

College HE Access and Participation Statement 2025/26

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Approved by	HESB
Policy Owner	Deputy Principal for Curriculum & Quality
Policy Author	Assistant Principal for HE & Academic Standards
Scheduled review	Reviewed & published annually
Available on	Intranet/website

The College curriculum intent is to offer and deliver:

Create Your Future

Waltham Forest College 

“An ambitious curriculum is designed to prepare learners with the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to enter employment and progress their careers, forming the skilled, resilient and adaptable workforce that our local and regional employers need. Learners are equipped with the confidence to actively participate in their communities, significantly contributing to social cohesion and inclusion within the local and surrounding boroughs of the College.”

The college strategic plan and curriculum strategy outlines its commitment to meeting local, regional and national skills needs of which Higher Education level through apprenticeships and HNC/Ds play a role.

The college provides a whole college environment that includes Higher Education (HE) that is dedicated to celebrating diversity, promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

College Commitments to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) are outlined in its EDI Policy

This College EDI policy describes in a single document how the College will fulfil its statutory duties to promote equality of opportunity and avoid discrimination.

The College celebrates and values the diversity brought to its workforce and student body by individuals regardless of any personal characteristics personal choices or disability and will treat all employees and students with respect and dignity and aim to ensure that all employees have equal opportunities for training and promotion. The College will work towards the elimination of discrimination conscious or otherwise and eliminate harassment to any employee. The college will aim to have up to date materials available to all to promote understanding of any personal characteristics, personal choices, or disabilities.

The EDI policy sets out the responsibilities of all staff, students and Governors in upholding these commitments.

The College’s Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Scheme has the following main purposes:

- To ensure there is equality for all learners and potential students when accessing services and provision offered by the College
- To ensure there is equality of opportunity for all students in terms of outcomes
- To ensure there is equality for all current and potential employees of the College
- To promote positive attitudes towards equality and diversity
- To promote a working and learning environment that is free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation and where there are positive relations between people of different racial groups, cultures, religions, ages, sexuality, abilities and disabilities, choice of identification and all genders and reassessments
- To meet legal requirements

This EDI Policy and scheme applies to all members of the College’s community, including various agencies and others with whom the College works.

The college seeks to collect and monitor a range of student data to enhance its performance in delivering and improving student experience and outcomes to ensure successful outcomes.

Higher Education Ambitions & Strategy

The college is committed to meeting local and regional needs by widening participation of HE by under-represented groups such as mature students, students from ethnic minorities, students from

socially and/or economically deprived areas, students with specific learning difficulties and/or learning disabilities and students who are the first from their family to access HE in the UK.

The college offers a range of L3 programmes that provide opportunities for those wishing to enter Higher Education. In addition, the well-established Access to HE programmes play a key role in widening participation for those adult learners without traditional qualifications wishing to progress into partner HEIs.

The College has traditionally been very strong regarding widening participation and aims to continue offering flexible delivery and appropriate support to give students from all backgrounds and circumstances the opportunity to succeed at HE level.

The college curriculum strategy outlines its commitment to the London Skills Strategy and its priorities to empower all Londoners to access the education and skills to participate in society and progress in education and work.

The HE provision at the college is distinct from that provided by many traditional HEIs in that it raises the aspirations of those who would not normally consider higher education as part of their career path and offers an alternative approach to supporting students that is not evident in traditional HEIs via HNCs and HNDs. By making such provision available to aspiring learners, the college plays an important role in contributing to the economic development of the local community, the widening participation agenda and the achievement of national targets for HE participation. The offer of HNC/Ds under the HTQs branding at the college supports widening participation by enabling local learners adversely affected by the cost-of-living crisis to consider studying locally.

The college also intends to support widening access and participation through providing an extensive range of industry-focused micro qualifications in line with the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE) in due course as this student funding systems comes into place from 2027.

The college has an intention to offer courses under direct provision in 2025/26:

- a Level 5 Teacher Training Qualification for internal staff development in due course in 2025/26 once qualification approval and validation is in place.
- the VTCT Level 4 Diploma course in Laser Treatment for the Hair & Beauty sector to upskill workers already employed in the sector.

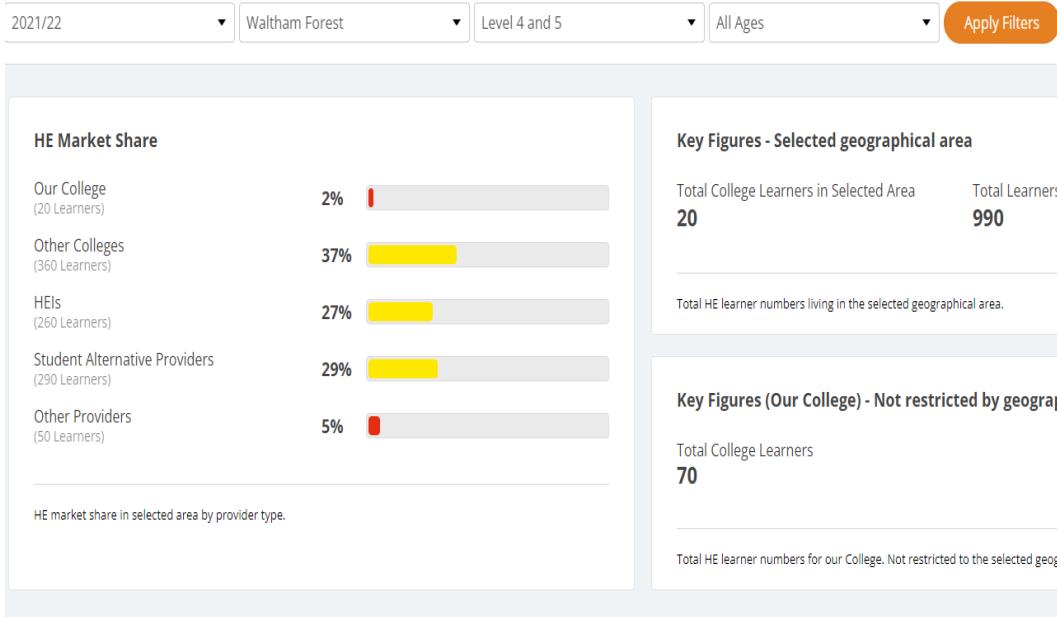
A partnership arrangement with University of Portsmouth sees the college offer in Pearson HTQs in the following pathways as 2-year full time programmes:

- HTQ Level 5 Higher National Diploma Business (Leadership & Management)
- HTQ L5 Higher National Diploma Electrical & Electronic Engineering
- HTQ L5 Higher National Diploma in HealthCare Professions Support

Previously run qualifications in collaborations with other organisations working to support widening participation such as Kier Training to support access to short Level 4 or Level 5 Certificate courses in Care Home Management for professionals contribute to the data set analysis that is available to the college.

RCU Vector data for college participation in Higher Education studies (Level 4/5 only) Waltham Forest:

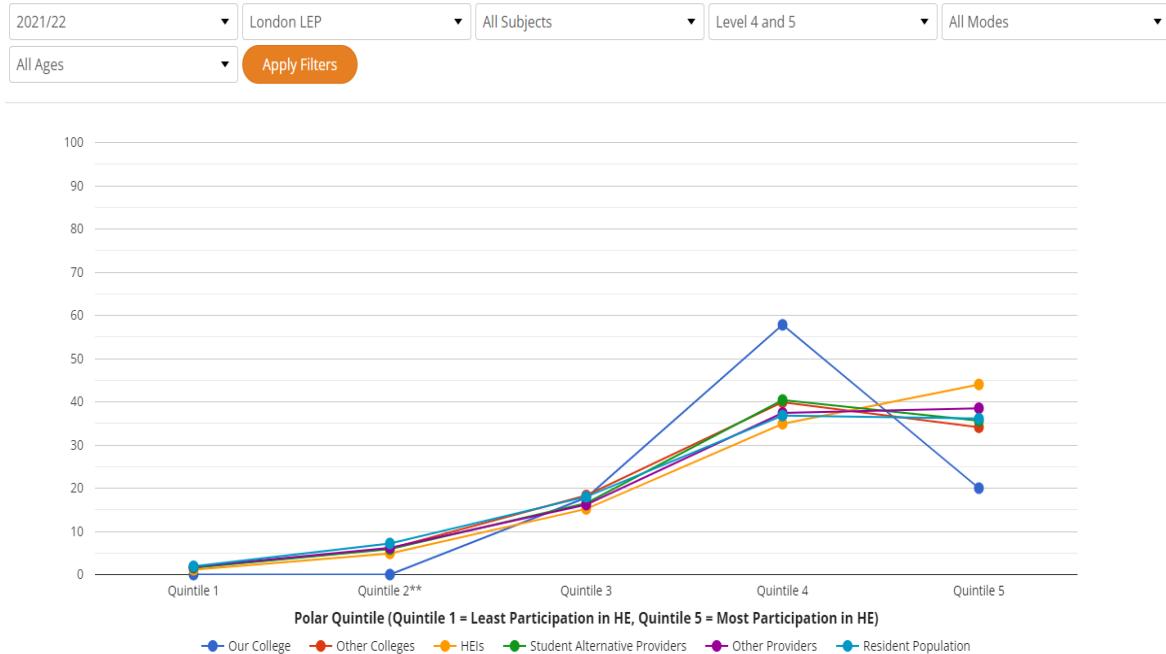
HE Summary Guide



The college has a very small share of the local/regional HE market and the determination to seek to offer HNC/Ds under the HTQ brand will seek to widening access and participation to serve its local community well and expand provision that is distinct from other providers who offer mostly undergraduate degree programmes.

RCU: Polar participation 2021/22

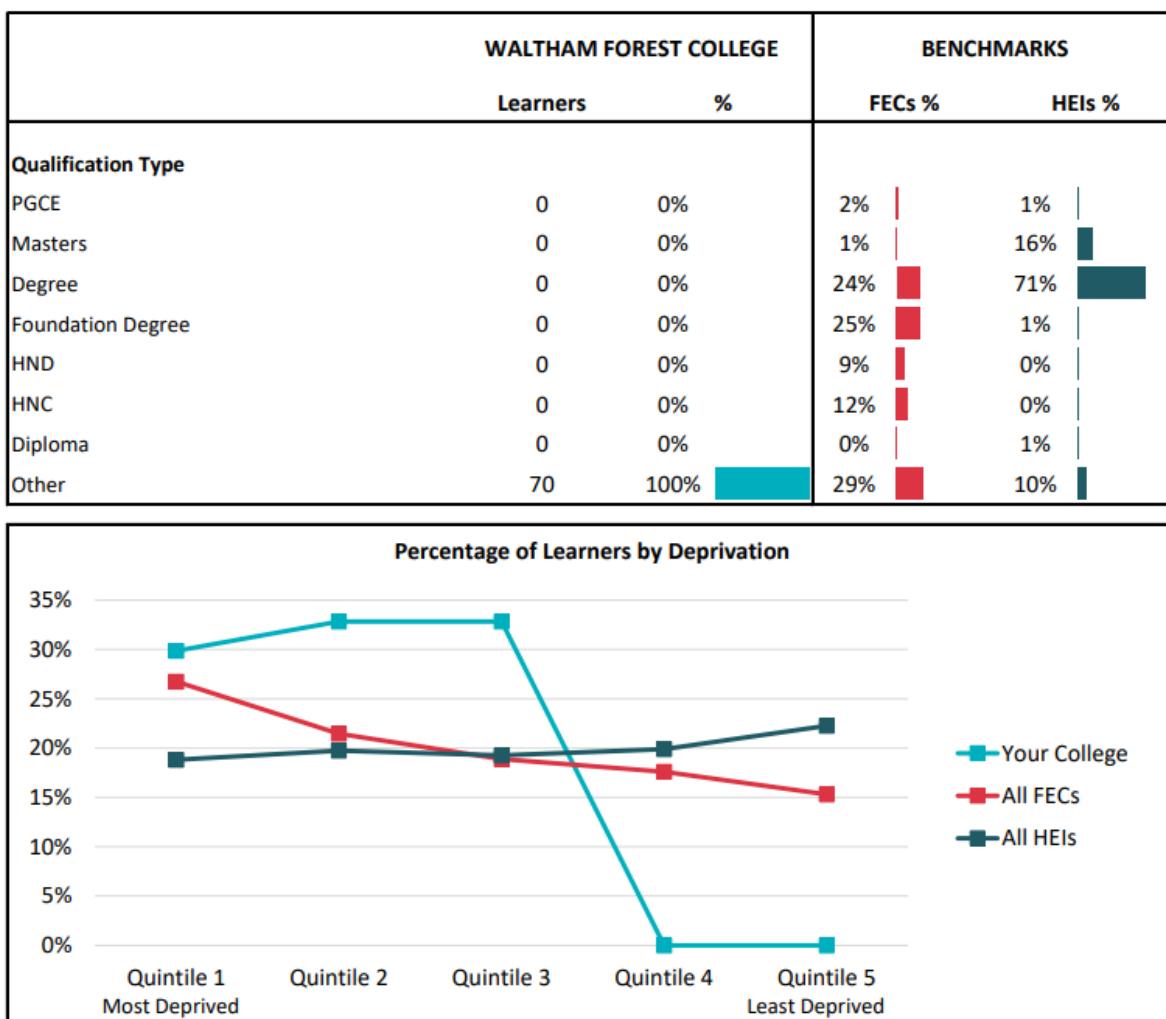
Polar Profile Guide



RCU MIDES Report 2021-22

**Total Number of Higher Education Learners 2021/22 at
WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE :**

70



The college's use of data is in line with GDPR requirements.

Areas we seek to develop:

- Increase student recruitment from underrepresented groups onto HNCs and HNDs on offer through effective internal progression
- Consider options for higher level apprenticeships at Level 4 and Level 5 in line with the college strategic plan and curriculum strategy
- Reduce any attainment gaps between students from underrepresented groups, particularly those from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities, and those from other groups on HE programmes
- Improve the progression rate of all students into graduate-level employment or further study by offering programmes where there are clear specialist needs driven by employer demand or licence to practice requirements in line with college strategic priorities) aligned to the LSIP (London Skills Improvement Plan)

College widening participation strategies

The college has a range of strategies to underpin its access and participation commitment:

- All prospective students have access to initial assessment & guidance together with follow-up diagnostic assessments to ensure that they are on the right course and understand the requirements of the course in line with Matrix Standards.
- Provision of clear and transparent advice, information and guidance by career and welfare advisers from point of inquiry through to enrolment and progression to either employment or further study
- The college welcomes all applications and seeks to value previous work-related experience in the HE application process to particularly support mature applicants
- Marketing campaigns reflect diversity of imagery to challenge stereotypes on perceptions of careers or courses
- Career and employment fairs to promote progression to HE and employment
- Open Day Events to support progression from Level 3 to Level 4
- Progression talks to all level 3 students on HE programmes available at the college and further interaction with the UniConnect partnership
- Dedicated careers workshops and tutorials to help students with the application process for college HE offer or UCAS application
- Careers Guidance will support students as they near the end of their course with advice on careers, higher level courses and applications for jobs and higher study
- Employer involvement in course content and assessment design
- Dedicated personal tutorial support to promote progression throughout the student lifecycle
- Provide support for Level 3 students to prepare them for entering HE by providing tuition in academic skills such as referencing, research, academic writing and independent study)
- Provision of appropriate additional learning support for all students, including those with disabilities, mental health difficulties or learning difficulties or disabilities
- Provision of specialist support staff for students experiencing mental ill health or emotional difficulties
- Provision of financial support advice on course fees, bursaries, grants and student loans based individual circumstances
- Provision of support for students for whom English is not their first language

Monitoring & Evaluation

The college monitors the performance of the HE provision throughout its annual quality assurance cycle. This involves contributions from students, staff, and employers. As a self-critical institution we are continuously reviewing and improving the services to students. To ensure that we can achieve our aims we review our student support throughout the student lifecycle.

Pastoral and academic guidance is in place so that students are helped to reach their full potential. Regular monitoring of live data on their individual performance ensures that personalised target setting can be made, and feedback is accurate on their progress throughout their course of study.

Students' views and suggestions on their student experience are regularly canvassed through formal and informal methods to inform our strategies for access and participation. Our student course representatives feed back into curriculum areas and appropriate actions are then followed through. We conduct several student surveys throughout the year. There is student representation position on the College's Student Education Sub Committee as part of the college's HE structure.

Equality and diversity indicators are collated from performance data and reported to ensure they are consistently considered by senior staff. Action plans are then created and are monitored and evaluated through the HE deliberative committee system and internal Directorate reviews.

A college Self-Evaluation Document (SED) and Quality Enhancement (Improvement) Plan for Higher Education is to be completed annually and presented to the Board of Governors for consideration and once approved is monitored and challenged regularly throughout the year by the HE Strategy Board (HESB). Monitoring will be the responsibility of the Deputy Principal who will report on progress to the Board of Governors.

The College will work with students from BAME backgrounds and with protected characteristics to ensure that they have the correct support to enable them to achieve. The College will undertake more detailed analysis of data to identify specific groups of BAME students who may be at risk of under achievement. The College will use Student Voice data and focus groups to review progress in this area.

The Access and Participation Statement is updated and published on the college website annually under college key documents/HE policies. The college will seek to use guidance from the OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register ([About the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register - Office for Students](#)) to further refine its analysis and plan as its data of HE learners becomes richer as time progresses. And engage with Advance HE and QAA and TASO literatures and reviews for advice and support on student success.

At the college, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is central to the college vision and values. We want everyone to feel safe, comfortable, and ultimately proud of who they are. The EDI policy therefore supports ambition to build a diverse and inclusive community that actively seeks to recruit, support, and promote talented individuals from all different backgrounds and heritages. EDI is the responsibility of everyone and support and provide an inclusive community in which everyone feels valued, differences are celebrated, and individuality is respected.

As such, we believe that all members of the college community have the right to:

- Be treated fairly, respectfully and with dignity;
- Work in an environment of openness and transparency;
- Be recognised for the contribution they make and valued for who they are and what they will become;
- Be supported within their work, study, and life in college;
- Be provided with fair, equal, and accessible facilities and services;
- Be provided with development opportunities wherever possible for the growth of understanding and awareness of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Targets and milestones:

The College will continue to review the access arrangements for all students and the specific needs of underrepresented groups. The following data will be collected and used to inform future planning and any amendments to the annual Access and Participation Statement:

- Internal progression rates from college FE into college HE
- Review of published RCU Vector & Polar data comparators on socio-economic datasets
- Average household income of new entrants and payments of bursaries
- Retention and completion rates of students along with continuation rates from Level 4 to Level 5
- EDI profile of students to monitor widening-participation, retention and achievement statistics across the range of wider equality & diversity data including care leavers

Student Fees and Support

The college is committed to ensuring that higher education is accessible to all students, regardless of their background. We offer a range of support services and bursaries to help students manage the costs associated with their studies. Our bursary scheme as outlined in the published **HE Support Policy** on the college website provides financial assistance to eligible students, helping to cover tuition fees, living expenses, and other essential costs. Additionally, we offer comprehensive support services, including academic tutorials, mental health resources, and career guidance, to ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed. We believe that education should be a transformative experience, and we are dedicated to removing barriers to access and participation.

Student Consultation

This plan is to be shared, discussed and reviewed with Student Representatives from within the Students Union. Further work on student engagement in developing and enhancing Student Representation and Feedback, as outlined in the **HE Student Engagement Policy**, on the range and quality of the college offer will take place as the intended start of HTQ delivery from September 2026 enables greater degrees of feedback on this plan.

This statement and plan should be read and considered in conjunction with the following:

- **College Curriculum Strategy**
- **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy**
- **HE Admissions**
- **HE Fees Policy**
- **HE Strategy**
- **HE Student Support & HE Student Engagement Policies**
- **HE Student Communications Policy**
- **HE Transparency Data**

Document Change Record

Version	Description of Change	Changes Made By	Date	SLT App Date
V.1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Annual review and update	MB	Summer 2025	