



Access Agreement

2017 – 2018

New College Nottingham (ncn) is a bastion of social mobility and opportunity.

ncn provides real ladders of opportunity, at all stages, to help people achieve their potential.

From the provision of basic literacy and numeracy skills, to providing opportunities for those who have not prospered in mainstream schooling to resit their GCSEs.

ncn provides a wide range of opportunities for mature students to study Access to Higher Education programmes, and for students to learn a skill, trade or craft.

There are opportunities for school and college leavers to develop their learning at level 3 before progressing to higher education, right through to the opportunity to study a degree course in their local community.

Providing individuals with the opportunity to achieve their potential is what we are all about

We serve our community

We are proud of our students and all that they achieve



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1. Introduction

New College Nottingham (ncn) is committed to widening access to higher education and to the principle that individuals with the potential to benefit from higher education should have the opportunity to do so. This access agreement will outline these commitments. The agreement has been informed by the National Strategy for Access and Student Success which lays down our strategic and whole student lifecycle approach to widening access and enhancing student success. This agreement takes account of the changes to the fair access landscape and goals around improving social mobility for higher education students beginning full or part-time study programmes in the 2017/18 academic year.

2. The College

New College Nottingham (**ncn**) is a large general Further Education College formed from a series of mergers in 1998/99 between four colleges in the Nottingham conurbation. The College has four main campuses: **ncn** Basford Hall, **ncn** Clarendon, **ncn** City and **ncn** High Pavement Sixth Form College. The city campus, in the heart of the city's creative quarter, comprises the Broadway and historic Adams building, as well as 25 Stoney Street, the home of **ncn**'s School of Art and Design.

ncn's mission is embedded within the Access agreement: '*Excellence, employability and enterprise: our promise to present and future generations*'. This is underpinned by ncn's shared values which summarises the College's ethos and reflects how ncn seeks to work with students, staff, stakeholders and employers. These shared values include:

- Corporate
- Can do
- Creative
- Collaborative
- Courageous
- Celebrating
- Communicative

These values form the impetus for embedding the right culture of delivery for the strategic touchstones of excellence, employability and enterprise.

In support of this, ncn's Higher Education (HE) Strategy 2015-2017 states that ncn will;

"...encourage a culture of stakeholder involvement to enable ncn to shape their provision and opportunities to meet the needs of all learners. To continually review and improve the learner experience by responding effectively to feedback and integrating stakeholders in all processes"

The strategy is underpinned by the belief that effective education is best achieved through engaging all stakeholders with the institution, with a shared vision, strategy and operational plan for achieving strategic priorities.

3. The Context

The context in which the College operates provides an added dimension to the education and training provided. The College serves a city that faces some fundamental educational and socio-economic challenges.

The key educational challenge is low levels of achievement across schools in the City. In 2014, average achievement for Nottingham schools of five GCSEs at grades A*-C, including English and Maths, was 44%, significantly underperforming against a national average of 57%. There is also a low level of skills amongst the adult population, particularly in the inner city and the city fringe estates.

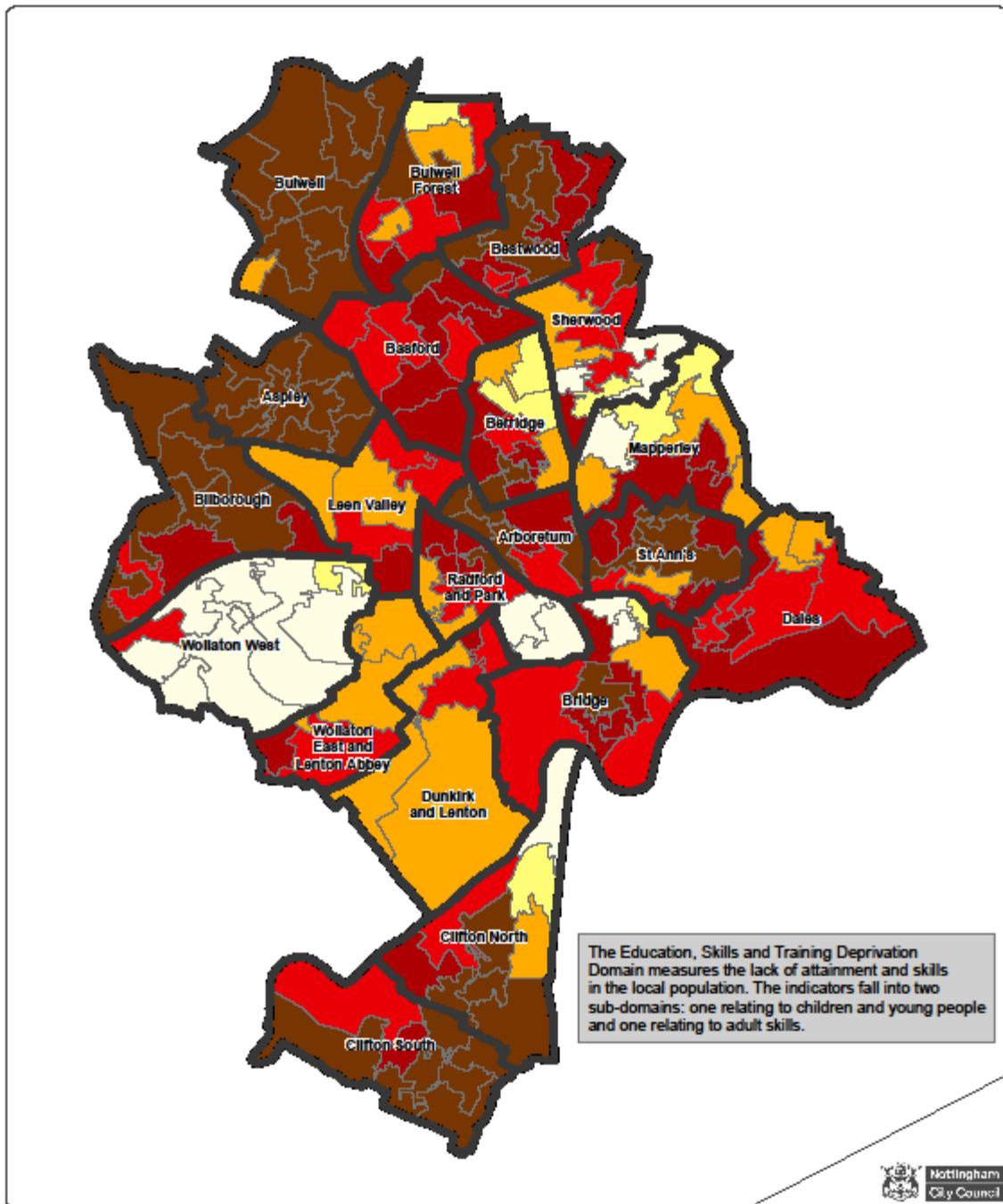
In terms of disadvantage, Nottingham has a very high proportion of children in out-of-work families. In 2014, 31.8% of children (child benefit claimants) were living in households where all adults were out of work and receiving workless benefits. In 2015, 17% of the total working age population were DWP benefit claimants resulting in intergenerational unemployment which continues to be a high priority issue in the City.

The City of Nottingham is the 8th most deprived Local Authority District (out of 326) in England, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation from the Indices of Deprivation 2015. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation are generated from different domains including; Income, Employment, Health and Disabilities, Education Skills and Training, Barriers to Housing and Services, and Crime.

Nottingham City comprises 182 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). In England, there are 32,844 Lower Super Output Areas and each one has been ranked according to the measures of deprivation. 1 is the most deprived and 32,844 is the least deprived. In total, 61 of the 182 City LSOAs fall amongst the 10% most deprived in the country. 110 fall in the 20% most deprived. The lowest ranking LSOA in the City is in Bulwell, which ranks 63rd nationally out of 32,482, and is one of two City LSOAs ranking in the most deprived 100 Super Output Areas in the country – the other being the area of Aspley, ranked 78th.

Educationally, the level of disadvantage is even greater, with the City of Nottingham ranked the 6th most deprived Local Authority District (out of 326) in England, using the Education, Skills and Training Domain average score.

Education, Skills and Training Deprivation 2015 | Nottingham City



Key

- Wards
- Super Output Areas (2011)

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National Rank of Super Output Areas

Worst 10%	40.1% to 50%
10.1% to 20%	60.1% to 80%
20.1% to 40%	80.1% to 100%

To find out more please see <http://www.nottinghaminsight.org.uk/insight/key-datasets/indices-of-multiple-deprivation-2015.aspx>

Analysis and Insight
INFORMATION
MANAGEMENT SERVICES

New College Nottingham works extensively to improve educational opportunities for the Nottingham Community. The College's student body reflects this profile, with a significant proportion of students drawn from the most disadvantaged areas.

New College Nottingham makes a substantial contribution to widening participation and social mobility, not just through its own higher education programmes, but through the support and guidance it provides for level 3 students progressing to higher education generally. In 2014/15, ncn supported 975 students to secure a place on higher education programmes, both locally and nationally, and on a broad range of vocational and academic subjects.

This access agreement has three core themes; Access, Retention and Student Success, and Progression to further Study or to Employment. This document will outline some of the work undertaken and will also highlight priorities with an outline of the ambitious targets and milestones set to continue to further support the fair access landscape and social mobility goals.

4. Equality and Diversity Statement

New College Nottingham is committed to equality of opportunity for all who learn and work here. ncn respects and values the diversity of staff, students, contractors, governors, visitors, and the wider community served, and strives to create a positive working and learning environment where everyone is encouraged to reach their full potential. The College constantly seeks to improve what it offers and how it delivers services to meet the changing needs of learners and local employers.

The Nottingham context is as follows:

- BME groups: The 2011 census shows 28.5% of the population as being from BME groups, an increase from 19% in 2001.
- Disability: Nottingham has a higher than average rate of people with a limiting long-term illness or disability. BME groups tend to have higher rates of limiting long-term illness or disability than White British people, particularly in the older age-groups;
- Socio-economic disadvantage: Nottingham is ranked 8th most deprived district in England in the 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)
- Educational disadvantage: Nottingham is ranked 6th most deprived district in England using the Education, Skills and Training Domain average score, in the 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

The higher education community at ncn is reflective of the local community:

- 77% of bursary recipients are from low income households (under £25,000)
- 20.3% of higher education students disclosed a disability at enrolment
- 12.3% of higher education students disclosed a learning difficulty
- 24% of students are from BME groups

The College is committed to reviewing and monitoring the level of assistive technology for students with learning difficulties to ensure that support for students is appropriate. We will also review closely, support for disabled students, to ensure that those with disabilities are not affected by the changes to Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) for those entering HE in 2016/17, and that reasonable adjustments are made to offset this change in DSA support. Disabled students are contacted as soon as they apply through UCAS, with information and advice regarding DSA to ensure they are fully supported through the process.

An equality impact assessment has been carried out on our access agreement to ensure we meet our responsibilities to both students and communities served including consultation with students.

Student Consultation

In producing this agreement ncn has consulted with students over the previous academic year. This has been in the form of Student Voice forums and student engagement meetings, focusing on how the college can better support students into employment and/or further study, and how to enhance student success whilst on programme.

The College has also consulted recently with students regarding the financial support package now offered through the agreement, both in terms of the benefits of the scheme and also around possible changes to enhance the package further to support students in their studies.

The College has also reviewed with students, the additional academic support that is provided through its ACES team to ensure this is an effective form of support.

5. Core Theme 1 - Access

ncn has a strong track record on widening participation in higher education. The Participation of Local Areas classification (known as POLAR) is a UK-wide area-based measure that groups geographical areas according to the proportion of young people living in them who participate in higher education (HE). The POLAR3 classification is found to closely correlate with other measures of disadvantage. POLAR captures a specific form of disadvantage, educational disadvantage relating to participation in higher education.

An analysis of POLAR3 postcode areas against student population data in 2015/16 revealed that 31.3% of full-time higher education students were from areas designated in quintile 1 for young participation, with 58.1% living in areas designated in both quintile 1 and 2. These are the wards with the lowest levels of participation in higher education, in this respect the College performs significantly above the average HEI.

Given the changes to the fair access landscape and the new goals around social mobility, ncn makes a significant contribution to both social and labour mobility, particularly for those who face disadvantage as a result of where they live. Consistently around 94% of ncn graduates are in work or further study six months after completing their higher education programme.

A breakdown of the higher education student population by participation type is given in the table below, including both adult and young participation, for students living in areas that are designated in quintiles 1 and 2:

Participation Type	qYPR Quintile 1	qYPR Quintile 2	qYPR Quintiles 1 + 2
All Higher Education Students	30.1%	27.7%	57.8%
Full Time Higher Education Study	31.3%	26.8%	58.1%
Part Time Higher Education Study	26.3%	30.4%	56.8%

Participation Type	qAHE Quintile 1	qAHE Quintile 2	qAHE Quintiles 1 + 2
All Higher Education Students	25%	24.6%	49.6%
Full Time Higher Education Study	24%	24.4%	48.4%
Part Time Higher Education Study	28.4%	24.8%	53.2%

ncn also has a strong track record in providing access to HE and supporting disabled students. In 2015/16, 20.3% of all higher education students disclosed a disability at enrolment, with 12.3% of all higher education students reporting a learning disability. The higher education student population reflects the local context with a BME student population of 24%.

In terms of National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC), 53% of higher education students were from backgrounds in NS-SEC bands 4-7. ncn provides access for under-represented groups and this further supports social mobility.

The College attracts a significant proportion of students from low income backgrounds. An analysis of 2014/15 bursary data revealed that 53% of full-time students were eligible for bursaries. Of those eligible, 77% received a full maintenance grant and therefore had a total combined household income of £25,000 or less.

Access for full-time students is not problematic. However, part-time students are becoming increasingly difficult to attract following the change in the HEFCE/SLC funding model. This is a national trend with falling numbers of part-time enrolments.

In 2017-18, part-time higher education course fees will be below the OFFA threshold of £4,500. It is anticipated that part-time higher education course fees will be differentiated and discounted to support the recruitment of part-time students. It is clear that part-time study is very price sensitive; therefore this measure will help to support the recruitment of part-time students. A higher percentage of our part-time students are mature learners. Consequently, this measure will also support the recruitment of mature students.

As part of our commitment to long term outreach work, ncn works extensively with local schools, colleges and community groups to engage in learning opportunities. The College has both maintained and developed its schools and colleges partnerships and in 2014/15 undertook educational outreach work with 37 different schools and colleges, delivering a wide range of activities to 12,015 local school pupils in years 9-13. The College has also increased its attendance at the UCAS higher education conventions, attending 15 days in total during 2015/16. This will include the East Midlands convention, Sheffield, Manchester, Worcester, Norwich, London, Staffordshire, Lincolnshire, Birmingham, and the West and North Yorkshire events. The UCAS higher education conventions provide an opportunity to engage and reach out to thousands of prospective students.

In addition to working with schools, colleges and UCAS events, ncn works extensively on community events and projects that reach out to different sections of the Nottingham community. These events include the Nottingham North based 'What Next' careers and opportunities fair, Nottingham Mela, Nottingham Pride, Nottingham Jobs Fair, the Splendour festival and Arnold Carnival.

During 2014/15 and 2015/16, ncn became part of a National Network for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO). The North East Midlands Collaborative Outreach Network (NEMCON) aims to encourage more young people into higher education and to deliver a nationally coordinated approach to working with schools, universities

and colleges, to help people access higher education. NEMCON members include: Bishop Grosseteste University, Central College Nottingham, Chesterfield College, Derby College, Loughborough College, New College Nottingham, Nottingham Trent University, Stephenson College, University of Nottingham, West Nottinghamshire College.

During this project ncn has successfully delivered a programme of collaborative family suppers and school visits. The college has also been successful in a NEMCON project bid to recruit a Widening Participation Officer to commence from summer 2016. This will be a shared role, working in partnership with another local further education college. The Widening Participation Officer will deliver widening participation activities and provide specialist information, advice and guidance to prospective higher education students, in schools and colleges. This will include information about student finance, UCAS applications, and finding appropriate courses of study, in addition to working on community based activities.



Our Work in Action - A Family Supper event held at New College Nottingham, delivered in partnership with Nottingham Trent University and the University of Derby. Students and their parents/carers have the opportunity to find out about higher education over a hot meal. Participant evaluations show these events to be highly effective. New College Nottingham works collaboratively, with local HEI and college partners, to raise awareness of the opportunities available and to promote progression to higher education.

Following the end of the funded period for the network, in 2016/17, ncn will seek to continue working in collaboration with partner organisations, with specific consideration given to those collaborative activities or projects that are deemed to have been most effective through the evaluation process. At the time of publication HEFCE was beginning to release information regarding funding opportunities for consortia of universities, further education colleges, private higher education providers, sixth form colleges, schools, charities, Local Enterprise Partnerships, local authorities and other local partners, to submit proposals to run programmes of collaborative outreach in specific, local areas where higher education participation is low overall and lower than would be expected given GCSE (KS4) attainment rates.

New College Nottingham will explore the opportunities available to contribute towards this programme of work.

The continued expansion of Access to Higher Education Diplomas at ncn will further support increased numbers of mature learners to progress to higher education both at the College and at other higher education institutions. ncn currently has in excess of 400 Access to Higher Education students. The College is successful in recruiting mature students to its higher education programmes. In 2014/15, students' age profiles ranged from 17-56 years old, the mean average age was 24 years old, and 58% of the entire higher education student population was aged 21 or over.

The College will seek to develop more flexible approaches to part-time learning and has already made some progress in this area with its higher and degree apprenticeship programmes. In a collaborative partnership with Middlesex University, ncn delivers a higher apprenticeship framework incorporating a level 5 Foundation degree, or a level 6 BA (Hons), to students employed full-time in the construction industry. This model will be explored for further development in other areas. In 2016, ncn saw the first higher apprenticeship Construction Site Management graduates in the UK.

The parliamentary constituency area of Nottingham North faces significant challenges with its progression rates to higher education. Higher education progression figures show that just 16% of young people at age 18 move onto higher education, making this one of the lowest levels nationally. New College Nottingham has recently invested 27 million pounds in completely redeveloping its Basford Hall campus which lies at the heart of this constituency area, to support educational attainment, achievement and skills development.

The website for Graham Allen, MP for Nottingham North states that:

“Nottingham North, is typical of those ex-manufacturing areas (Raleigh bicycles, mining and textiles have all gone elsewhere) with high levels of unemployment, low educational attainment and social deprivation. Some of many revealing statistics are that Nottingham North sends the fewest number of young people to university of any constituency in the UK, and have double the average number both of single parent households and free school meals”

“This is a great investment into Nottingham North and will help to give our young people a kick start to their careers and offer them a brighter future”

ncn is currently the only education provider delivering higher education programmes within the Nottingham North area. In 2014/15, ncn had 91 higher education students from this constituency area. Proportionally, 14% of the entire full-time higher education student body were from Nottingham North, along with 9% of all part-time

students. Providing and supporting opportunities for higher education progression in Nottingham North is a key priority.

ncn works hard to ensure students make the transition to higher education. All students are provided with an ncn 'Welcome Pack' before they enrol on their course, usually during the summer period. This resource is developed for all students, but contains targeted advice and guidance to help disadvantaged students make their transition to higher education. It contains a range of information about starting at New College Nottingham, including information on financial support, and advice and guidance for disabled students and care leavers. The pack also contains information about how to access additional academic support to help non-traditional HE entrants. This is complemented by a by a large 'Welcome' event on the first day, to formally welcome all new students to the College, and to provide a range of important support information.

Some curriculum areas, for example Fashion and Design, also offer a short two week bridging course before the commencement of their course to upskill students that are returning to education at no cost to the students.

New College Nottingham has made big strides in the number of students it has supported to progress onto higher education programmes across the board. A recent longitudinal study over the period 2006-2014, shows the total number of students placed on higher education programmes, through UCAS, has increased by 66% over an eight year period.

Academic Year (entry)	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No of students placed	588	672	770	739	749	850	801	846	975

In order to make informed decisions about progressing to higher education it is important that students have timely access to a range of information. ncn will publish all fee and financial support information, along with course information, as soon as it becomes available. ncn will continue to work closely with all partners, including UCAS, to ensure the timely provision of detailed course and financial support information, in particular through the UCAS Course Collect service and other media. ncn will also ensure a timely submission of the HEFCE Key Information Set data return so that this detailed information can be widely published, including on the Unistats website. The College will also work closely with the Student Loan Company to ensure the provision of robust course and fee information in order to meet their operational requirements. We will meet student attendance confirmation deadlines and the moratorium dates to release fee payments to the College. We will also fulfil our obligation to confirm changes in student's circumstances to the Student Loan Company in a timely manner.

6. Core Theme 2 - Retention and student success

Retention rates of first year FdA students continues to be an area for improvement. In 2014/15, end of year examination board data shows withdrawals for this group was 14%. There are specific actions in place to address this, including the provision of additional support for students.

The College's Academic Coaching and Employability Skills (ACES) team work with students across all Higher Education courses. Bespoke study skills workshops, either as one off, or as part of an integrated programme are offered, and additionally, a flexible service providing one-to-one study skills appointments. Already this academic year, the ACES team have delivered 300 one-to-one academic coaching sessions alongside a wide range of group tutorials. The ACES team work with students from the induction period and throughout the entire study period.

Many of the students accessing the service have non-traditional entry qualifications and a large number of students have been out of formal education for long periods. The ACES service provides guidance and support with the range of skills that these students need to successfully meet the requirements of their programmes of study.

Support from the ACES service plays an integral part in the retention of students who may be considering withdrawing because of the unexpected demands of their course. Student success is enhanced through the acquisition and development of academic study skills. It is recognised that often the students at risk of dropping out or not achieving as highly do not take advantage of the academic development and support available. Intervention and approaches should, where possible, be embedded in mainstream provision, therefore, the ACES team work closely with course leaders and tutors to further embed academic study skills within higher education programmes.

An evaluation of ACES support has shown that 82% of students who had accessed the service through tutorials rated their advice Good or Excellent, while over 46% of students felt that their work had improved noticeably and 25% felt that their work had improved substantially. Qualitative feedback from both academic staff and students further underlines the effectiveness of the service.

Through the ACES team, ncn has the capacity, willingness and expertise to provide important, transferable, academic skills that will enhance the student experience and success.

International students with English as a second or further language are also able to access specialist language support from fully qualified EFL tutors, who are experienced in working with higher education students. HE International students are offered up to 15 hours of language support each academic year.

In addition to these support mechanisms, the College also has a dedicated central higher education support team providing specialist information, advice and guidance,

including finance and welfare support, to students throughout the entire learner lifecycle. This includes from recruitment and admissions stage, through on course support, right through to graduation. This is integral to supporting student success as the team provide expert support that frequently results in supporting students to remain on programme where they might otherwise have left their course. This familiarity and friendly approach of the team mean that students feel able to come forward to ask for support when they need it.

Further to this, ncn has recently created a dedicated 'University Centre' at its Adams Building in the Lace Market area of the City. This central facility is located in the heart of the City centre and is easily accessible to students from across the City. This vibrant centre provides a hub for higher education students, creating a diverse, cohesive higher education community where students have a sense of belonging. The Centre is home to the higher education team and ACES who provide a wide range of support. The Centre also houses its own reception desk and a dedicated study lounge featuring refreshment, IT and print facilities. The University Centre is where the programme of higher education open days are delivered, and some school/college visits take place. The sense of community and access to central support services all in one place supports students to succeed on their study programmes.

The key strengths relating to student success are pass rates on BA programmes with 89% pass rate in 2014/15. BA programmes continue to have very high rates of retention.

In a project that will further support student success, New College Nottingham is a lead college in the Association of Colleges (AoC) Scholarship Project. The Scholarship Project aims to support the development and embedding of a distinct college higher education scholarly ethos. A key outcome is to establish a 'scholarship framework' and 'kitemark' that can be adopted by all colleges and is firmly centred on advancing relevant forms of scholarship within technical and professional curricula which aims to enhance the learning experience for students.

The project will explore different forms of scholarship, including student scholarly activity and wider community and employer engagement. This conceptual underpinning will guide the exploration of current scholarship policies and practices with a view to developing, testing and embedding a 'scholarship framework' which can be used to support, enrich and quality kite mark a wide range of scholarly activity. This will ultimately contribute to enhanced scholarly activity, enhanced teaching and learning, and student success.

The project will run for a period of three years from 2015-2018 and is funded by the HEFCE Catalyst Fund and managed by AoC. The project is also supported by the NUS, the QAA, and the HEA.

7. Core Theme 3 - Progression to further study or to employment

Progression outcomes for ncn higher education students are very positive. The most recent Destination of Leavers Higher Education (DLHE) Survey shows that 94% of all New College Nottingham graduates available, are in employment, or further study, six months after completing their HE study programme. This is a high figure nationally, and this performance indicator has been strong over recent years. A review of student academic outcomes between different groups did not reveal any significant difference between those of white students and other ethnic minorities, and white males from disadvantaged areas continue to be well represented at the College.

ncn is committed to an agenda of embedding more employability skills and knowledge within the HE curriculum in order to realise its strategic touchstones of Excellence, Employability and Enterprise contained within the ncn Strategic Intent statement. Many of the higher education programmes now incorporate work placement opportunities, or 'live' briefs provided by industry partners to provide real work experience to develop employability skills.

For the 2017/18 academic year, ncn will continue to fund the role of Higher Education Engagement and Employability Officer. This role focuses on supporting higher education students to progress to graduate employment opportunities and also to engage students in broader opportunities, such as volunteering and quality processes in order to further enhance their experience and employability skills.

New College Nottingham also has a dedicated team of *Matrix* accredited Career and Destination Coaches that provides one-to-one advice and guidance. Specialist information, advice and guidance will support progression to employment and in particular graduate employment opportunities. Information advice and guidance will be provided about the new student support packages for postgraduate study. This should support progression and help widen access for postgraduate study.

The ACES team also features an element of personal success coaching, working closely with students to identify possible barriers to their success and to develop individual strategies to aid retention, success and progression.

New College Nottingham has also created an ambassador scheme whereby students can represent the College at various events and activities. This scheme helps students to develop a wide range of skills enhance their employability.

New College Nottingham currently operates a Foundation Degree in Law, approved by the Law Society. This course provides a progression route, with advanced standing to the LLB Law programme at Nottingham Trent University. Part of the rationale for this programme was to support widening access within the legal profession and to help support students to access professional careers. This further supports social mobility.

ncn students operate a skill swap exchange whereby students can contribute their skills in order to deliver large scale student projects. Examples include acting students working with TV and Film production students to create films, Photography students working with Fashion students on final major projects, and Graphic Design students producing promotional artwork for Theatre Arts students' productions. The skill swap exchange really helps students develop skills for the workplace, working with real budgets and timescales.

8. Fees and Financial Support

Tuition Fees

Tuition fees for full-time foundation degrees, for UK/EU students starting in 2017/18 will be £7500 for that academic year. This fee will be subject to an annual inflationary uplift to maintain value in real terms.

Tuition fees for full-time BA (Hons) top-up degree students starting in 2017/18 will be £7500 for the academic year.

Tuition fees for full-time HNC/HND programmes for students starting in 2017/18 will be £7500 for that academic year. This fee will be subject to an annual inflationary uplift to maintain value in real terms.

Financial Support

In 2017/18 ncn will continue its emergency discretionary fund (the Access to Learning Fund) to support students who experience unexpected financial hardship. This fund will be expanded to 2017/18 with a fund of £15,000 allocated for this purpose. This fund will be managed in line with the old ALF methodology to ensure equity and transparency, but with more flexibility around non-standard awards to reflect the diverse nature of difficulties that students may encounter.

In recognition of the additional challenges that care leavers face, ncn will increase its care leaver's grant, up to £2,000 per academic year for those who have been in local authority care. In addition to this financial support, care leavers are offered additional support early on from the application stage to ensure that their independence is well established right from the start. This support includes information about accommodation and signposting to a range of support services. New College Nottingham also maintains a full profile on the Propel website which is a dedicated website resource to support care leavers progressing to higher education. This profile includes a named contact for all care leavers. This is also backed up by a dedicated webpage on the ncn website which also promotes additional resources for care leavers and information about the additional support available at the College.

ncn has a well-established means tested bursary scheme which has operated for many years. A means tested scheme will continue in 2017/18 offering financial support on a sliding scale, offering more support to those from the lowest income backgrounds.

Household income based on SLC assessment	ncn bursary award
Up to £25,000	£1,000
Between £25,000 and £30,00	£750
Between £30,000 and £35,000	£500
Between £35,000 and £40,000	£300

Feedback from student focus groups to the Higher Education team and course tutors shows that the bursary scheme is invaluable for the students that receive it. It helps to alleviate some of the reliance on students working long part-time hours and provides support for students with travel and maintenance costs. It also makes a vital contribution to enable students to access work placement opportunities in the UK and overseas.

During 2014/15 bursary scheme recipients were surveyed to better understand the impact of the financial support programme for higher education students. 86.4% of respondents thought that the bursary scheme was helping them to stay on the course, and of those working part-time, 48% thought that the scheme helped to keep working hours to a manageable level. The survey also collected some qualitative data which illustrates that the bursary is highly valued by students and an essential part of support for day to day living costs, including travel and accommodation, along with expenses associated with the course such as materials and printing.

We have a large proportion of students from very low income households. The bursary, along with our hardship fund, provides essential support and helps students to remain on programme and achieve the best possible outcomes.

In 2017/18 the estimated commitment for financial support measures for students, including bursaries, care leavers grants and hardship funding will be £269,600. The total estimated expenditure in 2017/18 on access, student success and progression measures will be £223,250.

9. Milestones and Targets

In the 2017/18 academic session ncn will aim to:

1. Strive to achieve and then maintain the percentage of students from WP backgrounds at 35% of the total higher education cohort (Baseline year 2012/13, POLAR3 quintile1)
2. Increase internal progression to higher education programmes by 5% year on year (Baseline year 2008/9)
3. Deliver an increased care leaver's grant worth up to £2,000 per annum for students that have been in local authority care and collaborate with partners to support care leavers
4. To maintain, or exceed, the percentage of mature students (those aged over 21 years old) at 40% of the total higher education student population.
5. Maintain the number of ACES one-to-one support sessions at 500 (an increase of over 30% on the base line) with an enhanced emphasis on year one students to further support retention of students.
6. Introduce a proactive, targeted intervention process, whereby tutors notify the ACES team of students at risk. A member of the team will then contact these students to discuss barriers to success and how these can be overcome and to arrange ongoing support sessions as required.
7. Deliver a focused programme of workshops and lectures to facilitate the development of academic and employability skills and to expand students' awareness and understanding of graduate progression opportunities.
8. Retain the post of a Higher Education Engagement and Employability Officer to support higher education graduates into employment opportunities.
9. In support of our long term strategic approach to outreach, ncn will develop its higher education IAG open day programme to provide more opportunities to engage with prospective students, from 3 days in 2013/14, to 6 days throughout the whole academic year in 2016/17. This will be maintained in 2017/18. Just over 50% of open day attendees go on to enrol on an ncn higher education programme and so this is a key activity to support higher education progression.
10. To maintain the percentage of graduates progressing to further study, or employment, above 90% (DLHE).
11. Deliver two large scale family supper events collaboratively with a minimum of two local HEI/college partners.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

The targets in this agreement will be monitored on an ongoing basis and in year adjustments will be made where necessary. This will be through our internal quality assurance model where our higher education and our performance against our access agreement will be reviewed and monitored. This will include a review of all targets and due consideration to the impact on access, student success, progression and equality and diversity measures.

Specifically, plans for monitoring and evaluation of the 2017/18 Access Agreement targets and milestones will include:

Annual monitoring of internal progression to higher education courses will be undertaken by using our UCAS destination reports. The use of UCAS reports will provide a consistent annual dataset to evaluate performance against this target.

Financial support measures will be robustly evaluated with bursary recipients completing an annual bursary review survey to clearly establish the utility of the scheme in supporting students in their higher education journey. Both qualitative and quantitative information will be collected and this will feed directly into an annual review of the bursary scheme. Recommendations for amendments to the scheme will be made accordingly based upon the outcomes of this survey. This will ensure that it is an effective support measure and that the scheme is meeting its strategic aims. The emergency hardship fund will be similarly evaluated.

The target for maintaining a high proportion of enrolled students from widening participation backgrounds will be reviewed and evaluated annually through the development of an annual enrolment report. This report will identify the proportion of students living in widening participation postcodes, specifically in quintile 1 of the POLAR3 classification.

An annual review of the ACES study skills, workshops and intervention process will take place to ensure that it positively contributes to students' success, retention and progression. Retention rates of year one foundation degree students will similarly be evaluated through annual analysis of Examination Board data to ensure progress is being made in this area with curriculum areas taking action from this feedback action planned within their Course Standards and Quality Reports (CSQRs) and course reviews.

Overall progression rates will be monitored annually through the completion of the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education survey (DLHE).

Due to the publication schedule of this agreement and HEFCE recurrent grant allocations, including the Student Opportunity allocation, spending forecasts and commitments may need to be realigned to reflect the prevailing funding environment

and enrolment numbers at the time. At the time of publication ncn was exploring merging with Central College Nottingham from 1st August 2016. As a result, some of the commitments and activities outlined in this agreement may need to change as a result of a new single merged institution being created.