

## **South and City College Birmingham 2019-20 access and participation statement 2019-20**

South and City College Birmingham is a large diverse, general further education college, which operates across much of Birmingham. The College dates back to 1875 when it was formed as Handsworth Technical School and has undergone a number of name changes and developments since its original formation. In 1963 Hall Green Technical College was formed and then became independent as South Birmingham College in 1993 following the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. In August 2012 the College changed its name to the present South & City College following the merger between South Birmingham College and City College Birmingham. In 2017 the College was approved to use the term 'University centre' by the Department for Education and now enrolls approximately 850+ students on higher education programmes.

Following the Government's Area Review process in 2015, it was recommended that Bournville College merge with South and City College Birmingham. Bournville College experienced turbulent times in recent years due to poor financial management and wider management issues which impacted on the quality of delivery and students' learning experience prior to 2016. The West Midlands region was in the first phase of the process and so during academic year 2016-17 South and City College Birmingham and Bournville College operated as federated colleges with a shared Principal and management team until merger was approved. Bournville College formally closed and became part of South and City College Birmingham in August 2017. South and City College Birmingham is now one of the largest general further education colleges in England, offering courses from entry-level qualifications to higher levels.

Both colleges applied for a TEF award as separate institutions in TEF year 2. South and City College Birmingham (SCCB) was awarded a silver medal and Bournville College (BVC) was awarded a Provisional TEF award. In TEF year 3 the College has reapplied for a TEF award.

In assessing the College's performance data will be used from TEF metrics which are based on taught data (both franchised and directly funded provision) and internal data for directly funded provision, the target population for the access and participation statement.

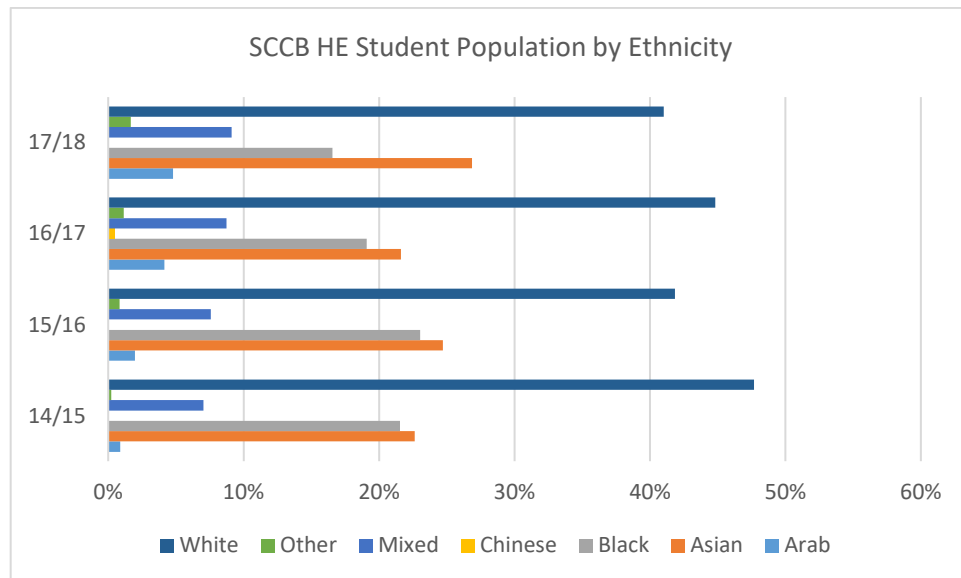
### **1.0 Assessment of current performance**

#### **1.1 Access**

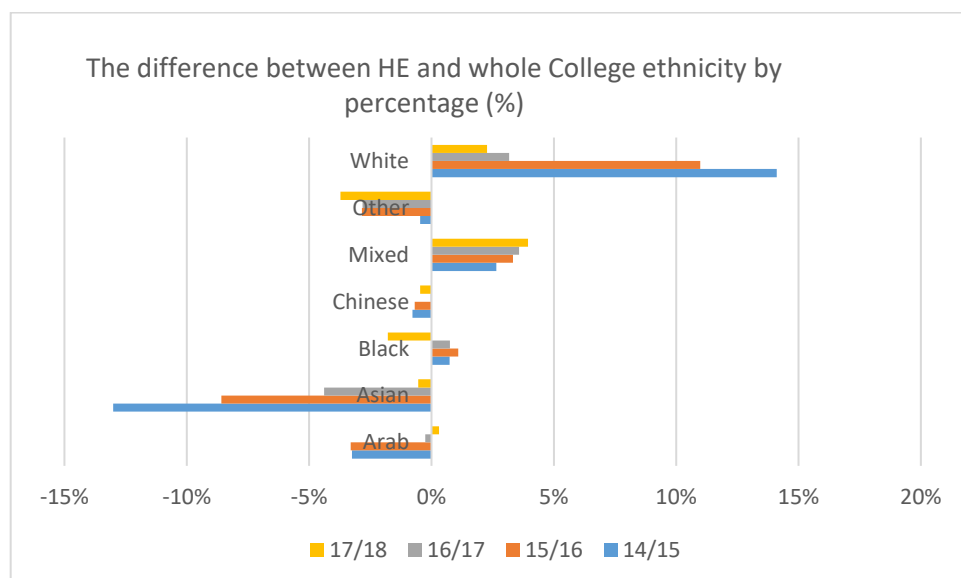
The College enrolls over 400 directly funded students each year on to other undergraduate programmes at levels 4 and 5. The majority of these are HNC/D programmes awarded by Pearson, in addition there are a smaller number of validated foundation degrees and two undergraduate degree top-up programmes awarded by local university partners.

## 1.1.0 Ethnicity

59% of higher education students at the College in 2017/18 are from BME backgrounds 34% higher than the national profile for undergraduate programmes. The largest BME group is Asian at 27%, white students continue to be the largest group within the College at 41%.



The ethnicity of higher education students compared to all students studying at the College on all programmes has since 2014 become more reflective of the student population as a whole. Mixed raced students have a higher and rising percentage compared to the whole population and students identifying as other and black has seen a slight decline when compared to percentages for the whole College population.



The merger of the Colleges has had a significant impact on the TEF year 3 metrics, the aggregate ethnicity data of the College demonstrates that BME students now account for

53% of our student body from 59% at SCCB. For our full time students, 61% are now from BME backgrounds against 70% for SCCB in TEF year 2. Asian students constituted the majority of full time students at SCCB in TEF year 2 at 42%, the merged data now shows that White students are the largest ethnic group for TEF year 3 at 39%. White students continue to be the majority at 63% for part time students and this remains due to the higher enrolments in teacher training programmes and more significantly in construction based subjects where the percentage of higher skilled and qualified staff from BME backgrounds is low in the sector.

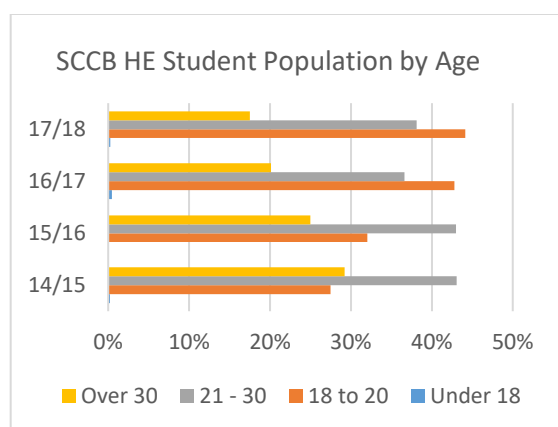
### 1.1.1 Age

The profile of higher education students at the College by age has seen a changing pattern over the last four years, whereas the national pattern has remained reasonably consistent except for a slight decline in mature students overall.

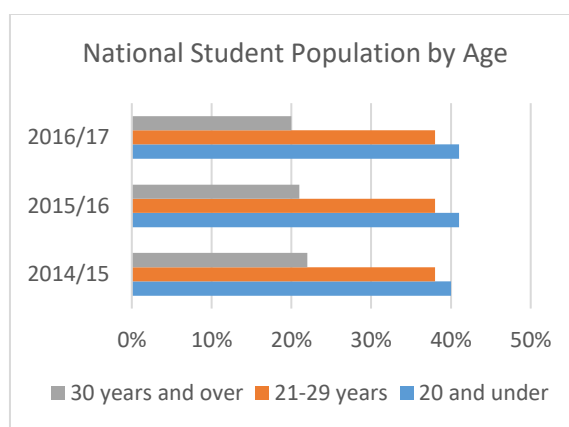
Mature students aged 30 years or more have declined at the College by significantly more than the national rate by around 12% since 2014-15. This decline in mature students follows the decline nationally in this age group and the College rate of 17% is slightly below the national engagement in higher education for students aged 30 years and over at 20%<sup>1</sup>.

Students aged 21 to 30 years old maintained their numbers in 2014/5 and 2015/16. In academic year 2016-17 there was a decline of 7%, although there has been a small increase of 1.5% in 2017-18 to 38% matching the national rate of 38% for this age group.

The largest increase in students enrolled at the College is in the 18-20 year age group at 44%, this is a 17% increase since 2014-15, and 3% above the national rate.



Source: SCCB student data 2018



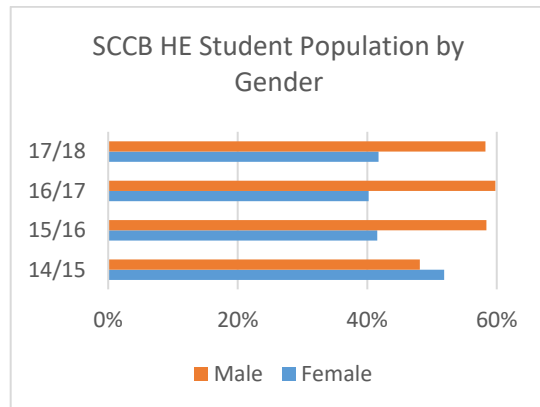
Source: Adapted from HESA 2018

TEF year 3 data also demonstrates that 54% of students are under the age of 21 years on full time programmes, however this falls to only 16% on part time programmes. Part time programmes still attract mature students with 36% of students aged 30 years or more.

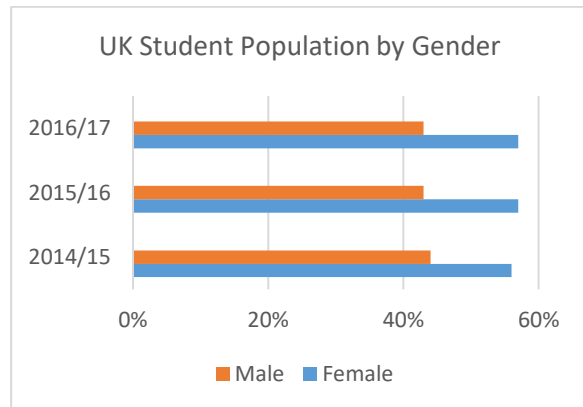
<sup>1</sup> HESA: Who's studying HE 2016-17, figure 4

## 1.1.2 Gender

There has been an increase in enrolment of male students at the College since 2014/15 by approximately 10%. In 2017-18 43% of students are female and 57% male. This pattern is the opposite of the UK wide student population with 57% female and 43% male for full time students.



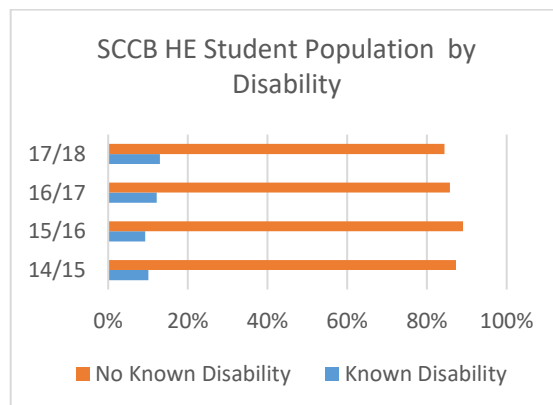
Source: SCCB student data 2018



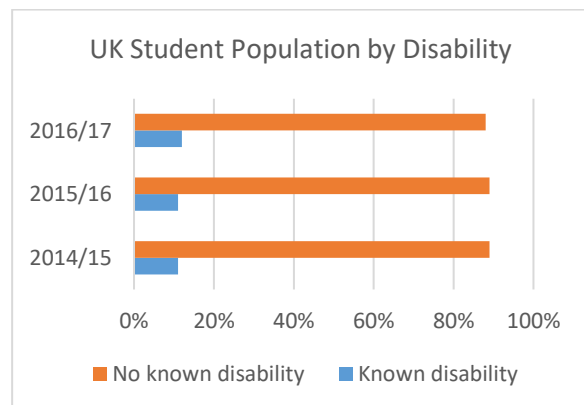
Source: Adapted from HESA 2018

TEF year 3 data narrows the gap between genders identifying 52% of students as female. Part time students again are the reverse of the UK wide population and TEF year 3 data shows that 59% of part time students are male, this is mainly due to the higher number of construction based programmes offered at the College which attract predominantly male students and are reflective of the sector.

## 1.1.3 Disability



Source: SCCB student data 2018

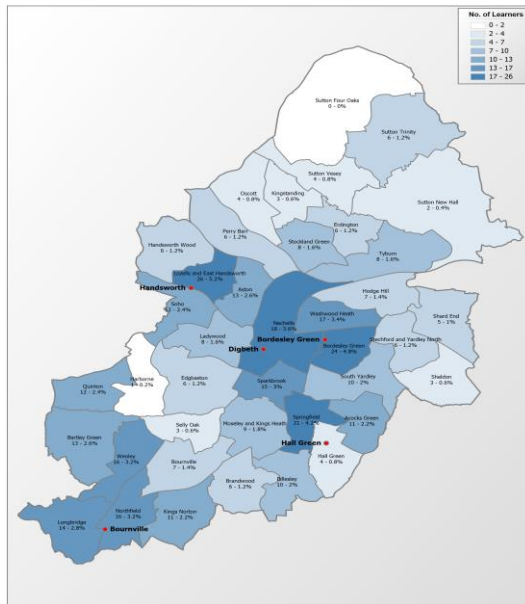


Source: Adapted from HESA 2018

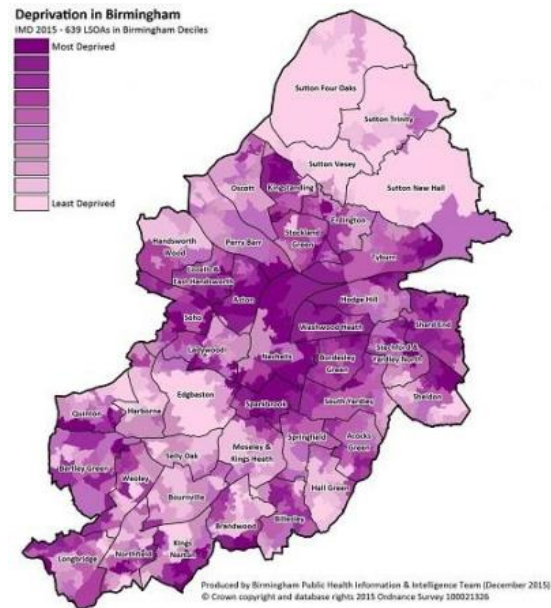
The number of students identifying as having a disability at the College is 1% above the UK population rate at 13%. This is a 3% increase since 2014/15, and is reflective of the whole College student population.

## 1.1.4 Low higher education participation, household income and socioeconomic status Deprivation

The College attracts students from across Birmingham and 82% of our higher education students are local students. Higher numbers of students live in wards adjacent to campuses where our Higher Education Centres are located. Non-local students normally study on franchise programmes for full time programmes or make good use of the excellent transport links from for example Northampton, Leicester, and Derby. Non-local part time students travel to College to study on specialist courses such as Building Services Engineering.

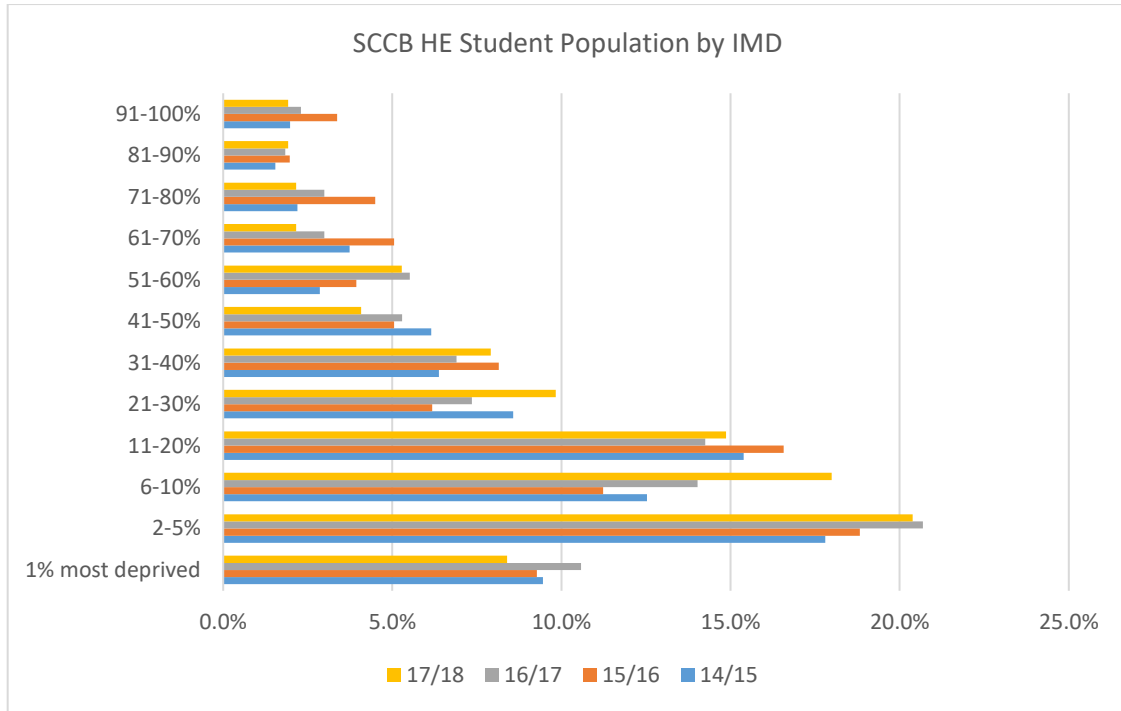


SCCB HE student Population 2016/17 by Birmingham Ward  
Source: SCCB student data



Deprivation in Birmingham 2015  
Source: Birmingham City Council

The College is committed to widening participation in education, metrics for TEF year 3 show that 46% of full time higher education students are in categories 1 and 2 in terms of POLAR 3 classification, this is an increase of 3% on TEF year 2. When comparing the SCCB student population map and the IMD data map a high proportion of higher education students are from IMD wards. For SCCB in TEF year 2 there is was no difference between full time and part time students, however for TEF year 3 the percentage of full time students remains at 46%, part time students in these categories has fallen to 36%, due to the smaller numbers enrolling on part time courses the overall percentage remains at 46%.



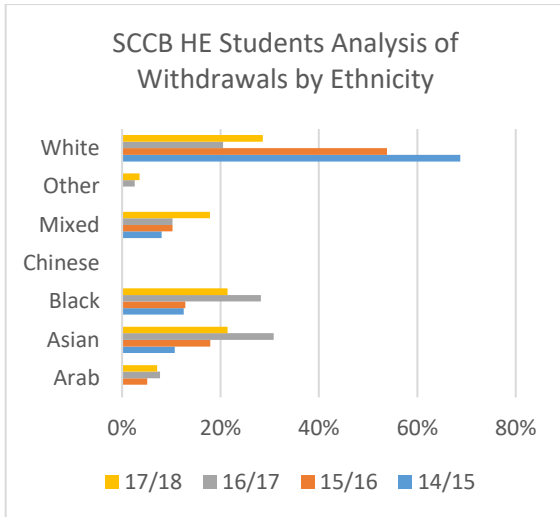
Source: SCCB student data 2018

Using indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) data 29% of higher education students studying at the College are ranked as being in the top 5% of the most deprived areas of Birmingham in 2017/18. In this year nearly 62% of higher education students are ranked as residing in the top 20% of most deprived areas in Birmingham, an increase from 43% in 2014-15 of 19%. There has been a slight decline of students in 2017-18 in the top 1% of most deprived, however this is counteracted by the large increase of 6% of students residing in the top 6-10% of deprived areas. To support widening participation, SCCB also has lower entry criteria than most university providers with 77% of full time students and 82% of part time students in TEF year 3 classified as low or non-tariff for entry qualifications, aiming to support our communities and widen participation in higher education..

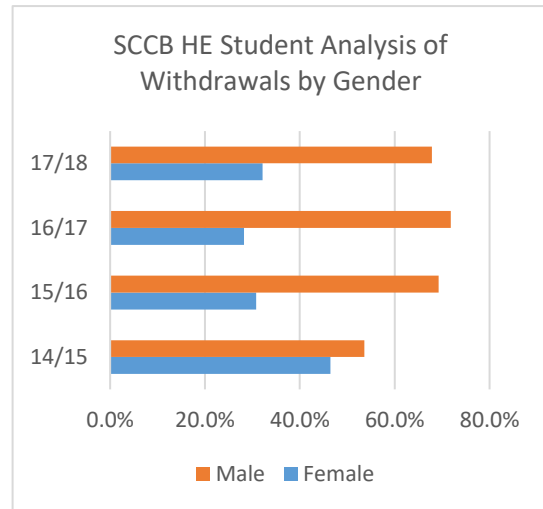
## 1.2 Success and progression

### 1.2.1 Continuation

In analysing non continuation rates through withdrawal data by ethnicity reveals that in 2014/15 and 2015/16 the highest withdrawal rate was by white students at Bournville College. In 2017/18 since merger the withdrawal rate of white students as a percentage of total students withdrawn has reduced by half. In 2016/17 there was an increase in withdrawals for Asian students, and specifically male Asian students and these were flagged in the TEF year 3 metrics.



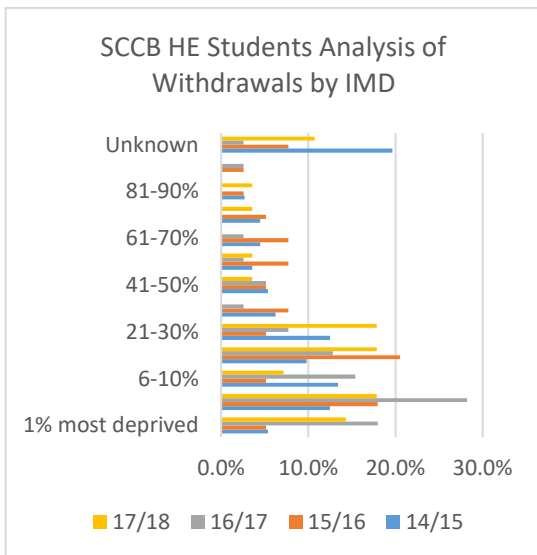
Source: SCCB student data 2018



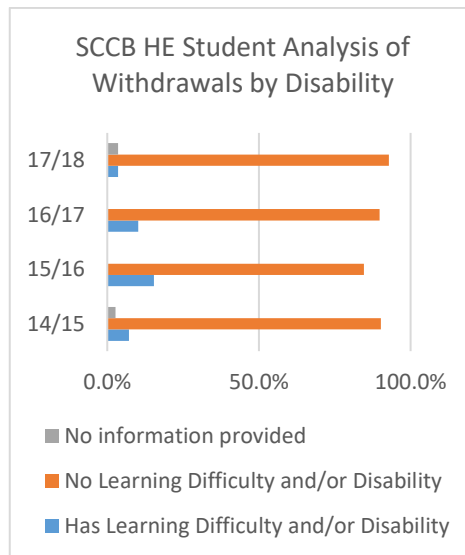
Source: SCCB student data 2018

Male students at the College are more likely to withdraw from their programmes than female students and 68% of total withdrawals in 2017-18 are male, this is a slight reduction on the previous year. TEF year 3 did not highlight any particular gender or characteristic for students who did not continue in their studies.

Students from neighbourhoods ranked as areas of high deprivation are more likely to withdraw from their programme than students from areas of low deprivation. In 2017-18 the actual number of students withdrawing from areas of high deprivation ranked in the highest 20% fell by approximately 50% at the College. Actual numbers of withdrawals from areas of deprivation ranked in the top 10% also fell by 54%.



Source: SCCB student data 2018



Source: SCCB student data 2018

The TEF year 3 data does not demonstrate any flags from withdrawals based on disability, the number of students with disabilities withdrawing has fallen by 12% to 4% since 2015/16. The College recognises that the largest challenge for higher education is to improve the number of students continuing in their studies. In 2016-17 77% of

students successfully progressed into year 2 of their programme, this was an increase of 4% on the previous year. This still remains 5% below the benchmark identified in TEF year 3 as 82%.

## 1.2.2 Attainment

Attainment for the newly merged College for students who successfully complete their programme is at 86% across all fulltime programmes which have 1 or more years' duration. The attainment rate for full time programmes at SCCB for 2016-17 was 91% and Bournville College 79%. Part time programme attainment was 93%. The majority of programmes studied were other undergraduate.

## 1.2.3 Progression and Employment

The TEF year 3 metrics show positive flags for students entering highly skilled employment or further study and are over 6% above the benchmark.

	Benchmark	Core metric
Employment or further study	93.60%	93.00%
Highly skilled employment or further study	71.00%	77.30%

Mature students have excellent progression outcomes at nearly 11% above benchmark.

	Benchmark	Age	
		Young	Mature
Employment or further study	93.60%	92.60%	93.60%
Highly skilled employment or further study	71.00%	74.70%	80.80%

Students from low participation households are above the progression benchmark for all POLAR quartiles, and significantly above benchmark for all National IMD quartiles of up to 11%.

	Benchmark	POLAR		National IMD	
		Q1 or Q2	Q3, Q4 or Q5	Q1 or Q2	Q3, Q4 or Q5
Employment or further study	93.60%	92.50%	92.60%	92.90%	93.20%
Highly skilled employment or further study	71.00%	72.00%	76.50%	75.30%	82.10%

Progression outcomes to highly skilled employment or further study are significantly above benchmark for BME, non-disabled students and both male and female students.

	Benchmark	Ethnicity		Disabled		Gender	
		White	BME	Yes	No	Male	Female
Employment or further study	93.60%	92.40%	93.70%	83.30%	94.30%	91.30%	94.20%
Highly skilled employment or further study	71.00%	73.70%	80.30%	64.60%	79.00%	78.90%	76.30%



Only one category is flagged as below benchmark in TEF year 3 and that is students with a disability who are not progressing at the same rate as non-disabled students into high quality employment or further study. Although higher than benchmark, White students also need to be supported at the College to achieve the high progression outcomes that other students achieve.

## **2.0 Ambition and strategy**

South and City College Birmingham has a mission to provide outstanding education and training which is primarily vocational, in response to the needs of learners and employers. Higher education contributes to the College being able to fulfil this mission.

### **2.1 Access**

Higher education at the College widens participation and meets the needs of employers and community well. The College has ambitions to continue working at being successful in attracting BME students, male students, local students who reside in wards of high IMD and most deprived areas.

The College will continue to work with schools and our community to widen access to university level qualifications. With 80% of higher education students living locally and the locations of the College's two university centres near wards with the highest IMD in Birmingham the college is well positioned to attract students and meet the needs of employers.

The College engages extensively with learners at level 3 to enable progression into higher education both at the College and at University, in 2016-17 over 1,000 level 3 learners progressed to a university level programme.

The College has a dedicated Schools liaison and outreach team who work with local schools to encourage progression into further and higher study. The College links with over 200 schools in the West Midlands and is successful in attracting students onto programmes across further and higher education programmes. Over 60 schools had 50 or more students progressing to the College in 2017-18 and 66.4% of the College student population are from the 20% most deprived areas in Birmingham. Our ambition is to increase the number of students by 5% from high IMD areas to reflect the student population at the College, and increase the recruitment of young white males by 10% to programmes offered at the Bournville College campus adjacent to the NCOP target wards.

The College also aims to increase the number of female learners in higher education and even the gap between genders, this is a particular need for part time programmes of study. In order to support this increase the College is using positive female role models in subject areas such as construction and engineering.

Aiming to reverse the trend of declining mature learners entering higher education the College is developing courses and delivery to support mature students and particularly those with caring or child commitments at level 3 and above. The College also aims to

increase engagement of vocational learners to progress into higher education through designing programmes with university partners to develop clear progression routes to degree programmes such as in STEM subjects. The College aims to improve recruitment of vocational learners to STEM subjects by 50% by 2019-20, including 25% of learners from quintiles 1 or 2 of POLAR 3.

Innovative course design for higher apprentices is also being used to support the business patterns of employers and enable mature students to engage with higher level programmes. The College aims to increase higher level apprentice recruitment by 100% in 2019-20 from 2017-18 enrolments, with 50% female target.

## **2.2 Success and Progression**

The main aim for the College is to improve continuation rates for students across all groups. The College will aim to increase continuation rates to the benchmark by the end of 2019-20 academic year. This will build on the retention for 2017-18 and will be achieved through improvements to on programme support, reduction in withdrawals and improvements to achievements at the end of students' first year of study.

On programme support will be focussed at specific times of students learning journey. At the start of programmes students will receive personalised support to identify learning gaps and advice for specific financial or personal support needs.

Improvements to engagement monitoring and an introduction of earlier intervention strategies will be supported to enable students at risk to be supported earlier in their programme to reduce the withdrawal rate and increase achievements across all students and include a focus on the engagement of young Asian and white males to reverse the overrepresentation of these groups in non-continuation rates. Earlier intervention in non-engagement of students from areas with high IMD scores will also be monitored and students referred for specialist support earlier in cycle.

The College has successfully engaged in projects during the current academic year to build students' confidence, social mobility and ultimately employability skills and prospects. Erasmus plus has been effective in allowing higher education students to undertake work experience in Europe, targeted study skills training has been used such as 'Ace your Exams' training and 'Memory Mnemonics' to engage students from vocational studies who may not have recent experience of exams. The College is also linking to the mayor's mentor programme as part of the one million mentors' scheme and supported by the West Midland's Mayor. All of which contribute to improving retention and achievement.

Curriculum design is key to students' success and the College has developed new partnerships with local universities to design new curricula and offer progression to degree programmes for higher education students. To improve the progression of mature and local students and to provide more local opportunities for students from wards with

high IMD scores, the college is developing full honours degree programmes and top-up degree programmes. Innovation in design is utilised to allow cross qualification working, easier transfers between programmes and/or employment is being introduced to maximise student outcomes. The college aims that all higher education students will be able to progress onto a higher level qualification either at the College or at one of our partner universities within one hours travelling distance from home, or be able to study using alternative methods to enable local study.

Higher apprenticeships are another key growth area for the College and there is evidence that these programme are successfully engaging mature learners who wish to progress in their employment, the college is ambitious and aims to develop these apprentices into full degree apprenticeship by 2020, offering more choice for students. Designing flexible study methods which accommodate business patterns in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are important to attract businesses and provide progression opportunities for employees.

The College has been recognised for the clear focus on student employability and the established links with employers, and this is central to higher education at the College. Many programmes with good employment outcomes have work placements incorporated into their programme or use live projects to support learning. Live projects in media, film, music and fashion support the development of employability skills and help build a portfolio of work for students who are entering industries which are typically SME or self-employed. Students in the care sectors study for programmes that have a 'license to practice' to support employment outcomes and are offered to students aiming for employability or graduate programmes. This has supported the college in achieving positive outcomes in TEF 3 core metric data, and for BME, IMD, mature, and gender.

An improvement in outcomes for students with disabilities will be aimed for to equal the outcomes for non-disabled students, through support from the student engagement team and careers support.

By introducing these measures, the College aims to increase student achievement rates for full time students to 95% across all programmes at the College for both full and part time students completing their programmes. The college will also make improvements to data collection and analysis of student achievements for high grades on other undergraduate programmes.

## **2.3 Evaluation**

The College through the annual provider review and reporting mechanisms is satisfied with the proposed monitoring of the overall performance of higher education students across the student journey. Higher education students performance is monitored at each stage of the student journey, greater depth of analysis would improve some aspects of monitoring and evaluation of performance for certain characteristics of students. To be able to analyse the impact of support measures the college will continue to undertake analysis by key characteristics at each stage of students' journey, however, in for example student achievements and analysis of grade profiles for other undergraduates by gender, ethnicity, disability and age will be analysed in more depth. This more detailed analysis will further focus interventions and developments to be able to target specific groups of students and improve outcomes.

The impact and evaluation of initiatives will be undertaken through student survey and analysis of key priorities identified and the measurement of improvements in data. Qualitative data will also be collected through student focus groups to evaluate the financial measures offered to support students.

## **3.0 Access, Student Success and Progression Measures**

### **3.1 Access**

The college aims to increase access for students from wards with high IMD, mature students, white males from wards classified as POLAR quintiles 1 and 2. To achieve the targets a range of measures will be used.

#### **3.1.1 Outreach**

The College has a dedicated schools liaison team who work extensively with local schools. The College will extend this work to include:

- A higher education roadshow with dedicated university level progression and advice for secondary schools, access to tasters for different vocational subjects, across year groups on school premises.
- Introduce 5 taster days for schools during 2018-19 academic year and increase this in subsequent years.
- Continue to work with Aimhigher Plus National Collaborative Outreach Programme which targets wards with low engagement in higher education. The College's Bournville College campus is located within and adjacent to key target wards for this activity. In addition students from further education programmes at the College also benefit as recipients of Aimhigher Plus activity such as access to Ambassadors from local universities. The College aims to increase the recruitment of young white males by 10% to programmes offered at the Bournville College campus adjacent to the NCOP target wards.

### **3.1.2 Curriculum Design**

The College will continue to develop programmes for local students, those who identify as having multiple deprivation indicators, mature learners and to increase engagement in higher education. This will include programmes to be developed at lower levels introducing more programmes that meet the needs of local students such as expanding Access to Higher Education programmes. One example which will positively impact on mature female learners entering higher education in 2018-19 was the introduction of an Access to Higher Education programme in Criminology. In 2018-19 students from this programme will be continuing to study at the College on a newly developed Foundation degree in Criminology.

To support the recruitment of vocational learners into higher education the College will continue to work with partner universities and employers to develop innovative programmes such as a foundation degree in engineering specifically designed with additional study support to aid transition and prepare students for final year degree entry at a partner Russell Group university

The College will also continue to consult with local employers on the design of programmes and the subjects offered to both attract students and for students to achieve positive graduate outcomes. This is particularly successful on higher apprenticeship programmes where the College can offer different pathways and it has a positive financial impact for 30 higher apprentices and their employers.

### **3.1.3 Mentoring**

In terms of mentoring for improving access the College employs mentors who work with students across all academic levels. The College:

- Benefits from being part of the Aimhigher Plus NCOP and has an ambassador mentoring students at Bournville College campus and are committed to continuing this in 2019-20.
- Appoints approximately 40 ambassadors who work with curriculum teams at key events and open days, and the College will introduce a target of 10% of College ambassadors should be current higher education students.
- Will introduce a subject specific mentor scheme for higher education students across levels of study with an aim of 25% of programmes engaging within the first year, and 50% in year 2.
- Ensure that all students from areas of high deprivation are prioritised within the mentor scheme to support the reduction in withdrawals and improve continuation.

## **3.2. Success and Progression**

### **3.2.1 Academic Support**

A key challenge for students entering higher education is transition. To support this and improve achievements and continuation rates the College will:

- Make improvements to student induction to include an individual tutorial within the first 2 weeks of joining the College to establish support needs and transition.
- Continue with the allocation of dedicated time for a personal tutor for programmes.

### **3.2.2 Teaching and Learning**

The College will continue to ensure that 100% of academic staff hold a recognised teaching qualification within two years of employment, and will continue to offer a teaching qualification for free as part of the staff development programme. In addition higher education academic staff will be encouraged to become Fellows of the HE Academy / Advance HE. The commitment to scheduled dedicated staff development every 6 weeks will be maintained by the College.

The College will continue to offer GCSEs in Maths and English for higher education students who need GCSEs specifically for progression, such as those students who wish to become primary school teachers and improve graduate outcomes and will further support mature learners.

The College will invest in developing flexible learning to support students both on campus and off campus and which will add to students' current ability to access their desk tops remotely for 24 hours and 365 days per year. Online individual tutorials will be introduced to support attainment for students with disabilities or learning difficulty with an entitlement of 3 hours per year.

### **3.2.3 Partnership**

The College has good links with partners such as schools, universities, the LEP and employers in the West Midlands region and collaborates well to support students to develop higher skills and student outcomes. Data on progressions and destinations is collected and used to inform decisions on programmes and curriculum development and is used in planning and approval processes.

Each programme that is offered has progression pathways sign posted and the college links with local partners to develop pathways for each programme. The College will work in partnership to develop full degrees or top-up degrees for other undergraduate student progression. Where there is demand and students will benefit in terms of learning

experience the College will deliver these programmes at one of the university centres at Digbeth or Bournville College campuses. The college will ensure that 100% of courses have clear progression routes to honours degree programmes and beyond.

With the introduction of full honours degrees at the College graduate opportunities and recruitment will be signposted for students. The College's student engagement team will support students who have a disability in application processes, to improve progression to highly skilled employment or further study and narrow the outcome gap with non-disabled students.

### **3.2.5 Employability**

Programmes at the College all have planned development of employability skills and the College will commit to all higher education students to have the opportunity to engage with a live project or placement.

- In specialist subjects such as music the College will continue to provide students with the opportunity to engage with 'Student Crew' offering paid work experience.
- The highly successful Early Years and Health and Social Care conference will continue to be supported by the College to develop higher education students' skills, link students with industry practice, research and scholarship. This conference also encourages level 3 students to engage in a higher education experience to aid progression.
- All programmes will embed employability skills within teaching, learning and assessment

### **3.3 Evaluation**

The College will use a range of measure to evaluate the success against targets.

- Evaluations following outreach events through surveys and school feedback
- Specific higher education learning support reports on engagement and achievement
- Evaluation of data on participation of target learners in higher education, and the impact of measure on reducing withdrawals, improving continuation overall and for specific groups and characteristics of learners.
- Improving data to analyse attainment of high grades and by specific characteristics
- Focus groups with higher education students on the impact of new measures that have been introduced to improve retention and achievement..

- Review of student data against whole college population and monitor the impact through equality and diversity reporting structures and annual reporting mechanisms.

### **3.4 Equality and Diversity**

This statement aligns with the College's Equality Strategy in that the statement supports the College's aim to ensure that everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect and dignity. We are seeking to provide a positive working and learning environment that is free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation and place equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of our business. The Equality Strategy for example makes a commitment to making every effort to ensure that our student body and workforce reflect the diverse communities of Birmingham and beyond and the access and participation statement identifies measure to support this and monitor progress. The strategy and access statement also commits to involving staff, students and service users in securing improvements to our programmes, services and learning and work environment.

The access and participation statement also aligns to the strategy in that it considers protected characteristics in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, and plans measures to reduce inequality across protected characteristics such as outcomes for students with disabilities.

Higher education students have been consulted through Boards of Studies on the content of the statement and agreed prior to submission to the Office for Students. Furthermore students will be engaged in the review of this statement as part of the Board of Studies process which meet twice per year,

### **4.0 Investment**

Improvements identified in this Access and Participation Statement will be funded through existing budgets as there is no additional fee income from tuition fees.

The College has for a number of years invested in learning technology for full time students in their first year to support attainment and progression and has provided a student hardship fund and will continue to invest income from other sources in improving successful outcomes for learners..

### **5.0 Provision of information to students**

Information on the access and participation statement will be provided to students on the College's website for prospective students and be available in hard copy by request.