



## Access and Participation Statement 2025-2026

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Access and Participation Statement (APS) sets out how Trent Education Centre ('the College') intends to support access and participation in higher education by students from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups, especially people from Black and Asian communities, and [all other students](#) who have missed out on further and higher education, mature students (over 21 years) and students from low participation areas (Quintiles 1 & 2<sup>1</sup>).
- 1.2. It explains how the College already supports access and participation to students from these groups, with functional skills and vocational training from Levels 1-3, and how it intends to develop access and participation further through its developing higher education provision.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1. This Access and Participation Statement (APS) is the first step towards the implementation of Strategic Priority 2 in the College's Strategic Plan; *Widen university level access to people from under-represented and disadvantaged communities.*
  - 2.2. This APS informs all students, staff, stakeholders, and the public about the College's commitment to supporting access and participation to its higher education courses.
- 2.3. This APS ensures that the College complies with the initial and ongoing [OfS condition of registration A2](#): *To register in either of the Approved categories and charge fees up to the basic amount for qualifying undergraduate courses, a provider must publish an access and participation statement.* The College is applying to register with the OfS under the approved category, which permits the College to charge fees up to the basic fee amount and no more. Hence, an Access and Participation Statement (APS) is appropriate, rather than an Access and Participation Plan (APP).

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<sup>1</sup> Quintiles 1 & 2 may refer to areas with a low proportion of residents participating in higher education compared to Quintiles 4 & 5 with a high proportion participating.

### **3. Scope**

- 3.1. This Access and Participation Statement is available on the College website for all stakeholders and the public to access. It is also available on the College VLE (Klaspad), where it will be accessible to all students attending higher education courses at the College (See Appendix 2).
- 3.2. The statement will be renewed annually as a minimum and may be renewed sooner if the facts change and new regulations or guidance are made available.

### **4. Data Protection**

- 4.1. In meeting its obligations to support access and participation to its provision, the College is committed to making responsible use of data that it needs to hold on student protected characteristics including:
  - Age
  - Gender & gender reassignment
  - Marriage & civil partnership
  - Pregnancy & maternity
  - Race
  - Religion & belief
  - Sex
  - Sexual orientation
  - Disability
- 4.2. The College is also committed to making responsible use of student performance metrics including attendance, completion, retention, progression, and continuation<sup>2</sup> rates.
- 4.3. The College has a Data Protection Policy, and Data Privacy Notice & Consent Policy, which set out how the College meets its commitment to the protection of student data according to the UK General Data Protection Regulations and the amended version of the 2018 Data Protection Act. The College is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office Registration Number: Z3126380.

<sup>2</sup> Continuation refers to continuing studies at the College, achieving the qualification, or transferring to another higher education provider.

## 5. College Background

- 5.1. Trent Education Centre (TEC) was founded in February 2012 to provide adults from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups with functional skills and vocational training courses in their local area. The College caters especially for mature students from communities with high levels of unemployment due to a lack of employability skills and knowledge, including Black and Asian communities, and [all other students](#) who have missed out on further and higher education, and those living in low participation areas. Given early successes in attracting and supporting hard to reach students into education and employment, the College opened two more Study Centres, and now has Centres in Nottingham, Leicester, and Birmingham.
- 5.2. In the next phase of its development, the College intends to provide progression opportunities for the students that have completed functional skills and vocational training courses and are keen to progress to higher education courses. The College also intends to attract new students from under-represented groups, especially mature adults who are working and wish to gain promotion, seek new employment opportunities, or start their own businesses.

## 6. Alignment with the Strategic Plan 2024-28

- 6.1. The College's **Mission Statement** declares our intention to improve the life chances of local disadvantaged people from under-represented communities, through access and participation in holistic further and higher education.

*To provide students within local communities with the holistic education they need to improve their life chances.*

- 6.2. One of the College's 7 core values in the [Strategic Plan 2024-28](#) is **Inclusion: widening participation so that no-one gets left behind**. This shows our commitment to supporting access and participation in higher education.
- 6.3. Three of the four Priorities in the College's [Strategic Plan 2024-28](#) also demonstrate the College's commitment to supporting access and participation of disadvantaged students from under-represented groups as outlined in paragraphs 6.4 to 6.6 below.

6.4. *Strategic Priority 2: Widen university level access to people from under-represented and disadvantaged communities.* The objectives for this priority include:

- Attain OfS registration, establish a franchise or service level agreement with at least one university or college partner for the delivery of undergraduate degree programmes in Business, or BTEC Pearson HNDs in Business
- Between 2024 and 2028, recruit 2,325 students for Entry Level and Further Education courses; and recruit 3,701 students for Higher Education courses. The students for all courses will be equally distributed across all the College's Study Centres. According to the current profile of students the College recruits for its Level 1- Level 3 courses, a large proportion of the students in higher education will be from disadvantaged backgrounds and underrepresented groups including Black and Asian communities, and all other students who have missed out on further and higher education, mature students on low incomes or unemployed, and people living in low participation areas.

6.5. *Strategic Priority 3: Give people the opportunity to develop the employability skills they need for gainful employment and career success.* The objectives for this priority include:

- Provide employability workshops for students, continue to develop the thriving Employer's Forum (The College has been running these for the past four years). and set up a micro-business and SME business incubation hub. This objective is tailored to meet the specific needs of the disadvantaged groups we intend to support with access and participation.
- Run conferences where local employers can provide students with opportunities for work placements.

6.6. Given its background in supporting adults with functional skills and vocation training, the College employs a holistic approach to education as stated in Strategic Priority 4. This is implemented by focusing on the social and emotional wellbeing of each student in additional to their academic development. This approach is appropriate for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, especially mature adults who have been out of education for a long time and lack employability skills for gainful employment.

## 7. Our Locations

7.1. The College has three Study Centres, all of which are strategically located in areas of low participation, or with high deprivation amongst the communities we particularly target. Our locations include:

**Nottingham (Head Office)** Digital House 2.3,  
Clarendon Park  
Nottingham, NG5 1AH

**Leicester**  
Humberstone House  
81-83 Humberstone Gate Leicester  
LE1 1WB

**Birmingham**  
Mill Wharf, Mill Street  
Birmingham  
B6 4BS

## 8. Areas of Low/High Participation

City	Postcode	POLAR4 <sup>3</sup> Quintiles <sup>4</sup>	TUNDRA MSOA <sup>5</sup> Quintiles	TUNDRA LSOA <sup>6</sup> Quintiles	Adult HE 2011 <sup>7</sup> Quintiles
Nottingham	<a href="#">NG5 1AH</a>	2	2	2	4
Leicester	<a href="#">LE1 1WB</a>	5			4
Birmingham	<a href="#">B6 4BS</a>	2	4	5	1

Table 1: HE Participation by Area

- 8.1. The above table provides [OfS data](#) on the proportion of participation in higher education by residents in the three postcodes where the College's Study Centres are located.
- 8.2. The data shows that Nottingham and Birmingham postcodes have a low proportion of 18-year-olds who started higher education between 2009-10 and 2013-2014.
- 8.3. Nottingham also has a low proportion of 16-year-old state funded pupils who entered higher education at 18 years of age in both MSOA and LSOA areas.
- 8.4. The Birmingham postcode is classified as quintile 1, which are areas in the UK that have the lowest proportion of people with a higher education qualification in 2011.
- 8.5. The Birmingham location is one of the lowest participation areas for adult higher education in the UK, and the Nottingham and Birmingham locations also have a relatively low proportion of 18-year-old students entering higher education in the UK.

<sup>3</sup> POLAR4 refers to the proportion of 18-year-olds started higher education between 2009-10 and 2013-2014.

<sup>4</sup> Quintile 5 indicates the highest rate of participation and Quintile 1 the lowest rate of participation in the UK.

<sup>5</sup> TUNDRA MSOA refers to the proportion of 16-year-old state funded pupils who entered higher education at 18 years of age in MSOA areas, which usually comprise of between 2,000 and 6,000 households and have between 5,000 and 15,000 residents.

<sup>6</sup> TUNDRA LSOA refers to the proportion of 16-year-old state funded pupils who entered higher education at 18 years of age in LSOA areas, which have a minimum of 1,000 residents and a mean of 1,500.

<sup>7</sup> Adult HE 2011 refers to the proportion of people in an area who had a higher education qualification in 2011.



## 9. Target Student Groups

- 9.1. The College plans to support specific groups of students into higher education, where gaps have been identified in the equality of opportunity. See for example, the [Office for Students Equality Impact Assessment \(Sep 2018\)](#).
- 9.2. Though not exclusively, we plan to specifically target four of the twelve disadvantaged and under-represented groups of students that are listed on page 3 of the [Office for Students Regulatory Advice 7 \(Jul,2018\)](#). These include:
  - Those living in areas of low higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status (see our locations above)
  - Students of certain ethnicities (e.g. Black and Asian and all other students who have missed out on further and higher education)
  - Mature students
  - Carers (People Studying Health & Social Care)

## 10. Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR)

10.1. A students' opportunity to access higher education and to be successful in higher education, may be affected by one or more of the 12 sector-wide risks in the [equality of opportunity risk register \(EORR\)](#).

10.2. The following table identifies how some students at Trent Education Centre may be affected by these EORR risks, and how the College can mitigate the risks.

Risks	How our students are affected	Mitigations
<p><b>Risk 1: Knowledge and skills</b> Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to be accepted onto higher education courses that match their expectations and ambitions.</p>	<p>The College recruits many students facing this lack of opportunity, especially mature students in low incomes who have been out of education for a long time.</p>	<p>The College runs functional skills and vocational training courses from Level 1 to Level 3 that provide students with the English, Maths and other knowledge and skills they may need to enter higher education. The College provides students with holistic support that builds their confidence and self-esteem.</p>
<p><b>Risk 2: Information and guidance</b> Students may not have equal opportunity to receive the information and guidance that will enable them to develop ambition and expectations, or to make informed choice about their higher education options.</p>	<p>The College's students need effective IAG to help them make informed choices about higher education. Students on Level 1 – Level 3 courses need IAG on progression opportunities into higher education.</p>	<p>As stated in the Strategic Plan, the College intends to apply to the Matrix Standard for high-quality IAG, which enables "people to reach their full potential" (Matrix, 2023).</p>
<p><b>Risk 3: Perception of higher education</b> Students may not feel able to apply to higher education, or certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified.</p>	<p>Many of the College's students or potential students do not believe they are young enough or qualified to apply for university level studies. Many are also unaware about the funding opportunities available to them.</p>	<p>The College does outreach to communities to inform people from under-represented groups about recognition of prior learning (RPL) for people with work experience, who may lack formal qualifications, and to inform them about the funding they might access.</p>

Risks	How our students are affected	Mitigations
<p><b>Risk 4: Application success rates</b> Students may not be accepted to a higher education course, or may not be accepted to certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified.</p>	<p>The College students may fail to pass entrance tests or interviews due to a lack of confidence and experience in taking tests and attending interviews.</p>	<p>The College provides additional workshops and support to students on how to write their CV, write and speak about themselves and their personal achievements and goals with confidence and fluency. This helps to prepare students to attend interview and write their personal statements.</p>
<p><b>Risk 5: Limited choice of course type and delivery mode</b> Students may not have equal opportunity to access a sufficiently wide variety of higher education course types.</p>	<p>The College's higher education offer is currently limited to the ATHE Level 4 Extended Diploma in Business and Management.</p>	<p>The College is planning to gain Pearson approval for the HND in Business and is also seeking a partnership with a university to offer degree courses. The College may consider diversifying its portfolio to include higher education courses in Health &amp; Social Care as well as IT in future.</p>
<p><b>Risk 6: Insufficient academic support</b> Students may not receive sufficient personalised academic support to achieve a positive outcome.</p>	<p>Many of the College's non-traditional mature students require academic support from personal tutors in addition to their scheduled classes.</p>	<p>The College is establishing a programme of additional academic support classes for all higher education students who need additional support in English and academic literacy as well digital skills. Employability workshops are also planned.</p>
<p><b>Risk 7: Insufficient personal support</b> Students may not receive sufficient personalised non-academic support or have sufficient access to extracurricular activities to achieve a positive outcome.</p>	<p>The College's students require opportunities to meet Tutors on a one-to-one basis in addition to attending scheduled classes.</p>	<p>The College's Strategic Plan includes assignment of a Personal Tutor to each student and the maintenance of an individually tutored Personal and Professional Development Plan (PPD) that integrates personal, social, and emotional development alongside academic achievement and career planning. The College is committed to maintaining a minimum Academic Staff to Student ratio of 1:30.</p>

Table 2 EORR with Mitigation

10.3. Students considered at risk according to the equality of opportunity risk register will be provided with additional support where possible to mitigate the risk. For example, students in need of knowledge and skills will be signposted to additional support classes.

## 11. Access and Participation Benchmarks

11.1. According to the [House of Commons Library Briefing Report](#) there were 2.86 million students at UK higher education institutions in 2021/22, but there are ongoing concerns about student numbers from certain groups including mature students and some disadvantaged groups.

11.2. According to [January 2024 UCAS application rates](#), out of a total of 335,930 applicants in business and management higher education courses, less than 1% were 30 -34 years old (1,230 - 0.37%), or 25-29 years old (2,830-0.84%). Trent Education Centre (TEC) attracts mature learners to its community learning courses, and recently recruited one class of mature students to its ATHE Level 4 Extended Diploma in Business and Management. The College also plans to offer access for mature students to the Pearson Higher National Diploma in Business.

11.3. According to the [January 2024 UCAS statistics](#) in the table below, 64% of UCAS applicants in all ages and all parts of the UK were White compared to 17% Asian, 9% Black, 6% Mixed, 3% Other and 1% unknown. The College recruits many students for its functional skills and vocational courses from all ethnic communities in Nottingham, Leicester, and Birmingham, and intends to provide access to its higher education provision to students from all communities, especially Black, Asian and all other students ([including White](#)) who have missed out on further and higher education.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 %
Asian	63,520	70,140	73,540	76,520	79,260	17%
Black	35,530	40,690	41,780	43,020	44,380	9%
Mixed	22,450	25,830	27,660	28,020	29,690	6%
Other	9,860	11,110	12,640	13,810	15,160	3%
Unknown	4,330	4,810	4,370	4,530	4,590	1%
White	316,530	352,170	339,330	315,780	306,130	64%
	452,220	504,750	499,320	481,680	479,210	100%

Table 2: UCAS Data 15 Feb 2024 (Ethnicity, England, UK)

11.4. The data in the table below, taken from [HESA](#), shows what percentages of students according to five personal characteristics of Gender, Age, Disability, Religious belief, and Ethnicity, were in all types of full-time higher education courses in England between 2017/18 and 2021/22. The percentages have remained steady over the five academic years.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Gender</b>					
Female	56%	57%	57%	57%	57%
Male	44%	43%	43%	43%	43%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Age Group</b>					
20 and under	62%	61%	61%	59%	59%
21-24 years	24%	24%	24%	24%	23%
25-29 years	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%
30 years and over	9%	9%	10%	11%	13%
<b>Disability status</b>					
Known disability	16%	17%	18%	19%	20%
No known disability	84%	83%	82%	81%	80%
<b>Religious belief</b>					
No religion		49%	49%	47%	46%
Buddhist		1%	0%	0%	0%
Christian		32%	31%	32%	32%
Hindu		2%	2%	2%	2%
Jewish		1%	1%	1%	1%
Muslim		12%	12%	13%	14%
Sikh		1%	1%	1%	1%
Spiritual		1%	1%	2%	2%
Any other religion/belief		2%	2%	2%	2%
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
White	69%	68%	67%	66%	65%
Black	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
Asian	14%	15%	15%	16%	16%
Mixed	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Other	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Not known					
<b>Total UK domiciled</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4: HESA data on HE enrolments by Personal Characteristics 2017/18-2021/22

11.5. In the last academic year (2021/22) 57% of students were female compared to 43% male, 59% 20 years or under compared to 13% 30 years or over and only 6% aged 21-

24, 20% had a known disability, 46% had no religious belief compared to 32% Christian and 14% Muslim, and most significantly, 65% were White compared to 10% Black and 16% Asian.

11.6. These figures support the College's strategy to specifically (though not exclusively) target mature students, and students from Black and Asian communities, to support access and participation in higher education from under-represented groups. This includes targeting mature White students and all other students who have missed out on further and higher education.

## 12. Student Admissions

The College provides equality of opportunities to all applications through fair and transparent student recruitment and [admissions policy and processes](#). Students have full access to the College's [Terms and Conditions](#) and [Tuition Fees, Refunds and Compensation Policy](#), which are available on the College website.

During the recruitment and admissions process, the College provides students with the following information in compliance with [Consumer Protection Law](#), and the [Competition and Markets Authority \(CMA\)](#):

- The number of Guided Learning (Contact) Hours (GLH)
- The number of expected Self-Study Hours making up the Total Qualification Time (TQT)
- The total costs of the course including fees plus any additional costs the student may incur

All public information provided to prospective students and active students is checked and approved by the Head of Quality or person(s) delegated by the Head of Quality. All marketing and recruitment materials are vetted to ensure they comply with the College's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.

Students can enrol into a higher education if they are legally eligible and meet entry requirements. Mature students who do not have formal qualifications will be able to gain entry if they can demonstrate relevant prior learning through work experience. This allows non-traditional mature students an opportunity to access higher education that they are equipped for through the experience they have gained in the workplace.

## 13. Monitoring Access and Participation

- 13.1. The College will monitor and review its recruitment and service provision to students and the quality of the overall **student experience** at all stages of the student journey from admissions, enrolment, and inductions to personal tutoring with holistic student support and welfare, access to the virtual learning environment, IT, and library resources. Alumni will be permitted access to their email, the library and support services for up to six months after they graduate.
- 13.2. The College will monitor its **recruitment of students** against intended plans to provide access to 3,701 students into higher education courses over the next five years from the current academic year 2023/24 to academic year 2027/28. This includes plans to recruit students into the Pearson BTEC Higher National Diploma in Business and a BA (Hons) degree programme through a partnership arrangement with a university.
- 13.3. Students will be recruited from all locations where the College has **Study Centres**, including Nottingham, Leicester, and Birmingham. Given the evidence from data provided in this Access and Participation Statement, more students will be targeted from low participation areas in Birmingham and Nottingham. It is expected that as the College grows, in addition to mature students the College may recruit more traditional students, who possess Level 3 qualifications and are between the ages of 18 and 25.
- 13.4. Student recruitment and admissions teams will be monitored to ensure that all students admitted have been fairly assessed and meet the **entry criteria** for the course for which they are applying. This monitoring process will be overseen by the Head of Quality.
- 13.5. As part of the annual review cycle, the College will conduct a **gap analysis** of student attendance, completion, retention, progression, and continuation rates according to personal and protected characteristics of students including sex, age, and ethnicity. This analysis will inform the annual improvement plan and include interventions to close any attainment gaps identified.
- 13.6. This Access and Participation Statement (APS) will be guided and approved by the **Academic Board** on an annual basis. The Academic Board has an independent member and student representation, which ensures that the student voice is heard when finalising, amending, and renewing the APS.
- 13.7. The Academic Board reports to the **Board of Governors** a minimum of three times per annum and the Board of Governors Terms of Reference will include a report on the status of the APS as a standing item. The Board of Governors also includes independent members and a student representative.
- 13.8. The Access and Participation Statement will be reviewed and **renewed annually** as a minimum, or sooner if amendments are required. After its approval by the Academic Board the APS will be uploaded on the College website and VLE.

## **14. Concluding Statement**

- 14.1. The College is committed to recruiting students from the disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups it has identified, including students from low participation areas, mature students on low incomes or unemployed, Black, and Asian students, and all other students who have missed out on further and higher education.
- 14.2. The College will provide multiple entry routes where possible to make higher education courses accessible to students from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups.
- 14.3. The College will expand its portfolio and adapt existing programmes of study where possible to provide courses that meet the needs and interests of students from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups.
- 14.4. The College will make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities or special needs when teaching and administering examinations and assessments.
- 14.5. The College is committed to making ongoing improvements to the attendance, completion, retention, progression, and continuation rates of disadvantaged students, and those from under-represented communities, especially those identified in the equality of opportunity risk register as being at risk.
- 14.6. The College will attempt to reduce attainment gaps with interventions for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups.
- 14.7. The College will enhance and grow its support services to ensure support staff are available to monitor and support students with attendance and engagement, assignment submissions and mitigating circumstances.
- 14.8. All students will be given training and equal opportunities to complain and appeal to staff, including academic appeals and appeals against admissions decisions.
- 14.9. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups will be provided with employability support and training.



## 15. Appendix A: Online application form

<b>First Line of Address *</b>		
<input type="text"/>		
<b>City *</b>	<b>Country *</b>	<b>Postal Code *</b>
<input type="text"/>	United Kingdom <input type="button" value="v"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Previous Qualification Level</b>	<b>Country of birth *</b>	<b>Nationality *</b>
Prefer Not to Answer <input type="button" value="v"/>	United Kingdom <input type="button" value="v"/>	United Kingdom
<b>Ethnicity *</b>	<b>Visa Status *</b>	
Any Other Asian Background <input type="button" value="v"/>	UK Citizen - English	
<b>Which course are you applying for? *</b>		
ATHE Level 4 Extended Diploma in Business and Management		

**When would you like to start study? \***

May 2024

n? \*

**Preferred Study Centre Location \***

Nottingham

**Employment Status \***

Unemployed

No disability

**If yes, what type of benefits you are receiving \***

Universal Credit

**If other, please give details**

Drop files here or

[select files](#)

Large empty text area for providing details.

**ID Back Picture**

Drop files here or [select files](#)

Max. file size: 4 MB, Max. files: 1.

**Qualification/Work reference letter, P60**

Drop files here or [select files](#)

Max. file size: 4 MB, Max. files: 1.

**Proof of address**

Drop files here or [select files](#)

Max. file size: 4 MB, Max. files: 1.

**Right To Work**

Drop files here or [select files](#)

**National Insurance Number**

Drop files here or [select files](#)

Max. file size: 10 MB, Max. files: 1.

**Terms & Conditions \***

I agree to the [terms and conditions](#).

**Untitled**

First Choice

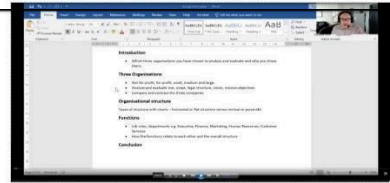
[Submit](#)

1

### My Progress

Total credits: 0 (Not verified on Futarium)

The Business Environment    People in Organisations    Policies and Procedures    Access and Participation Statement



#### ATHE Level 4 Extended Diploma in Business and Management



The course offers students broad and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of business.

It covers 8 units on a wide range of business and management related topics. Students with this qualification can progress to Level 5 Extended Diplomas in Business and Management.

audio/videoid(0)

#### Modules



The Business Environment



Policies and Procedures



People in Organisations



Access and Participation Statement...

#### Topics & Resources

##### The Business Environment

- 1. Types of organisations
- 2. Meeting objectives of different stakeholders
- 3. Understand the structure of organisations, Organisational structures

##### The Business Environment

Unit 1 Business Environment Assignment

Impact of globalisation

#### Assessments ATHE Level 4 Extended Diploma in Business and Management

So far there are no assessment for you.