

Access and Participation Statement

Policy number:	CQ003	Policy Owner:	Head of Faculty Higher and Adult Education
EIA Status:	Compliant	EIA meeting date:	17/07/2025
Approved by:	SLT	Date approved:	26 March 2025
	Committee		23 June 2025
	Board		
Review frequency:	Annually	Next review due:	01/06/2026
External website:	Yes	Status:	Active
Linked policies/ documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy • Equality Impact Assessment Guidelines 		

Policy Summary

To demonstrate how Newbury College aims to make its HE provision accessible to all and to broaden its provision to meet the interests and needs of a wide range of students.

Access and Participation Statement

1. Policy Statement and Purpose

The College is committed to making higher education (HE) accessible to a diverse student body and expanding our offering to meet varied interests and needs. This is achieved through the College's designated HE facility, trading as University Centre Newbury (UCN), which provides degree level and higher professional programmes to the local and regional communities.

Purpose

This policy ensures transparency and inclusiveness in our HE programmes, addressing the requirements of the Office for Students (OfS) regulatory framework and supporting diverse student groups.

Scope

The policy applies to all HE programmes at UCN, including traditional HE programmes, higher and degree apprenticeships and professional programmes.

2. Definitions

- **Apprenticeship Programmes:** Work-based training programmes with educational components.
- **Higher Education (HE):** Education provided at academic levels 4 and above.
- **Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA):** Collects, assures and disseminates data about HE in the UK on behalf statutory customers (e.g., OfS).
- **Office for Students (OfS):** Regulatory body for all English Higher Education.

3. Responsibilities

- **Head of Department UCN:** Oversees policy implementation and compliance.
- **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):** Ensures policy alignment with College and UCN goals.

4. Procedures

See Appendix A: Access and Participation Statement.

5. Compliance and Enforcement

Monitoring of policy implementation will be conducted annually, with a focus on maintaining diversity in student enrolment and ensuring support mechanisms for all students.

6. External References

- OfS Regulatory Framework
- Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Performance Indicators

7. Supporting Documents

- Appendix A: Access and Participation Statement

8. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant legislation.

Reviewed: January 2020, March 2024, March 2025

Next review date due: March 2025, June 2026

Appendix A: Access and Participation Statement (HE)

Introduction

UCN is committed to ensuring that our HE offer is inclusive and diverse, catering to a broad spectrum of student interests and needs. Our aim is to be an inclusive environment where individual differences are respected and where all staff and students have a fair opportunity to fulfil their potential (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement).

Accessible pathways to HE are provided at levels 4, 5, 6 and 7, including higher and degree apprenticeship programmes. Our wide-ranging academic offering includes:

- Higher National Certificate and Diplomas:
 - Engineering (Electrical and Electronic)
 - Engineering (Mechanical)
 - Engineering (Manufacturing)
 - Community Coaching for England
- BEng (Hons) Engineering Design validated and franchised by Bournemouth University
- MSc Engineering and Post Graduate Diploma in Engineering qualifications in partnership with Buckinghamshire New University

Theme 1: The areas we address

Transparency and Performance Metrics

- Our adherence to the Condition F1 transparency of information condition for the OfS regulatory framework.
- Engagement with HESA performance indicators.
- Direct applications for UCN HE programmes, except for specific programmes in partnership with universities, where applications are processed through the partner university.

Demographics and Outreach

We are enhancing our data analysis on applicants who choose alternative institutions or face rejections, aiming to refine the application experience continually.

Our goal is to broaden the diversity of our HE student population while also expanding our reach to younger applicants, offering them a seamless transition from level 3 programmes.

We are committed to promoting gender diversity through inclusive recruitment practices.

Table 1.1 Male vs Female Enrolments (Excludes HE Apprentices & Access HE)

	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
HE Apprentices					70	11

HE Full Time Provision	14	5	22	7	45	12
HE Part Time Provision	29	5	69	9	104	20
Partnerships	17	17	9	21	24	19
Total	60	27	100	37	243	62

Female enrolments have increased each year over the last three years which has enabled the achievement of the QiP action 2022/23 to increase female participation by 10%. For 2023/24 female participation has increased 25 students

Ethnicity and Inclusivity

We aim to sustain an inclusive approach to HE recruitment, working closely with employers to encourage applications from all ethnicities.

Table 1.2 BAME Enrolments (Excl Access)

Ethnicity	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Asian	2	4	13
Black	0	0	7
Mixed	0	0	5
Other	0	1	3
White	65	107	277
Total vs (Ethnicity %)	67 (3%)	112 (4.5%)	305 (9%)

The demographic of West Berkshire as of the 2011 Census shows 5% of the local population declares as BAME. The college's intent is that recruitment of BAME students aligns to the regional demographic. The table above shows that for 2023/24 HE enrolments for BAME students has doubled from last year and is above the regional demographic by 4%. The target set last year was to increase the total to meet the target set of 6.1% which has been surpassed this year by 2.9%.

Support for Learning Needs

We aim to have a supportive environment that enables students who have requested learning support, or who have been identified as having learning difficulties, disabilities or health problems, to progress confidently in their learning journey.

Theme 2: Ambitions and Strategy

Growth and Development

UCN has strategic aims to expand its HE provision, aligning with local employment needs and the Local Skills Improvement Plans.

Widening Participation

Our commitment to widening participation is reflected in our recruitment strategies, particularly in supporting students who meet alternative entry requirements.

Table 1.3 Widening Participation Based on English Index of Multiple Deprivation (EIMD) (Excl Access and HE Apprentices)

Deprivation	Quintile	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Most deprived	Quintile 1	2	2	7
	Quintile 2	6	7	21
	Quintile 3	15	24	45
Least Deprived	Quintile 4	29	38	100
	Quintile 5	33	41	132

Enrolment by EIMD has increased over the previous three years each year for Q1-3 students in the areas of higher deprivation. The percentage of students from Q1-3 compared to the percentage of students from the least deprived areas is low at 24% of the total student population. UCN intake has increased overall but the students from the most deprived areas increase have not been as large as the numbers from the least deprived areas. Newbury is a relatively affluent area where the indicators of multiple deprivation are very low.

UCN was developed to widen participation to HE for the region. Programmes have been developed to meet the local skills needs of the region and delivery models are designed to enable students to continue to work while achieving their qualifications. We encourage applications from students with industry experience, BTEC, T-Level and alternative routes to apply for our Higher Education programmes.

University Partnerships

UCN adheres to the Access and Participation Plans for its partner HEIs with respect to recruitment and enrolment and provides information annually to support partner university plans.

Theme 3: Activities and Support for Students

Enhancing Student Experience

UCN is dedicated to enhancing the quality of education and opportunities we provide. This commitment is demonstrated through a variety of initiatives:

- Diverse learning modalities including face-to-face and blended learning.
- Emphasis on employability through work placements and professional training.
- Broadening student experiences via research projects, enterprise opportunities and community involvement.

Student Expectations and Opportunities

Students are encouraged to engage in activities that enhance their professional skills and community contributions. This includes participating in educational visits, industry speaker sessions and developing industry-relevant projects.

Supportive Teaching and Learning Environment

Our proactive approach in engaging students includes lesson observations, self-evaluation reviews, curriculum evaluation and dedicated forums for student feedback.

Additional activities to enhance student experience encompass quality improvement plans, health and safety reviews, dedicated HE study resources, external examinations and partnerships with employers and other HE institutions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, UCN is dedicated to fostering an accessible, diverse and supportive HE environment where students from all backgrounds can thrive and succeed.