



# Access and Participation Statement (APS)

| Version | Date        | Changes  | Reason for Changes    | Author/Reviewer   | Next Review                 |
|---------|-------------|--|-----------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| v2.1    | August 2024 | Amendments of minor syntax and spelling errors | Annual review was due | Mohammad T Islam<br>(Head of Academics & Quality Control) | August 2025/<br>As required |
| v3.1    | August 2025 | Amendments of minor syntax and spelling errors | Annual review was due | Mohammad T Islam<br>(Head of Academics & Quality Control) | August 2026/<br>As required |

## *Background*

Commonwealth College of Excellence (CCE) is a higher education college and is located the cosmopolitan area of North Finchley.

CCE is delivering HND Business and Computing courses at levels 4 and 5. CCE will be delivering HND Hospitality, Health and Social Care and Leadership Management courses in the year 2024/2025.

## *Assessment of current performance*

**CCE has completed first year of operations after registration with OFS. CCE has made considerable progress in developing and delivering higher education courses and maintaining high academic quality and standards. CCE will be expanding its operations in 2024.25 and will be recruiting larger number of students in various higher education courses.**

## *Strategic and Ambition:*

As you are aware that London is a cosmopolitan city, and the Ethnic Minorities represent almost 50% of the population in certain areas of the city. We will target these areas and will encourage these groups to access and to develop in the future.

CCE aim is that all students, from all backgrounds, with the ability and desire to undertake higher education, will be supported to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education.

We will target:

1. Ethnic Minorities and disadvantaged groups
2. Mature Students
3. Care Leavers
4. Those living in areas of low higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status.
5. White community who did not have the privilege to send their children to study for higher education.

To outreach these groups, we will follow the following strategy:

- We will identify the areas of London where these groups are predominantly populated.
- We will advertise and promote higher education in these areas.
- We will identify any sub-groups or associations representing these groups.
- We will invite representatives and actual individuals representing these groups to seminars and workshops in these identified areas.
- We will hire specialists in higher education to work with these groups either on individual or group basis.

- We will bear all the costs of these seminars and workshops including travel costs borne by the individuals of these groups.
- We will also target schools and colleges in the identified areas and hold seminars and workshops to convey our message of Access, Participation and Progression in higher education within our institution.
- We will also target employers in all parts of London so that we can make placements of unrepresented groups with them and even provide some incentive to the employers by paying a fixed allowance for each placed student.
- Through continuous engagement we will be collecting data from these unrepresented groups and learning from them the reasons for not proceeding to higher education.
- This data will be analysed, and we will lay down new and/or amend our existing strategy to ensure that we are on the right path to encourage members of the above-mentioned groups to access and participate in higher education.

### Targets

- Our targets to improve our performance will be ambitious and stretching so that it is a challenge for us to achieve them. Lack of improvement on year-to-year basis will indicate failure on our part. We hope not to disappoint OFS on this matter
- Target for access: We estimate that 75% of the total applications made for higher education to our college will be from the above-mentioned groups.
- Target for entrants: We estimate that 55% of total applications made for higher education to our college will be from the above-mentioned groups.
- Target for outcome: We estimate that 80% of the total entrants from the abovementioned groups will be successful in achieving their award.
- Target to raise attainment in schools and colleges: We estimate that through our aggressive campaign and outreach activities in schools and colleges we will be able to increase attainment levels of A and/or B grades in Advanced levels by 2% in the first year. This will gradually increase to 10% over the next five years.
- Target on sustained outreach programmes: We estimate that we will be visiting 10 schools and colleges in the first year of our operation.
- Collaborative target in conjunction with partner organisations: We estimate that we will be developing partnership with 2 colleges during the first year to outreach the unrepresented groups mentioned above.

### Access, Success and Progressive Measures:

CCE will be involved in the following overview of the activities and support from 2024 – 2027:

#### Access

- We will identify schools and colleges that would support us in encouraging and motivating their students studying for GCSE and A levels to progress to higher education. This will be done by visiting schools and colleges that are predominantly populated by unrepresented groups.
- We will also be targeting young and mature learners, their parents, and careers through collaboration with schools and colleges with a view to convincing them that higher education will lead to better standard of living.

- We will work with other providers of higher education on projects which will help us to outreach unrepresented groups so that they are motivated to enhance their qualifications by joining higher education courses. This will be done by approaching other higher education providers who have similar goals to us.
- We will go for outreach work with communities and adults by offering Taster days and visits to adults, community projects, progression agreements so that mature students can progress from further to higher education.
- We will also conduct outreach work with disabled students by providing mentoring programmes, summer schools, taster days and by motivating them to progress from further to higher education.
- We will develop strong strategic relationship with schools and colleges and communities by signing with them formal agreements with the objective to raising aspirations and attainment and enhance teaching and learning outcomes of potential students. Consequently, improving their access to higher education.
- We will follow the outcome of the research carried out by Institute of Fiscal Studies: 'Family background and university success (2016)' which states 'Key Stage 4 is a key predictor of participation in higher education.' We will therefore focus our attainment intervention by targeting at students under 16 years old so that they are encouraged and motivated at an early age for progression to higher education.

## Success

- The objective is to ensure that we provide and help and support to disadvantaged higher education students not only to retain them but to also improve their performance.
- The first thing we will do is identify the reason why students from unrepresented groups are not performing as compared to their peers. Different groups of students face different barriers to their success in higher education. We will identify differential outcomes, both in terms of non-continuation and attainment. Once this is done we will be able to understand the specific problems faced by different group of students.
- We will identify highest level of attrition among the various groups and the trigger points that makes it happen.
- Based on the understanding of the barriers we will develop specific and targeted intervention to improve the outcomes in this area. Inclusive activities and support measures will have positive affect on the unrepresentative groups.
- One way of reducing attainment gaps is to improve relationship between staff and students and among student's relationship. We will endeavour to make it as cordial as possible by removing the barriers.
- We will provide necessary financial support to disadvantaged students in extreme cases so that their attainment is not affected.
- Our student welfare officer will provide necessary support to unrepresented groups so that Psychosocial and Identity factors will have no bearing on their attainment.
- We will provide necessary and timely following interventions so that the disadvantaged groups success is maintained by:
  - Enhancing personal tutoring support.
  - Supporting student representatives from certain student groups.
  - Supporting more inclusive teaching and learning environments for all students using technology and innovative pedagogy

- Embedding cultural change with staff and students through training and inclusive curricula frameworks.
- Providing support for mental health wellbeing.
- Refreshing curricula to be more inclusive and representative of diverse backgrounds.

## Progression

- The objective of progression is to ensure that aim of students is achieved which to find employment or to progress to higher level course.
- As a part of our Exit Strategy CCE will prepare all the students in such a way that will make them easier to find employment after graduation. We will provide necessary training in interview techniques, CV writing, job searching and other related matters so that the students are ready to take up jobs.
- We will develop links with employers and employment agencies and introduce our students to them so that students are facilitated in finding employment.
- We will be inviting employers as our Guest Speakers on a quarterly basis so that not only able to guide the students on how businesses are run but also give an opportunity to students to question the speakers on employment. This will encourage the students to develop dialogue with employers at an early stage. The employers may decide to offer jobs to some students if they find them suitable for their businesses.
- We will hire specialist Human Relations Officer(s) to guide and signpost our students to both work placements and jobs. The placement could be with overseas companies.
- The work placements will help them to have on- the- job training so that they are well prepared to take up employment.
- CCE will put in extra effort to support unrepresented groups who have difficulty in finding employment after graduation. This will be done by giving more time to these students by CCE staff. CCE may also consider providing them fixed financial assistance up to three months after graduation.
- CCE will also try to find work placements for disadvantaged students with charities and social enterprises.
- CCE will also review and work with awarding bodies to incorporate employability modules into the higher education curriculum.
- CCE will provide all students facility to read both local and national newspapers as well magazines which advertise and promote vacancies for jobs. This resource will be available in college library.
- CCE will also support and guidance to students should they want to progress to higher level courses (postgraduate)
- We will have monitoring and evaluation arrangements by which we will measure the progress of less advantaged students against internal and external indicators. We will form a committee to oversee this activity

## Provision of Information to students:

- CCE is committed to provide accurate and timely information to potential students, their parents, advisors, and sponsors. This will mainly be provided on our website supplemented by information on major social media platforms.

- We will provide prospective online and range of information about course choice, fee, and funding advice. For detailed information about courses, we will provide links with relevant awarding bodies on our website.
- We will also provide hard copies of our prospectus and other relevant material.
- We will work hand in glove with student union to ensure students are provided wide range of information including advice and advocacy should they need to appeal or complain.
- We will organise range of open events and will have staff on hand to answer on applicants' enquiries.
- We will also provide information about our financial and other support to students on our website. This will be detailed information including eligibility criteria and level of support we will offer to unrepresented groups each year.
- Our approved Access and Participation Statement will be published on our website.