2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by Bedford 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 OfS. This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

1. Ambition and strategy

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

The College's mission is to support the local and national economy through the promotion, development and delivery of excellent skills training and education, and, as such, promotes itself as a genuine alternative to university through its Higher Education programmes and seeks to promote social inclusion and personal advancement in the local communities. To achieve this mission the College needs to attract underrepresented groups, particularly mature students, carers, disabled students, ethnic minorities and people from non-traditional Higher Education backgrounds.

The College has a higher than usual proportion of students from non-traditional backgrounds and is committed through its mission and values to continue to build on Access to Higher Education programmes for these students. This includes the development of new courses and delivery modes which meet the needs of the broad range of students the College attracts. The QAA HER team (Jan 2016) provided clear evidence of the College's commitment for fair access within B2 of the Quality Code: "The College adheres to the principles of fair admissions and has appropriate systems in place to ensure an effective admission experience for students from application to offer. Staff are clear about their responsibilities and provide additional support if required. Students are clear about the admissions process both with the support received from staff and the information available to them throughout the process. Students did not present any complaints or issues with the admissions process or procedures, and there are no complaints recorded against admissions decisions." This Agreement supports the College's Vision and Strategic Plan for Higher Education, period 2016-2021, which outlines our clear commitment to widening participation and increasing access to our Higher Education programmes and is aligned to the College Strategic Plan 2021. The Higher Education Strategic Plan builds on the findings of the Higher Education research commissioned in 2015/16. In addition, the Strategic Plan responds to the Higher Education Review January 2016 outcomes, the Higher Education Student Annual Conference recommendations and recent Government White Paper - Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice. The Bedford College Group aims to be one of the best Higher Education providers within Further Education providers in the country, offering a wide range of courses at Level 4 and above to enable students to progress to higher level skills and knowledge in their chosen vocational and academic subject. Our Strategic Objectives to 2021 The Corporation has identified and agreed four key objectives for the new plan:

 1. Educational Leadership
2. Educational Sustainability
3. Financial Sustainability
4. High Quality provision

Key Strategic Plan Performance Measure Increase Higher Education recruitment by 30%.

Key areas for development identified in self-assessment:
1. Increase the participation of male HE students at Tresham College
2. Increase the local HE offer (and therefore participation) at Tresham College
3. Increase the rate of internal progression onto the Higher Education courses at Tresham College
4. Reduce the achievement gap at Bedford College for Mixed race students
5. Reduce the achievement gap at Tresham College for Black students
6. Reduce the achievement gap at Bedford College for White British male mature students
7. Improve in-year retention to maximise achievement and progress of students
8. Improve pass rates at Tresham College
9. Improve onward progression to highly skilled employment/further study for full time learners from low participation neighbourhoods

The Plan to close the gaps has the following key themes:
• Curriculum Design (improve and extend the HE curriculum offer, particularly at Tresham Colleges, to improve participation)
• Learner progression (improve internal progression within the organisation)
• Quality improvement (improve quality monitoring and intervention to improve outcomes at Tresham College)
• Study Skills (improve study skills support to improve student retention)
 • Engagement (improve engagement with employers with the aim of improving student employability).

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by Bedford 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 Bedford 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)	Increase internal progression of the College's vocational Further Education students to our own Higher Education provision to 30% by 2022.	2015-16	10%	15%	20%	Percentage	2019-20	11	Limited progress
T16a_02 (Access)	Develop additional Access to Higher Education programmes (and pre-Access programmes) at the College, increasing the number of enrolled students on Access to Higher Education programmes at the Collegeincreasing the number of adult learners who wish to access Higher education provision by 30%	2016-17	156	180	190	Headcount	2019-20	208	Expected progress
T16a_04 (Progression)	Increase progression opportunities for students completing Level 3 programmes, HNDs and Foundation Degrees so that each programme (both full time and part time) has a clear progression route. This target is part of action plans with each of our validating HEIs.	2016-17	75%	78%	80%	Percentage points	2016-17	87	Expected progress
T16a_05 (Student success)	Higher education programmes to meet retention targets	2015-16	88%	90%	90%	Percentage	2017-18	95.1	Expected progress

T16a_06 (Access)	Increase progression from The Bedford Sixth Form to the College's Higher Education provision	2015-16	0%	4%	6%	Percentage	2019-20	1	Limited progress
T16a_07 (Success)	Increase achievement rates at Tresham College	2015-16	56.3%	65%	72%	Percentage	2017-18	75	Expected progress
T16a_08 (Success)	Reduce achievement gap for Black students at Tresham College	2016-17	46.8%	20%	10%	Percentage	2019-20	7	Expected progress
T16a_09 (Student success)	Improve retention of Mixed race students on our Higher Education courses where there is a retention gap	2016-17	8%	6%	3%	Percentage	2017-18	1.5	Expected progress

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 (Access)	Develop a long term outreach programme with academies within the Bedford College Academies Trust (BCAT)	Other (please give details in Description column)	0	1	1	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Limited progress

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	£4,933.00	£5,000.00	1%
Financial Support	£10,000.00	£850.00	-92%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected Bedford 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_01	We will implement a conversion plan to increase the number of acceptances for 20-21. We will also strengthen our Offer holder event to increase this.
T16a_06	We will continue to market our Progression Guarantee with these students. We will also carry out additional events to support these students with progression and their next study steps.
T16b_01	Develop and implement the outreach programme.

5. Confirmation

Bedford College confirms that:

Student engagement
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?
Yes
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?
Yes

Verification and sign off
Bedford 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	Mr Ian Pryce
Position	Principal and CEO

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

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

Target reference number: T16a_01
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
We have made limited progress in increasing our progression conversion. However, 28% of students received an offer for a place on our programmes.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
N/A

Target reference number: T16a_06
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
We have made limited progress in increasing the proportion of students progressing from the Sixth Form.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
N/A

Target reference number: T16b_01
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Due to the pandemic we have made limited progress in developing an outreach programme.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
NA

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

Bedford College's commentary on any of the targets listed in Section 2.

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	
T16a_02	
T16a_04	
T16a_05	
T16a_06	
T16a_07	
T16a_08	
T16a_09	
T16b_01	