



2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider Impact Report

This impact report summarises the progress made by Blackburn College against targets, objectives and written commitments set out in its 2019-20 access and participation plan. This document is a summary of information submitted by the provider to the Office for Students (OfS). This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

1. Ambition and Strategy

Blackburn College's ambition and strategy as detailed in the 2019-20 access and participation plan:

The overarching ambition is to provide access to Higher Education for those who may not have had the confidence or ambition to consider it previously. The strategic focus is to:

- Increase the participation of new entrants into Higher Education from ethnic minorities
- Increase the participation of part time students into Higher Education
- Increase the engagement of students with disabilities with the College Disability Services
- Increase the number of white males accessing Higher Education
- Increase the participation of students from low income backgrounds into Higher Education
- Improve student retention across all groups
- Improve student internal progression from Level 3 to Level 4 at the College
- Improve the retention and achievement of white economically disadvantaged males
- Improve retention and achievement for all groups on Foundation Degrees

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by Blackburn College of progress against the targets approved in its 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-20 access and participation plans. Full information can be found in **Table 8a – statistical targets and milestones** and **Table 8b – Other milestones and targets** of Blackburn College's 2019-20 [access and participation plan](#).

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in [Annex B](#).

Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	In terms of entrants and participation into higher education there has been a significant decrease since 2014-2015 (25%) by 4% from ethnic minorities (Pakistani and Indian) which reflects the local demographic. Figures have remained comparable from new baseline year into 2016- 2017 and it is anticipated that this will slightly increase annually going forward.	2015-16	21%	23%	24%	Percentage	2019-20	19.5	Expected progress
T16a_02 (Access)	The proportion of full-time students is generally increasing, whilst the part-time proportion has decreased by a yearly -2% over the last three years. This target remains problematic. However, due to more flexible delivery modes on full-time programmes this may reflect that students are indeed opting to study full-time on a flexible basis. The baseline is set using previous and current trends. The part-time learner profile increased in 2015-16 by +1% to 14%. However, the college has seen a decline of -2% to 12% in 2016/2017 for part time learners. Additionally, the number of part-time learners has decreased by 100 from 359 to 259 in 2016-2017	2014-15	13%	12%	13%	Percentage	2019-20	13.9	Expected progress

<p>T16a_03 (Other/Multiple stages)</p>	<p>Engagement with disability services (DSA) target will continue to be monitored as evidence suggests that this is a positive impact upon retention, achievement and success.</p>	<p>2014-15</p>	<p>45%</p>	<p>55%</p>	<p>57.5%</p>	<p>Percentage</p>	<p>2019-20</p>	<p>59.9</p>	<p>Expected progress</p>
<p>T16a_04 (Access)</p>	<p>For the last four years the proportion of females entering into high education has remained higher than males. The proportion of males has dropped by -1% each year over the last three years. The target is to increase the proportion of male to female students (although current trends indicate it may be challenging, hence the small targeted increase). The proportion of male entrants in 2014-2015 was at 39% with a decrease in 2015-2016 by 3% to 36%. However, there was an increase in actual male students entering from 201 to 374. Therefore, figures show that although the percentage of males to females is not equal, there has been an increase of 73 male entrants since the previous year.</p>	<p>2014-15</p>	<p>39%</p>	<p>40%</p>	<p>40%</p>	<p>Percentage</p>	<p>2019-20</p>	<p>29.4</p>	<p>Limited progress</p>
<p>T16a_05 (Access)</p>	<p>The number of students from a disadvantaged postcode entering into higher education has increased by + 3% in 14-15. 61% of learners come from disadvantaged postcode areas. This percentage remains the same as 14-15 as a percentage of all full-time learners, but there has been a significant increase in part-time students from 19% (14-15) to 31% (15-16). There has also been an increase of 138 overall learners in 15-16 from disadvantaged postcodes which is a 9% increase from 14-15. This reaffirms the need for collaboration with stakeholders, both internal and external. and the importance of the collaborative outreach programmes to which we are committed.</p>	<p>2014-15</p>	<p>61%</p>	<p>67%</p>	<p>69%</p>	<p>Percentage</p>	<p>2019-20</p>	<p>76.6</p>	<p>Expected progress</p>

T16a_06 (Progression)	In relation to the DLHIE data this has shown comparable figures in the last two years. We anticipate to increase periodically by 2021-2022	2014-15	89%	92%	93%	Percentage	2018-19	94	Expected progress
T16a_07 (Other/Multiple stages)	<p>In the last 3 years, retention has remained static, the target is to improve retention rates through investment in student success. Measures in place to ensure early intervention and support for all learners. Academic Recovery Plans introduced as a pilot in 15/16. Plans to refine and continue in 16/17.</p> <p>Implementation and development of an effective caseload management tool has been put in place, with a facility to record detailed student information and key attendance data. Production of operational and management information has been refined to enable more sophisticated analysis of student attendance patterns, achievement by course and individual learner, and factors affecting choice of pathways. This allows early intervention and support, thus broadening the student experience and enhance mapping of student progression from pre-enrolment to alumni. The planned implementation of the Student Buddy Scheme for 15/16 works closely with the Student Engagement Team and is anticipated to support student retention across the board.</p>	2014-15	75%	82%	83%	Percentage	2019-20	79	Limited progress
T16a_08 (Access)	Internal Progression : To increase the internal progression rate by 1% year on year. We shall review our current internal progression activities in 2016-2017, involving all stakeholders.	2014-15	46%	49%	50%	Percentage	2019-20	66.59	Expected progress

T16a_09 (Student success)	Female student retention at end of year 14/15 was 13% higher than male student retention. 12/13 and 13/14 end of year reported 14% female retention higher than males. We will focus on narrowing this gap by 1% year on year for the next 5 years.	2014-15	13%	10%	9%	Percentage	2019-20	3.3	Expected progress
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Other milestones and targets

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16b_01 (Other/Multiple stages)	Retention rates remain complex and a challenge given the high proportion of students from a disadvantaged post code. Retention remains comparable over the last two years. Mechanisms are in place to identify these cohorts of students and implemented support and early intervention. Management and Student Engagement Team working closely to address these issues directly. The planned implementation of the student buddy scheme would allow a targeted approach to support these students.	2014-15	76%	82%	84%	Percentage	2019-20	76.6	Expected progress
T16b_02 (Access)	To increase participation and activity with The Children's University and broaden the activity to secondary school pupils and involve participation from current college students. Working in conjunction with the Collaborative Outreach (NNCO) Project groups	2014-15	4	7	7	Headcount	2019-20	7	Expected progress
T16b_03 (Other/Multiple stages)	To offer a one stop shop support service for students which provides a wrap-around service. The Student Engagement and Support team to start at pre-application and recruitment stage to raise awareness of higher education and employment opportunities and the wrap around support on offer throughout the lifecycle of the student. Working closely with the college support service teams such as Student Finance, Disability Services	2013-14	NA	NA	NA	Other	2019-20		Expected progress

T16b_04 (Other/Multiple stages)	To increase participation in Summer School by offering rolling and on-line study support. Specific bespoke sessions targeted at prospective, new and existing students	2014-15	150 students	190	200	Headcount	2019-20	175	Limited progress
T16b_05 (Access)	To re-evaluate and increase formal partnerships on reflection of the work of the NNCO and NCOP, specifically with Schools and Sixth Forms and those not engaged in HEI outreach activity. Continue working with partners of NNCO and ensuring sustainability after the lifecycle of the project. Researching into further funding in relation to collaborative outreach.	2015-16	NA	NA	NA	Other	2019-20		Expected progress
T16b_06 (Progression)	To deliver structured transition support offer via the HE Disability Service for disabled students from our FE arm or potential applicants from UCAS or direct applicants	2015-16	NA	9	12	Headcount	2019-20	340	Expected progress
T16b_07 (Other/Multiple stages)	Offer a buddy system for existing students with specific learning difficulties or autism to aid their transition and integration into the Blackburn student experience	2015-16	NA	9	12	Headcount	2019-20	0	Limited progress
T16b_08 (Other/Multiple stages)	To maintain the number of schools (29) and 6th Form Schools and Colleges (23), with a focus on the more local schools and community centres we work with, whilst widening our outreach activity year on year. Providing a more extensive offer, including increasing the number of activities and frequency of events. Also introducing more interactive projects and activities to stimulate pupils within schools and support attainment and raise awareness with families, teachers and careers staff.	2014-15	52	52	52	Headcount	2018-19	52	Expected progress

T16b_09 (Multiple)	The coding club will be a pilot with regards to supporting students in raising attainment. Students within schools who are from under-represented and disadvantaged cohorts will be identified and the initial aim will be to raise attainment with ten specific pupils tracking their progress within their school and their destination up to Year 11-13	2017-18	10	10	n/a	Headcount	2019-20		No progress
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3. Investment commitments

3.1. Access and participation investment for the last audited year

Please note that some differences in predicted vs actual spend may be due to reporting differences between academic and financial years.

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£40,000.00	£1,197,859.00	2895%
Financial Support	£735,522.00	£405,159.00	-45%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected Blackburn College has made the following commitments to increase the rate of progress against their targets.

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16a_04	A contextual admission entry criterion will be introduced to support under-represented groups in applying.
T16a_07	The College has implemented academic and pastoral support which is now directly line managed by academic managers to provide early intervention and support to students who have been identified 'at risk'.
T16b_04	Re-establish pre-Covid-19 plans without restrictions.
T16b_07	Revisit and consult with students about the approach and offer for a 'buddy' system.
T16b_09	The College will explore alternative means of engaging with local schools and employers to improve outreach and Widening Participation activity.

5. Confirmation

Blackburn College confirms that:

Student engagement	
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?	
No	
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?	
No	
Verification and sign off	
Blackburn College has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.	
Yes	
Accountable officer sign off	
Name	Dr Fazal Dad
Position	Principal and Chief Executive

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

Blackburn College's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16a_04
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
No, however the overall number of students entering Higher Education at Blackburn College has declined significantly over the last 5 years.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
The College has continued to work relentlessly with all 52 local secondary schools and colleges to promote the value of Higher Education leading to improved life chances and prosperity.

Target reference number: T16a_07
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
No, however, the College has put in place additional measures to support students to successfully complete their Degree, with a particular focus on those students with children at home and those who also worked as front-line key workers.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
Blackburn University Centre responded to the pandemic by diversifying delivery models, introduced a number of initiatives to ensure no detriment to students including giving the students the opportunity to apply for exceptional mitigating circumstances. Furthermore, small amendments to some assessments were made with the approval of the awarding partners.

Target reference number: T16b_04
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
The impact of Covid-19 has influenced progress due to changes and engagement opportunity.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
Restrictions did not allow for planned activity. However, remote engagement with a nominated 'key contact' provided bespoke and flexible opportunities for new and prospective students to access support and guidance.

Target reference number: T16b_07
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Limited progress only in light of the Covid-19 lockdown pandemic.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Buddying was postponed until students were able to resume with onsite and peer to peer learning. Alternative support was established via online sessions with group tutorials and specialist support for wellbeing and disability support colleagues.

Target reference number: T16b_09

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

The impact of Covid-19 has resulted in no progress being made to engage with local schools and employers in light of lockdown restrictions.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Not to date, however the College will explore, going forward, alternative means of engagement.

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

Blackburn College's commentary on any of the targets listed in [Section 2](#).

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	The College Higher Education intake over the last 5 years has significantly decreased. However, in light of this the analysis shows the College has made positive progress in the recruitment of Indian and Pakistani students.
T16a_02	
T16a_03	
T16a_04	Students entering Higher Education at Blackburn College has declined significantly over the last 5 years. Therefore, the baseline year and targets set do not reflect the demographic intake of the student population.
T16a_05	
T16a_06	
T16a_07	Closer analysis of completion data clearly demonstrates the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown having a detrimental impact on the student completion rate.
T16a_08	
T16a_09	
T16b_01	As previously commented, the College intake has significantly reduced for Higher Education students, therefore baseline targets originally set do not reflect current demographic intake.
T16b_02	
T16b_03	
T16b_04	In light of the Covid-19 lockdown, the traditional summer school events did not take place, however the College adapted to an online key contact process to engage with new students.
T16b_05	
T16b_06	The baseline set does not reflect the recent years changes in student intake.
T16b_07	The College will review the 'buddy' system after receiving student feedback.
T16b_08	
T16b_09	This activity was funded via the NCOP with a targeted audience for one year.