



Access & Participation Statement

Key Information	
Policy Reference Number	CCSW - APS
ELT Post Responsible for Update and Monitoring	Vice Principal - Innovation, Curriculum and Quality
Published on Website	Yes
Date approved by ELT	04 June 2024
Date Approved by Governor's Committee (if applicable)	17 June 2024
Date of EIA Review	28 May 2024
Date of Next Policy Review	01 July 2025

1. Cheshire College – South & West Access and Participation Statement

- 1.1 The College is a general further education college with three main campuses in Crewe, Ellesmere Port and Chester. Courses are offered from entry level to level 6 in Higher Education and level 7 in professional courses. In 2022-23 more than 9,525 learners studied at the college. The learner population is made up of full-time learners aged 16-18 years, adults and apprentices, completing level 1, 2 and 3 programmes such as NVQ's, BTEC's, T levels and A levels. The College also offers a range of full cost courses and international study opportunities.
- 1.2 In 2022-23 there were approximately 230 Higher Education students (approximately 2.5% of the student population) studying a range of Higher Education programmes across the three campuses.
- 1.3 The student cohort is drawn from a wide range of ages and backgrounds. The vast majority reside in the immediate local catchment area and, therefore, the College offers a higher-level learning opportunity to those who may otherwise have not considered, or been able to access, Higher Education.

2. Being a Higher Education Student at Cheshire College South & West

- 2.1 The College recognises that many of its Higher Education students prefer to stay and study locally and as such the Higher Education programmes offer a progression route from level 3 study such as vocational level 3, A level or Access programmes to Higher Education in addition to non-traditional entry routes such as through accreditation of prior learning and work experience.
- 2.2 For many of the College's progressing students, being able to access local, high quality Higher Education courses is key to deciding if studying at a higher level is an option. There are many reasons for this, such as more mature applicants who have community ties such as work or family commitments finding it difficult to access Higher Education outside of the local area. Some of the College's Higher Education students have identified the need to be in a familiar learning environment where their needs are recognised and they can feel supported in their learning, perhaps because of physical or mental health conditions, difficulties and/or disabilities or simply because some students recognise, they are not yet ready to live independently and study away from home.

3. The Profile of Higher Education Students (2022-23 and 2021-22)

- 3.1 Between 2021-22 and 2022-23 there was a small shift in the profile of students studying Higher Education at the College. The number of males increased to make up 60% of the student body, there were also more students aged 21+ attending courses compared to the previous year. The ethnicity of the College's students continued to reflect the local and regional demographic of the areas the College serves. There has also been a slight decrease (-1.08%) in the number of students entering Higher Education study who declared a disability. However, 5% of students did not provide any information on disability, which could explain the decrease in declared disability.
- 3.2 The College has built excellent working relationships with local employers and the College's Higher Education provision has been built around meeting the needs of local businesses and commerce. The College has several students who work full time and are sponsored by their employer to attend college to achieve a higher-level qualification. Many students who are released from industry attend college through the Higher Apprenticeship routes. The College is responsive to students' needs and endeavours to build Higher Education programmes to meet the needs and requirements of prospective students. The College has done this by:
 - 3.2.1 Responding to student voice and feedback by providing progression routes to Higher Education for students to enable study at the College beyond level 3.
 - 3.2.2 Providing opportunities for students to study Higher Education in a learning environment that is supportive and inclusive.
 - 3.2.3 Timetabling programmes to best suit the needs of students, for example offering blended learning to enable students to be released from industry to attend and achieve or concentrating the timetable into blocks of study including some evening study to enable those with work and / or family commitments to attend Higher Education programmes.

Descriptor	2022-23		2021-22	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total Student Count	200	100%	230	100%
Gender				
Female	80	40%	100	43.48%
Male	120	60%	130	56.52%
Age Group				
Under 21	90	45%	120	52.17%
21 and over	110	55%	110	47.83%
Ethnic Group				
White	190	95%	220	95.65%
Black	*DP	DP*	0	0%
Asian	0	0	0	0%
Mixed	0	0	10	4.35%
Other	0	0	0	0%
Disability				
No Information Provided	10	5%	0	0%
Disability	50	25%	60	26.08%
No Known Disability	140	70%	170	73.92%

*DP Where the information has been suppressed for data protection purposes.

(Table 1: Profile of Higher Education Students)

4. The National Student Survey

- 4.1 The National Student Survey (NSS) is managed by the Office for Students on behalf of the UK Higher Education funding and regulatory bodies. The survey, aimed at final year students, provides information for prospective students and for stakeholders to support a high-quality learning experience gathering students' opinions on the quality of their courses which helps to inform prospective students' choices and provide data that supports institutions in improving the student experience and supporting public accountability.
- 4.2 The NSS Student Survey has seven key themes, and the College is exceeding benchmark in 6 out of 7 of these themes. Further information can be found at: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-andguidance/student-information-and-data/national-student-survey-nss/get-the-nss-data/>

5. Enabling Students to Succeed

- 5.1 Equality, diversity, and inclusion are central core values of the College, and the College is proud of its Higher Education students and their successes.
- 5.2 The College recognises that studying at a higher level can be challenging and therefore the College seeks to prepare students by offering all applicants to Higher Education programmes a pre-enrolment interview with the course team leader who can provide a detailed overview of the course and expectations. The College also provide a meaningful induction to Higher Education students including a study skills package to enable a smooth transition to study.
- 5.3 The support services at the College contribute to the success of the Higher Education students - these include excellent support for students with identified disabilities and / or difficulties. Students are supported through personalised support plans, financial advice and guidance, and access to Student Advisers offering specific guidance on student finance awards for Care Leavers and Disabled Students Allowance applicants.
- 5.4 All students have access to qualified careers advisers who can provide one to one guidance interviews to assist with career planning.

5.5 Students on Higher Education programmes say that they receive excellent support whilst studying at the College. Students value the teaching and learning strategies used on Higher Education programmes and the teaching resources provided which includes access to the college and partner university Learning Resource Centres (LRCs).

5.6 To ensure all students have access to IT facilities the College's Crewe and Ellesmere Port campuses offer dedicated Higher Education Hub facilities which are collaborative learning spaces planned for exclusive use by the HE students.

6. The importance of Student Voice

6.1 The College's Higher Education students are key stakeholders, and the College recognises the importance of student feedback; every Higher Education course and year group is asked to nominate and elect a course representative. Course representatives are invited to meet for the Higher Education student voice meetings held on a termly basis to provide feedback to the Higher Education link Governor and the Director of Higher Technical Education. Higher Education students are represented at Corporate Board level with the annual nomination and election of a Higher Education Student Governor, the governor works with the Student Senate to provide a conduit for the Higher Education student voice on matters relating to the student body.

6.2 The College welcomes student representatives to sit on the Higher Education Academic board which meets at regular intervals throughout the year.

6.3 Information about Student Voice is available in induction and welcome talks. This is followed up in the course introduction sessions led by Course Team Leaders and information is also included in programme handbooks.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

7.1 Student progress is monitored at programme level by the Course Team Leader and Course Tutors. The Director of Higher Technical Education also has oversight of all the Higher Education programmes and receives regular reports on student progress, attendance, and participation.

7.2 Students have access to their progress records as teaching staff record progress on internal college systems such as MarkBook available to students through the College intranet and ProPortal or if the programme is linked to a partner HEI, then progress is recorded through the equivalent university systems. The College's Assessment Board has formal oversight of student progress. The Assessment Board meets at the end of semester one to note progress of all students and at the end of the summer term to formally approve all grades and progression to the next stage of study.

7.3 The College has an established deliberative structure for its HE provisions ensuring institutional oversight and effective governance. The structure is depicted below.

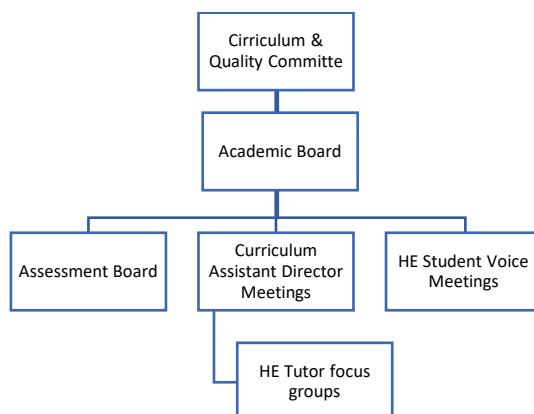


Diagram 1: Deliberative Structure

7.4 In addition to the internal monitoring and evaluation described above the College is subject to external quality monitoring processes and engages actively in these. Examples include:

- 7.4.1 Meeting the requirements for registration with the Office for Students
 - 7.4.2 Partner HEI annual monitoring
 - 7.4.3 Partner HEI validation and partnership review cycles
 - 7.4.4 Pearson Annual Review activities
 - 7.4.5 External moderation and Examiners
- 7.5 The College actively engages in all quality assurance and review processes, the findings of which inform improvement planning.