

DN Colleges Group: 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, succeed in and progress from higher education. You can see the full access and participation plan for DN Colleges Group at <https://www.don.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/DN-Colleges-Group-APP..pdf> and https://ucnl.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/DNCG-Access-and-Participation-Plan-20_21-to-24_25.pdf

Key points

The focus of our access and participation plan is on improving outcomes for specific groups of students. Data shows that, compared to their peers at DN Colleges Group (DNCG) – University Campus Doncaster (UCDon) and University Campus North Lindsey (UCNL), outcomes are lower for certain groups of students. *See pages 1 – 9 in the full plan.*

The underrepresented groups at DNCG are mature; low income; disabled; ethnic and multiple.

Research has found that people who meet one or more of these categories are statistically less likely to go on to Higher Education. Furthermore, students from low-income backgrounds; ethnic minority groups and white underrepresented in higher education, are less likely to achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above and less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study. Overall progress into highly skilled employment or further study has improved for full time students. However, we still have further to go in reducing the gap for part-time students progressing into highly skilled employment or further study.

Fees we charge

At DNCG, the maximum fees charged for the majority of courses are:

- £7,400 for full-time students
- £6475 for part-time students - based on £61.67 per credit studied and up to a maximum of 105 credits.

You can see a full list of fees for courses at DNCG at [Doncaster College – Higher Education Fees and Finance](#) for UCDon and [Study at UCNL - Come and view our wide range of Programmes- UCNL](#) for UCNL

Financial help available

We offer financial support to students from underrepresented groups, further details can be found on *page 22 in the full plan*. This helps students access higher education and continue studying until their course is completed. The support includes:

- **Care leavers bursaries** of £500 for students who identify as care leavers.
- **Low participation neighbourhood bursaries** of £500 in two instalments, during year one for those level 3 students progressing from FE into HE within our institution and/or from households where residual income is below £25,000. Where demand exceeds the supply of bursaries further filters can be applied for STEM subjects.
- **BAME bursaries** of £500 in two instalments at the end of year one June and the next in September, for students from BAME backgrounds continuing into year two.
- **Hardship fund** is available to qualifying students who face financial hardship and difficulty.

Information for students

Prospective students receive information on fees and financial support through a range of media including college websites, at in-person events, such as our open days, pre-entry financial information workshops and newsletters, by email communications and the University Campuses Information and Advice Offices.

Current students receive information about fees and the financial support available through our student portal 'HE Essentials' on Canvas, internal communications campaigns including financial information workshops, programme handbooks, emails and the University Campuses Information and Advice Offices. *See page 21 of the full plan.*

For the most up-to-date information, see our website(s) at [Doncaster College – University Centre](#) and [UCNL - Welcome to the University Campus North Lincolnshire \(UCNL\)](#)

What we are aiming to achieve

Our overall aim is to support students to access higher education, and to create an environment where students at DNCG can achieve their full potential.

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

- **Support attainment at school and access to higher education** – We will capitalise on the **unique relationship we have with FE** colleagues to undertake collaborations in partner schools to raise attainment of level 1 and 2 learners and pre-16-year-olds in schools and college.
- During 2022-23, we will identify other local schools from where fewer pupils access higher education in collaboration with **UniConnect**: Humber Opportunities Programme (HOP) and Higher Education Progression Partnership South Yorkshire (HeppSY).
- We will continue to **promote internal progression** with level 3 FE students and Adult Access of our HE provision, through the participation of HE progression tasters / workshops / events.
- We will develop our work with **Children's University Doncaster and Scunthorpe** and increase the number of partner schools and monitor learner attainment. We will develop a programme of work to start in 2023-24, with a focus on priority subject areas such as STEM, to target the work that will do in schools.
- **Diversifying our provision** – We will continue to review our current suite of level 4 and level 5 programmes of study, Higher Technical Qualifications and degree apprenticeships during 2022- 23 and 2023-24. We will complete our FE mapping exercise of existing pathways into HE and identify areas where further diverse pathways can be developed to increase the portfolio by 2024-25.
- **Students from low participation neighbourhoods and low-income backgrounds** – By 2024-25, we will improve:
 - the **continuation rate** (the proportion of students continuing to the next year of their course) to reduce the 2% gap identified against the TEF Quality Improvement Data benchmark 2022.
- **Part-time students from low participation neighbourhoods and low-income backgrounds** – by 2024 -25 we will improve:
 - **Continuation** of part-time students from IMDQ1 and 2.
 - **Progression** to highly skilled employment or further study to reduce the 8% gap identified against the TEF Quality Improvement Data benchmark
- **Care-experienced students** – Whilst currently the number of care leavers across the institution is very low, measures continue to be developed, so that the allocated 12 bursaries of £500 will be distributed.

- **Mature students** – By 2024-25 we will improve the continuation rate for part-time mature students (aged over 21 years) and reduce the continuation gap between part-time young students. We will also reduce the progression gap between full-time mature students and full-time young students.
- **Ethnic minority students** – By 2024-25 we will reduce the continuation gap between Asian and white students.
- **Disabled students** – By 2024-25, we will reduce the attainment gap and progression gap between disabled students and not known to be disabled.

Further details can be found on *page(s) 5 -9* of the full plan and in the *Targets Spreadsheet*.

What we are doing to achieve our aims

- Extend our **programme of work with schools and FE colleagues** – this supports more pupils from underrepresented groups to attain good grades and progress to study for a higher education qualification. More resources will be invested in outreach work, with a focus on extending the work that we do in schools.
- Take a **targeted approach to learning and teaching** – this focuses on our four main target groups and is informed by student representatives on our Learning, Teaching and Scholarship Committee and APP Group.
- Further develop the **flexible modes of learning** to give students a choice in how they learn.
- Enhance **support for study throughout** the institution so all students can access tailored support particularly those students at higher risk.
- **Engage external partners** to collaborate on improving access to higher education, success in the chosen course of study, and progression to employment or further study. Further investment is being allocated to enable a targeted approach to progression opportunities for our students.
- **Engage students** in their own development of personal, social and professional skills.
- Offer **financial support**, including bursaries and hardship funding for eligible students, and practical support for students applying to Student Finance England - [Student finance for undergraduates: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

How students can get involved

Students are represented on our Access and Participation Plan Group which is responsible for overseeing implementation of the plan. To provide feedback contact the Student Society at UCNL [Study at UCNL - Come and view our wide range of Programmes- UCNL](#) and at UCDon [Doncaster College – Study at University Centre Doncaster](#) See *page 18 of the full plan*.

To become involved in this work, contact the Associate Director of Higher Education Widening Participation at karen.dainty@don.ac.uk.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

The Access and Participation Plan Group will monitor and report on these processes to the Access, Success and Participation Committee and the Academic Board. The Committee will oversee implementation of actions to ensure ongoing progress against yearly milestones in our access and participation plan. 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. We will publish evidence from our evaluations on our website by January 2024. See *page(s) 18 – 21 of the full plan*.

Contact details for further information: You can contact karen.dainty@don.ac.uk for further information.