



ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Last updated Dec 2020. Next Review Date: November 2021

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

OUR AMBITIONS AND STRATEGY

The Learning and Development Bureau (LDB) remains committed to Widening Participation and Access to Higher Education, particularly to those students coming from non-traditional routes. This commitment is reflected in LDB's ambition to support individuals of all backgrounds, abilities and aspirations in order to fulfil their potential through learning, achievement and progression.

Within LDB structure, equality and diversity continues to be the corner stone of its continuous development. This is reflected in our Admissions Procedures, mapped to our awarding body partner's criteria and The UK Quality Code for Higher Education, where impartial advice and guidance is given to ensure all applicants are supported and placed on courses appropriate to their demonstrated ability to achieve. College Management ensures this is achievable by continuously reviewing and evaluating:

- ❖ Admissions Data
- ❖ Progression and Retention Data
- ❖ Learning and Teaching
- ❖ Assessment
- ❖ Induction
- ❖ Student Support
- ❖ Staff development
- ❖ The process of Programme Development and Review

This Access and Participation Statement has been developed and implemented after careful analysis and consideration of a wide array of student data sources including the Teaching Excellence Framework, HESA indicators, post-graduation employment survey data, SLC data on the number of our students receiving the maximum maintenance grant, NSS and other student surveys, and data gathered from our own application and student interview forms.

LDB works to foster learning in all prospective students to:

- ❖ prepare them for higher education
- ❖ ensure success on their programme of study
- ❖ improve their employment prospects
- ❖ open possibilities for postgraduate study
- ❖ give them opportunities to return to learning throughout their lives

STUDENT SUPPORT AND DISABILITY POLICIES

LDB adheres to the affirmed premise that anyone with potential to benefit from Higher Education should have equal opportunity to pursue this endeavour. Our Executive remain committed to enabling avenues that aid social mobility for, in particular, under-represented members of society. LDB prides itself on our work to date to attract applications from and improve success and progression for mature students, from minority ethnic groups and those who are differently abled.

The Student Support and Disability Policy communicates a framework of student support as a key theme to supporting individuals of all backgrounds, abilities and aspirations in order to fulfil their potential through learning, achievement and progression.

WHO WE WORK WITH TO WIDEN ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

In ensuring criteria outlined in our Widening Access statement is addressed LDB targets students from underrepresented groups which include students:

- ❖ Low socioeconomic groups
- ❖ Who are first in their generation to consider higher education
- ❖ Who attend schools and colleges where performance is below the national average
- ❖ Who have a disability
- ❖ From under-represented ethnic backgrounds
- ❖ LGBTQ
- ❖ Carers

PRE-ENTRY ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

The delivery of appropriate academic and pastoral guidance to all prospective and current students is an important strategic policy for LDB.

The recruitment process starts with an open day where Admissions and faculty staff members deliver a presentation about the College.

ADMISSIONS AND INDUCTION

After that stage applicants are shortlisted and selected individuals are invited to attend an 'Assessment Day'. Applicants complete the registration form, undertake an Initial Entry Test and an English and Numeracy test. They then complete the required SAPE (Screening for Accreditation of Prior Experience).

Once everything is completed and an applicant's documents are checked and verified, they are then interviewed by an academic staff member. This dialogue between an academic staff member and prospective student is crucial, and during the interview, staff members evaluate the applicant's suitability for the programme as well as their intention and motivation to successfully complete their targeted qualification.

During the interview, the academic staff member also identifies areas of improvement for an applicant. At that stage, it may also be the case that the interviewer refers the applicant to the Academic Support Centre in order to attend additional workshops. Upon successful completion of the admission process, and once the applicant accepts the offer to study, the form is sent to the Academic Support Centre for further reference. In our opinion, this helps our students in continuously improve their learning and employability skills.

The final step before the programme commencement is Induction. During this day, new students are provided with important further information.

FIRST TERM/SEMESTER

Lectures, tutorials, office hours, personal tutors and academic support are all different levels of support to students that we have implemented. Each semester personal tutors monitor students' academic progression as well as attendance and get to know their allocated students well. Personal development plans are also linked in the process.

Consequently, a rapport between personal tutor and student is developed and this also contributes to student engagement at much higher levels. The lead personal tutor is in constant communication with the personal tutors and any problems identified are dealt with swiftly. When a particular student has been identified as needing further support, the personal tutor refers the individual to our academic support centre for additional help via our internal referral system.

MOVING THROUGH THE COURSE

Personal tutoring is yet another layer put in place in order to support students through the course. Our student make up are for the most part adult learners, with an average age profile of 35 years old and have come back to education for a 'second chance'. Consequently, they need time to adapt to the requirements and challenges of learning. Personal tutors are allocated to individual students at the beginning of their studies and remain with their tutor until completion.

Students are also required to formulate a personal development plan at the beginning of their studies and follow it throughout their studies. It is also checked and evaluated during scheduled tutorial sessions and formative feedback is provided.

Finally, as discussed earlier, if personal tutors identify that a particular student is need of additional support, they refer them to our Academic Support Centre using our internal referral forms for further support.

EMPLOYMENT/PROGRESSION

The College recognises the challenges which can accompany the commitment to widening access particularly in the successful retention of some students. Academic Support Centre offers bespoke study skills workshops. They also offer a flexible service providing one-to-one study skills appointments. Support from the ASC service plays an integral part in the retention of students who may be considering withdrawing because of the unexpected demands of their course. In addition to

these support mechanisms, the College also has a dedicated student support team providing specialist information, advice and guidance, including finance and welfare support, to students throughout the entire learner lifecycle.

Furthermore, the Careers Advice Centre provides students with information and guidance on career choices during their time at LDB. The Centre advises on learning and work development, searching the local job market and brushing up on interview skills.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

LDB values student input on widening access and participation. We use suggestions and reports from the Student Union, and outcomes of NSS and other student surveys, as well as student feedback through the Programme Committees, Student Support, Pastoral Care, Disability Services, and personal tutors, to inform our strategies for access and participation.

REVIEW OF THIS STATEMENT

We review this Access and Participation statement annually as part of our annual review of LDB policies. We will update and re-publish this policy annually as required by condition A2 of the Office for Students Regulatory Framework. This version of the Access and Participation Statement was published in December 2020.