

Blackburn College Access and Participation Plan (APP) for 2025-2029

Impact on the Community

1. Economic Growth & Employability

Our APP is closely aligned with local and national employer needs, ensuring that students acquire industry-relevant skills to enhance their employment prospects. By prioritising career readiness, we aim to contribute to regional economic development and social mobility.

2. Widening Access & Social Mobility

The plan outlines proactive measures to expand outreach to disadvantaged groups, including students from low-income backgrounds, ethnic minorities, mature learners, and disabled students. Through tailored financial, academic, and wellbeing support, we seek to improve student retention, reduce dropout rates, and increase progression into higher education and skilled employment.

3. Community Partnerships & Cultural Impact

We recognise the importance of strong partnerships with local schools, employers, and community organizations in strengthening education pathways. Our commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive learning environment will cultivate cultural awareness, social cohesion, and community engagement.

Ensuring Implementation & Accountability

To guarantee the effective implementation and monitoring of this plan, we have established a robust governance framework that operates at multiple levels within the College:

- **Single Equality Committee:** Embeds equality, diversity, and inclusion across all initiatives while assessing the impact of widening participation efforts.
- **Learning & Quality Committee:** Evaluates teaching, learning, and student support strategies to align with the plan's objectives and track student progression and attainment.
- **Corporation Board:** Provides strategic oversight and ensures accountability among College leaders and managers in delivering the APP, with progress measured against key performance metrics.

Alignment with B3 Metrics & Widening Participation

Our structured review process aligns directly with B3 metrics, focusing on student continuation, completion, and progression. By systematically tracking these outcomes, we will:

- Expand access to higher education across Blackburn with Darwen and beyond.
- Improve retention and success rates, particularly among disadvantaged and non-traditional students.
- Maximise progression into further education, skilled employment, or higher study.

Commitment to a Brighter Future

Blackburn College remains steadfast in its mission to transform lives through education. Through strategic leadership, continuous review, and a deep commitment to inclusivity, this plan will expand opportunities, enhance student outcomes, and create long-lasting benefits for individuals and the wider community.

By embedding equity, opportunity, and success at the core of our institution, we not only support our students but also contribute to shaping a more prosperous, inclusive future for Blackburn, Darwen, and beyond.