tutor. Teachers will also be able to refer a student for support whilst on programme.</p> <p>Each new level 4 student will be assigned a higher-level student to act as a mentor.</p> <p>Student will have the opportunity to join a peer support group facilitated by NCC academics to support one another and share problems and solutions</p> <p>This measure will support students who may encounter financial hardship during their studies. It offers short term financial support providing an option to remain on the programme rather than leave.</p> <p>These strategic measures will provide ongoing academic and pastoral support for students. They will identify students at risk of non-continuation, so appropriate timely actions can be implemented. We expect these measures to reduce students leaving on programme.</p> <p>This will result in the elimination of the non-continuation gap of the BAME students by 2024-25. 2022-23 to 3ppt, 2023-24 to 1ppt 2024-25 to 0ppt.</p>	<p>Course Boards (2 per year)</p> <p>Access and Participation Plan Intervention Group (APPIG) - (3 per year)</p> <p>HEC (3 per year)</p> <p>Governance: CQSC (4 per year)</p>

<p><b>Attainment</b></p> <p>Attainment Gap for mature students</p> <p>Attainment gap for BAME students</p>	<p>Commitment to reduce the mature student attainment gap.</p> <p>To eliminate the attainment gap of BAME students, currently at 40ppt, by 2026-27.</p>	<p>d) Preparation for HE study transition module</p> <p>c) HE Academic Tutor and Pastoral Support</p> <p>e) Mentoring Programme</p> <p>f) Academic Support Groups</p> <p>a) Partnership and Collaborative working</p> <p>b) Progression opportunities to employment and further study</p>	<p>This transition module will cover academic writing, referencing, research, planning and structuring assignments and organisational skills. We expect the impact of this is improved standards of students' work, resulting in higher module grades.</p> <p>Students will be screened after enrolment and where deemed necessary offered targeted academic support from the tutor. The impact of this will be improved academic outcomes.</p> <p>Each new level 4 student will be assigned a higher-level student to act as a mentor. This provides an opportunity for an open dialogue with a student leading to better understanding of programme requirements. This will raise aspiration and contribute to better standards of work and achievement of higher grades.</p> <p>Student will have the opportunity to join a peer support group facilitated by NCC academics to support one another and share problems and solutions</p> <p>Students can enrich and apply their academic work through exposure to employers coming into College. Students can also use live projects and client briefs. Opportunities to network with potential employers.</p> <p>This will result in reducing the mature attainment gap.</p> <p>Impact of the above will be elimination of the gap for BAME students attainment by 2026-27. Progress over the following years: 2022-23 to 30ppt, 2023-24 to 25ppt, 2024-25 to 20ppt 2025-26 to 10ppt, 2026-27 to 0ppt</p>	<p>Course Boards (2 per year)</p> <p>Access and Participation Plan Intervention Group (APPIG) - (3 per year)</p> <p>HEC (3 per year)</p> <p>Governance: CQSC (4 per year)</p>
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### **3.4 Student consultation**

Student engagement and learner voice is crucial to NCC and it views students as partners in the quality assurance process. Student feedback is captured throughout the year across all programmes through regular scheduled course boards. The key targets from this action plan will form standard agenda items at the Higher Education Committee (HEC) meetings in which student representatives attend. Student engagement with the deliberative committee structure (HEC) also provides students opportunities to feedback on the progress of these targets and actions.

We also operate an 'open door' policy and are happy to receive feedback informally at any time.

This plan has been developed with students input and feedback. All student reps on degree and post graduate programmes were invited to attend the Access and Participation Forum. The forum was presented with and discussed:

- Rational for the Access and access plan
- Assessment of access and performance data across the whole student lifecycle
- Gaps identified in performance data
- Potential measures the student reps. believed that could eliminate gaps in access, continuation, and attainment

The common theme raised was around additional support measures, both academic and pastoral support. Based on this feedback the strategic measures were developed or enhanced and shared with student representatives for any further comment. Students were supportive and in agreement with the final measures.

Students will be kept abreast of the progress of the APP through the course boards, described below, held twice in the academic year.

### **3.5 Monitoring and evaluation strategy**

Monitoring and evaluation of the APP will involve three groups and committees, Course Boards, Access and Participation Plan Implementation Group (APPIG) and the Higher Education Committee (HEC), refer to Table 10 APP Overview. These groups will also identify and implement any remedial action that may be required to ensure APP targets are being met.

#### Course Boards

Course Board are a mechanism for students to feedback on academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities whilst at NCC. Student reps are nominated to represent their class and represent their programme at course boards, they undergo training for the role. Outcomes from course boards are presented and discussed by HEC. Progress with the AAPIG will be a standard agenda item at all Course Boards.

#### Access and Participation Plan Implementation Group (APPIG)

This group comprises a range of academic and support staff who monitor progress with the APP's objectives and strategic measures. This group meets termly before the scheduled HEC meetings. The role of this group is to carry out an evidenced evaluation on how the strategic measures are supporting with achieving the objectives and targets of the APP. The action plan is updated with

comments, updates and recommendations. If during the scheduled APPIG monitoring and evaluation meetings it is identified that gaps are not reducing as per the objectives or the strategic measure is not achieving its intended outcomes it will be highlighted in the report to HEC along with recommendations.

### Higher Education Committee

The APP targets will be scrutinised, reviewed and monitored by HEC. This group comprises all the operational managers for HE programmes at the College and the HE strategic directors. This committee has operational responsibility for HE and meets termly. HEC reports to the Governing Body via Curriculum Quality and Students Committee (CQSC). Operational Responsibility for the APP will reside with HEC, and it will be a standing agenda item. HEC will receive updates on the APP from the APPIG group regarding progress on the outcomes of the APP objectives and any recommendations. If the APP strategic measures are making insufficient progress against the APP objectives, and there is a risk that the set targets will not be met, recommendations will be discussed, agreed and remedial actions implemented by the appropriate team as required.

### **APP Strategic Oversight – NCC Governance and Overall Evaluation**

Responsibility of the APP ultimately resides with the College's governing body. The College's governing body is the Corporation Board, which is responsible for the oversight of all College activities including HE. The Corporation's Standing Orders establish five Standing Committees of the Board to scrutinise the work of the College on behalf of the Board, to report to it, and to make recommendations. The CQSC, has responsibility for academic governance of HE, meeting 4 times in the academic year, of which HE is a standing agenda item at the meeting.

CQSC receives regular reports and updates on the student academic experience, student outcomes, and academic standards. CQSC delegates specific responsibilities for the academic standards and the quality of student learning experience to the Higher Education Committee in the context of the College, HEC is comparable to an academic board in other HE institutions. CQSC receive minutes as well as reports from HEC, this includes regular updates on the APP. The APP objectives have been presented to and approved by CQSC.

As described we have put individual evaluation under each strategic measure, we will then be assessing these individual evaluations together in an overall evaluation strategy. This overall evaluation strategy is currently being developed. Following the theory of change the impact of the strategic measures will be analysed and amended as required following evaluation.

## **4. Provision of Information to Students**

NCC is committed to transparency of its information for prospective and current students.

The increased tuition fee has been clearly stated on each course page on the public website, NCC has also written a letter to every new applicant for HE programmes proposed to start in September 2022 explaining why the tuition fees are different and a summary of how the additional fees will be spent to widen access to HE and improve the quality of the provision. Within the letter there is a link to the web pages that offer information advice and guidance on applying for a loan. Also, the letter has a phone number for NCC's HE admissions team so that applicants can receive personal support and response to queries.

Prior to enrolment there is a dedicated HE web area which all prospective students can access. It houses all the key information, for example, HE policies and procedures and details of the application process. There are also programme specific web pages containing detailed information such as programme fees, financial support, programme content and assessment and progression opportunities. NCC has comprehensive VLE pages that also hold key information including programme transcripts, further programme specific information, exam board dates, tutor profile and contact details.

The College also offers a range of information and guidance open days for prospective students which provides students with information to assist them making an informed decision. Potential students can speak individually, in a confidential setting, with a trained advisor, on issues such as financial, academic and pastoral support matters.

Once enrolled all new students receive an induction, where key information is shared, for example how to access support services such as counselling, and library services as well as detailed programme content. During this induction, the HE student hardship fund is highlighted/promoted to all the students; this includes the eligibility criteria for the fund which is calculated on household income, and how students can apply.

## **5. Appendix**

The OfS will append the following items from the fees and targets and investment documents when an access and access plan is published:

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)
2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)
3. Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

### Summary of 2022-23 entrant course fees

\*course type not listed

#### Inflationary statement:

We will not raise fees annually for 2022-23 new entrants

**Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2022-23 entrants**

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	Full time	£7,000
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT		£9,250
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	Level 6 Education ( top up year)	£9,250

**Table 4b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2022-23**

Sub-contractual 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	*	*

**Table 4c - Part-time course fee levels for 2022-23 entrants**

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	N/A	£3,500
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	N/A	£3,500

**Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2022-23**

Sub-contractual 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	*	*

# Targets and investment plan

## 2022-23 to 2026-27

Provider name: New City College

Provider UKPRN: 10006963

### Investment summary

The OFS requires providers to report on their planned investment in access, financial support and research and evaluation in their access and participation plan. The OFS does not require providers to report on investment in student success and progression in the access and participation plans and therefore investment in these areas is not recorded here.

#### Note about the data:

The figures in Table 4a relate to all expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education. The figures in Table 4b only relate to the expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education which is funded by higher fee income. The OFS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

The figures below are not comparable to previous access and participation plans or access agreements as data published in previous years does not reflect latest provider projections on student numbers.

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
<b>Total access activity investment (£)</b>	£70,000.00	£75,000.00	£80,000.00	£100,000.00	£105,000.00
Access (pre-16)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Access (post-16)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Access (adults and the community)	£70,000.00	£75,000.00	£80,000.00	£100,000.00	£105,000.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Financial support (£)</b>	£25,000.00	£30,000.00	£35,000.00	£40,000.00	£45,000.00
<b>Research and evaluation (£)</b>	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
<b>Higher fee income (£HFI)</b>	£133,025.00	£195,235.00	£229,680.00	£260,530.00	£273,125.00
<b>Access investment</b>	52.6%	38.4%	34.8%	38.4%	38.4%
<b>Financial support</b>	7.5%	7.2%	7.0%	6.5%	6.6%
<b>Research and evaluation</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total investment (as %HFI)</b>	60.1%	45.6%	41.8%	44.9%	45.0%

