

City of Liverpool College

Summary of 2025-26 to 2028-29 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

An access and participation sets out provisions that will be meaningful and effective in promoting equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups, as determined by the Office for Students.

You can see the full access and participation plan for City of Liverpool College at [HE-Access-Partic-plan-for-2025-2029.pdf](#).

Key points

The City of Liverpool College has the ambition to offer high-quality, inclusive provision with outstanding quality of teaching and levels of support for all our students, ensuring they reach their full potential regardless of their background and identity. Our small-sized Higher Education provision is a part of this. Most of our Higher Education students come from the city of Liverpool and the Liverpool City Region. We recognise the challenges experienced by the City Region with poor outcomes from secondary education, high levels of special educational needs and high levels of economic disadvantage. We recognise this in our aim as a whole college to turn disadvantage into advantage for our richly diverse student population.

We work closely with local businesses, schools, universities and community partners to ensure local people have an equal opportunity to apply and move on to higher education, and to use higher education to provide skills and employment opportunities.

See pages 1-2 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Fees we charge

Our full-time course fees vary between £6700 and £9000 per year. We charge between £3700 and £4225 per year for part-time courses. Our courses in construction, engineering, dental technology and computing have higher fees than our other courses.

See page 41 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Financial help available

We provide a HE bursary for students with household incomes under £25000 per year, and for all students who are care leavers, young adult carers, young people estranged from their family, people from the gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, refugees and students from military families. We also offer hardship grants to students in financial difficulty and refund charges for students who are required to pay for evidence to claim Disabled Students' Allowance.

See page 24 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Information for students

We provide information on our fees and financial support on our website, along with eligibility criteria. This information is also available in our prospectus. Our outreach teams ensure that this information is made available to students, teachers, parents and carers in schools, colleges and community groups. We also share this information at open days.

See page 23 of the access and participation plan for more information.

What we are aiming to achieve

In most parts of the Liverpool City Region, people are much less likely to progress on to higher education than in other areas. Because we recruit mainly from these communities, we have a higher proportion of young students from areas where there is lower participation in Higher Education than most other HE institutions. We are also aware, however, that the proportion of these students we recruit has been falling slowly over time, and we would like to reverse this. We have identified that students are facing increased costs in doing HE courses and have negative perceptions of HE. They also need to develop the knowledge and skills and receive the information and guidance. We would like to address these issues.

We have a very diverse population of students in our college. Just under half of our students who study our further education courses come from minority ethnic groups, compared to just over 20% of minority ethnic people in the population of Liverpool. However, 20% of our higher education students come from minority ethnic groups. This is in line with our local population but much lower than our general college population. We would like more students from minority ethnic groups to progress to our HE courses. To do this, we want to ensure they have sufficient high-quality information and guidance to be aware of relevant opportunities in HE, and to correct any negative perceptions they might have about progressing to HE.

We have consistently recruited more mature students (aged over 21) than other HE institutions. Despite this, the proportion has shown some decline since 2020. We want to ensure they have sufficient advice and guidance and to address the cost pressures they face so that they continue to apply to higher education courses.

Just over a quarter of our students have disabilities, and a significant proportion of these have mental health difficulties. These students are less likely to complete their courses successfully, so we want to ensure that they have the support and environment they need.

We recognise that many of the areas in the Liverpool City Region we recruit from are also areas of high deprivation. We have some evidence that although up to 2019-20 students from these areas outperformed other students, this situation has reversed more recently. We would like to address the cost pressures they face, especially since the Covid pandemic and cost of living crisis, to improve their outcomes on their HE courses.

Although we have some gaps in the information available to us, we have some evidence that a smaller proportion of our students progress on to education or employment from their HE courses than that of comparable groups at other HE institutions. We want to ensure that they have suitable preparatory activities, including information and guidance, to ensure they progress suitably from their courses.

See pages 2-7 of the access and participation plan for more information.

What we are doing to address key risks to equality of opportunity

We have put in place a number of activities to identify and recruit students from areas where there is low participation in Higher Education in the Liverpool City Region. These include talks to promote HE to current Level 3 students, coaching support for students in areas of low participation, community outreach workshops and HE skills masterclasses and summer schools.

We are also aiming to recruit more HE students from minority ethnic groups to increase the diversity of our HE student population. We are doing this through information and advice sessions, talks promoting HE, career coaching and advice and ongoing work to decolonise the curriculum.

We are aiming to recruit more students aged over 21. We are doing this through targeted community outreach workshops, and bursaries for students with household incomes under £25000.

We are supporting students with mental health difficulties to stay on their courses and progress well. This is being done through coaching support for students returning from absence, and promotion of support services for students with mental health difficulties.

We are providing support for students with low incomes to successfully continue and complete their studies. HE students benefit from money advice and guidance, and also bursaries for students with low household incomes and other vulnerable groups.

We are also helping our HE students to progress on to suitable employment or further education. We are doing this by providing enhanced and targeted careers information, advice and guidance, a careers mentoring programme and using our curriculum to develop employability skills.

See pages 8-21 of the access and participation plan for more information.

How students can get involved

We have developed our access and participation plan through consultations with the Student Union and focus groups with current HE students. They provided important insights which are reflected in the final version of the plan. We will continue to involve students in monitoring the success of our plan as we implement it through focus groups and surveys. Students can also share their views through their course student representatives and the HE Officer in the student union.

See page 23 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

We will evaluate what we have achieved on an ongoing basis every year. We will do this through conducting surveys, focus groups and interviews with the groups of students we are aiming to help in order to understand the impact on them. This will be supported by analysing information about how many students in each group join HE courses at the college, access the support we provide and progress on to high-quality destinations. We will share the results of our evaluation with leaders and staff and use these to make further improvements and adjust what we do.

See pages 8-21 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Contact details for further information

Please contact heoffice@liv-coll.ac.uk for more information.