

South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS)

Summary of 2020-21 to 2024-25 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

You can see the full access and participation plan for SGS at <https://www.sgscol.ac.uk/policies>

Key points

SGS College provides full time and part time higher education courses in South Gloucestershire and Bristol to a broad demographic of over 700 students.

See page 1-6 of our full plan

Our access and participation plan is focussed on supporting specific groups of students to access our higher education courses and to improve their outcomes. Our data shows that students from some underrepresented groups at SGS have lower outcomes than others.

Student groups that are less likely to access higher education courses at SGS:

- Students, particularly those who identify as male, living in more deprived areas (using the Index of Multiple Deprivation which measures relative deprivation in local areas)
- Ethnic minority students.

Student groups that are less likely to complete their studies at SGS:

- Students, particularly those who identify as male, who come from areas where not many young people go on to higher education (low participation neighbourhoods)
- Students with disabilities or learning difficulties
- Students who are over 21 years old when starting their course

We have made progress in improving access and outcomes for these groups of students, but we still have more progress to make.

Fees we charge

At SGS, the maximum fees we charge are:

- £9,000 for full-time students
- £4,250 for part-time students

See page 21 of our full plan

You can see a full list of fees for all higher education courses at SGS at:

[Courses A-Z | University Centre WISE \(sgscol.ac.uk\)](#)

Financial help available

We offer financial support to students from underrepresented groups. This helps students access higher education and to continue studying until their course is completed. The support at SGS includes:

- An **annual bursary** of £500* for the duration of the course if the student's household income is below £25,000, or for students aged over 24 who are re-entering education, or for students aged 25 and under who are caring for someone at home.
- An **annual bursary** of £1000* for the duration of the course for students aged 18-21 who, before turning 18, were under the care of a Local Authority or a Health and Social Care Trust.
- A Scholarship (**fee waiver** of £1000*) for the duration of the course for students aged over 24 when they first join the course and who are re-entering education

***Annual amounts for full time students. Part time students receive the same total amount of bursary over the longer duration of their course.**

Information for students

- The most up to date Information on fees and financial support is available on our website: [Bursaries & Scholarships | University Centre WISE \(sgscol.ac.uk\)](https://www.sgscol.ac.uk/Bursaries-Scholarships)
- Our Admissions Team provides support throughout the application process and gives advice and support on fees and student finance to both prospective and current students: HEAdmissions@sgscol.ac.uk.

What we are aiming to achieve

Our overall aims are to support students from all backgrounds into higher education and to support all our students to successfully complete their studies with positive outcomes. We aim to create an environment at SGS where all of our students can thrive.


We have looked carefully at our performance, identifying key areas for us to focus on and we have created these aims and targets:

- **Students from deprived areas and low participation neighbourhoods** – By 2024-25, we will increase the number of students from deprived areas accessing higher education at SGS by 10% **and** improve our continuation rate (the proportion of students continuing to the next year of their course) by 19% for male students from low participation neighbourhoods.
- **Ethnic Minority Students** – By 2024-25, we will increase the number of ethnic minority students accessing higher education at SGS by 10%.
- **Disabled Students** – By 2024-25, we will improve our continuation rate for disabled students by 5%.
- **Mature Students** – By 2024-25, we will improve our continuation rate for mature students (aged over 21 years) by 8%.

What we are doing to achieve our aims

We have identified six areas of activity to help us achieve our aims and reach our targets:

1. Continue to offer and develop **flexible modes of delivery** for courses to give the widest possible choice for students.
2. Provide **financial, study support and wellbeing support** to our higher education students.
3. We have created a **Widening Participation and Retention Group** to plan and evaluate activities, and to monitor progress against our Access and Participation Plan targets.
4. Embed and promote **study skills, academic skills, IT and communication skills** to support our students transitioning into, and through our higher education courses.
5. Continue to develop **collaboration with external partners and local employers** to support students to access higher education courses and to provide students with increased opportunities to progress into further studies or to find industry relevant employment
6. **Embed inclusivity and diversity** in our course design and the ways we assess student work



See page
16 of our
full plan

How students can get involved


Our access and participation plan was developed in consultation with our higher education students. Our students are also an important part of our Widening Participation and Retention group which monitors progress against our targets and aims. We actively encourage student input into decision making at SGS.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

We use data and feedback to make sure that we effectively evaluate what we are doing is working to help us achieve our aims and targets set out in our plan.

Specifically, we evaluate:

- Our activity to support our aims and targets (as stated above)
- Course design



See page
17-18 of our
full plan

Our Widening Participation and Retention Group and Higher Education Steering Group is responsible for the development, monitoring and evaluation of our plan and the impact of activity against specific target groups. These groups report all findings to the SGS Further Education College Corporation which ensures progress against our aims and yearly milestones.

Contact details for further information

You can contact Dr Jo Kear by emailing the Curriculum Standards and Quality Team at SGS College: csqteam@sgscol.ac.uk for further information.