



# Higher Education Access and Participation Plan 2019-20

**Our Mission:**

*'To provide outstanding education and training for individuals and employers'*

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## College Context

Southport Technical College opened in 1935. This institution brought together a number of technical courses which had been offered throughout Southport since 1887. In 1938 Southport School of Arts and Crafts was founded. The two institutions were amalgamated in 1989 to form Southport College. In January 2018 Southport College merged with King George V College, a local sixth form college also based in Southport.

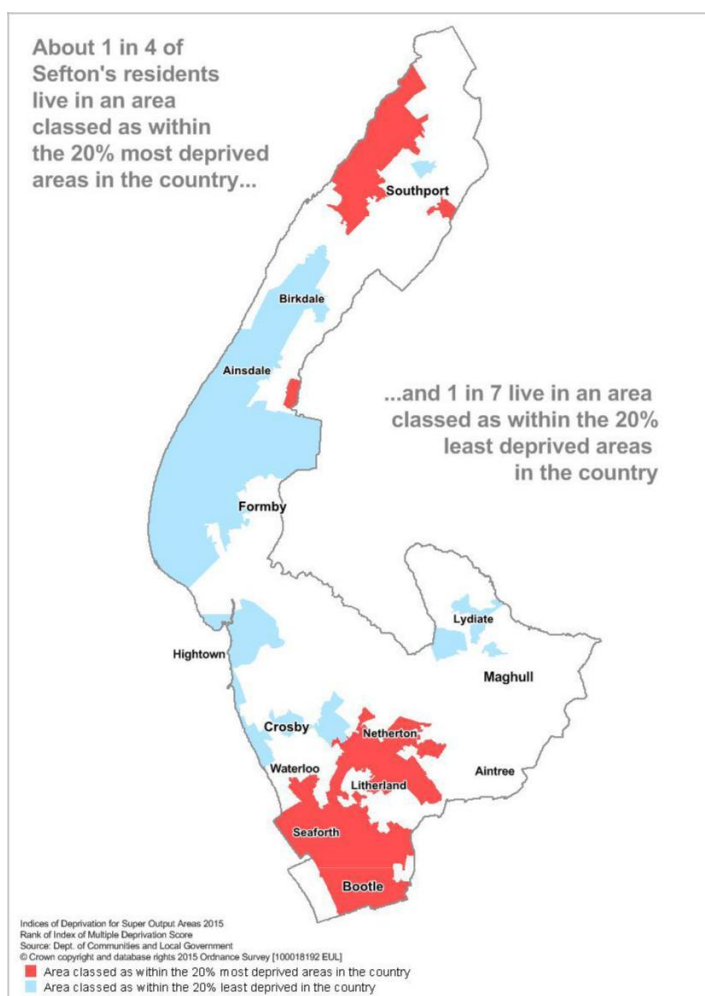
Southport College offers a range of courses to students from Southport and the surrounding area. These courses include Diplomas, NVQs, BTECs, A Levels and Access courses. In addition, Southport College has a small, sustainable portfolio of higher education courses awarded by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), the University of Cumbria (UoC) and Pearson.

Southport College is situated in a seaside town with a population of about 91,000 (2011, Census). It lies within the Metropolitan Borough of Sefton, which had a population of 274,900 in 2016. Sefton is a coastal borough. Sefton lies at the northern end of the Liverpool City Region. Sefton is one of five metropolitan districts within the Liverpool City Region. Sefton shares close economic, social, cultural and transport links with Liverpool City Region. Sefton also has important links to Preston and West Lancashire. Sefton adjoins the City of Liverpool to the south, the borough of Knowsley to the south-east, and the largely rural West Lancashire elsewhere. The local catchment area for the College, which includes part of West Lancashire, has an overall population of 386,400. The unemployment rate in Sefton is 5.3% compared to 5.3% in the North West and 5.1% in the UK. The indices of multiple deprivation, produced as a means of comparing measures of deprivation in different areas, rank Sefton as the 76<sup>th</sup> most deprived district out of 326 in England (Office of National Statistics, 2015).

**Figure 1 Sefton in its sub-regional context.**



**Figure 2 Areas in Sefton classed as within the 20% most and 20% least deprived in England.**



Higher Education is important for the local area as it provides a pathway into higher level study that would not otherwise be available to many students. Progression to higher level study in Sefton is significantly below national rates: according to the NOMIS report January to December 2016 32.1% of people of working age within Sefton are qualified to Level 4 or above compared with 34% in the North West and 38.2% in the Great Britain. The College has a dynamic HE strategy, one of the most significant objectives for HE states the following *“to enhance the personal growth, confidence and employability of young people and adults by significantly expanding opportunities for university level study whilst maintaining high standards”*. Directly related to the widening participation agenda, the College HE Portfolio has the potential to improve social mobility for the residents of Sefton and the outlying catchment areas (Figure 2).

The College has seen steady growth in HE numbers over the past six years and in 2017/18 the College enrolled 208 full time and part time HE students. Degree programmes are aligned to Liverpool City Region LEP priorities including Health and Life Sciences, Digital and Creative and Financial and Professional. Clear pathways into HE are facilitated through Advanced Level and Access to HE programmes in related subject areas, delivered at the College and at its partner King George V College.

Southport College is committed to equality and diversity. The College is dedicated to the active pursuit of an equal opportunities policy which addresses the need and right of everyone in the College to be treated with respect and dignity, in an environment in which a diversity of backgrounds and experiences is valued.

Southport College plans to deliver the following programmes in 2019/20:

Programme for 2019/20	Awarding body/HEI
FdSc Computing and IT	University of Cumbria
BSc Computing and IT (Top up)	
FdA Criminology and Social Science	
BA Criminology and Social Science top up	
FdA Business Management	
BA Business Management	
FdSc Health and Social Care	
BSc (Hons) Health & Social Care top up	
FD Working with Children and Families	
BA (Hons) Working with Children & Families top up	
HND Games design	
HND Graphic design	
HND Performing Arts	
HND Film and TV Production	
<b>The following programmes are delivered on a part time basis</b>	
HNC Engineering (Part time)	UCLan
Post Graduate Certificate in Education	
Certificate in Education	

## Assessment of current performance

Whilst outcomes for students are improving they remain an area for further improvement. Actions to improve retention for 2017/18 include improved IAG and validation of Foundation Degrees better suited to student progression.

In 2016/17, learners from deprived wards accounted for 34% of leavers and achievement for these learners was 81%, which is above the College overall rate. The proportion of mature learners increased from 62% in 2015/16 to 75% in 2016/17, with an achievement rate of 77%. Conversely, retention for 18-20 year olds was lower and IAG and retention for 18-20 year olds is an area for improvement. Outcomes for males and females show there was no achievement gap in 2016/17.

Recruitment in 2017/18 shows increased participation in learners from deprived wards (35% compared with 34% in 2016/17) with an in-year retention rate for 2017/18 of 95% compared with 94% overall. The percentage of students from deprived areas is higher than the demographic for FE at the College demonstrating that the College's aim to widen participation in HE is having an impact. Male participation has increased to 39% but remains an area for development.

For 17/18 retention for year 1 programmes is 93% and in-year retention for Year 2 is 98%. Overall retention for 2 year programmes has improved significantly from 65% to 80% as a result of increased attendance monitoring and course design but retention for a minority of course areas remains an area for improvement.

The objective is to widen local participation for all learners with a focus on those quintile (Q) 1 potential learners. In 2016/17 the overall achievement rate for students from deprived areas was 81% and above the rate for students from non-deprived areas.

The College employs a dedicated Disability Advisor for higher education programmes. Students with a known learning difficulty or disability account for 22% of the current cohort and the achievement rate for these students is in line with that of students without a declared disability or difficulty.

*NB: It should be noted that given the total number of students on HE programmes at the College is approximately 200, the groups identified above equate to small numbers.*

The AR for the Foundation Degree in Children, Young People and Their Services has continued to improve and is outstanding (71% 2015/16, 94% 2016/17). This can be attributed in part to the development of the BA Hons Top Up year to which most students progressed. The continuing development of top up honours programmes is seen as key in the widening of participation to HE.

One of the key features of the College’s HE provision is its alignment to vocational practice and employer engagement was cited as an area of good practice by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The curriculum is designed to meet local and regional needs and sector-specific requirements and is reviewed throughout the year by the Curriculum Development Committee and through Strategic Reviews. In the DLHE 15/16 89% (81% 2014/15) of leavers progressed to further study or employment. Progression for 2016/17 was excellent with 90% (2015/16 92%) of full time students progressing to further study, skilled or employment or employment. The results of the Destination of Leavers Higher Education (DLHE) Survey for 2016/17 reveal that from a 100% response rate (drawn from 91 respondents) only 2% were unemployed 6 months after completing their course. In April 2018 the College achieved the Matrix Standard for careers, advice and guidance with a number of strengths noted including: *“The passion and enthusiasm of the staff within the college for the progression and development of students is infectious.”*

The College’s UCAS application data demonstrates that learners who are recruited are local to the college, as such the College recognises this market and will continue to focus its IAG, recruitment and marketing locally and regionally.

**Table 1 Southport College UCAS applications 2015 – 2017.**

S35 Southport College	2015	2016	2017
North West	5	15	45

*Source: Supported by the UCAS data as detailed in relation to Provider Name, Applicant Domicile (Region) in the End of Cycle 2017 UCAS Analysis and Research, published on Thursday 25 January 2018 at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)*

The learner profile historically, as evidenced by UCAS the majority of our applicants via UCAS have been over 19 and female, demonstrated by the End of Cycle 2017 Data UCAS Analysis and Research, published on Thursday 25 January 2018 at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

S35 Southport College		2015	2016	2017
18	Men	0	0	5
	Women	0	0	0
19	Men	0	0	0
	Women	0	5	10
20	Men	0	0	0
	Women	0	0	5
21 and over	Men	0	0	0
	Women	0	5	10

## Ambition and strategy

### Overview

Southport College is committed to providing a local offer of a Higher Education, demonstrating a strong commitment to fair access, including the minimising of barriers for applicants and widening participation to HE within the local area. In addition to setting clear criteria for entry on to programmes, the College welcomes applications from students with non-traditional backgrounds and values work-related experience for those returning to education. In line with its Mission Statement and ethos of widening participation the College has implemented a number of activities to improve access and participation as detailed throughout this document. The College is working collaboratively with students, university partners and employers to further enhance our HE offer for the local area.

The trend in relation to the data as detailed in this document identifies the following:

- The College is successful in attracting mature learners and those with non-traditional qualifications and experiences;
- The College is successful in securing good progression outcomes for the very large majority of HE learners who complete their studies.
- Employer engagement was cited as an area of good practice by both the QAA and Matrix and continues to be a strength.
- The ratio of learners from deprived areas continues to grow.

The areas for development are:

- Improved student success rates, particularly at Level 5
- Recruitment of male learners
- IAG and retention of learners under the age of 21
- Continued growth in the participation in HE locally
- Implementation of higher apprenticeships
- Improved access to independent study areas and improved classrooms and workshops
- Improved engagement strategies including capture of the learner voice for identified groups.

## HE Strategy

The focus of the Southport College Higher Education Strategy promotes further the aim to widen access to higher education by taking into account the importance of meeting the needs of key local employment sectors, and to support the economic and social regeneration of the sub-region.

The HE Strategy's key aims focus on widening participation and improving opportunities for local people as already established that our target market is predominantly local:

- To enable students to aspire and succeed through providing the highest quality HE learning opportunities in an environment which is both supportive and challenging;
- To grow our HE provision and student numbers through widening participation, and access, targeted advice and guidance and providing clear progression opportunities for young people and adults into higher education;
- To develop a responsive curriculum which enhances students' employability and career opportunities, meets employer needs and supports economic growth;
- To maintain and develop accommodation and resources to support a distinctive, high quality HE experience;
- To work in partnership with students, staff and University partners to enhance provision and practice.

In line with the HE strategy the College is partnership working with NHS Trusts to develop allied health higher apprenticeship programmes featuring Foundation Degrees and National Occupational Standards developed with the employer. This will provide the opportunity to upskill the local workforce whilst also widening access to higher education within a sector which is a priority for the Liverpool City Region. The Business Development Manager and the HE Manager attend the Merseyside Apprenticeship Implementation Core Workforce Group; the Group is chaired by the Host lead for the Apprenticeship Strategy and comprises representation from local trusts, health education leads, Skills for Care, Skills for Health and Health Education England.

The curriculum strategy for 2018 has included a focus on developing clear pathways for adults returning to education, from Level 1 through to Level 6, ensuring they can develop relevant level specific study skills so that students are equipped to progress through to level 6 and beyond. Programmes are closely aligned to local and regional priorities in key sectors including the life sciences, creative and digital.

To support student success and development academically all validated FDs, BSc & BAs and HNDs offered at the College have a study skills module in every year:

- Level 4 – personal development and study skills
- Level 5 – Research Skills
- Level 6 – Dissertation

In addition, additional short qualifications in relevant subjects, such as safeguarding or mental health, are offered to HE students in order to enhance their employability skills and progression opportunities.



## Ensuring continuous improvement through evaluation

Student cohort data including equality and diversity impact measures (EDIMs) are regularly reviewed at course and top level, in addition to the specific targets identified throughout the quality assurance cycle. EDIMs are evaluated as part of the self-assessment process and are subject to scrutiny via the Equality and Diversity Committee and top level reports are reviewed by the governing board

In order to maximise the achievement of higher education students a dedicated HE Performance Management Group committee, which was introduced in 2017, meets on a bi-monthly basis to monitor course performance and manage students at risk of non-completion, with course level or top level actions being taken forward to the Higher Education Quality Improvement Group. The College Executive Team and Standards Committee receive regular reports on curriculum development and quality for HE provision at the College. Attendance and retention data is also reviewed at Board of Studies meetings. At 80% attendance for HE is 5% below the preferred College target and this alongside retention, particularly of 18-21 year olds, and IAG will be a continued focus for 19/20. Evaluation of activities undertaken during the year ahead will be evaluated through reports, against targets, received by the HE Quality Improvement Group, Executive Team and Standards Committee. Provision will be reviewed via the Curriculum Development Group, Strategic Reviews and in partnership with awarding institutions and students. Specific targets include the improved retention and achievement of learners aged 18-21. In order to support timely evaluation of progress against targets the MIS team provide dedicated HE reports for analysis. Student engagement in quality systems will be further enhanced in 2019 through the review and revision of learner voice approaches undertaken by the College, in consultation with the student body.

One of the key features of the College's HE provision is its alignment to vocational practice and employer engagement was cited as an area of good practice by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The curriculum is designed to meet local and regional needs and sector-specific requirements and is reviewed throughout the year by the Curriculum Development Committee and through periodic Strategic Reviews.

## Targets and Measures

As a strategic priority for the College, the development of Higher Education provision is a key feature of Governors Strategic Days as well as the governing Board and Standards Committee. The Access Agreement targets and milestones, outlined in the resource plan, will be monitored and reported on in the Higher Education Quality Improvement Group meetings and periodically via the Equality and Diversity Committee in order to report on progress.

The following targets and milestones are included in the resource template:

- Increased participation of male learners from low participation neighbourhoods
- Ensure increased success for all mature learners particularly at level 5
- Continued growth in the participation of all HE learners from low participation neighbourhoods locally
- Improved achievement of young undergraduate entrants through improved IAG
- Improve access to HE for those in low income employment through implementation of Foundation degree based higher apprenticeships
- Improved student engagement strategies and mechanisms including the engagement of students in quality improvement and the capture of learner voice for identified groups

- Work alongside year 10 and 11 students within the region to raise expectations and widen access to HE

### **Monitoring the delivery of the plan**

The principal responsibility for monitoring and evaluating widening participation actively lies with the Equality and Diversity Committee, chaired by the Director of Teaching, Learning and Support and attended by a cross section of College managers, curriculum staff and a student representative., Organisational Development and Culture, as well as cross College staff. Student cohort data including equality and diversity impact measures (EDIMs) and survey feedback (drawn from identified groups) are regularly reviewed. Specific targets identified as part of this Access Agreement will be reviewed via this committee from 2019/20 onwards throughout the quality assurance cycle.

The HE Strategy derives from the College Strategic Plan and also informs the Marketing Strategy, which in turn then informs business planning for the forthcoming year.

Key priorities are:

- To continue to improve the achievement rates of all students identifying and where appropriate addressing any achievement gaps for widening participation groups.
- To assess the impact of socio-economic background on student performance and identify areas for further exploration and action.
- To further improve retention of vulnerable groups through rigorous initial advice and guidance and individualised study programmes.
- Annual review and monitoring of the Access Agreement, targets and milestones.

The College's HE Strategy is due for review in 2018/19 and will encompass top level widening participation and access objectives.

For 2019-20 the College will seek to further engage with the wider community through innovative events such as its recent Super Saturday which achieved footfall of over 2000 participants and was well received on social media. The Business Development team will build on progress made in 2018 to further engage employers in the upskilling of their workforces via higher apprenticeships and part time study. The Student Engagement team will continue to support the most disadvantaged students in achieving and exceeding their aims. These activities will be evaluated through review of recruitment and retention data, reports on careers education activity, quality assurance of IAG processes and analysis of a range of stakeholder feedback. Reports on these activities are reviewed by the governing board and internal committees including the HE Quality Improvement Group and the College Executive Team.

### **Equality and Diversity**

Southport College's specific Equality and Diversity objectives are reviewed on an annual basis, and are aligned to local needs, the College's strategic plan and specific equality and diversity impact measures. The Equality and Diversity Policy is reviewed annually and sets out the College's aim to improve the achievement rates of all students identifying and to address any achievement gaps and to assess the impact of socio-economic background on student performance, identifying areas for further exploration and action. The policy also sets out the aim to further improve retention of vulnerable groups through rigorous initial advice and guidance and individualised study

programmes. For 2019-20 this policy will be encompass the strategies set out in the plan. The College has paid due regard to equality and diversity in designing its access and participation plan and all policies, procedures and course programmes are subject to equality impact assessment.

The Equality and Diversity Committee, which includes student and HE management representation, receives reports and briefings on progress against equality targets and national policy and top level reports are reviewed by the governing board. An annual report on the activities and targets set out in the access and participation plan will submitted to this Committee.

Equality and diversity is central to life at the College and is articulated in the College's Equality Statement "[Working for you](#)". Ten staff members drawn from curriculum and business support teams are dedicated Equality and Diversity Champions and contribute to a calendar of cross-college events and College policy.

Attainment gaps are identified through self-assessment processes at course, departmental and top level for FE and HE programmes and are monitored through quality development plans and self-assessment processes and are subject to scrutiny by the Equality and Diversity Committee and the governing board. For example in 2012 the attainment gap between males and females on FE programmes was 9% but through a range of targeted strategies including improved IAG and curriculum review there is now no gap. Likewise, outcomes for males and female students completing HE programmes in 2016/17 show there was no achievement gap.

## Student Engagement

The learner voice strategy sets out the College's approach to engaging with the student body including student governors, council, complaints, surveys and rep meetings. Rep action plans document actions arising at both course and college level and includes feedback on aspects of the service which are fed back by relevant managers. A dedicated Student Engagement Strategy sets out the College's approach to the development and enhancement of engagement mechanisms and processes.

As identified in the College's HE Review engagement is central to the development and enhancement of the College's HE provision. Since 2015/16, the HE Quality Improvement Group has included student representation. A Student Engagement Co-ordinator is now in post and programme specifications and a number of policies and reports have been written and reviewed with support from student representatives.

The College has taken steps to improve student engagement in the quality of its provision but this requires further development in 2017/18. Whilst HE students at the College benefit from small class sizes and highly trained and accessible tutors, it is recognised that the development of a distinct HE student experience including HE specific social activity continues to be a challenge for the College. The Student Engagement Co-ordinator has reviewed the rep training programme and is working, in conjunction with student representatives, on the development of forums and mechanisms which better meet their needs and interests.

The programme for HE Representative training has been fully revised for 2017/18 and the election of a new Lead Student Representative for HE programmes has been established as an annual event. New awards for Student Engagement and Citizenship were introduced at the College's fourth

graduation event which moved to Trinity Church for the first time year in order to raise the profile and increase access to the event, attendance for which increased threefold.

It is recognised that the strategies for engagement and capture of the learner voice, particularly from identified groups, will be reviewed in partnership with students in 2018/19 in order to design processes that best meet their needs.

A range of mechanisms are used to engage students including:

### **Survey feedback**

Survey results are used to inform improvements at course and College level. In 16/17 the overall satisfaction rate improved at 3.41 (3.37 2015/16). Survey data from different WP groups is analysed and actions are set. For example, student satisfaction is highest amongst identified groups including learners from deprived wards and learners aged 30+. Respondents with a learning difficulty were less satisfied with planning, interest in lessons and feedback and this information is used to inform curriculum improvements.

NSS results provide prospective students with information to aid study choices. The survey was conducted over a 3 month period and the results are drawn from responses from students on the final year of full time HND and Foundation Degree programmes. Satisfaction with teaching and learning has continued to improve at 84% (2015/16 80%). Teaching, Learning and Assessment scores are integral to the Teaching Excellence Framework and the College has developed new observation instruments to drive forward improvements in this area. It should be noted, however, that only a small minority of students at the College are eligible for the survey.

### **Student Representation**

The College seeks to ensure that students are represented in every aspect of College life. Three student governors sit on the College governing board and attend committees including Standards, Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding. The Student Council is drawn from a diverse student cohort and is involved in awareness projects, tendering processes and cross-college consultation. The Lead Student Representative for HE attends the HE Quality Improvement Group which will be responsible for monitoring the progress of the strategies set out in this plan in the first instance.

Student representatives (reps) have been instrumental in providing feedback at a senior level. Student reps are invited to attend course team meetings and departmental. Student rep meetings are undertaken twice yearly and feedback reports were supplied by student representatives when they are not able to attend meetings. Additional adhoc meetings are undertaken periodically throughout the self-assessment cycle.

### **Programme Design, Development and Approval**

The processes of programme design, development and approval are an essential element of higher education providers' internal quality assurance and enhancement processes. During the HE Review the QAA identified the College's approval process for HE programmes as an area for development arising from limited evidence of the approval of HN programmes. All programmes are now subject to an established internal validation process alongside the partner institute's validation process.

In 2016/17 the College took the decision to progress with the development of degree pathways, revising its course approval process for HE provision. All new programmes were subject to scrutiny

by employers and stakeholders. All awards are benchmarked against QAA Subject Benchmark Statements. Staff are supported by the HE Manager, Heads of Department and partnership leads in the planning and approval process. These curriculum developments have resulted in increased participation for mature students who accounted for 75% of HE achievers in 2017 and in students from areas of deprivation who accounted for a third of achievers and had the highest achievement rate of any identified group.

Having reviewed local need and marketing data course, the College is continuing to explore the local delivery of higher apprenticeships with local NHS trusts and care providers and sees this as a vital additional and accessible route to higher education within the care sector (a regional priority) for mature learners locally.

<https://www.southport.ac.uk/higher-education/our-college/employability-statement->

### **Student consultation on this Plan**

Higher education students were provided with the opportunity to express their views about the content of this plan before it was submitted for approval, through the undertaking of small focus groups, and students were consulted as exemplified below.

*“As a PGCE student who is has studied at the college for the two years and is about to graduate my peers and I were invited to consult on this paper. We feel it is a truly representative of the ethos and culture of the student support, development and opportunities afforded to HE students at Southport College. We have found our experience to be a positive and constructive learner journey in partnership with all aspects of the college.”*

Due to the limited time available, and the timing of the submission, access to student feedback was limited but those consulted were satisfied with the plan. However, going forward the quality and support team will ensure that it involves students from a range of backgrounds in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the access and participation plan through semesterly review of progress against targets and identification of any further areas for improvement or development. At committee level, reports will be received and evaluated with membership including representation from the student body.

## **Access, student success and progression measures**

### **Overview**

The College runs a successful ESOL programme both at the College and wider community sites within the Liverpool City Region and works closely with the Job Centre Plus in the design and delivery of these programmes which offer good progression routes into HE and achievement rates. The ESOL programme offers support to those HE BME students currently on programme, on average the HE BME intake annually is 3%, in line with local demographic data for the borough of Sefton. Achievement rates for BME students are broadly in line with overall achievement but it is difficult to draw formal conclusions due to the low numbers involved.

The number of care leavers and looked after children attending the College has continued to increase and their retention and attendance is closely monitored by the safeguarding team, the E&D Committee, CET and Governors. The student guidance team launched a care leavers covenant in

2017 to provide clear information on the extensive support available to them. Retention rates for these learners are in line with the College average for 2018.

The college employs a Counsellor and a newly introduced Welfare Officer who provides specialist support with finance, welfare, housing, external bursaries, grants etc. A dedicated member of team provides support and guidance with applications to the Student Loans Company. The guidance team offers impartial advice and guidance through an advisor trained to Level 6 in Careers Advice and Guidance. The majority of the academic teaching are vocationally qualified and undertake industrial updating in their area of expertise and as such also offer careers and progression support.

As an FEC with higher education provision we are fully committed to widening participation. As set out in the strategic plan, the College's approach is underpinned by a number of basic principles:

- To enhance the personal growth, confidence and employability of young people and adults through excellent vocational and academic education;
- To make a significant contribution to the local and national economy by building positive and productive partnerships with employers, supporting the skills needs of priority areas, and encouraging enterprise and endeavour;
- To enhance the personal growth, confidence and employability of young people and adults through excellent vocational and academic education;
- To ensure all programmes enable students to succeed and progress;
- To provide excellent and inspirational teaching and learning;
- To create a safe and secure environment in which equality of opportunity, diversity of backgrounds and experiences are valued;
- To develop and implement an accommodation strategy which ensures the College estate is fit for purpose and meets curriculum and business needs.

The College aims to widen access and participation for particular groups and individuals, and to positively impact on the performance of its higher education programmes:

- Further education learners progressing to higher education;
- Under-represented groups and non-traditional local learners, including those on low incomes, those living in deprived areas, care leavers and carers, those whose families have no experience of higher education, people with learning difficulties and disabilities and these from different ethnic groups;
- Mature learners re-entering education;
- Part-time learners in employment.

Equality and diversity is central to life at the College and is articulated in the College's Equality Statement ["Working for you"](#).

In order to maximise the achievement of higher education students a dedicated HE Performance Management Group committee, which was introduced in 2017, meets on a bi-monthly basis to monitor course performance and manage students at risk of non-completion, with course level or top level actions being taken forward to the Higher Education Quality Improvement Group. The College Executive Team and Standards Committee receive regular reports on curriculum development and quality for HE provision at the College. Attendance and retention data is also reviewed at Board of Studies meetings. At 80% attendance for HE is 5% below the preferred College

target and this alongside retention and IAG will be a continued focus for 18/19 and 19/20. Evaluation of activities undertaken during the year ahead will be evaluated through reports, against targets, received by the HE Quality Improvement Group, Executive Team and Standards Committee. Provision will be reviewed via the Curriculum Development Group, Strategic Reviews and in partnership with awarding institutions and students. Specific targets include the improved retention and achievement of learners aged 18-21. In order to support timely evaluation of progress against targets the MIS team provide dedicated HE reports for analysis. Student engagement in quality systems will be further enhanced in 2019 through the review and revision of learner voice approaches undertaken by the College, in consultation with the student body.

### Activities to widen access and participation

The College, which has recently merged with a local sixth form, will continue to work closely with in excess of 90 feeder schools and colleges within the Liverpool City Region and West Lancashire in order to continue to widen participation in advanced and higher level study. For 2019-20 it will seek to further engage with the wider community, through events such as its recent Super Saturday which achieved footfall of over 2000 participants and was well received on social media. The Business Development team will build on progress made in 2018 to further engage employers in the upskilling of their workforces via higher apprenticeships and part time study. The Student Engagement team will continue to support the most disadvantaged students in achieving and exceeding their aims. These activities will be evaluated through review of recruitment and retention data, reports on careers education activity, quality assurance of IAG processes and analysis of a range of stakeholder feedback.

The following activities have been put into place to improve access and participation in HE. There have been a number of successful initiatives resulting in a steady growth in HE students at the College, as described below. Within the local geographical remit of the college there are Q1, 2 and 3 areas. As discussed the College needs to further promote the HE provision in these areas. Over the last 3 years Q1 learners have successfully graduated from honours programmes at the College.

The following activities are implemented locally and in outlying areas, as detailed in figures 1 and 2.

### Inclusive recruitment

Target	Activities
Targeted recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Careers events – internal and external</li> <li>• Taster events</li> <li>• College Open evenings, including HE specific Open Evenings</li> <li>• All HE students are interviewed for the course they have applied for</li> </ul>
Adult engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-Access to HE, Advanced Level Diplomas and Access to HE programmes in pathway subjects provide pathways to adults re-entering education</li> <li>• Information, Advice and Guidance for applications to HE programmes, includes support for students making UCAS applications and HE funding</li> <li>• Well regarded ESOL programmes are delivered both at the College site and in JCPs across Merseyside, providing access to adult FE and HE programmes</li> </ul>
Partnership with HE institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southport College is working with its partner Higher Education Institute partners, University of Cumbria and UCLan, to offer a range of HE courses to accommodate students’ needs academically in an easily accessible location in their local community.</li> </ul>

Access to course information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prospective students can access detailed course related information a number of ways via the college website, the HE prospectus, programme specifications and open evenings;</li> <li>• All full time applicants apply through UCAS, part time students apply directly to the college. One to one support for UCAS and loan applications is provided by the guidance team.</li> </ul>
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### Initial Advice and Guidance

Target	Activities
Learning Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Support Interviews prior to enrolment and regular reviews</li> <li>• Disability and technological support and communication on teaching and learning strategies for teaching staff</li> <li>• Specialist tutor support</li> <li>• Support for vulnerable learners such as care leavers and carers</li> </ul>
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 3 students are supported through UCAS application workshops, personal statement writing support and mock interview sessions are facilitated by internal pastoral staff and outreach staff from partner HE Institutions.</li> <li>• All students are interviewed and robust independent advice and guidance is given to all perspective students during the interview. If the interview is unsuccessful the student is then directed to student guidance for further advice and guidance on alternative programmes that are available.</li> </ul>

### Improving retention and success

Target	Activities
Support for transition into HE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant Day an event (pre HE academic year) for all HE applicants to come into college to meet the staff team, look at resources and their fellow HE students. Advice and support in relation to SLC application, enrolment and DSA application is also given at this event</li> <li>• Robust induction processes, including learning support interviews and reviews</li> <li>• Provision of information (micro-website for HE, main College website, written information, social media)</li> <li>• Monthly subject-related careers events staffed by Progress Co-ordinators and guidance staff with representatives from HEIs and local employers.</li> <li>• Dedicated counselling service, with 1-2-1 programmes and drop-ins</li> </ul>
Enhancement of student experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University Centre providing high quality learning environment incorporating classrooms, a silent study area, a lapsafe, fixed drop in computer bays and a Library Learning Centre – significant accommodation developments planned for Summer 2018 including a dedicated independent study zone</li> <li>• Work placement or work-related experience, with employer engagement cited as good practice by the QAA</li> <li>• Courses are designed and planned in conjunction with students, higher education partners and employers</li> <li>• Small class sizes with good tutor to student ratio for all HE programmes</li> </ul>



## Progression to further study/employment

Target	Activities
Support for transition into HE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with university partners, students and local employers to improve the curriculum, including course design, assessment design, effective and efficient use of resources and College's range of HE programmes and routes into them.</li> </ul>
Work placement/ experience	<p>All HE students will have the opportunity to experience at least one of the following as part of their course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a work placement or internship</li> <li>a live brief linked to an external client</li> <li>a research project</li> <li>a careers module</li> </ul> <p>Progression rates for HE students are consistently at or above benchmark.</p>
Support for next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advice and guidance for post-course destinations with support provided by HE partner institutions and local employers.</li> <li>Vocational HE curriculum with programme of personal development or professional practice for all students</li> <li>One to one tutorials to identify next steps</li> <li>Consistently good progression rates for HE students</li> <li>Progression events targeted at vocational areas such as Get Into Computing, Get Into Health and Care and the Apprenticeship Fair (500 attendees)</li> <li>The College team plans to work with its HEI partners to promote Level 7 progression routes for all level 6 students.</li> </ul>

## Outreach work with schools and young people

- The Marketing and Schools Liaison team work with a wide range schools across the profile, providing information in schools and at the College. Open Evenings, the prospectus and the College website provide information to potential students. An Applicant Welcome event takes place each year during the summer term as well as a parent welcome event and parent's briefings are provided at key intervals.
- Mentoring programmes in place with schools and young people which take place in a variety of subject areas with the aim being to inspire students, enhance knowledge of what is required in order to be successful at each stage of progression in order to aid preparation and transition.
- Bespoke campus visits are available to both groups and individuals with the opportunity to meet both key staff and students who can provide insight into programmes of study as well as an overview of College life.
- A careers taster programme is available to pupils, either in group sessions or as individual tasters, these have been particularly successful in supporting potential learners in deciding which study programme is right for them.
- A wide range of master classes available across both sites which offer either focus on subject areas or career paths available within specific industries

- Progression agreement in place with feeder schools across both sites to ensure that every student can be offered a place on a course at the College regardless of their school outcomes
- A comprehensive programme in place to support both looked after children and care leavers this includes; detailed handover of key information with schools, ongoing support from the safeguarding team and overall support with general welfare from both the Welfare Officer and Progress Tutor team.

### **Outreach work with communities and adults**

- Taster days and visits for adults, including Open Evenings and Super Saturday which engaged 2000+ visitors
- Progression agreements aimed at adults progressing from further education.
- As part of curriculum design, all adult learning pathways lead to progression routes for higher education, through a variety of routes, full and part time.
- Work with employers aimed at progressing adults into higher education includes engaging employers through apprenticeships – in particular Level 5 for Leaders and Managers.
- Promotional events and on site talks – DWP, NHS Trusts, various accountancy practices. Bespoke delivery on site.
- Engineering apprenticeships – Level 3 upwards
- HE programmes – links with employers for live briefs, guest speakers and workshops.

### **Outreach work with disabled students**

The College endeavour to provide the equal opportunities for students with disabilities, making reasonable adjustments/bespoke arrangements where required. As part of the Schools Liaison and Learning Support outreach the teams work together to support those with additional needs in both mainstream and non- mainstream schools to access all initiatives detailed below.

- The Schools Liaison team (Marketing) work with a wide range of local schools, providing information in schools and at the College. Open Evenings, the prospectus and the College website provide information to potential students. An Applicant Welcome event takes place each year during the summer term and parent’s briefings are provided at key intervals.
- Mentoring programmes in place with schools and young people take place in a variety of subject areas with key feeder schools with the aim being to inspire students, enhance knowledge of what is required in order to be successful at each stage of progression in order to aid preparation and transition.
- Bespoke campus visits are available to both groups and individuals with the opportunity to meet both key staff and students who can provide insight into programmes of study as well as an overview of College life.
- A careers taster programme is available to pupils, either in group sessions or as individual tasters, these have been particularly successful in supporting potential learners in deciding which study programme is right for them.
- A wide range of master classes available across both sites which offer either focus on subject areas or career paths available within specific industries

- Progression agreement in place with feeder schools across both sites to ensure that every student can be offered a place on a course at the College regardless of their school outcomes
- A comprehensive programme in place to support both looked after children and care leavers this includes; detailed handover of key information with schools, ongoing support from the safeguarding team and overall support with general welfare from both the Welfare Officer and Progress Tutor team.
- Financial support for the completion of Educational Psychologist assessments for new and continuing students.

## Activities to raise the aspirations of potential students

### *Strategic relationships with schools*

- Apprenticeship events organised by College are held both within schools and on onsite. Exhibitors include; National Apprenticeship Service, universities, assessors, current apprentices and employers from a wide variety of subject areas. The aim of these events is to help students to understand how to register with NAS, how to search and apply for apprenticeships, opportunities and career pathways available within apprenticeships. The College has developed an Acorns HSC programme with local trusts which enables progression to nursing and higher apprenticeship programmes which include a Foundation Degree element.
- The College team provide PSHEE activities within schools; these are usually bespoke to the needs of the school and can range from Subject Specialist Workshops, CV and covering letter writing workshops, guest speaking from industry specialists.
- The Marketing team have recently developed a relationship with the local Rotary Clubs who have funded summer experiences such as Rotary Youth Leadership Academy programme to students who would not ordinarily have access to such opportunities. Going forward plans are in place to utilise this relationship further by working on a multitude of programmes in a variety of subject areas engaging learners from primary schools upwards with the aim of widening the scope of opportunities available from all backgrounds.
- Mock interviews for school learners from KS3 –KS5 enhance employability and improve their understanding of employer expectations and progression routes.
- Visitor Economy Week activities – the visitor economy is worth £4.3bn to the Liverpool City region and supports over 51,500 jobs. The College facilitates activities and competitions with secondary schools to inspire learners with relation to the visitor sector. Plans going forward are to engage more schools and therefore more learners to raise awareness of HE and career routes.
- A number of workshops and events are hosted at the College to provide understanding on progression routes with recent examples including the Apprenticeship Fair (500 attendees, aged 15-25) and Health and Social Care Careers Fair which provided students with the opportunity to discuss progression options with employers, universities and the College.
- Some of the activities the College implements can be accessed from its Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/southportcollege/>

During 2019-2020 the College plans to continue with the work it currently undertakes with schools and colleges, creating bespoke packages according to the needs identified by key contacts within schools and building on experience to continuously improve the service provided.

The College also aims to increase the focus on partnerships with local Colleges and Sixth forms to enhance HE progression from these establishments and to continue to build on relationships with employers in order to explore higher apprenticeship routes for local workers. The College is expanding its higher apprenticeship provision, which includes embedded Foundation Degree programmes, in order to widen access to professional and higher level study.

## Investment

The University Centre, which opened in 2012, provides a distinctive higher education experience and, at a cost of 1.6 million, demonstrates the College's commitment to the development and enhancement of the HE experience for local people. Further investment in its HE accommodation is planned for summer 2018, including a dedicated independent study zone, and HE students, staff and employers have all taken part in the consultation and decision making processes. The work will start in June 2018 and is intended to improve access to independent study and additional high quality learning spaces and media suites. The College's HE Strategy aims to ensure that the planned growth of higher education provision is accompanied by an equal emphasis on maintaining high quality teaching and learning and support which enables learners to achieve their full potential. HE lecturers are supported in completing post-graduate qualifications and in engaging in scholarly activity which enhances learning and supports improved outcomes for learners.

The College seeks to combine the distinctive advantages of locally delivered Higher Education in a supportive Further Education College environment with the higher learning and research ethos of a higher education institution.

The Southport College central reception area and IAG service was remodelled in 2017 to provide a one stop shop for information and easier access to guidance. The Careers Officer and Welfare Officer are based in reception making them accessible for drop in or by referral by curriculum teams, and the Disability Advisor is situated in the University Centre. HE students with learning difficulties are able to access free educational psychologist assessments in order to maximise their ability to achieve and progress.

### Checklist of requirements

In your access and participation plan you must set out the level of investment you intend to make in 2019-20. You must include:

- ☐ the total investment you will make through your access and participation plan in 2019-20, both in cash terms and as a proportion of higher fee income disaggregated investment, in cash terms and as proportion of higher fee income, that shows how much you will spend on access, success, progression and financial support
- ☐ the investment you will make in access and participation beyond that identified within your access and participation plan.

Our judgement on whether the level of investment identified within your plan is appropriate will be influenced by the proportion of higher fee income that it represents.

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In your resource plan, you are required to complete a forecast of investment across a four year period (see the guidance on completing your resource plan in Annex B for more information).

Outreach activity 18%

- Student success – to include hardship fund and tutorial and study support 64%
- Student progression 18%

## Provision of information to students

Potential students will receive accurate information about the courses they are interested in; presented in a manner appropriate for them, thus allowing them to make informed decisions about what is right for them. The College makes every effort to ensure that the information provided to applicants and students about their course is correct. Occasionally it may be necessary to update a prospectus or course page, for legitimate reasons including regulations, staffing or resources. The College will endeavour to keep any changes to such information to a minimum and to keep students informed appropriately.

Each year the University Centre Prospectus is produced. The College's printed prospectus is intended to provide an overview of the programmes of study, resources and support available at the College. It is developed well in advance of the start of the academic year and therefore the information within the printed prospectus reflects the courses as they are at that time and maybe subject to changes which will be published online (available [here](#)). Each year the current prospectus is reviewed by focus groups for staff and students to review the quality of information provided. In order to ensure this document is clear and accurate the draft prospectus is subject to review by partners HEIs, a member of the Executive team, the Marketing Manager, curriculum leaders and managers within the Quality and Support directorate. The HE area of the College website is also reviewed by partner HEIs to ensure the currency, quality and availability of information in relation to their Institution.

The College website includes a dedicated Higher Education section to signpost students to key documents and sources of information including the wider information set, course details, fees, guidance and learning support. The College's online course leaflets contain the most up to date information on courses including detailed programme specifications and tuition fees. The College regularly updates course leaflets so that published course information is accurate and up to date. Heads of Department instruct Curriculum Leaders to review course leaflets as part of the College's annual curriculum planning process. Specifications for HEI programmes are updated in line with external validation processes and contain live links to the partner HEIs policies and procedures. The Pearson specifications are developed by course teams and reviewed by the HE Curriculum and Quality Group. Course information can be found here: [www.southport.ac.uk/higher-education/our-courses/show-all-he-courses](http://www.southport.ac.uk/higher-education/our-courses/show-all-he-courses).

Course Information available to higher education students via the website is periodically reviewed by the HE Manager and a Student Advisor (who possesses a Level 6 careers qualification) in order to

ensure the information is fit for purpose. This information includes an overview of each course, fees and a detailed programme specification showing programme structures and course team information. Specifications also set out any potential course costs which are optional and tend to be low cost in order to widen participation in HE in line with the College's HE Strategy. In addition the College hosts Open Evenings and promotional events for internal and external candidates, and provides tasters, in order for students to review resources and talk about the options available to them with curriculum tutors, support staff and guidance and careers staff. The College also hosts apprenticeship events for employers and potential students providing them with information on alternative access to HE via higher apprenticeships.

Published information is managed by the Marketing Manager who is also a member of the Curriculum Development Group in order to keep abreast of curriculum developments and changes. The Curriculum Development Group meets on a monthly basis during term time to review local market intelligence, employer feedback and local and national priorities, and seeks to ensure that new and existing programmes are fit for purpose.

Course information is available to all students via the College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Moodle. Curriculum Leaders follow the College HE Moodle Standard with the expectation that all students have access to handbooks, examiners' reports, module guides and teaching resources. Key policies are described in course handbooks and induction processes; these include academic appeals, malpractice and complaints.

External applicants apply via UCAS and internal applicants apply by the College's own application system. All applicants, whether internal or external, are subject to an interview with a member of the course team in order to ascertain their prior learning, aspirations and intended progression aims and also to find out more information about their courses. Any applicant identifying a learning difficulty or disability will receive a separate support interview in order to ascertain their specific needs. At the end of the interview students are notified of the admissions tutor's decision and this is confirmed in writing, together with any conditions of the offer of a place or alternative guidance should a place not be offered. Applicants are advised in a timely fashion of any changes or matters arising and are invited to an applicants' day to find out more information about support, study skills and the course itself at the end of the summer term. At enrolment students sign the learner agreement which sets out the agreement between the College and the student. The admissions process is detailed in the prospectus and set out in the College Admissions Policy, both of which are reviewed annually

During 2017 the College website was extensively revised and a bespoke HE student information area was created which can be viewed via the following link, to ensure all students can access dedicated information about the College's HE provision. <https://www.southport.ac.uk/#>. All policies and procedures which quality assure the HE student experience are also available via this link [wider information set](#).

### **Provision of information to students about fees**

The College will publish an HE Tuition Fee Policy for 2019/20 applicants articulating the College's continuing commitment to maintain fee levels for the duration of a student's enrolment on a course. The College tuition fee policy does not apply inflationary rates to students continuing to the following year of their programme. Course fees are published on the website on a dedicated page

and on each course leaflet. The Refund and Compensation Policy sets out the College's approach to refunds and compensations and is available via the [College website](#).

### **Provision of information to students about financial support**

The College provides financial support in the undertaking of all educational psychologist assessments for HE learners with learning disabilities and difficulties and this is planned to continue. The College Welfare Officer provides access to a range of support mechanisms including support and signposting to external services. The College will continue to provide access to a trained Counsellor who works closely with a number of HE students on a referral basis.

Continuing students will continue to receive the support that was advertised to them when they applied.

The College does not subcontract and would not disadvantage any student in the unlikely event that a validating partner would change during their studies.

\* course type not listed.

Full-time and part-time course fee levels for 2019-20 entrants.

Please enter inflationary statement in the free text box below.

WP and areas of deprivation sustainable

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£6,600
Foundation degree		£6,600
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		£6,600
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Franchise 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		*
Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		*
Foundation degree	University of Cumbria 10007842 -	£3,300
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND	Pearson -	£3,300
CertHE / DipHE	University of Cumbria/UCLan - Cert/HE in ITT with UCLan	£3,300
Postgraduate ITT	UCLan -	£3,300
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*



**Table 8a** - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body

Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu)	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu)	Baseline year (drop-down menu)	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16a_01	Access	Gender	<b>Other statistic</b> - Gender (please give details in the next column)	increased recruitment of male learners	No	2016-17	39%	41%	42%	43%	44%	45%	
T16a_02	Success	Mature	<b>HESA T2a</b> - (Mature, full-time, all undergraduate entrants)	increased success for all HE learners particularly at level 5	No	2016-17	71%	77%	79%	80%	81%	82%	
T16a_03	Access	Socio-economic	<b>Other statistic</b> - Other (please give details in the next column)	continued growth growth in the participation of HE locally	No	2016-17	208	215	220	225	230	235	
T16a_04	Multiple	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>HESA T1b</b> - State School (Young, full-time, undergraduate entrants)	improved IAG and retention of learners under the age of 21	No	2016-17	39	42	43	44	45	46	
T16a_05	Access	Attainment raising	<b>Other statistic</b> - Socio-economic (please give details in the next column)	implementation of Foundation and degree level higher apprenticeships	No	2017-18	0	12	22	32	38	42	
T16a_06	Multiple	Multiple	<b>Other statistic</b> - Other (please give details in the next column)	improved learner engagement strategies including the capture of learner voice for identified groups	No	2016-17	79%	82%	84%	86%	87%	88%	

**Table 8b** - Other milestones and targets.

Reference Number	Select stage of the lifecycle	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16b_01	Multiple	Multiple	Other (please give details in Description column)	investment accomodation strategy	No	2017-18	700,000	0	0	0	0	0	refurhment of University centre