

South Essex College of Further and Higher Education: Summary of 2020-21 to 2024-25 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, achieve success in and progress from higher education.

➡ You can see the full access and participation plan for South Essex College of Further and Higher Education and find out more about widening participation at [Widening participation | South Essex College](#)

Key points

The focus of our access and participation plan is on improving entry to higher education, attainment and entry into graduate employment for specific groups of students.

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of the full plan

Data shows that, compared to their peers at South Essex College of Further and Higher Education entry to higher education, attainment and progression into graduate roles are lower for certain groups of students.

- Black Asian and Minority Ethnic groups and students from the most deprived areas are less likely to go onto higher education.
- The same groups of students are less likely to achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above.
- Students that come from a neighbourhood where not many people go onto higher education and white students from the most deprived areas are less likely to gain a graduate job on completion of their degree.

Fees we charge

At South Essex College of Further and Higher Education the maximum fees charges are:

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- £9,000 for full time students
- £3,875 for part time students

➡ You can see a full list of fees for courses at South Essex College of Further and Higher Education at [South Essex College Higher Education course fees](#)

Financial help available

We offer financial support to students in the shape of a hardship fund. This helps students access higher education and continue studying until their course is complete. Applications are assessed on a case by case basis and meet a set of criteria.

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The hardship fund has three application routes:

Route 1 Standard Award – priorities final year students, students with disabilities, single parents with dependent children, care leavers and estranged students. The award is not repayable and ranges from £300 to £1500 dependent on circumstances.

Route 2 Non-Standard Award – this is designed for unforeseen one-off expenses, e.g. broken laptop, car repairs. The minimum award is £50 and the maximum is £500 and is not repayable.

Route 3 Late funding loan – is available to students who are in receipt of funding from student finance but whose funding has been delayed. The amount of funding is dependent on personal circumstances e.g. single, couple, 1 child or 2 children. This is to be repaid in full 10 days after receiving their latest finance payment from student finance.

Information for students

- **Prospective students** receive information on fees and financial support at in-person events, such as our open days, and from our website.
- **Current students** receive information about fees and the financial support available through our internal communication campaigns, emails, student virtual learning environment and website.

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of the full plan



For the most up-to-date information, see our website [South Essex College](#)

What we are aiming to achieve

Our overall aim is to support students to access higher education. We also want to create an environment where students at South Essex College of Further and Higher Education are supported and can achieve their full potential.

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of the full plan

Based on assessment of our performance, we have identified the following areas on which to focus our work:

- **Support attainment at school** - Extend our outreach work by recruiting a HE outreach coordinator to develop relationships with schools and other partners to increase the attainment raising activities.
- **Diversifying our provision** – The college is the lead provider for the Institute of Technology (IoT) in partnership with five other college based providers and will be offering diverse pathways into and through higher education through expansion of Level 4, 5 and 6 including higher and degree apprenticeships in priority areas as identified by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and local employers in the areas of Engineering, Construction, Digital, Health, Logistics and transport. Beginning in 2022/23 with programmes in CMI Leadership and Management and by 2026/27 delivering programmes in all the priority areas.
- **Students from low participation neighbourhoods and low income backgrounds** – By 2024/25, we will improve:
 - the rate of access (the proportion of students accessing higher education) by 2%.
 - attainment of degree outcome of 2:1 or above by 3.5%.
 - attainment of a degree outcome of 2:1 or above for students who are also female by 8%
 - progression to highly skilled employment or further study by 12%.
 - progression for students who are also white to highly skilled employment or further study by 4%.
- **Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Students** – By 2024/25 we will improve:
 - the rate of access (the proportion of students accessing higher education) by 5%
 - attainment of degree outcome of 2:1 or above by 10%
 - attainment of degree outcome of 2:1 or above for students also from low income backgrounds by 10%

- attainment of degree outcome of 2:1 or above for students that are also mature by 21%

What we are doing to achieve our aims

We have identified seven programmes of activity to support achievement of our aims and targets.

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of the full plan

1. **Transition and attainment** focused induction and follow on activities including calendar of structured social events throughout the year for all students.
2. Develop our **outreach projects and partnerships** further with nurseries and schools to support more students from underrepresented groups to attain good grades and progress to study for an HE qualification.
3. Targeted **learning enhancement support and stretch** so students have access to tailored support.
4. Targeted and pro-active **student support** approaches to ensure students have access to tailored support to meet their needs during their time of study.
5. Programme level targeted **investment in student academic resources** to increase the student experience and attainment.
6. Targeted and responsive **financial support** in the aid of hardship funding to support individual circumstances.
7. Engage with validating partners and employers to collaborate on **improving entry to further study or employments** including employability skills.

How students can get involved

The HE student engagement officer arranged meetings with student representatives from a variety of backgrounds for the purposes of consultation, feedback and critical evaluation of the APP plan.

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of the full plan

Students focus groups are chaired by the access and participation officer and actively involved in the development of APP projects. Focus groups are promoted using the college's HE bulletin, MS teams, student forum, internal social media and course representative meetings



To provide feedback or become involved students can contact our Widening Participation Officer; wideningparticipation@southessex.ac.uk

Evaluation: how we will measure what we have achieved

Our programme of activity are informed by the best available evidence about what works for students, we collect data and feedback to analyse and evaluate the funding, design, implementation, output and impact of the projects by the widening participation evidence and evaluation board. Evaluation findings are reported to the higher education committee and Governors. We will monitor impact on our target groups, to ensure we are addressing our aims. Where appropriate, we will adjust our interventions in the best interests of our students.

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the full plan

Contact for further information

For further information please contact wideningparticipation@southessex.ac.uk