

Heart of Yorkshire Education Group: Summary of 2020-21 to 2024-25 access and participation plan

The Heart of Yorkshire Education Group was formed on 1 March 2022 as a result of the merger of Selby College and Wakefield College. This summary is based on the approved Access and Participation Plan for Wakefield College for 2020-21 to 2024-25 as the lead institution in the merger and the variations to that we have made to the plan to show how the Group will honour the commitments made to Selby students in its Access and Participation Plan. The Group consists of three campuses at Castleford, Selby and Wakefield.

What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans set out how higher education (HE) 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 the Heart of Yorkshire Education Group at <https://www.wakefield.ac.uk/office-for-students> and <https://www.selby.ac.uk/course-type/policies-procedures>

See section Assessment of performance of full plan pages 1-8

Key points

The focus of our access and participation plan is on improving outcomes for specific groups of students. The Group is proud to be inclusive and we are committed to supporting students from under-represented groups to participate successfully in Higher Education. We particularly aim to support more students from disadvantaged areas to participate and succeed in Higher Education, and data shows that

- students from these neighbourhoods are more likely to access Higher Education with us than at many other Higher Education providers.
- compared to their peers in some other Higher Education providers, students, particularly those aged under 21 years, are less likely to complete their studies with us if they come from a neighbourhood where not many people go on to higher education and less likely to progress into highly skilled employment.

Fees we charge

At the Heart of Yorkshire Education Group, the maximum fees charged are £6,950 for full-time students and £4,633 for part-time students

You can see a full list of fees for courses at the Heart of Yorkshire Education Group at

<https://www.wakefield.ac.uk/study-with-us/higher-education/higher-education-courses/>

[https://www.selby.ac.uk/courses?type\[\]=244](https://www.selby.ac.uk/courses?type[]=244)

See pages 16-18 of the full plan

Financial help available

We offer financial support to students from underrepresented groups. This helps students access higher education and continue studying until their course is completed. The support includes:

- A bursary of £500 payable in the first year if the student's household income is less than £25,000
- A 'Go Higher Reward Scheme' of up to £600 payable in the first year for students who choose to progress from an Advanced level programme with us onto a full-time Higher Education programme on one of our campuses

- An annual Care Leavers bursary of £1,500 which is available to any home student who has left local authority care in the 2 years prior to enrolment on the first year of study
- A Care Givers bursary of up to £1,000 in each year of study (excluding any repeat year), which is available to any home student who is a carer for a family member with long-term ill-health or disability
- An achievement scholarship of up to £500 that rewards high achieving students at Advanced level

See pages 20-21 of the full plan

Information for students

Prospective students receive information on fees and financial support from our website, at in-person events, such as our open days, individual meetings with our staff, and by email communications.

Current students receive information about fees and the financial support available through individual meetings with our staff and emails.

For the most up-to-date information, see our website

See full plan pages 9-10 and pages 21-24

What we are aiming to achieve

Our overall aim is to support students living in our region to access higher education and skills. As many of our students want to study and then work locally this will help to avoid higher-level skills shortages in our Districts. Our ambition is to build on the progress we have already made in recent years, particularly in supporting more students from disadvantaged areas to participate and succeed in Higher Education.

We also want to provide an environment where students at the Heart of Yorkshire Education Group can achieve their full potential. The college is committed to maintaining and improving access to Higher Education for all underrepresented groups and to develop its outreach, success and progression activities, both independently and in collaboration with partners such as local schools, partner colleges and the Uni Connect Programme.

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

Support attainment and access to higher education through collaboration - We will work together through Go Higher West Yorkshire in 2022-23 to investigate opportunities and understand the potential to undertake a collaborative approach to pre-higher education attainment-raising activity. We will continue to work collaboratively with schools, colleges and higher education providers in our region to support access to higher education for under-represented groups.

Diverse and flexible provision – We will grow higher education provision and student numbers in the Heart of Yorkshire Education Group by offering courses including Higher Technical Qualifications that provide students with the skills required to gain professional employment in the Districts of Selby and Wakefield, the Leeds City Region, North Yorkshire and West Humberside. We will also expand part-time and other flexible provision to meet the needs of employers and students.

Students from low participation neighbourhoods and low income backgrounds – by 2024-25 we will improve:

- the proportion of students on full-time Advanced level programmes of study with the Group who progress into HE by 9%
- the continuation rate for young students (the proportion of students aged under 21 years continuing to the next year of their course) by 12%

Care leavers – by 2024-25 we will increase the proportion of care leavers to align with the proportion on Further Education study programmes within the Group

Mature students – by 2024-25 we will improve

- the number of students on Access to HE programmes at the College who progress into HE by 6%
- progression to employment and further study for mature students by 3%

Disabled students – by 2024-25 we will improve the continuation rate for students at Wakefield with a known disability by 6%.

See full plan pages 10-18 and 20-24

What we are doing to achieve our aims

We have identified 6 main programmes of activity to support achievement of our aims and targets

1. Deliver a sustained programme of higher education engagement activities including advanced study skills with students on full-time Advanced programmes of study so that more students choose to progress into higher education and skills and are better prepared to do so
2. Further diversify our Access to HE provision particularly in Selby to provide more opportunities for mature students to access higher education
3. Change and extend our higher education offer to provide more opportunity for students to study on higher technical courses at level 4 and level 5 and to offer flexible modes of learning which give students more choice in how they learn
4. Continue to offer a wide range of financial support, including bursaries and hardship funds for eligible students
5. Deliver a 'September school' and provide dedicated weekly time for academic support to help students to achieve
6. Enhance support for progression across the institution, particularly for students seeking to enter employment so that more secure a professional role

How students can get involved

HE student representatives participate in key meetings such as the HE Student Committee, included in the HE Enhancement Panel, which evaluates the quality of provision and provides a forum for consulting on the HE Action Plan overseeing the implementation of the Access and Participation Plan. This panel includes ongoing briefing related to the widening participation profile of the college's HE cohort and impact of widening participation activities, with feedback from the Student Committee on proposed initiatives.

See full plan pages 18-24

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

Our programmes of activity are increasingly informed by the evidence available to us about what works for students. We will collect data and feedback to evaluate:

- our programme design
- the impact of the programme of activity we are doing to achieve our aims
- the 6 actions outlined above

The HE Participation committee and HE Student committee will monitor and report on the evaluation of the programme to the HE Quality and Standards Committee. The HE Quality and Standards Committee is responsible for judging the progress made and impact of our actions and recommending changes to our planned interventions in the best interests of our students.

Contact details for further information

You can contact Clare Allcock @ c.allcock@wakefield.ac.uk for further information.