



2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

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

1. Ambition and strategy

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

The ambition in our 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan was based on gaps in key HESA WP indicators, including young entrants from low participation neighbourhoods, low socio-economic groups and young entrants from state schools. At the time of writing our 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan, all undergraduate provision was chiropractic. As with many vocational degrees, for example medicine, widening access to chiropractic can be challenging given the high academic standards required to gain entry and that chiropractic is a relatively small profession in the UK with almost all chiropractors working in private practice. As such, chiropractic remains relatively unknown to a high proportion of the population, in particular those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. We therefore aimed to address access gaps in two ways:

- 1) Through looking at our admissions processes, investigating the use of contextual data in admissions and looking at interview practices
- 2) Through our outreach programme, including raising awareness of chiropractic and the introduction of attainment-raising activities. We committed to investigate ways to develop our relationships with schools and colleges to raise attainment in local schools and colleges and noted many of these actions/activities will also relate to the new courses.

Our strategy described in the 2019-20 plan recognised that successful initiatives in outreach and widening participation must be matched by support measures to ensure that each and every student achieves their academic potential whilst studying at AECC University College. We aimed to do this through the induction programme, buddy system, academic support framework, student support services and personal tutoring. It was thought many of these would also apply to the new courses in development and we plan to monitor these new cohorts over the coming years to determine if their needs are different to inform our future planning (NB. the first intake in our new courses was 2018/19). Due to the extended nature of the chiropractic course, we stated in our Bursary and Scholarship policy that we would support at least 5 students from low income backgrounds for all 5 years of study with a maintenance bursary, as well as provide all students from a low income household with a diagnostic kit bursary, to ensure no differences in access to essential equipment for all students.

As our 2019-20 plan focussed primarily on chiropractic students, we planned to use our 'Future pathways event' to help graduates find suitable employment following graduation; the University College arranges meetings between chiropractic practices and students in their final year. As a small profession, with an active AECC University College alumni, the network between chiropractors and chiropractic academic staff is pivotal and effective in introducing senior students to employment opportunities. As our strategic plans to diversify into other areas of the health sciences comes to fruition, we are ready to support these new students into their careers, with employability skills built into the curriculum of the new courses, including CV writing and the emphasis on presentation skills.

A key part of our 2019-20 strategy was acknowledged to be evaluation and monitoring. At the time of writing the 2019-20 plan, numbers of students from underrepresented groups were low and registered with our previous university partner, historic data lies with Bournemouth University. We committed to continuous improvement in this area including appointment of an Access and Participation Manager, development of an Access and Participation Steering Group to oversee this work and developing evaluation of our financial support packages. The University College also committed to implement an outcomes framework to routinely collect relevant data and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of our activities. This aimed to not only enable us to understand 'what works' in terms of access and student success, but perhaps more importantly how we can improve our performance in the future in terms of our own provision and student population as we diversify.

Progress against our 2019-20 ambition and strategy:

We have made good progress against this strategy; we have investigated contextual admissions and this is being taken forward through our Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Group. We are also putting in place financial support for prospective students from low income backgrounds to support them overcome financial barriers to entry such as attending open days, interviews and costs associated DBS and occupational health checks.

Our widening access outreach programme, which we started to develop during the 2018-19 academic year, was fully embedded during the 2019-20 academic year including a targeted schools engagement programme to allocate resources appropriately. Through relationships developed during 2019/20 with schools and partners, we started to create bespoke offers to target schools. In addition to having delivered the activities in our APP, we have delivered a number of others including immersive health careers days, bespoke revision and taster days, science clubs and competitions, and are working on a longitudinal programme with a target school to support students into university level study.

We awarded the bursaries promised in our Bursary and Scholarship Policy, as well as additional emergency COVID support funds to support students during the pandemic, and used the OfS Evaluation of Financial Support Toolkit for the first time to understand the effectiveness of the current offer, as well as further areas students feel provision is needed. As a result of this, we introduced a hardship fund as well as some specific funds for care leavers and final year chiropractic students going into clinic over the summer. Students told us this could be a challenging time as it doesn't tie in with payments from the student loans company, and they are unable to work as many hours in part-time employment due to their clinic placement commitments.

We joined the NERUPI framework in August 2019 and used the framework to actively plan aims and objectives for all Access and Participation activities, as well as mapping activities at key stages to identify potential gaps in our provision.

Whilst writing the 2020-25 Access and Participation Plan (ahead of the 2019-20 academic year), we identified a number of gaps which changed our outlook. Therefore, whilst we sought to still deliver as many of the activities as possible in this plan and meet the targets detailed,

we have also started planning and delivering projects to address our bigger gaps, and more ambitious targets, detailed in our 2020-25 plan. In particular the access gaps for students from POLAR4 Q1, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds, students with a disability and those who have experienced care. We have also started to work on the identified continuation gaps for POLAR4 Quintile 1 and 2 students and those students with a disability, as well as implemented work to investigate the potential progression gap for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students.

2. Self-assessment of targets

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

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

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in [Annex B](#).

Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	That the proportion of our first degree entrants coming from state schools increases year on year	2014-15	75%	81%	82%	Percentage	2019-20	92	Expected progress
T16a_02 (Access)	That an increasing proportion of our first degree entrants come from low income backgrounds	2014-15	20.8%	22%	23%	Percentage	2019-20	29.9	Limited progress
T16a_03 (Access)	That we increase the proportion of our first degree entrants coming from low participation neighbourhoods	2014-15	6.5%	7%	7.5%	Percentage	2019-20	12.7	Expected progress
T16a_04 (Access)	That we exceed national averages year on year	2014-15	>UK average	>UK average	>UK average	Percentage	2019-20	33.6	Expected progress
T16a_05 (Student success)	That we maintain our retention rates in line with location-adjusted benchmarks	2013-14	7%	7%	7%	Percentage	2019-20	8.5	No progress
T16a_06 (Student success)	That we improve on retention rates for young entrants	2013-14	9.7%	8.5%	8%	Percentage	2019-20	6.2	Expected progress
T16a_07 (Student success)	That we surpass our location-adjusted benchmarks in retention	2013-14	0%	5%	5%	Percentage	2019-20	13.5	No progress
T16a_08 (Progression)	Employment data taken from DLHE	2013-14	93%	95%	95%	Percentage	2019-20	100	Expected progress

Other milestones and targets

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16b_01 (Access)	Using British Science Week as a vehicle to deliver to Primary School an on campus event with Key Stage 2 (Year 5 & 6 pupils). Activity theme based around nutrition, health and exercise.	2016-17	1 school, 64 participants	2 schools, 80 participants	3 schools, 100 participants	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	3	Expected progress
T16b_02 (Access)	Fit Friends- after school fitness club for primary and secondary school children. Introduce school children to a HE campus	2016-17	0	1 primary & 1 secondary school, 10 participants	2 primary & 2 secondary schools, 15 participants	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	0	No progress
T16b_03 (Access)	Prospectus for 11 year olds. As part of SUN network, AECC will feature in a prospectus distributed through SUN member WP activities and websites	2016-17	Approx. target of 1000	Approx. target of 1000	Approx. target of 1000	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16b_04 (Access)	Talks and information stands in secondary schools in LPNs aimed at key stages 4 & 5.	2016-17	3 events attended by 150 pupils	4 events, attended by 200 pupils	4 events, attended by 200 pupils	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	5	Expected progress
T16b_05 (Access)	Taster opportunities- on campus through shadowing clinic interns	2016-17	15 throughout the year	15 throughout the year	15 throughout the year	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	4	Limited progress
T16b_06 (Access)	Summer schools- week long summer school for key stages 4 & 5 from cold spot areas. Baseline year 2017-18	2017-18	5 pupils taking part	7 pupils taking part	10 pupils taking part	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	19	Expected progress
T16b_07 (Access)	Filming with SUN. Targeting disadvantaged groups to consider careers in health and social care.	2016-17	Approx. target of 1000	Approx. target of 1000	Approx. target of 1000	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16b_08 (Access)	Back pain talks. To provide information to mature students on HE through back pain management in the AECC outpatient clinic	2016-17	1 talks with 15 attendees	2 talks with 15 attendees at each	2 talks with 15 attendees at each	Other	2019-20	3	Expected progress
T16b_09 (Student success)	Induction of personal tutors with students in receipt of bursaries. Baseline 2017-18	Other (please give details in	All personal tutors inducted	All personal tutors inducted	All personal tutors inducted	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	100	Expected progress

		Description column)							
T16b_10 (Progression)	Formal meetings between chiropractors and final year students	2016-17	1 day of meetings	1 day of meetings	1 day of meetings	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	1	Limited progress
T16b_11 (Access)	Vouchers for discounted chiropractic treatment in our onsite clinic, giving exposure to a typically private chiropractic practice	2017-18	15 referrals	20 referrals	20 referrals	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	1	Limited progress

3. Investment commitments

3.1. Access and participation investment for the last audited year

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

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£220,639.00	£72,000.00	-67%
Financial Support	£128,700.00	£36,000.00	-72%

4. Action plan

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

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16a_02	Move to the Index of Multiple Deprivation to measure proportion of first degree entrants from low income backgrounds, as specified in our 2020-25 Plan
T16a_05	Continue to monitor retention for different student groups. We are also extending our transition activities for new students.
T16a_07	We will continue to monitor mature student non-continuation and include this student group in targeted student retention activities such as our transition programme
T16b_02	N.A - this is an activity based target
T16b_05	This is an activity based target, however, we will be offering these opportunities in the chiropractic clinic as soon as we can and are confident this will contribute, alongside the case study workshop to widening access to chiropractic as a career path
T16b_10	We are holding the event online this year and hope to be able to hold it in person again in the future
T16b_11	Offer these alongside other outreach opportunities

5. Confirmation

AECC University College confirms that:

Student engagement	
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?	
Yes	
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?	
Yes	
Verification and sign off	
AECC University College has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.	
Yes	
Accountable officer sign off	
Name	Lesley Haig
Position	Vice-Chancellor

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

AECC University College's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16a_02
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
This target was originally based on HESA PI measuring NSEC4-7. As this particular measure no longer exists, we conservatively estimate that we have made limited progress using the data drawn from our Student Records System and given our progress elsewhere.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
We have moved to measuring progress against the Index of Multiple Deprivation using 19-20 as a baseline.

Target reference number: T16a_05
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
For home domiciled students, the non-continuation rate has increased slightly to 8.5 %
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
We have reviewed our assessment regulations which provides 3 opportunities for assessment each year, giving students a greater opportunity to pass/progress

Target reference number: T16a_07
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
For home-domiciled mature students, the non-continuation rate has increased to 13.5 %
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
We have reviewed our assessment regulations which provides 3 opportunities for assessment each year, giving students a greater opportunity to pass/progress

Target reference number: T16b_02
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
As this is a face to face athletics coaching programme in spring/summer term it was not possible to deliver this due to the pandemic.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Alternative activities were delivered online including some science/health based competitions for this age group

Target reference number: T16b_05

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

This is a work experience opportunity where younger students shadow a final year chiropractic student in their clinical practice. We had 4 shadowing visits during Semester 1 and another 8 booked during Semester 2 which we had to cancel due to COVID. There have been further enquiries since so I am confident we would have met our target - and that this will continue to be a popular access project to allow younger students to find out more about chiropractic

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

We have devised an alternative 'case study workshop' until we can welcome observers to the clinic again. This has been devised by a final year chiropractic student with the Director of Clinic and is an interactive case study session where students get the opportunity to research and feed in their thoughts on the patient presentation, guided by the expertise of the final year student and staff member.

Target reference number: T16b_10

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

This was an in person event due to take place just after the first lockdown (a speed meet to allow final year chiropractic students to network with clinics with vacancies)

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

As clinics had already been recruited to the event, clinics were matched virtually for online discussions with students instead

Target reference number: T16b_11

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Although a large number of vouchers were given out at school talks, taster days and open days, only 1 student used the voucher scheme.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

As evidence shows the vouchers are not popular with students, we will still offer these but alongside other more successful activities such as the chiropractic clinic shadowing days and final year student talks in schools - offering these as an additional opportunity to find out more.

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

AECC University College's commentary on any of the targets listed in [Section 2](#).

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	Increase from our baseline data of 75% to 92% (93.8 location adjusted)
T16a_02	The data provided is a version from our student records system using the HESA criteria as NSEC 4-7 data is no longer available
T16a_03	An increase from 6.5% to 12.7% (currently based on POLAR4 as only HESA data available to measure against)
T16a_04	The number of mature students entering AECC University college is still above the national average (29.4%)
T16a_05	
T16a_06	Non-continuation of younger students under 21 years has decreased
T16a_07	
T16a_08	Limited data available -All students in full or part time employment in 2017-18 graduate outcomes responses
T16b_01	Delivered to three local secondary schools pre-COVID. All schools were from Low Participation Neighbourhoods.
T16b_02	
T16b_03	Collaborative activity previously completed, however we continue to work on a number of collaborative outreach initiatives
T16b_04	We delivered 5 stands at LPN schools career events as well as 10 talks/assemblies prior to COVID (and continued to deliver online since)
T16b_05	
T16b_06	We moved our two planned summer schools online and had double the number of students attend.
T16b_07	Collaborative activity previously completed, however we continue to work on a number of collaborative outreach initiatives
T16b_08	Following writing the 2020-25 plan, we have focussed these on younger students. Our final year students delivered 4 talks in local schools
T16b_09	All tutors inducted (100%) Personal tutor scheme working well and tutors have been having additional meetings with students during the pandemic to ensure they feel supported.
T16b_10	
T16b_11	

