

# NESCOT

## Access and participation plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

### 1. Assessment of performance

North East Surrey College of Technology (NESCOT) has 1096 students currently studying at level 4 or above. 832 students are OfS funded and are either studying full-time or part-time with accreditations to either: Pearson, Kingston University, University of Greenwich and University of West London.

NESCOT's higher education provision range from Higher National Certificates (HNCs) to Master (Level 7) programmes and includes Higher National Diplomas, Foundation Degrees, Honours Degrees (including Level 6 Top-Up degrees) and Integrated Masters of Science degrees.

Higher Education students at NESCOT reflect the following characteristics currently:

- 57% students are females; 43% are male
- 31% are from ethnic minority groups
- 13% had a declared disability or identified learning support needs at the time of application
- 15% of students are studying part time
- 43% of students are from Surrey; 14% from Greater London and 13% from the South East
- 37% are from low-income backgrounds (which was previously 27%)
- 37% of NESCOT's higher education students are amongst the three highest deciles of multiple deprivation.
- 82% of students are identified as mature (aged 21 and over)
- 41% of NESCOT's higher education applicants have internally progressed
- 30% of NESCOT's applications were via UCAS, the remainder were direct applications to the institute

NESCOT is located within Surrey and has a County level ranking of 150 out of 152, whereby 1 is the most deprived county according to Index of Multiple Deprivation. Most of Surrey's 709 LSOAs are in the most deprived declines (ranges 8 – 10). Ethnic minority groups within Surrey is currently at 9%, indicating NESCOT has a market present to increase participation in higher education studies.

The increased numbers of students drawn from less affluent communities stem from increasing NESCOT's provision and footprint to include locations such as Oldham in 2016/17, Aldgate East and Hounslow in 2018/19, this has increased historical low levels of participations within higher education amongst these regions.

Within TEF data there are signposts to indicate significant differences in continuation rates for disadvantages students will need addressing to achieve OfS KPMs by 2030/31. There is positive trend currently indicating that an increase number of student applications is occurring at NESCOT (applying for higher education qualifications), especially those with an ethnic background.

TEF data also indicates a high level of non-continuation for full-time mature students compared to younger students which needs addressing in order to close an absolute gap which is present, TEF data is time-lagging and data will be investigated further in the Access and Participation Plan.

The proportion of males applying and studying to NESCOT College has remained consistent until 2017/18; while gender is not an underrepresented group for NESCOT the intersection of young, white males is a focus point for the institute.

## 1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

### Access

The number of students studying HE programmes within NESCOT has increased from a variety of backgrounds<sup>1</sup>. Within the IMD quintile 5 data there has been a 12% increase in students coming to NESCOT based from 2014/15 to 17/18 data<sup>1</sup>. Similarly, quintile 3 and 4 data showed (after declines in 2015/16 and 2016/17) a steady increase in students applying to NESCOT College. In spite of this data quintile 1 and 2 has not shown an increase in participation at the college, controversially data has indicated a steady decline varying in 3% within the two quintiles indicating significant gaps between students who are in deprived vs. least deprived areas. This needs to be addressed across the 5-year access and participation plan.

The Polar4 dataset reveals a 3-5% increase within quintile 4 and 5 regions however declines are seen within quintile 1 and 2 regions of 2% and 1% respectively. The absolute gap seen in the 16/17 data between quintile 1 and 5 is 42%, a strategy needs to be initiated within the 5-year access and participation plan, shown in the target and investment plan.

Based on internal data IMD quintiles for the three most deprived areas showed a 6% increase compare to 2016/17 data therefore indicating more students from quintile 3 are accessing and applying to NESCOT college<sup>2</sup>. An assumption of combined quintile 1-3 increases could be derived from newly offered HE provision; HNC/Ds in Business in lower socioeconomic areas (i.e. Oldham, Hounslow, Aldgate East) have recently been introduced in the last two academic years. NESCOT is increasing the provision in different locations therefore spreading its footprint to the wider community which are attracting students from lower socioeconomic background and quintiles to participate in Higher Education.

### Success

#### Non-continuation

An absolute gap between deprivation quintiles 3 -5 compared to quintiles 1 and 2 within 16/17 is 7%<sup>1</sup>. Looking deeper into deprivation quintiles 1 and 2 data there is a steady decrease in the number of students withdrawing from their programmes of studies. In the 2013/14 academic year students in quintiles 1 & 2 had non-continuation rates of 20%. A 4% decrease has been cited in the 16/17 data indicating students are retained at an 84% (110 students out of 130)<sup>1</sup>.

Polar4 data is not recorded on the OfS data dashboard and needs to be further investigated throughout the student's lifecycle.

#### Attainment

Attainment level stand at 75% for students who are associated with deprivation quintiles 3-5, there is a lack of data monitoring attainment rates within deprivation quintiles 1 and 2 across part-time and full-time provision, this also includes polar4 data. As new provision was initiated in regions of lower quintiles from the 2016/17 academic year data is still being collated for recent cohorts to determine the

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<sup>1</sup> Data published on OfS Data Dashboard

<sup>2</sup> NESCOT Internal Data

percentage of students achieving higher grades, it is within the college's focus to increase the number of students to attain grades at a higher level.

### Progression to employment or further study

Within the least deprived areas (quintile 3-5), progression to employment or further studies has improved by 7% since 2013/14 and is at 62% based on 2016/17 data; there is no recorded data of deprived quintiles 1 and 2. On a polar4 scale again, no data is recorded for quintile 1 and 2 however an increase of 30% is seen with quintile 3-5 data; initially 40% in 2012/13 it is now at 70% within 2016/17 datasets <sup>1</sup>. Majority of students are still completing their programme of study especially where NESCOL has embedded higher provision in lower socioeconomical areas (i.e. Oldham, Aldgate East and Hounslow), therefore a lack of evidence is present. It is in the college's interest to capture exit points effectively in future to demonstrate positive outcomes in terms of employability and further higher education, this will be discussed later within the strategy measures.

## 1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

### Access

The gap between white students and BAME students have significantly decrease within the last 3 academic years<sup>1</sup>. The reason for greater access for BAME students is associated with the HNC/D provision that is implement at Oldham, Hounslow and Aldgate East which was initiated in 2016/17; as a result, it has improved BAME participation at NESCOL.

Before NESCOL increased its footprint, gaps at NESCOL between white students and in particular Asian students were at 63%, our 2017/18 data indicates that this gap has reduced to 7% <sup>1</sup>.

Consequently, this has meant that black, mixed and other students make up 7%, 5% and 1% of the NESCOL HE population respectively. A strategy to increase the BAME student population with be discuss further in section 2.2.

The number of students who apply to NESCOL from other BAME background are at a low and has not spiked proportionally with students who have identified themselves as Asian <sup>1,2</sup>.

Within our part time provision there is limited data however there is a plateau between white students applying to NESCOL college while the Asian population has increased from 10 to 15% between 2013/14 and 2017/18 data <sup>1</sup>.

2018/19 has indicated 40% of our full-time students have identified themselves as BAME students; for part time provision 27% of our students come from a BAME background, totally to 33% of the student population at NESCOL within the 18/19 cohort; therefore, the absolute gap has increased from 7% to 34% which will need to be monitored; reasons for the increase in absolute gap include higher number of students applying to NESCOL due to an increased provision in a range of subjects not just merely at Oldham, Aldgate East and Hounslow <sup>2</sup>.

### Success

#### Non-continuation

No significant gaps are found within the continuation gaps when comparing white to BAME students; percentage point differences have gone from -15% to 7% (data from 16/17) <sup>1</sup>. Internal data within the college indicate that BAME students in full-time education has non-continuation rates of 12% and in the part-time modes of studies, 28% of students had withdrawn from their programme of studies (based on 2017/18 data) <sup>2</sup>. According to the OfS data dashboard 84% of Asian students complete their programme of studies however there is no data available for other ethnic backgrounds <sup>1</sup>.

BAME students who were in full-time education had withdrawn mainly from computing and business provisions whereas students studying part-time withdrew from teacher training only <sup>2</sup>.

The absolute gap between BAME students not-continuing within their programme of studies against white students is at 8%. Close monitoring of the withdrawal rates amongst BAME students need to be continually monitored with programme teams employing strategies to aid in students completing their programme of studies; this is done via intensive care meetings with all HE Programmes (see section 3.1).

TEF data has categorised a change of gap and between year 4-5 data there is no significant differences between BAME and white students which was previously in year 1-5 data classed as significant differences <sup>3</sup>. There is a lack of data currently to disaggregate the BAME population further at this stage of the student lifecycle.

#### Attainment

2017/18 completion rates were at 84% however a vast majority of grades, especially HNC/Ds provision were passes only. It is the college's aim to promote aspirations and to raise attainment levels for all students, including BAME students through a variety of interventions include Personal Development Plans (PDPs) and using role models as case studies to inspire students throughout their journey at NEScot <sup>2</sup>. There is a lack of data currently to disaggregate the BAME population further at this stage of the student lifecycle.

The systems that are currently in place do not aid in analysing data from this underrepresented group; a plan is to develop a system which can monitor BAME students and other underrepresented groups throughout this aspect of the student lifestyle. The strategy to record this data includes recording exam classifications throughout the exam board period, with the anticipation to evaluate the data with to identify the actual attainment levels. For HE courses up to level 5, higher grades include merits and distinctions; for level 6 provision higher grades include 1<sup>st</sup> class honours and 2:1 classifications.

#### Progression to employment or further study

The systems that are currently in place do not aid in analysing data from this underrepresented group; a plan is to develop a system which can monitor BAME students throughout this aspect of the student lifestyle. As students are completing higher education courses in the 2018/19 academic year data is not available however it is expected that destination exit points are reported in Graduate Outcomes to identify if BAME students are employed or completing further studies. Internal systems need to be developed within the institute to identify destinations for students completing higher education courses at an early point. Processes are due to be changed whereby students at the end of their programme of studies will inform programme leads if they are going into employment and more specifically into the industry that they have completed their HE programme within. Data will be collated and evaluation can be made on the underrepresented groups and how they progress within this stage of the student lifecycle.

### 1.3 Mature students

#### Access

A positive trend has been established amongst mature students (aged 21 and over) studying full-time at NEScot. In 2013/14, 44% of students were classified as mature whereas in 2017/18 mature students

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<sup>3</sup> NEScot TEF data

make up the majority of the student population at a rate of 76%, a difference of 32% over the last 4 academic years <sup>1</sup>. Current data for the 2018/19 year shows mature students make up 82% of the total number of students studying in HE provisions; 82% in full-time provision and 84% in part-time provision <sup>2</sup>.

Amongst the OfS data available (i.e. 2017/18), 90% of part-time students were mature, which is above the average of HEIs intake of mature students which stands at 87.4%. As stated above 18/19 data shows 84% of students are mature, a slight decline compared to the previous year however this needs to be monitored so this is not a continuing decline amongst students applying to NESOCOT <sup>1</sup>.

## Success

### Non-continuation

Based on TEF metrics there are no significant gaps between young and mature students over a 5-year cycle and within the year 4-5 metrics in full time provision. It is noted that as NESOCOT now predominately has mature student population, continuation rates amongst young students is lower than mature students at 0.5% compared to year 1 metrics of -1.5%.

Within the 18/19 data currently non-continuation rates are at 7% within full time provision and at 20% for students who are in part-time provision. Trends are showing that withdrawals are occurring with the education and business provisions for full-time studies and education only within the part-time studies. Causes of the non-continuation are currently unknown however strategies will be implemented to decrease the percentage of non-continuation to ensure OfS ambitions are achieved; 2018/19 data indicates an 89% retention rate, retention rates are indicated rather than continuation rates as many students complete a one year higher education provision following foundation degrees, HNCs and HNDs <sup>2</sup>.

### Attainment

TEF data is limited and does not show attainment results for mature students however, attainment is reported to be at 70% within the 17/18 academic year which is aligned to other HEIs <sup>2</sup>. A gap between young and mature students within full-time modes of studies remain at 7.4% which needs to be addressed to achieve OfS's ambitions <sup>3</sup>.

In part time provision there is limited data available within the institute however when comparing data to other HEI's an increasing gap is appearing (13% difference in 2015/16), in the following 2 academic years the gap has closed to a difference of 2.7% <sup>2</sup>.

## Progression to employment or further study

Significant gaps are found within the year 4-5 TEF data indicating a 33.3% difference between young and mature students progressing to employment or further studies <sup>3</sup>. Progression rates have increased in the mature population from 2014/15 to 2016/17 data by 10% resulting in 60% achieving higher grades however is behind with other HEIs <sup>4</sup>.

## 1.4 Disabled students

### Access

Data recording students who have declared a disability has fluctuated from 2013/14 to 2017/18. In the 2014/15 academic year there was a 3% increase compared to the previous academic year within full-time programmes; data was not collected between the 2015/16 academic year however a decline was

noted in the 16/17 academic year (5%) and increased in the 17/18 academic year by 3%. Either though a decrease is seen across the 4 academic years the number of students declared between 2013/14 academic year and 17/18 academic year remains the same as 20<sup>1</sup>.

Within part-time provisions 15% of NESCOL's students had declared a disability which is just above the average amongst other HEIs at 14.8%. Students declared either a cognitive/learning disability or multiple impairments, none had declared a mental health issue<sup>1</sup>.

Internal data for 18/19 has indicated that only 6% of students in part-time and full-time studies have declared a disability, 52% of these students are identified as mature students<sup>2</sup>.

### Success

There is no data on the OfS student data dashboard however according to internal data there is good retention rates of 91% and students are passing on their programme of study<sup>2</sup>. During the continuation stage of the student lifecycle more students are identified as having disabilities; this is identified by tutorials and is followed up within the internal system which develops and initiates a support plan for each individual. The total number of students with disabilities disclosed within this stage of the student lifecycle increases, in the academic year 2018/19 42 students disclosed this information<sup>2</sup>. The college continues to provide the support of this underrepresented group and strives to support students who do not declare a disability at the access stage of the student lifecycle.

### Non-continuation

None continuation rates are a low of 9% which is below the TEF Benchmarks at 3.5%; reasons for non-continuation are unknown however this should be acknowledge in future to reduce the likelihood of non-continuation and to achieve OfS KMI's<sup>4</sup>.

Forecasts for 2018/19 internal cohort data has that the absolute gap between disabled and non-disabled students is reduced, due to the small number of students who have withdrew it is not possible to state the actual number however, non-continuation rates need to be monitored within the 2019/20 academic year to ensure the absolute gap between these two populations does not increase<sup>2</sup>.

### Attainment

All students who have a disability have historically passed and completed their programme of study<sup>2</sup>. The number of students who attain a higher grade is unclear and the systems currently in place does not aid in analysing data from this underrepresented group; a plan is to develop a system which can monitor disabled students' attainment levels.

### Progression to employment or further study

No data is reported on the OfS data dashboard and internal data is lacking in identifying where the students from this underrepresented group progress; a plan is to develop a system which can monitor disabled students throughout this stage of the student lifestyle<sup>2,3</sup>.

## 1.5 Care leavers

### Access

Currently data is lacking within this section for this underrepresented group, however it should be noted that carers' who previously has been in receipt of Free School Meals is derived from internal



progressors within the college only using ILR evidence. Application data is used to identify care leavers applying within the college to study Higher Education however the analysis of data is limited.

#### Success

##### Non-continuation

Tutorials throughout the academic year and programme of study enables programme teams to support and implement strategies in order to aid in retaining students and to complete their programme of study. Collection and analysis of data is lacking therefore no data can be provided.

##### Attainment

The systems that are currently in place do not aid in analysing data from this underrepresented group; a plan is to develop a system which can monitor care leavers throughout the student lifestyle.

##### Progression to employment or further study

The systems that are currently in place do not aid in analysing data from this underrepresented group; a plan is to develop a system that can monitor care leavers throughout the student lifestyle. It is in the college's interest to capture exit points effectively in future to demonstrate positive outcomes in terms of employability and further higher education; this will be discussed later within the strategy measures.

## **1.6 Intersections of disadvantage: Young White Males Population and Young Males from Quintile 1 and 2**

Significant gaps are found between White and BAME students across the institute<sup>3</sup>; within full time provisions it was seen that 2013/14 academic year 78% of the students applying were from a white background and in 2017/18 only 47% of students applying derived from a white background where as BAME students made up for 53% of the population<sup>1</sup>.

For part-time provision within the 2017/18 academic year, white students predominately make up the population at 70%, of which are from a young population (i.e. under 21).

Numbers of young, white males applying to HE provisions at NESCOL have slowly been decreasing from 40 students in 2013/14 to 33 students in 2017/18<sup>2</sup>. The total of young male students in this time period is 54 and 43 respectively<sup>2</sup>.

Further investigating the intersection of young males from deprivation quintiles 1 and 2 make up 24% of the HE student population in 2017/18 compared to 14% in 2015/16<sup>1</sup>. When exploring the POLAR4 dataset and scrutinising this group there is a decline in results which indicates that males from these quintiles are not applying to NESCOL compared to historic data (9% in 2013/14 and 7% in 2017/18). When considering POLAR4 quintile 1 and 2 data and the intersection of white students, a decline in access can be seen 16% (2014/15) to 7% (2017/18) even though male students are not specifically addressed within this intersection these two intersections need to be addressed and a commitment is needed to improve the underrepresented group of young white disadvantaged males.

## **1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education**

## Access

Those previously in receipt of Free School Meals (FSMs) are another group to bear in mind as experiencing barriers to progression. At NESCOT internal data shows relevantly small numbers of students entering (40 in 2016/17 and 50 in 2017/18) <sup>2</sup>. As a group it is recognised that data analysis and monitoring of these students is not sufficient to capture their experience within the student lifecycle. From 2019/20 the application process for students applying and enrolling at NESCOT has changed and a closed question asking (if historically) they were eligible for FSMs. Analysis will be made after the census date (1<sup>st</sup> November) and students will be tracked and closely monitored for further support at NESCOT. Evaluation will be made and an outcome will be determined to see if this subtle change within the application form for students accessing HE provision aid in identifying this underrepresented group.

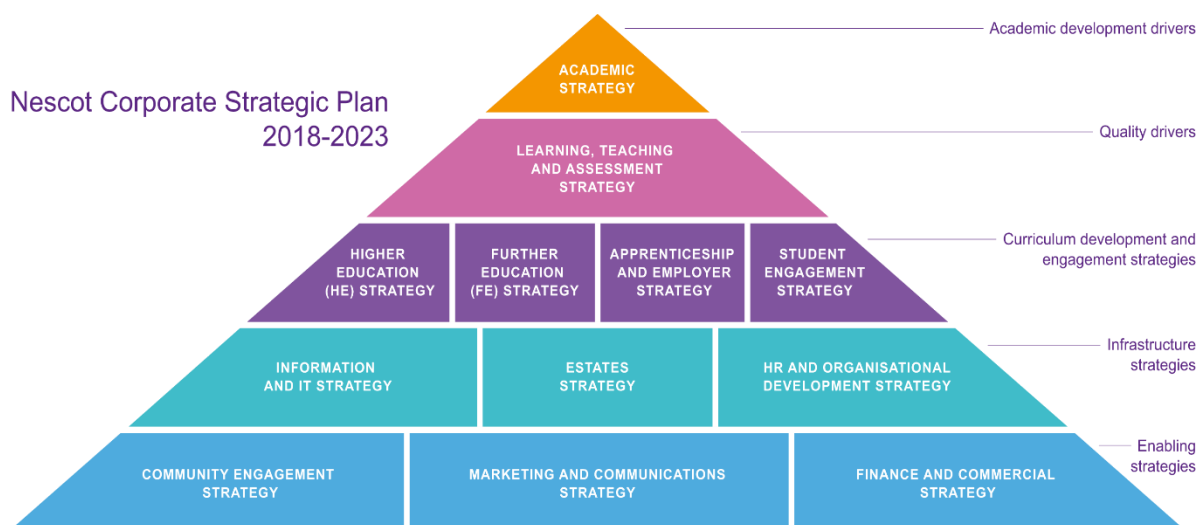


## 2. Strategic aims and objectives

NESCOT's vision is to be "The College of Choice for Students, Staff and Employers". The institute's strategic plan identifies a number of key priorities which includes:

1. Outstanding teaching and learning and assessment in an innovative and safe environment
2. Continuing financial stability and growth
3. Helping our students to develop the skills, attitudes and qualifications they need to succeed at work
4. Engaged with employers and other organisations to offer courses and qualifications that are innovative, relevant and in demand
5. Developing strong relationships with schools and community groups to give clear information, advice and guidance
6. We are an employer of choice

From the image below NESCOT has created a number of sub-strategies below, one including higher education to aid in the achievement of the institute's vision.



Within the higher education strategy, key priorities include:

1. Sustain access for those from disadvantaged post-codes and build on access for disabled students
2. Ensure provision of stronger transitional support to HE for L3 and mature career changers alike.
3. Continue improving non-continuation (student retention) for HE students generally; and for target groups – white students, students with a disability, a mental health problem and mature students
4. Build on achievement of access goals by improving attainment
5. Continue to develop a curriculum relevant to employment and student needs

## 2.2 Target groups

Based on the assessment of performance, the access and participation plan will focus on the following groups and within the stages of the lifecycle:

### Access

- Low participation of Higher Education, low household income and socioeconomic status
- BAME students
- Disabled students
- Care leavers
- Students who were previously in receipt of FSMs (at key stage 4)

### Success

- Low participation of Higher Education, low household income and socioeconomic status
- BAME students
- Mature students
- Disabled students
- Young white male students

### Progression

- Low participation of Higher Education, low household income and socioeconomic status
- Mature students

## 2.2 Aims and objectives

Tables 2a, b and c on the Target Investment Plan illustrates what the college is committed too with the use of baseline data so OfS Targets and ambitions can be achieved at NESOCOT. NESOCOT aim to strive and achieve the targets set which will enable us to meet OfS KPMs. Where OfS KPMs are to be 0% by 2030/31 between particular underrepresented groups we will strive to achieve targets then.

Where targets do not have a baseline, key commitments will be described below to establish how NESOCOT will be ambitious to reduce the gap amongst underrepresented groups. Strategies to record the data will be defined, with timescales if appropriate.

### Access

Aim	Objective	Timescale to collect data
Increase the access for students who are care	Creating role models and raising awareness via NCOP and higher education opportunities fair and open	Get data from NCOP partnership and to establish if the objectives applied

leavers at this stage of the lifecycle.	evenings to demonstrate that students have an equal opportunity to uptake on higher education courses	increases number of applications for HE provision at NESCOLT
Improve access for students who have previously been in receipt of FSMs in this stage of the lifecycle	Support students who are internal progressing at NESCOLT who are in these underrepresented groups to strive to achieve with Advice & Guidance support and tutorial/PDP support	Subtle changes to the application form whereby a closed question is asked, evaluation will be made after the HE census date (1 <sup>st</sup> November). Trials will be undertaken to collect this data in the 2019/20 academic year.

### Success

Aim	Objective	Timescale to collect data
Decrease the absolute gap of non-continuation levels between POLAR4 quintile 1 and 2 compared to 5	<p>Continue with intensive care meetings with HE provisions on a 1-1 basis (3 meetings a year) to target students who are likely to withdraw from their programme of studies and monitor interventions put in place.</p> <p>Establish the characteristics of the cohort at the initial intensive care meeting and monitor success within following meetings.</p> <p>Continually evaluate and improve the support systems currently at NESCOLT (i.e. safeguarding, finances, academic skills, LRC guidance) to aid in capturing and support students studying at NESCOLT.</p>	<p>Live descriptive statistics will be undertaken and continually monitored at intensive care meetings.</p> <p>Qualitative and quantitative data via surveys at induction and mid-year will be evaluated and actions will be undertaken at the HE Board.</p>
Decrease the absolute gap of attainment levels between BAME and white students	<p>Continue with intensive care meetings with HE provisions on a 1-1 basis (3 meetings a year) to target students who are likely to withdraw from their programme of studies and monitor interventions put in place.</p> <p>Establish the characteristics of the cohort at the initial intensive care meeting and monitor success within following meetings.</p>	

	Continually evaluate and improve the support systems currently at NESCOL (i.e. safeguarding, finances, academic skills, LRC guidance) to aid in capturing and support students studying at NESCOL.	
Decrease the absolute gap of attainment levels between young white disadvantaged males' students compared to young male students	Record grades at exam boards each academic year for internal analysis	Academic registrar will be responsible to analyse the data collected at the exam boards. Attainment levels will be identified via analysis and the underrepresented group will be monitored on an annual basis (after reassessment periods), approximately October on an annual basis.

### Progression

Aim	Objective	Timescale to collect data
Reduce the gap in the progression stage of the student lifecycle between POLAR4 quintile 1 and 2 against 5	Capture exit points for students at the end of their programme of study to identify if students continue with higher education and/or find employment (including HE provision related)	The academic registrar reports on data collected regarding exit points at the end of the programme to monitor gaps between groups.  Data will be finalised and evaluated annually at the end of the reassessment periods (approximately October) and reported to the HE Board.
Reduce the absolute gap in the progression stage of the student lifecycle between mature and young students	Use the F1 Transparency of Information documentation to analyse and evaluate the students' lifecycle at NESCOL	

### 3. Strategic measures

In 2019/20, NESCOL plan to upgrade systems and "trial run" the data that cannot be currently capture in a live report (addressed in Assessment of Performance) therefore when the 2020/21 plan is initiated better data analysis can occur to feedback against the plan and comparisons between the data that is collected can be compared to our access and participation plan for that academic year.

Under section 2.2 it can be seen that where quantitative data is not available NESCOL are implementing a range of strategies to support our students throughout the whole lifecycle with the

aspiration to collect quantitative data in future which will become more meaningful when comparing data to OfS ambitions and KPMs.

### **3.1 Whole provider strategic approach**

#### Overview

All students are supported to undertake PDPs to aid their progression during their time at college. Each student is assigned a personal academic and pastoral tutor who is responsible for supporting the PDP process. Within the PDPs students may be directed to the “Employer Hub” which is the college’s established on-campus employment and employability centre. This innovative facility provides students with practical support finding part-time and full-time employment and delivers workshops and advice on CV preparation, interview techniques, and work experience and apprenticeship placements; this enables students to have a better chance to graduate in the field of their higher education qualification.

The college also runs structured UCAS support sessions which provide advice and guidance to students applying for further higher education study. UCAS support sessions are scheduled to assist students to write their personal statements. The Director of Faculty for academic vocational provision co-ordinates all UCAS applications to ensure progression to higher education is maximised both internally and externally.

Other projects that the college has designed for 2019/20 include online learning to increase flexibility of curriculum; this allows students to have a “friendlier” interface to access academic journals and research to strengthen the level of their work, which should increase levels of attainment.

The college runs an annual Higher Education Opportunities Fair which invites higher education institutions, volunteer and gap year organisations and employers to meet with our students. The HE Opportunities Fair is an excellent opportunity for students to meet university representatives, discuss further progression opportunities including apprenticeships and to gather information about Higher Education Institutions. It is also an opportunity for students to consider volunteering roles to build their experience and further develop employability skills

#### Alignment with other strategies

The College’s Quality Improvement Action Plan for higher education programmes has involved a forensic focus on programmes where student retention has been identified as an issue. Intensive care meetings are held between the Director of Higher Education and course teams where students are flagged at risk of withdrawal and where there have been low levels of retention. The focus of these meetings is on the interventions required to retain students to be successful on their programmes. The senior management team, HE Board and the Corporation’s Curriculum and Quality Committee receive reports at all meetings on progress on the HE Improvement Action Plan.

The review of performance has identified the need to improve continuation rates for specific groups who are young male students from quintiles 1 & 2, students with a disability and mature students.

Currently all HE programmes at NESOT are supported through a mechanism called “Intensive Care Meetings”. These meetings are completed three times a year (once a term), the initial approach will be to understand the intersection between success factors, characteristics of the student population and to undertake appropriate live descriptive statistics. Analysis includes how many students enrolled and discussions are based around how to retain students who are from an underrepresented group and support students who are requiring additional support (i.e. academically, financially, safeguarding). After

the initial meeting at the start of the academic year, ongoing evaluation is completed throughout future meetings and targets/strategies designed from the initial meeting is continuing reviewed until that cohort finish their programme of study, new strategies can be implemented at any meeting whereby the cohort is present. Reports are generated after every programme has been seen (each term) which is addressed to the HE Board. At the HE Board a range of strategies implemented from the intensive care meetings are explored which may result in commissioning additional research including focus groups and other studies within student groups.

The Equality and Diversity Working Group review “gap analyses” in terms of student performance and outcomes. It provides an annual report to the governing body of the College. The analysis of achievement and participation gaps is an integral part of NESCOL's Equality and Diversity working group and quality improvement strategies. Gap analysis is a standard feature of the Corporation's KPI reporting, published every month and circulated to all governors. An action plan is produced in relation to identified Equality and Diversity performance gaps and reported to the SMT and the Corporation.

The College has a strong focus on the development of teaching learning and assessment, at all levels of delivery in the curriculum. The HE Teaching and Learning group has had a strong focus in driving projects to improving the on-programme experience for students. In 2018/19 an embedded research methods module was delivered collaboratively by the LRC team and programme teams. The purpose of this was to prepare students for their summative assessments, in particular their first summative assessment. A series of structured information skills sessions directed students to what the expectations were in terms of higher education programmes of study and how to find credible resources for their relevant programmes. Feedback from students showed 18% were positive on research and referencing within their work, this was identified in the induction survey. From 2019/20 additional study skills, citation and IT literacy skills will be incorporated into the embedded research module.

NESCOL's Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy has a new initiative and builds on the concept of peer review, which is linked to the previous professional standards initiative in 2018/19. NESCOL has invested in specialist software called IRIS. The concept is to increase the provision of peer review and sharing of good practice through the use of tagging and clipping excerpts of lectures, seminars, forums, discussions and practical learning. This should allow staff to remove many logistical barriers compared to historical lesson observations. This project will be monitored as it rolls out across the 2019/20 year.

### Strategic measures

The College works closely with skills development partnerships such as the Employment and Skills Board which brings together businesses, schools, local authorities, colleges, universities, third sector organisations and other stakeholders across Surrey to focus on key LEP priorities including the development of new flexible and innovative progression pathways to higher level skills. The College is linked into widening participation and access networks through the NCOP project based at the University of Surrey and this provides a very helpful sounding board and source of intelligence about what works.

The College is working in partnership with a local school to develop new pathways from Year 8/9 onto vocational pathways. Central to the approach is to embed advice and guidance around apprenticeships and higher apprenticeship progression. The embedding of the Widening Participation role within the Advice Team has further strengthened this initiative and allows for a more coherent approach to take place. NESCOL already offers a number of very successful higher apprenticeships and this initiative seeks to widen access to opportunities that may be attractive to lower participation neighbourhoods.

NESCOT is a partner member of the National Collaborative Outreach Project based at the University of Surrey with Royal Holloway London, University of the Creative Arts, Surrey County Council, Guildford College and Farnborough College of Technology. It is already working closely with the project to deliver outreach activities that reflect the distinctiveness of the HE in FE offer. It has run a number of very successful higher apprenticeship events at the College using current higher apprentices as advocates. Events which have taken place this last year involve working more closely with the Advice and Guidance team and visiting local schools and networks alongside the Careers team. This has led to a more responsive approach such as the Career Insights days offered this year in subjects such as computing, performing arts osteopathy and animal management. It is too early as yet to see the full impact of these; however, schools and pupils have responded very positively and further events are already planned in the forthcoming year; two taking place at the University of Surrey in August.

NESCOT expects that there will be increasing linkage through the NCOP project and its mainstream school liaison work to raise awareness of the variety of pathways into higher education, particularly 'learn while you earn'. This support widening access for lower participation groups. Of equal importance will be messages around aspirations to higher attainment through these routes i.e. employers expect high achievement at the point of entry and not see the routes as a second-class pathway.

Whilst it has been difficult in recent years for FECs to engage with schools, particularly in the local Surrey area where nearly all schools have successful sixth forms and where the number of pupils attending independent schools is the highest nationally at 25% of all pupils in the county, recent changes following the Lord Baker amendment have permitted the College to re-engage with many schools. NESCOT has invested in the training of two level 6-qualified members of NESCOT's school liaison team who now visit schools and are able to discuss non-traditional pathways into higher education including higher apprenticeships. A number of student ambassadorial roles have been created drawing upon students and apprentices at HE levels and they will be linking with the school's higher apprenticeships.

Delivery modes for programmes have been developed in response to student and market feedback. This has meant an increase in the full-time numbers and an associated drop in 17%pts in part time numbers. However, in real terms, due to the overall increase in volume this translates to almost double the full-time numbers over the last three years, from 374 (2016/17) to 708 (2018/19) students.

NESCOT is a member of an NCOP bid that has a focus on raising student attainment in schools where there are lower levels of progression to higher education and we will be active in this project raising awareness of the range of pathways into higher level study including higher apprenticeships.

We will measure, evaluate and monitor the impact of these activities as follows:

- Growth in HE student numbers at NESCOT. The targets for these are set out in NESCOT's Curriculum Plan and Academic Strategy.
- Growth in Higher apprenticeships. The targets for these are set-out in NESCOT Curriculum Plan and Academic Strategy.
- Growth in apprenticeship numbers. The targets for these are set-out in NESCOT Curriculum Plan and Academic Strategy.
- Increased internal progression from Level 3 to NESCOT HE provisions.



- An increase in the number of Schools Liaison visits undertaken by the College IAG and related teams.
- Raising GCSE English and Mathematics achievement rates for students undertaking resits as part of the condition of funding requirement.

### 3.2 Student consultation

Student consultation has involved a variety of mechanisms this year, including those such as the Student Council, Student Staff Consultative Committees, internal and external student surveys throughout the academic year (induction, mid-year, NSS module evaluation and course valuations), including informal discussions in lectures.

In the formulation of the 2020/21 Access and Participation Plan students were consulted using a variety of means: questionnaires, face to face focus groups and telephone discussions. This variety meant that the different modes of attendance were included as fully as possible and their responses taken into account. Part of the final consultation has been the circulation of the plan associated with a summary of what has been taken into account and implemented or not as a result of student feedback. Where not, then rationale has been provided.

In the forthcoming year more responsive reports are to be built around the key groups of focus and measures set. These will be reviewed at the various for a, (Student Staff Consultative Committees, Boards of Study and Student Council) allowing for easier monitoring of progress and ultimately evaluation. This will provide an opportunity for further discussion with students at appropriate points during the academic year allowing for a more responsive approach to the plan and measures to be taken.

In addition, the HE Student Council nominates a representative to the HE Board. The HE Board reviews the Access and Participation Plan as a standard agenda item and forms the cross-college vehicle for monitoring higher education in the first instance against KPMs.

The outcomes from the student consultations are detailed below:

- Increased transitional support before starting programmes and during induction with students playing a larger role
- Wider continuous promotion of support available across the programme to help maintain awareness of the full support offer available as needs emerge, sometimes later into the programme
- Increased focus on preparation for progression and next steps with further employer involvement specialist careers advice cv building and interview preparation

### 3.3 Evaluation strategy

When completing the OfS evaluation self-assessment; all 5 aspects of performance was indicated as emerging. In order to evaluate performance, plan and monitor improvements against targets arising from said evaluation the college has an Accountability Framework. This framework is used in creating a cross college view of HE in order to produce a series of evidence-based judgements (and arising from these targets dropped into a quality improvement plan), which form the self-evaluation process. The review of impact and in year actions arising is carried out at five points across the academic year (and so student journey) as part of the College's self-assessment and evaluation cycle.

At each review point evidence is produced for a panel consisting of the Senior Management Team and where appropriate Governors and peers from other institutions. Higher Education with NESCOL is reported on in the same manner as part of the faculty/subject area it sits within. This allows for in context scrutiny of the suitability of curriculum progression routes to be undertaken as feeder qualifications and awarding bodies change.

Evaluation is embedded throughout the whole of the student journey because the College recognises that the majority of its students will be affected by interstices of disadvantage, relating inter alia to prior attainment, familial experience of higher education, family commitments etc. The College's approach recognises these issues when recruiting students throughout the various FE and HE levels and embeds support strategies to help students to achieve. This is reflected in the College's student KPIs for retention and achievement across all of the age and level ranges, for HE this has been previously based on TEF Benchmarks.

Going forward there will be a more programme specific evaluation and discussion of progress with Access and Participation forming an agenda item at the Boards of Study and Student Consultative Committees. It will also form a key part and agenda item of the newly reconfigured Equality and Diversity Group. This will allow a programme specific consideration of progress to the plan targets from both staff and student perspectives. In addition, the HE Board will be meeting on a more frequent basis to allow for full feed in of evaluation around activities undertaken. This will allow consideration of activity impact and adaptation if required, to assist with in year change to meet targets.

Strategically, to ensure effective evaluation of the fuller information sets arising, the Equality Group will have a revised focus and terms of reference to include a stronger alignment to the Access and Participation Plan's targets, activities will be evaluated via short survey approach and also longitudinal analysis of data including student surveys.

### **3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan**

The HE Board will monitor performances against measures set out in NESCOL's Access and Participation plan and findings will be reported to SMT. As noted previously this will meet more frequently and also feed into the revised E&D Group. In addition, at this level there is consideration and monitoring at the Student Council with representatives from the programmes who are fully trained in the role and will receive further briefing around the widening participation agenda and targets. There will be a stronger programme level scrutiny using the Boards of Study and Student Staff Consultative Committees to feed in to higher level considerations. This will allow for full capture of progress or not at all levels and also ensure student engagement across the course of the year.

The key responsibility of monitoring and evaluating widening participation activity lies with the Academic Registrar with oversight from the Director of Higher Education and the Deputy Principal.

## **4. Provision of information to students**

Prospective students are signposted to fees throughout various point of the access stage of the student lifecycle (including research). Students fees are illustrated on NESCOL's webpages (i.e. fees page and course page). Student are also signposted to the course fees at the point of offer and the enrolment stage whereby students confirm how fees are to be paid. Students agree to the tuition fees being charged through agreement of NESCOL's terms and conditions policy.

NESCOT commits through its HE Terms and Conditions policy to ensure that students have full and transparent information to support their decision making at pre-course, offer and enrolment stages. Prospective students are also supplied with the following information:

- Offer letter(s) and related communications
- The Student Handbook – provided to students at induction
- On-programme course communications – typically provided to students by the Programme Leader
- ‘Weblearn’ access (online Virtual Learning Environment – VLE)

The College will seek at all times to ensure that information on the College website is up-to-date. Appropriate website information maintenance arrangements are in place. The College will seek to ensure that information is up-to-date in time for the internal HE progression events that take place at the College in the spring term.

Information provided by the College such as in presentations, in the prospectus, leaflets and brochures and on the College website, is accurate at the time of first disclosure. However, courses, college services and content of publications remain subject to change. Changes may be necessary to comply with the requirements of accrediting bodies or to keep courses contemporary through updating practices or areas of study. Circumstances may arise outside the reasonable control of the College, leading to required changes. Such circumstances include, industrial action, unexpected student numbers, significant staff illness (where a course is reliant upon a person’s expertise), unexpected lack of funding, severe weather, fire, civil disorder, political unrest, government restrictions and serious concern with regard to the transmission of serious illness making a course unsafe to deliver. After a student has taken up a place with the College, the College will look to give early notification of any changes and try to minimise their impact, offering suitable alternative arrangements or forms of compensation where it believes there is a fair case to do so.

Financial support is additionally signposted on the website, prospectus and open days’. Soft checks can be completed by the student finance team at any point (including at the time of enrolment) to ensure students’ can achieve their maximum potential and understand what they are entitled to (with financial support, if available to them).

Hardship funds are based on the access to learning fund spreadsheet which determines if a student is entitled to any money. The spreadsheet calculates the minimum amount of money needed in order to sustain a basic need. It should be noted the hardship loan is directed to all students and applications are made on a case by case basis. A total of £6000 will be available per academic year for hardship funds for students.

The College will publish its Access and Participation plan on its website.

## **5. Appendix**

The OfS will append the following items from the fees and targets and investment documents when an access and participation plan is published:

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)
2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)

3. Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

**Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees**

\*course type not listed

**Inflationary statement:**

Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations we intend to increase fees each year using the RPI-X

**Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants**

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	Business / Computing / Animal Management / Sports Therapy	£7,800
First degree	Collaborative Theatre	£8,800
First degree	Education Studies	£7,100
First degree	Osteopathic Medicine starts from 2018 onward	£8,500
First degree	Osteopathic Medicine starts pre-2018	£8,100
Foundation degree	Animal Management 2019 starts	£7,400
Foundation degree	Animal Management starts from 2020 onwards	£7,600
Foundation degree	Education Support	£6,600
Foundation degree	Sports Therapy	£7,400
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	Business starts from 2020 onwards	£6,000
HNC/HND	Computing & Systems Development	£5,800
HNC/HND	Performing Arts / Creative Media Production	£6,800
CertHE/DipHE	Certificate in Education & Training	£7,100
CertHE/DipHE	Psychodynamic Counselling	£7,100
Postgraduate ITT	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education & Training	£7,100
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

**Table 4b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants**

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

**Table 4c - Part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants**

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	Healthcare Play Specialism	£4,500
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	Certificate in Education & Training	£3,600
Postgraduate ITT	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education & Training	£3,600
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

**Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants**

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

# Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: North East Surrey College of Technology (NESCOT)

Provider UKPRN: 10004686

## Investment summary

The OfS requires providers to report on their planned investment in access, financial support and research and evaluation in their access and participation plan. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in student success and progression in the access and participation plans and therefore investment in these areas is not recorded here.

### Note about the data:

The investment forecasts below in access, financial support and research and evaluation does not represent not the total amount spent by providers in these areas. It is the additional amount that providers have committed following the introduction of variable fees in 2006-07. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

The figures below are not comparable to previous access and participation plans or access agreements as data published in previous years does not reflect latest provider projections on student numbers.

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Total access activity investment (£)</b>	£77,000.00	£77,354.00	£79,278.00	£79,278.00	£79,278.00
Access (pre-16)	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00
Access (post-16)	£12,000.00	£12,000.00	£12,000.00	£12,000.00	£12,000.00
Access (adults and the community)	£50,000.00	£50,354.00	£51,354.00	£51,354.00	£51,354.00
Access (other)	£9,000.00	£9,000.00	£9,924.00	£9,924.00	£9,924.00
<b>Financial support (£)</b>	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00
<b>Research and evaluation (£)</b>	£6,849.00	£6,849.00	£6,849.00	£6,849.00	£6,849.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HF1%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HF1)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Higher fee income (£HF1)</b>	£717,000.00	£719,400.00	£719,400.00	£719,400.00	£719,400.00
<b>Access investment</b>	10.7%	10.8%	11.0%	11.0%	11.0%
<b>Financial support</b>	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
<b>Research and evaluation</b>	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
<b>Total investment (as %HF1)</b>	12.5%	12.5%	12.8%	12.8%	12.8%



