2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by Bridgwater and Taunton College against targets, objectives and written commitments set out in its 2019-20 access and participation plan. This document is a summary of information submitted by the provider to the OfS. This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

1. Ambition and strategy

Bridgwater and Taunton College's ambition and strategy as detailed in the 2019-20 access and participation plan:

In line with the College's overall strategic aims in relation to widening participation, equality and diversity and as result of detailed analysis, Bridgwater and Taunton College/University Centre Somerset's strategy for continuous improvement is as follows:

To maintain and build on the already above average level of enrolment in relation to:

1. Students from POLAR 4 Quintiles 1 & 2
2. Mature students
3. BME students in comparison to the local population (which is known to be very different to the national picture)

To improve and develop in the following areas:

1. Work with the local authority to support looked after students (in care or formerly in care) to increase the number who access, continue and succeed in Further and Higher Education.

2. Improve continuation rates for disabled students and those from Quintiles 1 & 2, to above the TEF benchmark and thereafter above this to the national rate and beyond, with a particular focus on monitoring and tackling barriers for disabled students and those from POLAR 4 Quintiles 1 & 2 who may also have intersections of protected characteristics and thereby potentially greater barriers to overcome. A targeted approach will be adopted to explore the barriers for particular types of students in order to better understand and meet their needs, in line with best practice within the sector. The aim is to close the gap with other students whilst increasing continuation overall. Access and Participation funding will be used for the targeted work with these students to close the gap and increase the overall rate for these specific students.

3. Maintain 'good degrees' within 2% of the national HESA average for the sectors in which we deliver, with an increasing percentage of disabled and BME students contributing to this. The aim being to close the gap between any potentially disadvantaged groups and others.

4. To focus on the development of employability and transferable skills, confidence and aspiration to apply for highly skilled employment or further study for disabled students. In particular to focus on closing the gap between full time disabled students and others using best practice interventions identified within the sector.

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by Bridgwater and Taunton College of progress against the targets approved in its 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-20 access and participation plans. Full information can be found in **Table 8a – statistical targets and milestones** and **Table 8b – Other milestones and targets** of Bridgwater and Taunton College's 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in Annex B.

Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	Increase applications from FE students moving into HE in Somerset	Other (please give details in Description column)	152	168	170	Headcount	2019-20	184	Expected progress
T16a_02 (Access)	Increase applications from care leavers	Other (please give details in Description column)	10	11	11	Headcount	2019-20	1	No progress
T16a_03 (Access)	Increase applications from disabled students	Other (please give details in Description column)	99	107	109	Headcount	2019-20	181	Expected progress
T16a_04 (Access)	Maintain applications above the local average from black and minority ethnic groups	Other (please give details in Description column)	4%	4%	4%	Percentage	2019-20	2.67	Limited progress
T16a_05 (Access)	Increase applications from students from a low-income background	Other (please give details in Description column)	Not currently measured	70	75	Headcount	2019-20	52	No progress

T16a_06 (Student success)	Improve retention on all programmes	Other (please give details in Description column)	75%	78%	79%	Percentage	2019-20	91	Expected progress
T16a_07 (Student success)	Continue to increase the number of children achieving passes at GCSE in Bridgwater College Multi Academy Trust	2015-16	53%A*-C at BCA	BCA 55%	BCA 56%	Percentage	2019-20		Expected progress
T16a_08 (Progression)	Increase the achievement rate of students with Long Term Health Conditions	2015-16	Not measured	34%	36%	Percentage	2019-20	82	Expected progress

Other milestones and targets

No data was returned for this section in Bridgwater and Taunton College's 2019-20 access and participation plan.

3. Investment commitments

3.1.   Access and participation investment for the last audited year

Please note that some differences in predicted vs actual spend may be due to reporting differences between academic and financial years.

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£67,500.00	£163,000.00	141%
Financial Support	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	0%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected Bridgwater and Taunton College has made the following commitments to increase the rate of progress against their targets.

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16a_02	We will continue to work as appopriate with CLA and Care Leavers on an individual basis through regular meetings whilst they are on FE courses at the College. We will also continue to monitor their attendance and flag drops in attendance to the Wellbeing Team in order to continue to support these young people. Additionally we will establish Access and Participation Plan review meetings so that we can more easily review in-year if there are any further actions that we can take to achieve the target. Any good practice from the sector will be shared in these meetings to inform the discussion.

T16a_04	The data for the targets set for 2020-21 and thereafter align more clearly with the Key Performance Measures of the OfS and the monitoring data in the Data Dashboard than these targets for 2019-20. The Dashboard includes students on apprenticeships in addition to those just on undergraduate programmes. However the targets for this measurefor 2019-20 were based on TEF data. There is not any updated TEF data available at the time of writing that can be used to ensure a like for like comparison. As the rest of the data in these targets and milestones is historically based on undergraduates and does not include apprenticeships, the same methodology has been used for calculating this target internally. Full alignment with OfS Data Dashboard statistics will take place in 2020-21. Once apprenticeship data is included in the future, the number of students from ethnic minorities will be higher than the percentage shown here. A focus will remain on attracting BAME students and looking for opportunities to share their success stories to inspire others to access HE.
T16a_05	Continue to support the UniConnect agenda and interventions; Run HE taster sessions and progression events; Work with the NHS to support local mature students, including those from low income backgrounds, to join health-related courses; explore and establish further apprenticeship courses to enable those from low income backgrounds to receive a salary whilst learning. Use the OfS Data Dashboard for monitoring APP targets set for 2020-21, as this target in relation to applications rather than entrants does not align with national official data sets on the dashboard.

5. Confirmation

Bridgwater and Taunton College confirms that:

Student engagement
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?
No
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?
Yes

Verification and sign off	
Bridgwater and Taunton College has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.	
Yes	
Accountable officer sign off	
Name	Andy Berry
Position	Principal and Chief Executive (Accountable Officer)

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

Bridgwater and Taunton College's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16a_02
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes, we have carried out the planned activities/ commitments in our plan related to this target. However there were only 5 Children Looked After (CLA) / Care Leavers due to complete a level 3 course at BTC in July 2019 eligible to apply for HE in Sept 2019. One of these 5 students applied for HE at BTC/University Centre Somerset. The majority of CLA/ Care Leavers at BTC are on level 1 or level 2 courses and not therefore eligible at present to apply to HE. We continue to support them at whatever level they are currently working. There were 53 FE CLA / Care Leavers supported in 2018-19 and 56 supported during 2019-20 who were also in receipt of the Bursary for Vulnerable Groups.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
As the number of CLA and Care Leavers eligible to apply to HE was so much less than the milestone, it was not possible to achieve it. The majority of these students are on lower level FE courses. However there has been a significant increase in the support provided to CLA/Care Leavers through BTC engagement with an agreed protocol with Somerset County Council (SCC) including BTC staff engaging in Transition Panels for these young people with SCC.   Also via support provided through the Bursary for Vulnerable Groups. The students' attendance has been monitored and regular meetings held with BTC staff to help them keep on track and to focus. Barriers to learning have been identified and worked on with these young people. Next steps have been discussed, as appropriate to the individual.

Target reference number: T16a_04
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes, we have met the commitments in our plan related to this target. The number of students from minority ethnic groups on undergraduate programmes at BTC (2.67%) is still higher than the number in the local population (recorded as 2%) as per the target.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
An HE Recruitment Theme Group was established in 2019-20 to explore best practice across college in relation to increasing progression of FE learners into HE at University Centre Somerset, part of Bridgwater & Taunton College (BTC). The theme group ran all academic year and resulted in increased and more focused interventions between FE learners and the HE curriculum teams at the College. A focus on widening participation and equality of opportunity for all students was embedded within all activity in line with the College's inclusive strategic aims. The draft findings of this group were shared at the Februrary 2020 HE Conference which enabled extensive debate and sharing of good practice and challenging of existing practice amongst colleagues to help increase the focus on progression.

Target reference number: T16a_05
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes, we have met the commitments in our plan related to this target.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
Additional marketing activities and continual focus by the Next Steps South West team have endeavoured to impact this target. The work of the HE Recruitment Theme Group that was established in 2019-20 was also aimed at helping to meet this target.

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

Bridgwater and Taunton College's commentary on any of the targets listed in .

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	A focus on progression events and HE taster sessions has assisted in meeting this target
T16a_02	We will continue to work closely with SCC and the Transition Panels to support CLA / Care Leavers as they make their transition from school to FE. This will enable us to continue to prepare for their arrival and have the necessary support in place as soon as they arrive with tutorials/meetings arranged regularly to support them through their studies and to help them prepare for their progression.
T16a_03	The OfS Data Dashboard shows a 28% access rate for students reporting a disability at BTC in 2019-20. This was 1% higher than in 2018-19 and significantly higher than the sector average of 16.6%.
T16a_04	OfS Data Dashboard does not provide stats for BTC in relation to Access for Ethnicity, as the numbers of students from minority ethnic groups are too small. The OfS Sector Summary (March 2021) shows that it is only White 18 year olds who are under-represented in HE in comparison with the number of White 18 year olds in the UK population. Therefore there is not a national gap to be closed in relation to access for BAME students. We will though aim to ensure that BAME students are attracted locally to apply to HE to maintain the national position for these groups.
T16a_05	Alignment of this target with OfS Data Dashboard stats for 2019-20: POLAR4 Q1 24% for BTC, double the sector average of 12.3% & an increase of 1% from 2018-19 for BTC. IMD: BTC Q1 10%, an increase of 2% from 2018-19. However below the sector average of 21.7% in 2019-20.
T16a_06	Significant increase in support put in place to counteract effects of Covid-19 through Extenutating Circumstances process. This was used to problem solve issues and signpost students to support on an individual basis. The Data Dashboard shows a continuation rate for POLAR4 Q3 for BTC as 85% in 2018-19 (latest OfS stats available), a reduction from 90% in 2017-18. This is less than the 91.8% for Q3 for the sector. No other quintiles are shown in the BTC data. Continuation rates by age in 2018-19 show 92% for young students and 91% for mature students for BTC. This is in line with the sector for young students and above the sector (84.4%) for mature students. Full time continuation rates for Disabled students at BTC were higher than the sector. In 2018-19, 95% of those at BTC who reported a disability continued, in comparison to the sector average of 89.3%.
T16a_07	DfE and Regional Schools Commissioner confirm that this non-validated data cannot be shared

T16a_08	Additional support & problem solving through the EC process as well as individual tutorials helped to significantly increase the achievement rate of students with Long Term Health Conditions. Out of the 46 students with LTHC 28 students were due to complete/achieve in 2019-20 and 23 of them did so. The attainment rate for L6 completing students with LTHC was 69%. This is higher than the overall BTC disability attainment rate shown on the Data Dashboard which showed the 2019-20 attainment rate to be 55% for those reporting a disability at BTC, significantly below the sector average of 82.3%. The key question to explore here is the nature of the disabilities being supported at BTC in comparison to the sector and how we can further develop good practice to increase this continuation rate.