

KENDAL COLLEGE PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

OUR COMMITMENT

We are committed to equality of opportunity for all our students and we regard all as being of equal value irrespective of ethnicity, age, disability, religion, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, maternity/paternity and marital status and providing the opportunity to students from all backgrounds, and with the ability and desire to undertake higher education.

BACKGROUND

Kendal College is a small General Further Education College with a catchment area. In the 2011 census the population of South Lakeland was 103,658 and is made up of approximately 51% females and 49% males.

The average age of people in South Lakeland is 45, while the median age is higher at 48. 91.7% of people living in South Lakeland were born in England. Other top answers for country of birth were 2.2% Scotland, 0.8% Wales, 0.4% Northern Ireland, 0.3% Ireland, 0.2% United States, 0.2% South Africa, 0.2% India, 0.1% Australia, 0.1% Hong Kong.

Cumbria is the second largest county in England and accounts for almost half of the land mass of the North West. Home to 500,000 residents and with an employed workforce of 229,000, Cumbria's economy is diverse and complex, encompassing world-class engineering, manufacturing and energy companies, high quality food and drink companies and a unique visitor offer. Cumbria is home to a number of large, multinational companies whose impact spreads much wider through their supply chains. Notwithstanding the significance of these employers, SMEs provide the backbone of the Cumbrian economy, with 99.7% of businesses employing fewer than 250 people and 89% employing fewer than 10. The College serves a wide rural area, with students undertaking significant travel to undertake their studies.

Deprivation. In south Lakeland 8% of children live in poverty; well below the county and national averages (14.9% and 20.6%).

Currently the County only has 28% of its working age population qualified to this level (national average 33%). Data indicates that this is not due to low participation in Higher Education, but that many leave the County to undertake their Higher Education and then do not return.

The College has 270 Higher Education students and 76% are from the local LEP area. 61% of full-time learners are 25+ and 49% of part-time learners are 25+.

OUR AIMS

It is against this background that the college seeks to play its part in creating a fairer society by providing greater access to Higher Education for the local community. This will improve social mobility and stimulate the economic growth of the region.

We aim to support all in progressing to Higher Education if this is their choice and providing wider and fairer access to Higher Education. In particular, by:

- Increasing the number of mature students, thus increasing the likelihood of retaining their skills in Cumbria
- Ensuring that our programmes attract male and female students particularly into non-traditional areas
- Meeting the Skills needs of the region; developing relationships with local and regional businesses with the purpose of introducing Higher Apprenticeship pathways in order to support skills shortages.
- Ensuring that we attract a wide variety of students in relation to their backgrounds and characteristics
- Raise aspirations by providing opportunities for students to study Higher Education in a learning environment that is supportive and inclusive
- Increasing choice of HE routes to include higher and degree apprenticeships
- Preparing students effectively for their next stage of study or employment

In order to achieve these aims we:

- Offer a programme of flexible delivery to enable those in employment or with caring responsibilities to attend
- Offer Access programmes and bridging programmes to support entry to Higher Education to those without traditional entry qualifications
- Deliver a wide range of Higher Education programmes to meet local needs to include Higher Apprenticeships and Degree Apprenticeships
- Offer a simple and affordable fee structure with a commitment for fees to be maintained at the entry rate for the entirety of the programme
- Offer excellent levels of guidance to ensure that the programme chosen is the right one, with access specialist guidance to all prospective students and opportunities for taster days
- Give all prospective students an admissions interview from a specialist teacher
- Consider nonstandard qualifications where applicants have significant professional experience within their chosen subject area.
- Targeting marketing to encourage mature students
- Providing clear progression routes to Higher Education for vocational students within the College from Level 1 to Level 6 and ensure that all our students are encouraged to consider Higher level education including Higher apprenticeships and Degree apprenticeships
- Enabling students to access HE locally
- Analyse our data; enrolments, retention and success rates to ensure that no groups, including disadvantaged groups, are achieving less well than others and produce robust plans to tackle any identified areas of underperformance. Our analysis will be published as part of our Self-Assessment Process and in our updated Participation Statement for 2019-20.
- Providing an affordable HE programme
- Increasing our work with employers to provide the greatest possible employment opportunities for finishing students, including graduate jobs

- Continue to develop our excellent relationships with schools and raise awareness of Higher Education in schools and the community taking an active part in projects to raise awareness with groups and locations who do not traditionally undertake Higher Education.

IAG AND STUDENT SUPPORT

The College has a comprehensive central Student Services. From the moment any prospective student considers joining the college they will be able to access support with:

- Course Information and Enrolment
- Impartial information advice and guidance
- Travel and Transport
- Health
- Welfare and Funding
- Careers
- Learning support and Disabled Students Allowance
- Accessibility

The College has recently been recredited with the Matrix Standards award recognising the quality and impartiality of our Advice and Guidance.