

Annex H: Plan summary

South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS)

Summary of 2024-25 to 2027-28 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 SGS at:

<https://www.sgscol.ac.uk/policies>

Key points

SGS College provides full time and part time higher education courses in South Gloucestershire and Bristol to a broad demographic of over 700 students.

Our access and participation plan is focussed on supporting specific groups of students to access our higher education courses and to improve their outcomes. Our data shows that students from some underrepresented groups at SGS have lower outcomes than others.

See page 2-4 of our full plan

Student groups that are less likely to access higher education courses at SGS:

- Students living in more deprived areas (using the Index of Multiple Deprivation which measures relative deprivation in local areas)

Student groups that are less likely to continue, complete and achieve their studies at SGS:

- Students living in more deprived areas (using the Index of Multiple Deprivation which measures relative deprivation in local areas)
- Students with disabilities or learning difficulties
- Students from minority ethnic backgrounds
- Students who are over 21 years old when starting their course

Fees we charge

At SGS, the maximum fees we charge are:

- £9,000 for full-time students
- £4,500 for part-time students

See page 32-33 of our full plan

You can see a full list of fees for all higher education courses at SGS at:

[Courses A-Z | University Centre WISE \(sgscol.ac.uk\)](#)

See page 33 of our full plan

Financial help available

We offer financial support to students from underrepresented groups. This helps students access higher education and to continue studying until their course is completed. The support at SGS includes:


An **annual bursary** of £500* for the duration of the course if the student's household income is below £25,000, or for students aged over 24 who are re-entering education, or for students aged 25 and under who are caring for someone at home.

An **annual bursary** of £1000* for the duration of the course for students aged 18-21 who, before turning 18, were under the care of a Local Authority or a Health and Social Care Trust.

An **annual bursary** of £500* for the duration of the course for eligible students who are single parents with dependents aged under 18.

A Scholarship (**fee waiver** of £1000*) for the duration of the course for students aged over 24 when they first join the course and who are re-entering education.


*Annual amounts for full time students. Part time students receive the same total amount of bursary over the longer duration of their course.



See page 32-33 of our full plan

Information for students

- The most up to date Information on fees and financial support is available on our website: [Bursaries & Scholarships | University Centre WISE \(sgscol.ac.uk\)](https://www.sgscol.ac.uk/bursaries-scholarships)
- Our Admissions Team provides support throughout the application process and gives advice and support on fees and student finance to both prospective and current students: HEAdmissions@sgscol.ac.uk.



See page 4 of our full plan

What we are aiming to achieve

Our overall aims are to support students from all backgrounds into higher education and to support all of our students to successfully complete their studies with positive outcomes. We aim to create an environment at SGS where all of our students can thrive.

We have looked carefully at our performance, identifying key groups which show indicators of risks to equality of opportunity for us to focus on and we have created these objectives and targets:

Students from deprived socio-economic backgrounds – by 2027-2028 we will increase the number of students from deprived socio-economic backgrounds accessing higher education at SGS to 43% **and** improve our continuation rate (the proportion of students continuing to the next year of their course) for full-time students in this underrepresented group to 82%.

Students with a disability or learning difficulty – by 2027-2028 we will increase the continuation and completion rates of students with a disability or learning difficulty (including mental health issues). We aim to raise the continuation rates of full-time students in this underrepresented group to 84%, raise the completion rates of full-time students in this group to 74% and to increase the completion rates for part-time students in this group to 75%.

Students from an ethnic minority background – by 2027-28 we will increase the continuation rates of students in this underrepresented group to 85%.

Mature students – by 2027-28 we will increase the attainment rates of full-time mature students to 70%.

See page 5-24 of our full plan

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

We have developed 7 intervention strategies to address each key risk to equality that we have identified at SGS. Each intervention strategy is a set of planned and costed activities that are focussed at specific underrepresented groups and are designed to improve outcomes and reduce risks to equality of opportunity. These activities include existing activities but also include new planned activity.

Examples of new activity to support our 2024-25 to 2027-28 access and participation plan:

- Skills boost workshops for a local primary school to help raise attainment
- Bite-size taster sessions and finance talks for SGS FE students to increase awareness of different HE pathways and career options
- Introduction of a single parent bursary to provide financial support
- Increase of more flexible course options (such as shorter Cert HE courses and higher apprenticeships) to improve student choice
- A new Accommodation Officer role to support students to find affordable accommodation
- A centralised study skills programme to provide additional support with academic skills
- Increased financial support to help students with the cost of their assessment for Disabled Students' Allowance funding
- Enhanced training for HE Admissions, support and teaching staff about hidden disabilities and the barriers students face in continuing in higher education
- The set-up of specific student-led groups of students from disadvantaged groups to formally report back to the SGS Inclusion Committee
- A HE Specialist Mental Health and Wellbeing role created to support students
- A HE Counsellor role to provide counselling at point of need
- A Dissertation Coordinator to provide targeted academic support

See page 25-28 of our full plan

How students can get involved

Our access and participation plan was created in consultation with our higher education students. Our students are also an important part of our Access and Participation Group which monitors progress against the targets and milestones in this plan. We actively encourage student input into decision making at SGS.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

We will use data and feedback to make sure that we effectively evaluate what we are doing is working to help us achieve our aims and targets set out in our plan.

Specifically, we evaluate:

- Our activity to support our aims and targets (as stated above)
- Course design

See page 28-32 of our full plan

Our Access and Participation Group and the HE Business Planning Group are responsible for the development, monitoring and evaluation of our plan and the impact of activity against identified underrepresented groups. These groups report all findings to the SGS Further Education College Corporation which ensures progress against our aims, targets and target milestones.

Contact details for further information

You can contact Dr Jo Kear, Director of Higher Education at SGS, by emailing the Curriculum Standards and Quality Team at SGS College: csqteam@sgscol.ac.uk for further information.