2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by RNN Group against targets, objectives and written commitments set out in its 2019-20 access and participation plan. This document is a summary of information submitted by the provider to the OfS. This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

1. Ambition and strategy

RNN Group's ambition and strategy as detailed in the 2019-20 access and participation plan:

RNN Group is highly committed to widening participation and community outreach. We believe in an ethos of accessible education for everyone by targeting the barriers to Higher Education that potential students may face. We will continue to research and identify specific challenges that potential students in our community may face before entering university-level education. Certain underrepresented groups have not previously been recorded separate to an overall review of continuation, attainment and progression. As such, the 2018/19 academic year will acquire a baseline of data that will be utilised to identify any groups that need additional intervention support. This is the strategic baseline needed to move forward and create targeted and robust activities for these learners. The activities created for the 2019/20 Access and Participation Plan will be adapted and reviewed to reflect the targeted needs identified from the baseline data. Where necessary, RNN Group is committed to investing in key projects and activities related to recruitment strategies and widening access activities for target groups. As RNN Group is already closely embedded in our local NCOP, the creation and implementation of bespoke activities can be completed quickly. The College is an institution that is open and accessible to all, regardless of background. We believe in the importance of education and what affect it has on a person's future. To support this, the College offers a range of widening participation interventions at all stages of the student life cycle to support current and potential future students. RNN Group's bursary scheme provides our students with financial support to cover books, travel, or another financial barrier that is unique to a student. Through our partnership with HeppSY+, we have two Graduate Interns that permanently work from our three colleges, offering widening access opportunities to our Further Education learners. They remain impartial to RNN Group as we wish to continue with supporting widening access opportunities to our local student population.

Student Life Cycle

To support our strategic aims regarding a lifecycle approach to widening participation, the Higher Education team have appointed two new staff to work with our current and potential future students to address the barriers faced by those in the local community. The new posts allow our widening participation students to have bespoke support to aid their continuation and progression at RNN Group. These two posts began at RNN Group in March 2018 and work closely with the two Graduate Interns we have as a partnership agreement with HEPPSY+ (South Yorkshire's NCOP). Together, a 12 month activity plan is in development that outlines the barriers to education we have identified and the demographic groups we need to target and expand recruitment.

Targeting

Our widening participation activities are targeted at under-represented groups within RNN Group. While we prioritise supporting all under-represented groups identified in this plan, the College has taken the strategic decision to focus on two groups in particular for the 2019-20 academic year:
 • Students with Disabilities
 • Mature Learners

Collaboration

As a College, we are committed to enhancing our access activities through collaborative efforts with partners. Together, we have been able to pull resources and share best practice activities for the extension of our widening participation activities. We are a part of the South Yorkshire NCOP (HEPPSY+), working alongside universities and colleges in the region to develop aspiration activities and the sharing of widening participation information amongst Years 9-13 students. RNN Group has been a member of NCOP since its inception, and the current projects in place for widening access activities include, but are not limited to:
 • External university visits
 • Improving resilience and confidence building activities
 • Teaching cover and tutoring support
 • Parents HE advice evening
• Marketing resources

Equality and Diversity

Due regard has been given to the Equality Act 2010, with the impact of RNN Group's planned activities on individuals with protected characteristics having been considered. RNN Group's widening participation and equality and diversity strategies align and work together to ensure compliance and sensitive understanding in relation to the Equality Act 2010. The main responsibilities for ensuring the College adheres to its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 falls within the Human Resources department, which is led by the Director of HR. The Director chairs the Equality, Diversity and Safeguarding Group that is filled with representatives across the different departments of the College. The Group feeds in to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) via the Director of HR, which is a member of SLT. During the development of the Access and Participation Plan, due regard has been made to the Equality Act 2010 and the potential disadvantaging of said groups. (This has now been re-visited and is led by the Assistant Principal Safeguarding/Equality and Diversity, who is responsible for legislative compliance and reporting across the Group).

Consultation with Students

During the development of the Access and Participation Plan, students have played a fundamental part in the creating of activities and evaluating the outcomes of activities and research. With the utilisation of our Student Representatives, focus groups of learners from across different subjects, Part Time and Full Time, and young and mature students, were drawn from our higher education student population to consult on the plan at different key stages. Representatives from our Student Union were also consulted during the development of the plan. Due to a long Easter break and the summer months, RNN Group was unable to acquire student consultation at certain points in the development of the plan. However, students will remain involved in the development and monitoring.

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by RNN Group of progress against the targets approved in its 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-20 access and participation plans. Full information can be found in **Table 8a – statistical targets and milestones** and **Table 8b – Other milestones and targets** of RNN Group's 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in Annex B.

Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	Tracking activity increase of HE aspiration activity at local schools	Other (please give details in Description column)	20%	24%	25%	Percentage	2019-20		Expected progress
T16a_02 (Student success)	Achievement of completers at Level 5 and Level 6	2016-17	64%	68%	69%	Percentage	2019-20	72	Expected progress
T16a_03 (Progression)	Tracking of where students go towards employment or further education after graduation	2015-16	84%	85%	85%	Percentage	2019-20		Expected progress
T16a_04 (Multiple)	Identifying individuals from Polar 3 areas and encouraging HE academic study	2016-17	40	2% increase	2% increase	Percentage	2019-20	2	Expected progress

Other milestones and targets

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16b_01 (Access)	Meet Target Student Recruitment Number	2016-17	421	458	462	Headcount	2019-20	486	Expected progress
T16b_02 (Access)	Develop a minimum of two new programmes each year	2016-17	4	2	2	Headcount	2019-20	2	Expected progress
T16b_03 (Access)	Progression events for schools and colleges in the S. Yorkshire region	2016-17	2	4	4	Headcount	2019-20	4	Expected progress
T16b_04 (Access)	Attendance at Higher Education Open Days	2016-17	420	430	440	Headcount	2019-20	165	Limited progress
T16b_05 (Access)	Internal promotion of higher education within the college as a positive	2016-17	310	330	350	Headcount	2019-20	150	Limited progress
T16b_06 (Access)	Maintain collaborative regional partnerships aimed at widening participation in the S. Yorkshire and Humber regions	2016-17	2	4	4	Headcount	2019-20	4	Expected progress

3. Investment commitments

3.1. Access and participation investment for the last audited year

Please note that some differences in predicted vs actual spend may be due to reporting differences between academic and financial years.

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£14,200.00	£14,200.00	0%
Financial Support	£73,400.00	£15,000.00	-80%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected RNN Group has made the following commitments to increase the rate of progress against their targets.

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16b_04	The on-line summer schools will be offered to all HE students going forward in 20/21 and 21/22.
T16b_05	A package of on-line progression events have been planned for 2020/21 and are taking place.

5. Confirmation

RNN Group confirms that:

Student engagement
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?
No
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?
Yes
Verification and sign off
RNN Group has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.
Yes
Accountable officer sign off

Name	Jason Austin
Position	Principal/ CEO

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

RNN Group's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16b_04
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
As it was not possible for actual open days to take place, a series of summer schools were offered, but with limited attendance, possibly due to limited access to the college due to the pandemic restructions..
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
On-line summer school to be offered to all progressing HE students, prior to enrolment.

Target reference number: T16b_05
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Although some progression events took place, these became severely restricted by the move to the Covid lockdown situatuation
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
Some progression events were carried out remotely during the pandemic lockdown, but not as many as we planned.

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

RNN Group's commentary on any of the targets listed in Section 2.

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	
T16a_02	
T16a_03	
T16a_04	
T16b_01	
T16b_02	
T16b_03	
T16b_04	Although we were unable to offer the planned open day, a series of virtual summer schools were offered on-line to new students.
T16b_05	Progression events did take place up to the pandemic lockdown, but they were curtailed after the lockdown as priority was placed on the transition to on-line learning.
T16b_06	