

2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by Activate Learning 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

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

The 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan was originally developed by the former Guildford College Group and adopted by Activate Learning upon the merger of the two groups in March 2019. This has resulted in two targets in the plan not being taken forward (T16a_06 and T16a_07).

Activate Learning is a forward-thinking education group that is ambitious in its mission to transform lives through learning. The strategy behind the Access and Participation Plan for 2019/20 was to achieve that by enabling opportunities, creating life chances and generating prosperity for individuals and communities. Activate Learning is committed to advancing equality of opportunity, respecting and celebrating difference, eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and fostering good relations.

The ambition described in the plan was therefore to create a evidenced based approach through the establishment of a comparative data set. This will underpin Activate Learning's future planning as it strives to respond flexibly and with agility to student feedback ensuring that steps are taken which are data informed.

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by Activate Learning 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 Activate Learning’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)	To increase the percentage of young full-time undergraduate entrants from low participation neighbourhoods to be significantly above the location adjusted benchmark of 12.1% (POLAR3 Methodology) by 2020/21	2014-15	10.9%	11.8%	12.3%	Percentage	2019-20	11.7	Limited progress
T16a_02 (Access)	To ensure that the percentage of students from an ethnic minority non-white background studying on a higher education programme is in line with the total Guildford College student population (2014/15 benchmark of 14%) by 2019/20	2014-15	11%	13%	14%	Percentage	2019-20	12.4	Limited progress
T16a_03 (Access)	To increase the percentage of full-time higher education students with a declared disability or identified learning support need studying at the College to above 15% (2015/16 baseline of 9.3%) by 2020/21	2015-16	9.3%	13.5%	14.25%	Percentage	2019-20	20.2	Expected progress
T16a_04 (Access)	Double the number of level 3 students progressing internally from 8.5% to 17% by 2020/21 through internal promotion and programme development	2014-15	8.5%	14.3%	16.2%	Percentage	2019-20	12.2	Limited progress
T16a_05 (Success)	To maintain the non-continuation rate for all prescribed higher education programmes at below	2014-15	11%	10%	9%	Percentage	2019-20	12.5	Limited progress

	10% (2014/15 baseline of 11%) by 2020/21								
T16a_06 (Access)	Engage in entering into long-term data sharing/monitoring and outreach agreements with the three other Surrey FECs (Brooklands College, East Surrey College and NESCOL) by 2020/21 (focusing on ethnicity, POLAR3 and part-time via rationalisation of curriculum, combined events and a joint HE Prospectus)	2016-17	N/A	Data Sharing	Data Sharing	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		No progress
T16a_07 (Progression)	Establish two potgraduate programmes at the College by 2021/22 which provide a progression route from level 6	2015-16	0	0	1	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		No progress
T16a_08 (Access)	In-person engagement with an increasing number of local primary/junior schools to establish the Merrist Wood brand as an eventual destination for FE and then HE (Animal and/or Sport)	2015-16	Piece-meal engagement - number of events at Primary/Junior Schools	3	8	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Expected progress
T16a_09 (Access)	College level 3 study programmes to meet or exceed the relevant national achievement rate in their subjeetc areas	2016-17	National rates as in E24	See SAR	See SAR	Percentage	2019-20	84.4	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 (Success)	Activate Learning aims to raise the achievement rate for all learners to be at 86.0% by 2022/23 (National benchmark is 85.9%)	2017-18	83.7%	84.0%	84.3%	Percentage	2019-20	84.4	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	£33,090.00	£30,054.00	-9%
Financial Support	£59,562.00	£22,594.00	-62%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected Activate Learning 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
T16a_01	The embedding of the revised curriculum (expansion of Level 4 and Level 5 HN provision) and engagement activity is projected to deliver performance in excess of 1pp above target set in this plan for 2020/21.
T16a_02	The embedding of the revised curriculum (increase in Level 4 and Level 5 HN provision) is projected to deliver further enhancements in performance.
T16a_04	A review of the curriculum is being undertaken with progression routes to higher education programmes for students mapped.
T16a_05	Further work is being undertaken to promote HE Study Support provision to ensure that those students who are at risk of not continuing receive timely support
T16a_06	Further work is being undertaken to enhance the effectiveness of Activate Learning's Access and Participation Database to underpin evaluation and review of the Group's APP for 2020/21 to 2024/25 which sets out new strategic targets.
T16a_07	No action has or is to be taken.

5. Confirmation

Activate Learning 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	
Activate Learning 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	Sally Dicketts
Position	Chief Executive

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

Activate Learning's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16a_01
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Performance has not met target although the commitments in the plan have been delivered.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
Activate Learning has reviewed its curriculum and also engagement activity to evaluate the impact of current activities in relation to this target.

Target reference number: T16a_02
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Performance has not met target although the commitments in the plan have been delivered.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
There has been an increase of 5.4pp to 12.4% although it remains below the benchmark. This improvement is significant and has been primarily driven by changes in provision as a result of a review of the curriculum and engagement activity.

Target reference number: T16a_04
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Performance has been below target primarily due to the focus of the higher education curriculum on vocational/employer led provision offered across the Activate Learning Group. All commitments within the plan have though been delivered.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
Performance in areas where Activate Learning provides progression routes into higher education has been strong as evidenced in counselling where 61% of Level 3 students progressed on to a higher education programme.

Target reference number: T16a_05
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Performance has been below target and not all commitments in the plan were delivered due in part, to the COVID-19 pandemic and students seeking to take a break from studies.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

This was mainly impacted by students studying HNC programmes on a part time basis who were combining study with employment.

Target reference number: T16a_06

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

This target has not been met due to the merger of the Guildford College Group with Activate Learning during the life of the plan and the result that the target was deemed no longer appropriate.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Following the merger of the former Guildford College Group with Activate Learning in March 2019 a database has been developed which covers all 7 colleges within the Activate Learning Group. This addresses the intent behind this target.

Target reference number: T16a_07

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

This target has not been taken forward following the merger of the former Guildford College Group with Activate Learning as it does not fit with the Group's HE strategic plan and/or the APP targets identified and set within the Group's 2020/21 approved Access and Participation Plan.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

No action has or is to be taken.

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

Activate Learning's commentary on any of the targets listed in [Section 2](#).

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	
T16a_02	
T16a_03	
T16a_04	
T16a_05	
T16a_06	
T16a_07	
T16a_08	
T16a_09	
T16b_01	