

South Devon College

Summary of 2025-26 to 2028-29 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

An access and participation sets out provisions that will be meaningful and effective in promoting equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups, as determined by the Office for Students.

You can see the full access and participation plan for South Devon College at [Access and Participation Plan - University Centre South Devon](#).

Key points

South Devon College (SDC) is a medium-sized Further Education College in Torbay, Devon, with a commitment to providing high-quality Higher Education (HE) opportunities.

The College aims to reduce gaps in continuation, completion, attainment and progression outcomes for underrepresented groups, including students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, mature apprentices, young full-time students and those with disabilities.

The College will continue to invest in targeted support, tailored interventions and outreach activities to improve access to, success in and progression from, HE for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

See pages 1-6 and Annex A of the access and participation plan for more information.

Fees we charge

At the University Centre South Devon, our fees range from:

- £8,825- £9,250 per year for full-time students
- £4,412 - £5883 per year for part-time students.

For detailed information about the fees charged for Higher Education courses at South Devon College, please see page 44 of the Access and Participation Plan.

Financial help available

UCSD offers an 'Outreach Bursary' package designed to support students who are also entitled to support via Student Finance England. The bursary eligibility is as follows:

£1000 outreach bursary for Full Time and Part Time Level 4 students who meet one of the following eligibility criteria:

- a household income of under £25k
- are a care leaver
- have a home postcode within IMD Quintile 1

£400 for Full and Part Time Level 5 Students who have a household income under £25k.

£1000 for Full and Part Time Level 6 Students who have a household income under £25k

Bursary packages will only be paid once per academic stage and as noted are only for those students eligible for Student Finance England financial support.

See page 30 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Information for students

Prospective students and applicants received information fees and financial support at in-person events, such as our Open Events and Applicant Events, by email communication, and on our website.

Information about support for students who are disabled, parents and/or carers and those who are care experienced is available on our website <https://www.ucsd.ac.uk/student-life/support/>.

Current students receive information fees, funding and financial support via our internal communications and emails. For up-to-date information see <https://www.ucsd.ac.uk/student-life/funding-finance-and-bursaries>.

See page 30 of the access and participation plan for more information.

What we are aiming to achieve

Our overall aim is to support students to access, succeed in and progress from higher education into employment. We want to create an environment where all students feel that they belong and can achieve. Based on assessment of our performance, we have identified the following areas to support the outcomes of our students:

Objective 1: To reduce the gap in continuation between students with declared disabilities and those without from a baseline value of 11% to 3% by 2029-30 for Full Time Students, and from a baseline of 9.4% to 3% for our Higher Apprenticeship students by 2028-29 through the provision of disability-focused support for both students and staff.

Objective 2: To reduce the gap in continuation outcomes for Full Time Students from IMD Q1 in comparison to IMD Q5 from a baseline of 5.5% to 2% by 2028-29 through the provision of targeted academic, personal, mental health and financial support.

Objective 3: To reduce the gap in completion for students from IMD Q1 in comparison to IMD Q5 from a baseline of 10.7% to 5% in 2028-29 through the provision of targeted academic, personal, mental health and financial support.

Objective 4: To reduce the gap in completion for students who were eligible for free school meals, in comparison to those who were not from a baseline of 3.9% to 1% by 2028-29 through the provision of targeted support.

Objective 5: To improve the attainment of Full-Time students from IMD Q1 from a baseline of 58.7% up to 75% by 2028-29 through the provision of targeted grade improvement support.

Objective 6: To reduce the gap in attainment for young students in comparison to mature students from a baseline of 13.2% to 5% by 2028-29 through the provision of targeted support focusing on mental health, personal development and academic skills.

Objective 7: To reduce the progression gap for students from IMD Q1 in comparison to IMD Q5 from a baseline of 7.2% to 3% by 2028-29 through the provision of financial support and initiatives.

Objective 8: To reduce the progression gap for students in ABCS Q1 in comparison to those in ABCS Q5 from a baseline of 23.3% to 8% in 2028-29 through the provision of proactive progression support.

Objective 9: To reduce the progression gap for students who were eligible for free school meals in comparison to those who were not eligible from a baseline of 15.3% to 5% in 2028-29 through the provision of targeted progression support activities.

See pages 4-5 and Annex A of the access and participation plan for more information.

What we are doing to address keys risks to equality of opportunity

The College has designed and committed to intervention strategies to support in addressing the identified risks to equality of opportunity.

IS1 – Activities to improve continuation rates for young students, mature apprentices, students with a declared disability and students from IMD Q1. These activities include a programme of step-up activities to support transition in and through HE studies, an integrated tutorial programme and support programmes focused on addressing the key issues that impact on a student's ability to stay on course.

IS2 – Activities to improve completion and attainment for students from IMD Q1, students who were in receipt of school meals and the attainment of young students. These activities include a targeted grade-boost programme, academic skills support, and peer support networks.

IS3 – Activities to improve progression rates for students from IMD Qi and ABCS Q1, young students and students who were in receipt of free school meals. These activities include targeted support for employability activities, employability workshops and alumni champions.

IS4 – Financial support and guidance for students who have a low household income and are from disadvantaged socio-economic groups. This includes the financial support mentioned above, a hardship fund and financial management workshops.

IS5 – Activities aimed at supporting the mental health and resilience of all HE students through proactive interventions and a structure of support for students who are expecting difficulties with their mental health. These activities include wellbeing support, creative workshops, personal development workshops and counselling support.

See pages 7-27 of the access and participation plan for more information.

How students can get involved

We will work with HE students through our committee structure, including the HE Student Consultative Forum to ensure student involvement in the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of our plan. In addition, the College will establish a dedicated APP Student Group to ensure dedicated ongoing engagement with the plan and its future development.

See pages 28-29 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

South Devon College has integrated Access and Participation Plan (APP) evaluation into its HE framework, ensuring regular reporting and consultation with key stakeholders, including students, governors, and staff. A dedicated APP evaluation working group has been formed to plan and review the effectiveness of the evaluation strategy. The College has collaborated with regional providers to share best practice and refine its approach. Evaluation efforts will focus on qualitative data to assess the impact of interventions on student outcomes, while also monitoring overall student progress and outcomes data to identify areas for improvement.

See pages 29-30 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Contact details for further information

Please contact Dr Katherine Jones, university@southdevon.ac.uk, 08000 213 181 for more information.