

Statement of Contribution to the Public Good

Gower College Swansea

Address:
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The College is committed to the provision of a distinct Higher Education (HE) experience, which eases the transition between further and higher education. The choice and design of programmes is intended to be highly vocational, responsive to industry and employability driven. The key aspects of the student experience emphasise the continued development of a Gower College HE culture and community with a consistent experience regardless of franchise or awarding body. The approach is based on aspiration raising and the provision of unique learning opportunities. The College is committed to providing clear progression routes that deliver the benefits of higher level skills and qualifications for these learners.

In line with this the College looks to enhance progression, development and employment opportunities contributing to the public good through:

- Promotion of HE in sectors and communities with, currently, low progression
- Addressing areas where higher level skills are required for employment and progression
- Offering niche areas not offered by local Universities giving greater student choice and opportunity
- Delivering curriculum which is informed by Industry demand, priority and developing sectors
- Delivering curriculum which is vocational relevant with an employability emphasis including those traditionally seen as academic route

Groups Under-Represented in Higher Education

The College considers that groups under-represented in Higher Education include:

Parental Education – Students whose parents have not previously studied in Higher Education

Domiciled in Areas of Low Participation or High Deprivation – Students who live in neighbourhoods with low participation in higher education and/or students domiciled in wards defined as being amongst the most deprived.

Disabled Students – Students who have a disability, defined by students receiving Disabled Students Allowance.

September 2021

BME Students – Students who identify as being from BME Groups.

College Targets and Baseline with regard to the Equality of Opportunity and Promotion of Higher Education for groups under-represented.

Measurement against external information

The College will measure against the **HESA HE student enrolments by personal characteristics** using the most current data set, starting with 2017/18. It will also measure **against UK domiciled full-time HE undergraduate student enrolments by participation characteristics**. The specific comparators will be for; Country of HE Provider: Wales; Level of Study: Other undergraduate; Mode of Study: Full Time. This most closely represents the profile of Higher Education delivered by the College under its specifically designated provision. Both are available at <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/whos-in-he>. The College will also use census data to measure proportions of the population identifying as being from BME groups.

For the identified groups under-represented in HE the specific external comparison measures will be:

- 1) Parental Education - % of students reporting No for parental Higher Education. (Student Data Source: UCAS)
- 2) Domiciled in Areas of Low Participation – Number and percentage of students living in Low participation neighbourhoods as defined by Polar 4 Quartile 1 - (Student Data Source: College Enrolment Records)
- 3) Domiciled in Areas of High Deprivation – Number and percentage of students living in wards defined as being within the 20% most deprived areas on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 - (Student Data Source: College Enrolment Records)
- 4) Disabled Students – Number and percentage of Students receiving Disabled Students Allowance - (Student Data Source: College Enrolment Records)
- 5) BME Students – Number and percentage of students identifying as being from BME groups - (Student Data Source: College Enrolment Records)

College benchmark

The College will use the 2018-19 academic year cohort as its baseline to establish and measure its internal performance against the above criteria on a year by year basis. This is the first cohort studying on specifically designated provision.

Initial baseline to be established based on the above cohort with comparison against external measures indicated above for criteria 1-5.

College Enrolment Targets (Initial baseline 18-19)

Enrolments for criteria 1-5 to be at least 5% above external measures.

Enrolments for criteria 1-5 to see a 5% year on year increase

College Outcome Targets (initial baseline 19-20)

Full award attainment for criteria 1-5 to be at least that of students not identifying under those characteristics.

Equality of Opportunity

The College is committed to providing and enhancing equality of opportunity for student to access Higher Education. Examples of how the College demonstrates this include:

- A higher education bursary scheme offering between £500 and £1000 per year for students progressing to full time HE courses at the College. This supports equality of opportunity for students such as those living in areas of high deprivation.
- A hardship fund which supports students in financial difficulties to undertake their studies. This supports equality of opportunity for students such as those living in areas of high deprivation.
- In March 2018 the College formally opened a bespoke Higher Education Centre at the Ty Coch Campus which is highly accessible and provides a supportive and open environment with a distinctive HE culture. This supports equality of opportunity for students including disabled learners and those whose parents have not studied in HE through providing an environment and culture which bridges the gap between further and higher education.
- Compressed and consistent timetabling to allow part-time employment alongside study.
- Teaching and learning focus supported by the Vocational and Industry expertise of staff combined with relatively small class sizes and study support.
- Student Support Officers who work with students at both FE and HE to remove non educational barriers to progression and achievement. This supports learners from all groups identified as underrepresented in HE.
- Enhanced levels of student support as compared to studying at a University whilst achieving the same qualification. This supports learners from all groups identified as underrepresented in HE.

Promotion of Higher Education

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The College is committed to the promotion of Higher Education. Examples of how the College demonstrates this include:

- Events and activities around aspiration raising including demonstrating the benefits to students with regard to higher earning potential and greater social mobility including careers days with employers support. This promotes higher education as for students such as those living in areas of high deprivation.
- Events and activities around aspiration raising for specific groups including individuals resident in areas previously classed as Communities First Areas. This promotes higher education as for students such as those living in areas of high deprivation.
- HE taster sessions delivered within the new HE facilities aimed at removing barriers and addressing concerns around readiness to progress. This supports learners from all groups identified as underrepresented in HE.
- Utilising learner familiarity with tutors and the College combined with progression events including transport from other campuses. This supports learners from all groups identified as underrepresented in HE.

Investment in Public Good

The College invests 16% of its higher education income on ongoing public good related to Equality of Opportunity and Promotion of Higher Education in addition to its large capital investment in HE facilities.