

Newham College of Further Education

Higher Education

Access and Participation Statement | 2023-24

April 2022

Access and Participation Statement

Provider's name: Newham College of Further Education

Provider's UKPRN: 10004607

Academic Year 2022/2024

1. Context

1.1 Newham Area

Newham College is located in one of the most socially deprived areas of London, Nomis data demonstrates that Newham borough is characterised by low-paid, low-skilled employment. In 2021 full-time workers in Newham were paid weekly and hourly rates that were lower than those for London and for Britain as a whole. As such our curriculum plan focusses the development of economically valuable courses that have both immediate and long-term currency with employers. We recognise that there are good opportunities for young people in Newham to progress to higher education, and that the borough is located in Centile 4 of the POLAR 4 data set. There are, however, some variations within this data and there are different levels of participation from several ethnic groups. This means that we will focus our HE curriculum offer on those economically valuable courses that offer meaningful progression routes to HE and into skilled employment for educationally and economically vulnerable students.

Both in Newham and within close proximity, there is significant choice for students wishing to undertake a 3-year, residential undergraduate programme of study. There is far less choice for students who wish to develop higher level skills and qualifications obtained through non-residential, shorter, less expensive academic programmes. Newham College aims to address this relative market failure by focusing its HE offer on the "missing middle" between L3 and L6.

1.2 Newham College

Newham College of Further Education is a large sized, general further education college operating mainly from three major sites across East London, located in East Ham, Stratford,

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and Canning Town. The focus of provision is vocational education and training which includes study programmes, adult learning programmes, and courses for learners with high needs, together with apprenticeships and higher apprenticeships. The College takes account of local and regional skill needs which focusses on progression into economically valuable employment. In order to achieve this the College will work with a variety of stakeholders to develop its higher education provision. Those that have synergy and relevance include:

London City Institute of Technology ("LCIoT") this is a partnership between Newham College, Queen Mary University of London, and employers, opening in September 2022. LCIoT will deliver qualifications and courses from L3 - L7, in Engineering, Construction and the Built Environment, Green and Carbon Reducing Technologies, Digital Technologies and Transportation. LCIoT will be delivered from state of the art new facilities in the Royal Docks, funded by capital grants from the Departments of Education (£18m) and the Greater London Authority (£10m).

Barts Health Futures. Newham College is a strategic partner of Barts Health NHS Trust, sharing facilities at the College's Stratford Centre that was funded by each institution with match funding provided by the Greater London Authority. The collaboration delivers a range of qualifications and training, including Apprenticeships in Health Sciences and Digital. The Partnership also focuses on get into healthcare courses bridging local employment skills gaps.

2. Widening Participation Priorities

In deciding the widening participation priorities the College is aware that many of the potential students will:

1. already be working at a technical level three and have some professional experience;
2. continue to work and study simultaneously;
3. hold non-traditional qualifications;
4. be mature students;
5. be likely to speak English as an additional language; and
6. have little familial experience of higher education.

2.1 Our key priorities for widening participation are as follows:

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1. continue to raise awareness of participation in higher education among the local community as well as local regional employers in order to further improve access for under-represented groups;
2. promote participation in higher education, especially for specified target groups:
 - a. mature students returning to study with non-traditional entry qualifications;
 - b. students from under-represented groups; this will include adults/mature learners, White Working Class, BAME;
 - c. students from areas of multiple deprivation;
3. ensure high levels of continuation, completion and achievement for all students; and
4. improve progression into highly skilled employment or further study to L6 and beyond.

3. Widening Participation Strategy

3.1 Access and Admissions

We are committed to fair access and we encourage applications from all those who demonstrate the potential to succeed on our programmes. To this end, the College will:

1. ensure that full details of its access measures, including information on fees and financial support arrangements, are published in future editions of our Higher Education Prospectus and on our website;
2. maintain an affordable fee structure while ensuring that courses are both viable and sustainable. The College is keen to maintain this value for money approach to avoid creating barriers for debt adverse students, particularly those from non-traditional backgrounds;
3. harness the strengths of the London City Institute of Technology, and our strategic relationship with Barts Health NHS Trust to:
 - a. develop those courses that are highly valued by employers and meet identified skills gaps at a regional and national level;

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- b. develop flexible delivery models using the strength of remote and e-learning to reach a wide range of students;
 - c. support progression from HE courses into skilled employment or further study.
4. provide comprehensive information and pre-sessional activities that communicate the value of, and necessary commitment to, higher education; and
5. provide pre-sessional preparatory courses for students entering higher education from non-traditional vocational qualification routes into higher education. These courses will aim to break down barriers and increase confidence and capacity to succeed in, and emerge from, higher education at a high level of attainment.

3.2 Student Support

We are committed to ensuring that students who have chosen to study at the College will have the support necessary to emerge in good standing with high levels of attainment. To this end we will:

1. provide high quality pastoral support to help more vulnerable students throughout their time at the College;
2. maintain very high levels of academic delivery through the employment of appropriately qualified staff with up-to-date professional experience together with a high level academic and professional skills;
3. provide a virtual learning environment to all HE students to ensure that additional resources are available outside of classroom study and where students are not able to attend college;
4. provide an Academic Resources (Study Skills Hub) page of the VLE, supporting the transition to studying higher education, as well as Study Skills are relevant to study at level 4 and 5; and
5. provide access to a Study Skills Manager/Coordinator to provide formative feedback on study skills.

3.3 Careers

At an early stage we will provide access to expert Careers Advice team and wide-ranging support to help vulnerable students through and beyond their time at College.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

The College is committed to understanding those activities and opportunities that best contribute to students' accessing and successfully participating in higher education. Therefore, we aim to:

1. embed the student voice in all evaluation activities;
2. develop an evidence-based system that evaluates our WP activities against their intended outcome, for example all pre-sessional programmes will undergo a short, medium and long-term self-assessment of their value against their intended outcomes;
3. integrate admissions tracking with student success and graduate outcomes to better understand a student's subsequent journey after completing higher education course with us;
4. have evaluation data and information readily available for curriculum teams and the College as a whole better to understand the impact of our WP activities;
5. incorporate more organisational reflection in light of evaluation data into programme reviews and the whole College Self-Evaluation Document;
6. share evaluation findings with stakeholders;
7. encourage departments to have increased ownership of their evaluation outputs;
8. provide training for staff in order that they understand and can contribute to the evaluation of our WP activities; and
9. provide CPD and staff development to further develop their evaluation skills.