

Doncaster College

Access Agreement

For higher education students enrolling on their
first higher education programme in or after
2017-18

New targets
Updates to previous targets

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1 Introduction to Doncaster College

- 1.1 Doncaster College is the only provider of further and higher education in the Doncaster Metropolitan Borough area. The College has been involved in the delivery of higher education since the 1960's firstly as a teacher training establishment then as a general institute of higher education and currently as a large mixed economy college with 10% (962 FTE's; 1,300 students) of its provision being higher education compared to 90% (6,274 students) being further education.
- 1.2 In the summer of 2004 the College, in partnership with its only validating HEI, the University of Hull, established the University Centre at its High Melton Campus where the majority of higher education within the College is delivered.
- 1.3 Within the University Centre at Doncaster College a wide range of programmes are delivered including Creative and Performance Arts, Business Studies, Education, Humanities, Social Science, Sport and Relationship Counselling. Some of the higher education is delivered at the HUB campus of Doncaster College based in the town centre, including BA (Hons) Fine Art and Crafts, Engineering, Construction and Computing.
- 1.4 The College is committed to providing a broad range of educational opportunities to local industry and residents but also provides curriculum which attracts a national and international intake of students.

2 Demography

- 2.1 Doncaster is the largest Metropolitan Borough by geographical area in the country. It embraces a diverse community with Doncaster itself, smaller townships, several villages and rural areas. With the demise of traditional industries, the borough experienced considerable social and economic decline, with high unemployment. It is ranked as one of the most deprived areas in the UK and in 2015-16; 52% of students aged 16-19 studying at Doncaster College had disadvantage uplift.
- 2.2 The measures and activities in this access agreement are designed to improve participation and will also help to raise aspiration and breakdown the traditional barriers to progression to be found in the area.

3 Fees, student numbers and fee income

- 3.1 The provisions of this access agreement apply only to students enrolled in 2017-18 on the following types of programmes
- All full-time/part-time degree courses
 - All full-time/part-time foundation degrees
 - All full-time/part-time Higher National Certificates and Diplomas
 - All full-time top-up degree courses
 - All full-time/part-time initial teacher training programmes

All of the above student types enrolled in 2017-18 will be required to pay an annual tuition fee of £7,000 or PT pro rata of £3,500. We anticipate 1,010 entrants for 2017-18 of which 735 will be FT (comprising HND's, FD's BA and PG ITT students) and 275 PT (comprising HNC's, FD's and PG ITT).

Please see monitoring return for detail of the estimated number of all full time students at each fee level from 2016-17 to 2020-21

3.2 Students enrolled on full-time or part time undergraduate higher education programmes in the 2015-16 session or before and who are continuing on the same programme in subsequent years will pay £6,000 or pro rata this being the maximum allowed for colleges without Access Agreements for years prior to 2015-16.

3.3 The level of fee set by the College reflects the College's commitment that :

- the cost of full-time or part time higher education will not act as a barrier to potential students both capable and willing to undertake higher level study.
- increased income from tuition fees will directly benefit students, enhance their learning experience and encourage further progression and aspiration
- additional revenue gained from tuition fees will be focused towards attracting under-represented groups into higher education.

3.4 The £7,000, 2017-18 tuition fee for the above programmes will apply to all United Kingdom students and those who are nationals of any other state of the European Union. Annual inflationary increases for continuing students will be applied in line with the previous September's increase in RPI-X. We will ensure that these increases are reasonable and that they do not breach the fee caps, and in particular, no inflationary increase will be applied which would result in continuing students paying a higher fee than first year students on their course.

3.5 Students who move onto a top up programme either internally or externally will be treated as continuing students for the purpose of determining the fee to be paid.

3.6 Students who join a full-time programme part way through the year will pay a fee proportional to the number of academic weeks remaining. Students who transfer from part-time to full-time within four weeks of commencement of the programme will be liable for full fees.

4 Access and student success measures

4.1 Our strategic vision is to:

Transform lives and improve the local economy through access to outstanding education, training and employment opportunities

Our mission is:

Realising student potential and achieving excellence

The strategic commitment to access and student success is articulated through the Doncaster College Strategic Plan and there are staff, structures and processes in place to ensure a coordinated approach to monitoring, evaluation and impact of Access Agreement activities.

4.2 Predicted student numbers for 2017-18 entry indicate that it is appropriate to spend a total of £61,500 on Access Agreement activities in 2017-18. This figure represents 15% of the total anticipated additional income above basic fees for new UG entrants and as FT PG numbers are so small (40) we choose to use the same 15% measure for PG ITT entrants. We consider all expenditure included is 'countable' for the purposes of this access agreement.

In 2017-18 we intend to spend the monies as per the table below

OFFA expenditure summary	2017-18
Access activities	£9,000
Student Success	£27,000
Progression: internal FE to HE and transition into work or further study	£8,000
Financial support for care leavers FT and PT	£17,500
Total	£61,500

Analysis of our access, student success and progression activities and the additional financial support given to current students led us to the above decision. In terms of financial support we noted national research findings which indicate that bursary payments to poorer students do not greatly impact on student success. However in our 2016-17 Access Agreement we decided to support our care leavers by providing a £500 annual bursary plus and £200 heating and lighting grant each Christmas during their studies. During 2015-16 academic year students in receipt of these bursaries have reported how they value this timely support and that has enhanced both their wellbeing and their capacity to study effectively. Therefore we plan to increase these bursaries to an annual £1000k plus a £250 heating and lighting grant payable each Christmas for all care leavers. We will continue to monitor student satisfaction. As student care leavers represent such a small % of the overall student population our only criteria for such applicants is that a student on application can prove that they are care leavers. This criteria will remain in place for the 2017-18 Access Agreement.

5 Outreach activity

Doncaster College Children's University established in 2007 provide a variety of activities for primary children in the borough.

	2013-14	2014-15
Number of primary schools involved	23	30
Number of e-passports activated	19	24
Total number of children registered (7-12years)	Just over 3,000	4,500
Total learning hours this academic year to date	14,300	61,305
CU certificates issues this year academic year to date	471	1,469
Numbers of children graduated last year	535	705
College workshops for children this academic year	25	21

The above data clearly demonstrates the impact the CU is having on making children from primary level upwards aware of how they can aspire to Higher Education. From 2016-17 we will be monitoring enrolments onto our FE programmes to see which of these students participated in CU activities and in 2017-18 we will also request this information on enrolment from HE students

We also provided workshops and aspire to HE activities for our local secondary schools. However we recognised that our current outreach work with secondary local schools was patchy and we did not have an effective infrastructure to see the longitudinal effects of this work. Therefore we recruited a student intern in January 2015 who has worked with the Student Experience Officer in partnership with a local WP primary and secondary school to develop and pilot a series of events at various key stages (year 6,9,10/11) to help their pupils to aspire to higher education. An appropriate infrastructure is now in place to enable monitoring, evaluation and impact of these long, medium and short term interventions.

As stated in our 2016-17 Access Agreement we have developed student mentor training to help in the development of outreach activity materials and to ensure that students feel valued when participating in these activities. To date we have 8 trained mentors and we intend to use some of the Access Agreement monies to provide students with meal and coffee vouchers as payment in kind for participating in such activities. We plan to train a minimum of 8 further new mentors in 2017-18

5.1 Student Success

We already attract a high proportion of WP students and have effective policies processes and systems in place to effectively support student admissions, retention and success. However we continue to evaluate these and continually improve these measures.

The data below demonstrates our commitment to the WP and equal opportunities agenda

In 2015-16:

- all students recruited onto higher education programmes originally attended state schools
- 34% of undergraduates were recruited from low participation neighbourhoods
- 46% of the total student population were mature students
- 41% of the total student population were part time students
- 10% were in receipt of disabled student allowance
- The in year retention rate for all students in 2014-14 was 96%.

5.2 Improving WP non continuation rates on some level four programmes

In 2013-14 we spent time developing and improving systems to specifically analyse WP retention and success. This identified that the non-continuation rate for FT first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods on some programmes was 32%. This equated to some 29 of 92 students. Measures were put in place to monitor and support WP students more carefully particularly during the first part of that academic year and to ensure 'recruitment with integrity'. As a result non continuation rates have improved as per the tables below for L4 FT by 5% and by 4% for PT students. We will continue to monitor this data and put in interventions to enable consistency.

	1314 Total	Progression	% Progressed to L5	Non continuation rate %
L4 FT	184	153	83	17%
L4 PT	40	31	78	22%
Total	224	184	82	18%

1415 Total	Progression	% Progressed to L5	Non continuation rate %
125	110	88%	12%
73	59	81%	19%
198	169	85%	15%

5.3 Improving the FD and degree classification profile of WP students. Comparative analysis of the 2012-13 to 2014-15 FD and degree classification profile is tabled below

Foundation degree completers	Pass	Fail	Partial
Academic Year 2012-13			
Non WP	34	0	2
WP	16	0	1
% of WP of each category	47	0	50
Academic Year 2013-14			
Non WP	21	0	0
WP	13	0	0
% of WP of each category	62	0	0

Foundation degree completers	1st	2:1	2:2	3rd	Ordinary
Academic Year 2014-15					
Non WP	3	3	4	0	0
WP	1	4	5	0	2
% of WP of each category	25	57	56	0	100

We seek to improve this profile and therefore this has become one of our access agreement objectives onwards from 2016-17. Post 2014-15 foundation degrees cohorts will be classified as are three year degree programmes. This will enable direct comparison with three year degree programmes.

Programme teams will be provided with timely data to enable a robust and systematic approach to improving of the UCD FD degree profile in general alongside specific targets for WP students. Work done in 2013-14 to improve FD results overall ensured that all FD students passed their award 62% of these being classified as WP. The table above identifies that 82% of graduating FD students in 2014-15 obtained a 1st or 2.1 classification.

The tables on page 7 show the pattern of degree classification for three year degree programmes since 2012-13. This profile in our opinion is still too 'spiky' and we are working on ensuring more consistency for ALL and WP cohorts although we have identified that cohorts with a higher than average WP population that these groups

sometimes do not reach their full potential . We are therefore introducing from 2016-17 motivational workshops to help WP students address some of the mindset factors that can hinder their academic progress

BA (hons) degree completers	1st	2:1	2:2	3rd	Ordinary
Academic Year 2012-13					
Non WP	26	95	76	17	8
WP	5	34	33	10	2
% of WP of each category	19	36	43	59	25
Academic Year 2013-14					
Non WP	47	115	66	11	6
WP	17	43	27	5	2
% of WP of each category	36	37	40	45	33
Academic Year 2014-15					
Non WP	22	55	41	10	3
WP	9	31	29	5	2
% of WP of each category	29	36	41	33	40

5.4 We intend to introduce more distance learning and flexible learning opportunities in the coming years to support the WP agenda and make HE more accessible to more students from under represented groups. Plans include a BA in Sports Coaching and one in Business Management. We also plan to commence a number of degree apprenticeships in 2017-18

6 Progression Activities

The creation of the Student Number Control resulted in the cessation of some HE provision. With the removal of the SNC in 2016-17 this provided opportunity to continue the work started in 2015-16 to introduce new programmes of study to enable growth and to protect the institution where some provision showed recurring decline. Therefore we focused more specific attention on internal progression to these new programmes of study by providing additional activities to support internal level three students in aspiring to higher education. This work has proved particularly effective successful where HE staff have taught a level three modules. We have also addressed the decline in progression from Access to HE provision by placing this provision in one of the HE Schools. We continue to be mindful of the need to provide potential HE students with impartial information and guidance and balance internal progression events with events designed to recruit students locally and nationally.

Activities to ensure WP student success include

- 'Introduction to HE' offered to all schools and adult access learners. This provides general support and guidance, study skills support, finance and how to apply through UCAS including help in completing personal statements
- Master Classes in subject discipline so that students can experience HE 'ness
- Pre induction support via an externally hosted site
- Pre enrolment support service to ensure that all students declaring a learning disability have support in place prior to enrolment

- One week academic boot camp for those progressing from HND's to degree top ups
- Motivational Workshops during induction week to help WP students aspire from the outset to high levels of success
- Week long induction followed by additional LRC support during semester one
- Effective blog sites for student to be able to liaise with staff peers and employers relevant to their subject discipline
- Use of appropriate digital technology to enhance student success
- Programme teams liaise with WP students to develop a wider range of assessments
- Work based learning opportunities at level five
- End of programme opportunities to showcase work in London (Arts students)
- End of year shows throughout the borough
- Post graduate WP student mentors for undergraduate WP students
- Student advocates to support the WP agenda
- Students on work placement activities at the college to support the WP agenda. Eg student intern to support the wider usage of social media

7 Progression into work or further study

7.1 According to the Doncaster College 2012-13 destination of leavers data 70 % of our graduates were employed and 18.0% moved into further study upon graduation. In 2013-14 this figure increased to 72% with a further 16% moving into higher study (6% of this population working alongside their studies

The table below shows this further progress. We unable to disaggregate WP students from this data as the DLHE is anonymous.

DLHE Destinations of leavers data 13-14	no of Graduates	%
full time work	141	52%
part time work	53	20%
Work and study	16	6%
full time study	28	10%
part time study	1	0%
due to start work	3	1%
unemployed	17	6%
other	11	4%
TOTAL	270	100%

7.2 We intend to increase the support we provide to final year students to ensure that more progress into relevant work or post graduate studies. We will offer this support to all students but specifically track the destination of WP students and seek to identify the % of WP students in both categories.

8 Targets and Milestones

8.1 The College identified the following milestones and objectives for the 2017-18 Access Agreement

Baseline	Milestone	Activity
Access to HE		
2014-15 1 secondary plus 2 feeder primaries 2016-17 2 secondary plus 4 feeder primaries 2017-18 3 secondary plus 6 feeder primaries	Increase number of secondary schools and their feeder primaries undertaking these activities to 10	Work with two local WP secondary school and its feeder primaries to deliver appropriate aspire to HE activities for various key stage cohorts
Student Success		
WP PROFILE : of total student population 2014/15 = 32% 2014-15 = 33% 2015-16 = 34%	Maintain current WP profile	Continue good practice of advertising and admissions.
2012-13 = 68% of level four students progressed to level five 2013-14 82% of level four students progressed to level five 2014-15 79% of level four students progressed to level five	Improve non continuation rates of level four students on underperforming programmes to national benchmark by 2018/19	Improve admission process and provide specific additional learning and pastoral support for WP students at level 4
Of the total 2013-14 Final year population WP students represented 55% of those achieving 1 st class/2.1 awards	Improve degree classification profile of final year WP students to WP cohort to represent 56% of those achieving 1 st class/2.1 awards	Track WP student progress more rigorously at programme level to improve their degree classification profile
Improve flexible learning provision. Currently only one DL programme available	Increase the number of distance learning and / or flexible learning programmes	Introduce new DL programmes Rewrite existing POS to include more on line delivery
Develop strong positive mindsets for WP students	Introduce motivational workshops to increase student aspiration	Evaluate the effectiveness of these workshops via SPOMS and end of stage results
Progression		
2013-14 = 30% 2014-15 = 38% 2015-16 = 42%	Increase internal progression onto new HE POS to 50% by 2018/19 Target set to be met	Provide bespoke activities to support level three students progression onto new HE POS this has been actioned during 2016-17

2014-15 72% respondent graduates were in work and 16% undertaking PG study 6 months after graduation	72% respondent completers in work 6% respondent completers in work and PT study 16% respondent completers undertaking PG study	Continue good practice but increase move into support for WP final year students and identify % of WP graduates in work or PG study Provide group and individual I and G on post graduate study and advertise the new PG bursary scheme
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9 Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

The Student Progress Committee convenes three times per year and has as part of its remit responsibility to receive an annual evaluation of HE Widening Participation and Equality and Diversity activities and to approve recommended annual targets. This evaluation is undertaken by the Director of Higher Education and is informed by national and local WP data and EDIM's, alongside annual college student success data. The committee has the power to amend as well as approve these recommendations. The 2017-18 Access Agreement targets will form part of this annual evaluation.

10 Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 The College is committed to providing equal opportunities and celebrating diversity in all aspects of its work and to avoiding unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation to staff, students and customers. The College is committed to advancing equality of opportunity between people from different groups.
- 10.2 Our goal is to foster an environment that offers people inclusivity and in which they feel safe and secure, achieving an improvement in the quality of life for all who learn or work at the College. Our commitment to equality and diversity is intrinsic to the way we think and is therefore central to everything that we do. Doncaster College takes a strategic approach to the delivery of services which is supported by our Performance Management Framework.
- 10.3 The college has an overarching Equality and Diversity committee which monitors progress against annual priorities stated in the E and D action plan. However there are separate targets set for FE and HE and the latter are set annually by the HE student progress committee.
- 10.4 The clear distinction between Further Education and Higher Education enables transparency regarding appropriate use of public funds and student tuition fees. It also ensures that Higher Education targets are challenging and appropriately address the HE Widening Participation / Equality and Diversity agenda.

11 Provision of Information to Students

- a. Information relating to all aspects of student finance will be made available to all prospective higher education students prior to the commencement of their programmes and thereafter annually and will be clear, concise, timely and accessible.
- b. The information will give details of the annual and aggregate fees for the programme and other financial support which may be available thus enabling students to predict the likely cost of the programme and their likely level of debt incurred by the end of the programme.
- c. The information will be presented in a variety of ways:
 - Via the College website
 - Through the College's Higher Education prospectus
 - Through the College's Advice and Guidance Centre
 - At HE Open events
 - At Induction sessions
 - Through outreach work including talks at partner colleges and schools on student finance

12 Consulting with Students

Students were consulted during the development of this Access Agreement and offered ideas and support particularly regarding outreach activities and mentoring others to success. There is student representation on all committees this will ensure that students are involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the milestones set out in the agreement.