

2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by The Oldham 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

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

The College's Strategic HE aims concentrates access and participation at the heart of transformation and regeneration:

- ...achieve sustained growth in HE and Higher Skills provision which meets employer, student and community needs, keeps students engaged locally and is linked to the regeneration of the area
- ... engage with the community to raise awareness and increase the number of people in Oldham and surrounding areas engaging with HE and higher skills, transforming lives through education, experience, support and inspiration
- ... will deliver the highest standard in inspirational teaching, learning and assessment informed by professional practice, research and scholarship to enhance the learning experience
- ... provide an excellent HE and Higher Skills experience and strong HE identity, sharing our passion, enthusiasm and energy to enhance the development of students before, during and after their studies
- ... will provide governance and strategy to HE to support its growth, development and enhancement, building the brand, reputation and influence of UCO at Oldham College, with employers and the community
- ... will develop external partnerships that provide tangible benefits to HE and Higher Skills students
- ...UCO will enhance the career outcomes of all HE and Higher Skills students through supporting employability, enterprise and innovation and develop individuals who will shape the social and economic fabric of the future.

The College identified key targets in the first Access Plan (2016) and have added 7-9

1. to increase access to HE for young white males
2. to increase the numbers of male students studying HE at the College
3. to continue to target students from low participation areas
4. to continue to target students from low socio-economic groups where household incomes are below £21,000
5. to provide academic and pastoral support for students through each stage of their degree
6. to continue to support disabled learners
7. to identify carers and care leavers and their support needs across the stages of HE
8. to further develop engagement of learners as active partners
9. further work on developing employability skills within the curriculum and more structured engagement with employers to improve progression as complete

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by The Oldham 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 The Oldham 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)	Increase the number of students studying at UCO from families with income of less than £21000	2015-16	25%	31%	32%	Percentage	2019-20	60	Expected progress
T16a_02 (Access)	Increase the number of students studying at UCO from the local area of Oldham especially those from the areas of low participation	2014-15	45%	49%	50%	Percentage	2019-20	62	Expected progress
T16a_03 (Access)	Increase the number of white students on course for business and management and increase recruitment of BME students on the Games Art course	2013-14	25%	37%	40%	Percentage	2019-20	51	Expected progress
T16a_04 (Access)	Increase the number of male students on health and social science courses at UCO	2014-15	30%	37%	40%	Percentage	2019-20	17	No progress
T16a_05 (Access)	Increase the number of under 30 students at UCO so that there is a greater representation of younger students moving into Higher Education from the Oldham area	2014-15	69%	75%	79%	Percentage	2019-20	64	Limited progress
T16a_06 (Student success)	Increase the number of students succeeding their programmes from lower income backgrounds, areas of low participation, from white backgrounds, males on health programmes, students aged under 30 on all courses.	2015-16	80%	84%	85	Percentage	2019-20	74	No progress

T16a_07 (Progression)	In line with our aims to support widening access and to improve progression through each stage of the degrees. This progression will be based on infrastructure and resources that aid them in their studies, academically and pastorally.	2015-16	80%	82%	85%	Percentage	2018-19	85	Expected progress
T16a_08 (Multiple)	We will start our work in collaboration with 2 feeder schools to support groups of students to improve attainment in their studies. The projects will be focussed on 2 areas of our provision: Creative and Digital and Business and Finance. The intention is to see improved outcomes and also improved engagement in their school work and in preparation for further study.	2015-16	25%	35	40	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	2	Expected progress
T16a_09 (Progression)	increase the number of students progressing to post graduate study	2017-18	20%	25	28	Percentage	2017-18	12	No progress
T16a_10 (Progression)	increase the number of graduates attaining graduate level income	2016-17	50%	50	55	Percentage	2017-18	47	No 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)	Greater Manchester Higher is a collaboration of universities and further education colleges from Greater Manchester working together to provide high quality outreach activities for local schools and colleges.	2014-15	87 secondary schools engaged with	114 secondary schools	122 secondary schools	Other	2019-20	141	Expected 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	£60,000.00	£89,000.00	48%
Financial Support	£130,000.00	£71,000.00	-45%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected The Oldham 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_04	New curriculum continues to be developed to address the imbalance in gender of students within this discipline. This includes development of the criminal justice curriculum and the addition of mental health pathways, alongside the ongoing engagement of local schools, colleges and the wider community.
T16a_05	New curriculum continues to be developed, including in areas such as policing and construction and a scholarship has been introduced to specifically target young students progressing to HE and provide direct financial support to them. Targets for increasing the percentage of young white males and young BAME students are carried forward in the approved 2020-21 APP.
T16a_06	Significant investment in additional tutor support has already been made alongside enhanced at-risk monitoring of students. This additional monitoring and support is designed to ensure that all students receive the help they need. Additional hardship funding has also been provided, alongside the provision of IT equipment, to ensure that all students could continue their studies remotely.

T16a_09	Progression to higher level study continues to be a key focus. A new careers and graduate outcomes officer is now in post who will drive progress in this area. This will include an internal early careers survey 6 months after graduation from UCO, to identify graduates in postgraduate study, as well as work within curriculum areas, to drive awareness of postgraduate study options.
T16a_10	Improving progression to graduate level employment continues to be a key focus. The new careers and graduate outcomes officer, alongside newly established employer advisory boards will drive progress in this area. This will include an internal early careers survey 6 months after graduation from UCO, to identify graduates in high level employment as well as work within curriculum areas, to drive awareness and development of important employability skills. Work will also be continued with local employers, to improve the level and availability of graduate level employment locally.

5. Confirmation

The Oldham 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	
The Oldham 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	Alun Francis
Position	Principal and CEO

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

The Oldham College's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16a_04
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Commitments have been met, including access work with local schools, colleges and the community, but progress against target has been slower than expected due to the closure of the largest health related course at UCO.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
The introduction of new social science courses in 2017-18, including criminology and psychology has had a positive effect on the number of males studying these subjects, but from a lower baseline. In 2018-19, 14% of students in the health and social science discipline were male, and this increased to 16% in 2019-20.

Target reference number: T16a_05
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Commitments have been met, including access work with local schools, colleges and the community, and development of new curriculum but progress against target has fluctuated and been slower than anticipated. The commitment as stated in the plan, of achieving 65% younger students has almost been achieved. From the baseline year until 2018-19 a small but steady increase in the number of students aged under 30 was seen, increasing to 72% in 16-17, before dropping back slightly to 70% by 18-19. In 19-20 however, the percentage of under 30 year old students fell to 64%. Reasons for this are unclear but changes made to the curriculum more recently are intended to reverse this.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
New curriculum, targeting a younger demographic, including criminology and accounting has been introduced and has had a positive impact upon the recruitment of younger students, although group sizes are generally small.

Target reference number: T16a_06
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Commitments have been met, and additional support has been provided to all students by way of additional staffing in academic skills, including an ESOL specialist, additional staffing in disability and mental health services and also embedding of the HE tutorial scheme, to provide students with additional tutor contact time and small group and 1:1 support. A peer-mentoring scheme has also been successfully introduced.

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

The Covid-19 pandemic had an impact upon achievement across UCO in 2019-20, halting a three year improving trend. When looking specifically at under-represented groups, all groups saw a fall in achievement in 2019-20, having seen a gradual but sustained improvement in the years prior.

Target reference number: T16a_09

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

Commitments have been met, including further development of the careers and employability service, continued building of links with local and regional employers and the development of live projects and competitions to enhance students employability. Strong partnerships have also been developed with validating universities, to facilitate progression to postgraduate study.

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

The 2017-18 data is taken from the Graduat Outcomes survey results, so direct comparison between the baseline DHLE data is not representative of actual progress due to the timeframe of completion of the GO survey, 15 months after graduation from UCO. Significant work has been undertaken with student groups to support progression to higher level study, and in some curriculum areas, progress is good, particularly in business and psychology.

Target reference number: T16a_10

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

Commitments have been met, closely aligned to those above, in relation to postgraduate study.

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

The 2017-18 data is taken from the Graduat Outcomes survey results, so direct comparison against the baseline target is difficult, due to differences in what is being measured. The wage levels within Oldham and indeed the east of Greater Manchester, are recognised to be significantly lower than regional and national averages. UCO also has a high proportion of courses which, whilst socially valuable, often lead to lower paid careers, including areas such as early years and health and social care. Significant work has been undertaken with student groups and local employers to continue to improve this important area.

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

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

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	The achievement of this target has been based on available data in relation to IMD quintiles. Whilst not an exact proxy for household income, IMD Q1 has been used as an indicator of relative economic deprivation. In 2019-20, 60% of UCO's students lived in an IMD Q1 postcode, equating to some of the most economically deprived areas of the country.
T16a_02	In 2019-20, the percentage of UCO students residing in Oldham was 62% and of those, 35% were from Polar Quintiles 1 & 2, which is a 12% increase from 2014-15
T16a_03	In 2019-20, 51% of students on Business were white, with white students having seen a sustained increase over five years. The percentage of BAME students on Games Art fluctuated however, seeing an increase in some years but falling back in others. Small group sizes for this cohort make identifying meaningful trends difficult.
T16a_04	
T16a_05	
T16a_06	
T16a_07	Continuation between Year 1 and Year 2 has fluctuated across the most recent five year period but has seen a gradual improvement, reaching 85% in 2018-19.
T16a_08	Work began with two local schools in 2019-20 but was halted by the pandemic and associated lockdown. This work will recommence once the circumstances in relation to the pandemic allow.
T16a_09	
T16a_10	
T16b_01	Despite the pandemic, the GM Higher partnership engaged with 141 schools in 2019-20, 19 above target.