

# Wirral Metropolitan College

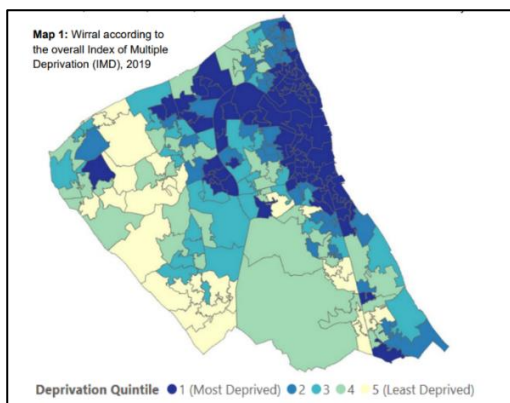
## Access and participation plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

### Introduction and strategic aim

Wirral Met College is a large Further Education College, with a small provision of Higher Education (HE). The College plays an important role in the widening participation agenda in Wirral. Our commitment to supporting both societal and economic growth is multifaceted. We have 7,500 students with over 2,300 of those 16–18-year-olds and over 800 adults studying full and part-time. The rest of our student population is made up of Trade Union, Apprenticeships, employer facing and community delivery. We have a small Higher Education offer that supports around 250 students who are studying on programmes such as three-year degree programmes and BSc Psychology 2 plus 2 programme (with completion at a partner university), HNDs, Higher Apprenticeships and higher professional qualifications.

We provide a range of Further Education (FE) sector pathways for post 16 learners to enable progression into HE. We also offer a full range of provision across a broad range of curriculum subjects. We offer progression pathways in Health, Science and Humanities through Access to Higher Education courses for adults which prepares them for university level study. We serve as a hub for lifelong learning and professional development, catering to students of all ages and backgrounds. Through engagement and partnerships with businesses, government agencies, community groups, residents and other education providers, our college facilitates knowledge exchange, skills transfer, and collaborative initiatives aimed at driving innovation and entrepreneurship. Our primary purpose revolves around advancing education opportunities in training and skills development, to support the economic growth and prosperity of the Wirral and Liverpool City Region (LCR) community we serve.

Wirral is part of the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) that is made up of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral local authorities. The Borough of Wirral covers an area of 60 square miles with its peninsula setting, bounded by the Rivers Mersey and Dee and Irish Sea. It encompasses urban, suburban, and rural areas with varying socioeconomic backgrounds and educational attainment levels. There are significant economic disparities between the east and west of the borough and many residents face multiple barriers to gaining and sustaining employment, including a lack of opportunity, limited access to affordable transport, poor mental health, addiction, and debt issues.



Wirral Local Authority has an overall Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score of 29.59 (2019). This means that Wirral Local Authority has higher levels of deprivation compared to the North West (28.06) and higher levels of deprivation compared to England (21.76), (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) 2019). According to the IMD 2019, 25% of the borough of Wirral falls within the 10% most deprived areas of the country, with most of these locations in the east of the borough in Birkenhead, Bidston, Seacombe, and Rock Ferry. Wirral is ranked 77th most deprived district in England, out of a total of 317. Therefore, a large proportion

of our FE and HE students are recruited from areas of deprivation, with 67.2% coming from the most deprived Quintile 1 or 2 on the IDM measure (2023/24, College MIS Data).

With a population of circa 320,000, almost two thirds of the borough's population live within the predominately built-up urban areas to the east of Wirral. Wirral Met College campuses are based in the heart of the most deprived areas in the borough. Birkenhead, in Wirral, situated in the east of the

borough is one of the most deprived areas in Wirral and is where 4 out of 5 of our campuses is based.



Our estate is divided into five career-led campuses:

1. Twelve Quays: STEAM and Health and Social Care
2. Wirral Waters: Built Environment
3. Conway Park: Visitor Economy and Supported Learning
4. The Oval: Public and Uniformed Services
5. Hamilton Campus – Professional Studies

*Hamilton Campus is also home to our WMC University Centre*

## **Educational Disadvantage:**

The LCR has a higher proportion of adults with no qualifications, and lower proportion of adults with qualifications of level 4 or above than the national average. Qualification levels at Further Education (FE) level are increasing in Wirral, especially at level 2. However, there is still a need to focus on level 3 and higher- level qualifications. There is also a need to maintain progression to and from all levels to enable progression to HE and graduate level employment.

Educational attainment in Wirral shows a mixed picture. For young people at age 19, the proportion achieving a level 3 qualification is closer to the national average but still lags behind, with Wirral ranking lower than many other local authorities. Specifically, the number of young people achieving a level 3 qualification is about 8% behind the national average.

26.3% of our students (4-year aggregate) had none, unknown or other entry qualifications, and 31.2% had 64 tariff points or less (OfS student outcomes dashboard). The vast majority of these were through internal college progression routes. Access to HE pathways of Health and Humanities pathways are the most successful routes into college HE. Our Access to HE Humanities pathway has 100% progression into our full time degree BA Sociology with Criminology (2022- 2024, College MIS Internal Data).

With respect to levels of Higher Education in the region, LCR is 5 percentage points lower than England for level 4+ qualifications for those aged 16+ (22% compared to 27%), but only 2 percentage points lower for people aged 16-24 (12% compared to 14%). The main difference seems to be in the older working age population – those in groups aged 25-64 in LCR are 5-6 percentage points less likely to have Higher Education than in England, (UK Data Service, 2017). There are fewer LCR residents with at least degree-level qualifications than the national average, with 29% of LCR's adult residents having NVQ4 qualifications or higher. This is less than the region (North West) average of 31%, and national average of 34%. The vast majority of our HE students fall into this mature age bracket.

As an anchor organisation in the Wirral and a key provider of vocational, post-secondary education, Adult Skills and Learning, and Higher Education, we play a pivotal role in empowering individuals, supporting local communities, and driving local and regional prosperity. The College offers its own diverse and accessible HE provision, which provides opportunities to students from underrepresented groups. Through our FE curriculum, the College prepares, supports, encourages and advises its FE 16-18 and adult students to progress to HE, not only within the college, but also to other HE settings in the region and beyond.

## **Types of Provision offered at the College:**

- Higher National Diplomas – 2 year programmes, full time
  - HND Photography
  - HND Film and TV

- 2 plus 2 Degree - 2 year programme, full time
  - BSc (Hons) Psychology with completion at partner university
- Degree Programmes – 3 year programme, full time
  - BA (Hons) Illustration and Animation
  - BA (Hons) Early Years
  - BA (Hons) Sociology with Criminology
- Level 4 Professional Qualifications – full time and part time delivery employer funded
  - Accounting (AAT)
  - Human Resources (CIPD)
  - Leadership and Management
  - Counselling
- Higher Level Apprenticeships - employer facing
  - Teacher Education and Skills
  - Engineering
  - Health Care Science
- Franchised Teacher Training – full time and part time delivery
  - University Higher Diploma in Teaching
  - Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching

There are 5 large universities within 20 miles of the college, as well as two large FE colleges offering HE as part of their provision. We, therefore, work in partnership rather than competition, and focus our resources on the local community.

We enjoy strong partnerships with the local universities listed below, who act as validating and franchise partners, and with whom we partner on several access and engagement activities:

- University of Chester
- University of Liverpool
- Edge Hill University (Franchise partner)

Apart from our Teacher Training programmes (which are offered under a franchise agreement), all our higher education courses are now offered full time, (with flexible family and working friendly timetables usually over 3 days per week). Historically, the college did offer more part time provision but demand has fallen. Therefore, the specific degree and HND part time offer has been withdrawn. A small number of students will study part time on professional qualifications which are related to their employment and are not directly funded.

Only a small number of students will study part time on directly funded courses as a result of a need to re-sit or complete part of their full-time study under mitigating circumstances.

### **Strategic aim**

At the heart of our Access and Participation Plan 2025/26 – 2028/29, lies our unwavering commitment to teaching excellence, inclusivity, and collaboration. Our College Strategic Plan is a culmination of consultation, reflection, and collaboration with stakeholders at every level. As we navigate the opportunities and challenges ahead for HE in a further education setting, we are guided by our core values:

- We are **Ambitious**

- We are **Resilient**
- We are **Inclusive**
- We are **Empowering**
- We are **Accountable**

Therefore, the College's Higher Education Mission is to provide a range of high-quality education opportunities that:

- provide clear, appropriate and **ambitious** pathways to both technical and professional higher education programmes, including Apprenticeships, to advance outcomes for students.
- equip our students with the lifelong skills, knowledge and behaviours needed for today's graduate work spaces, building a **resilient** workforce.
- are **inclusive** and accessible to all adults and school/college leavers and provide diverse and relevant higher qualifications that directly serve the local community.
- attract and retain students within Wirral and wider LCR to benefit and **empower** the regional economy.
- are in the best interests of the students and community we serve, and we take **accountability** for student performance and outcomes.

### **Risks to equality of opportunity**

There is limited data available to publish and from which to draw strong conclusions about the College's APP. There is limited data relating to the College's performance to significantly identify the gaps addressed below. This is due to our smaller provision of only 250-300 HE Students on average. Therefore, certain data sets, although important, cannot be applied or must be withheld due to GDPR and risk of identifying students from certain groups. The small volume of data sets makes them less reliable, meaning we cannot draw statistically certain conclusions in relation to the identifying risks listed, or if the specific interventions are best to reduce them. Some student group data such as TUNDRA, ETHNICITY and eligibility for FREE SCHOOL MEALS is collected only for students aged under 21 and therefore in the College context, where the majority student population is mature (+21 years), data is restricted and less helpful in our assessment.

The earlier "Introduction and Strategic Aim" section explained that part time provision will not be offered during this APP cycle and only a small number of students will study part time as a result of a need to re-sit, or complete part of their full-time study under mitigating circumstances. Therefore, analysis of the historical performance of part time student performances has not been included here and objectives will not be set.

The detail of the College's Assessment of Performance is set out in Annex A below. From this analysis, the College proposes to target the following risks.

### **Student Lifecycle Stage: Access full time**

The student population from the most deprived community (IMD Q1) is the largest group of students studying at the College, and significantly exceeds the sector average. Similarly, students over the age of 21 is the largest group of students studying at the College, and significantly exceeds the sector average. This is a strong feature of the College's ability to draw students from groups significantly under represented across the sector. The volume of data regarding the younger (under 21) full-time population is small and therefore difficult to draw conclusions from.

The proportion of students declaring a DISABILITY has significantly increased at the college over recent years and is significantly above the sector average. This is a strong feature of the college's ability to draw students from an underrepresented group and understand their needs.

The majority of students are white (94.7%), while significantly less diverse than the sector, this reflects the local community the College serves. Unlike larger universities, the College mainly attracts students from the local community.

The proportion of the student population eligible for Free School Meals (39%) significantly exceeds the sector average (18.1%, OfS data Dashboard 2024).

Therefore, no risk to equality of opportunity has been identified for any student groups in terms of access to higher education and no objectives will be set.

## **Student Lifecycle Stage: Continuation and Completion**

### **Risk to equality of opportunity 6: Insufficient academic support**

**PTS\_1.** The four-year aggregate indicates that only 80.1% of students reporting a disability continue their study compared with 86.4% who do not report a disability (a gap of 6.3 percentage points (pp) and significant). The 2-year aggregate data based on a smaller, but still reasonable volume, indicates a similar but worsened situation – 83.5% of students not reporting a disability continue their studies but only 75.6% of those reporting a disability continue (an increased and very significant gap of 7.9pp).

**PTS\_2.** The four-year aggregate indicates that only 76.4% of students reporting a disability complete their study compared with 84.7% who do not report a disability (a gap of 8.3pp and significant). The 2-year aggregate data based on a smaller, but still reasonable volume, indicates a similar but worsened situation – 86.3% of students not reporting a disability complete their studies but only 69.7% of those reporting a disability complete (an increased and very significant gap of 16.6pp gap)

### **Risk to equality of opportunity 7: Insufficient personal support**

**PTS\_3** There is indication of a gap in continuation rates between male and female students. This indicates that male students are less successful at continuing their full-time studies than females. The TEF Indicators (2023), covering a four-year period, and including students on Degree and other Undergraduate programmes indicate that 80.4% of males successfully continue their studies but female students are significantly more successful, with 86.2% continuing. This represents a gap of 5.8pp and a risk to the equality of opportunity for full time male students. A target to eliminate this gap during this APP cycle appears in the “Objectives” section.

### **Risk to equality of opportunity 10: Cost pressures**

**PTS\_4** Students from the most deprived communities are less successful in continuing their studies than students from the less deprived communities. Whilst the data is not available for all quintiles, the 4-year aggregate shows 80.7% of students from IMDQ1 continuing compared with 89.9% from IMDQ3 (other quintiles are not published), a gap of 9.2 percentage points (this is from a reasonably large student population). The 2-year aggregate data shows a much larger gap/risk to equality of opportunity with only 75.3% of students from IMDQ1 (the lowest performance of all quintiles) the most deprived communities continuing their studies compared with 88.9% from IMDQ3 (a gap of 13.6pp).

**PTS\_5** Students from the most deprived communities are less successful in completing their studies than students from the less deprived communities. Whilst the data is not complete for all quintiles, the 4-year aggregate shows 81.7% of students from IMDQ1 completing compared with 85% from IMDQ3 (other quintiles are not published), a gap

of 3.3pp (this is from a reasonably large student population). The 2-year aggregate data shows a much larger gap/risk to equality of opportunity with only 78.4% of students from IMDQ1 (the lowest performance of all quintiles) the most deprived communities completing compared with 90.6% from IMDQ3, and 81.1% from IMDQ4.

### **Student Lifecycle Stage: Attainment**

Attainment data applies only to students studying a full honours degree and is therefore limited in volume for the College. There are no significant gaps in attainment between students aged under 21 and those who are older. There is a small gap in performance between students with a disability attaining (a first or upper second class degree) and students without a disability attaining. This concern has been identified but the sample size is very small. However, the college will monitor this concern and explore through internal enquiry. In terms of ETHNICITY, the only data available is for white students, with no comparative data for other ethnic groups. There is no data available for TUNDRA, ABCS, DEPRIVATION, or FREE SCHOOL MEALS. Therefore, no risk to equality of opportunity has been identified for these groups in terms of Attainment.

### **Student Lifecycle Stage: Progression**

Due to the overall small student population, the modest take up of the Graduate Outcomes Survey (only 40%), the only data available is for AGE (+21 and under 21) and for DISABILITY. Therefore, it is difficult to make assumptions from the data. This is a concern that the College will monitor and explore through internal enquiry. In terms of DISABILITY, there appears no gap or risk to equality of opportunity. No data is available for TUNDRA, ABCS, DEPRIVATION, or FREE SCHOOL MEALS. In terms of ETHNICITY, the only data available is for the majority white students, with no comparative data for other ethnic groups which are so small. Therefore, no risk to equality of opportunity has been identified for these groups in terms of progression.

### **Objectives**

- PTS\_1** The College will reduce the continuation gap (currently 6.3% using 4-year aggregate data) between those who declare a disability and those who do not declare a disability. We will narrow the gap by 1.2pp per annum, to reduce the gap to 1.5% the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will be achieved through targeted on-programme academic study skill support, additional non-academic support relating to welfare, resilience and mental health.
- PTS\_2** The College will reduce the completion gap (currently 8.3% using 4-year aggregate data) between those who declare a disability and those who do not declare a disability. We will narrow the gap by 1.5pp per annum, to reduce the gap to 2.3% by the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will be achieved through targeted on-programme academic study skill support, additional non-academic support relating to welfare, resilience and mental health.
- PTS\_3** The College will eliminate the gap in continuation rates (currently 5.8pp, as indicated in the TEF 2023 data for the preceding four-year period) between male and female full-time students at the rate of 1.5pp per annum. This will be achieved by means of improved on-programme student support specially targeted at males.
- PTS\_4** The College will reduce the continuation gap (currently 9.2% using 4-year aggregate data) between the most deprived communities (IMD Q1 & Q2) and those from the least deprived (IMD Q3, Q4 and Q5) communities. We will narrow the gap by 2pp per annum, to virtually eliminate the gap by the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will

be achieved through targeted financial help, targeted personal, welfare, and financial advice support.

**PTS\_5**

The College will almost eliminate the completion gap (12.2% using 2-year aggregate data) between the most deprived communities (IMD Q1) and those from the least deprived (IMD Q3, Q4) communities. We will reduce the gap by 3pp per annum, to virtually eliminate the gap by the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will be achieved through targeted financial help, targeted personal and welfare interventions and financial advice support.

## Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Intervention Strategy: 1. Academic Support				
Risks to equality of opportunity 6: Insufficient academic support				
PTS_1 / PTS_2				
Risks to equality of opportunity	<b>PTS_1</b>	The four-year aggregate indicates that only 80.1% of students reporting a disability continue their study compared with 86.4% who do not report a disability (a gap of 6.3 percentage points (pp) and significant). The 2-year aggregate data based on a smaller, but still reasonable volume, indicates a similar but worsened situation – 83.5% of students not reporting a disability continue their studies but only 75.6% of those reporting a disability continue (an increased and very significant gap of 7.9pp).		
	<b>PTS_2</b>	The four-year aggregate indicates that only 76.4% of students reporting a disability complete their study compared with 84.7% who do not report a disability (a gap of 8.3pp and significant). The 2-year aggregate data based on a smaller, but still reasonable volume, indicates a similar but worsened situation – 86.3% of students not reporting a disability complete their studies but only 69.7% of those reporting a disability complete (an increased and very significant gap of 16.6pp gap)		
Objectives and Targets	<b>PTS_1</b>	The College will reduce the continuation gap (currently 6.3% using 4-year aggregate data) between those who declare a disability and those who do not declare a disability. We will narrow the gap by 1.2pp per annum, to reduce the gap to 1.5% the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will be achieved through targeted on-programme academic study skill support, additional non-academic support relating to welfare, resilience and mental health.		
	<b>PTS_2</b>	The College will reduce the completion gap (currently 8.3% using 4-year aggregate data) between those who declare a disability and those who do not declare a disability. We will narrow the gap by 1.5pp per annum, to reduce the gap to 2.3% by the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will be achieved through targeted on-programme academic study skill support, additional non-academic support relating to welfare, resilience and mental health.		
Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Pre-enrolment Support and Information	Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) application process support at initial contact phase. Those students who declare a disability at interview will be contacted by our Welfare Officer who will	0.3 FTE welfare officer @£25,000 = £7500	Students will start programme with DSA in place, or making good progress on application, and assessment of needs in place. Students will have academic needs analysis in place through so college can	No



	<p>conduct an initial assessment of declared disability. Once programme offer has been accepted and assessment of need confirmed, applicant will be supported to make formal DSA application if appropriate.</p> <p>Applicants who have accepted an offer of a place will be supported with a needs plan prior to enrolment.</p> <p>Welfare officer will organise formal DSA assessments if needed.</p>		bridge the gap between any equipment requirements until DSA is in place.	
Additional Academic support – Academic Progress Tutorials (APT)	Individual Academic Progress Tutorials (APT) with Academic Advisors to create Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for all learners with additional learning needs. Through ILP Academic Tutorials progress monitoring and personal development will be supported with interventions and targets set for students. All students to have 1 ILP progress meeting with their academic advisor 1 x per term (across 3 terms).	1 hour per week allocated to Academic Advisor timetables for Academic Progress Tutorial slots for all groups. 1 hour x 10 weeks @£100 x 10 Academic advisors = £10,000	Additional subject specific one-to-one tutorials available to all students. These tutorials will provide students with additional opportunities to work with academic staff to address issues related to forthcoming assessments in terms of subject knowledge, assessment requirements and grading criteria.  All students will be required to engage with Academic Progress Tutorials for the whole of their programme. Where support and concerns can be addressed or raised through monitoring ILP student progress.	Yes, PTS_3, PTS_4 and PTS_5
Additional Study Skills Workshops	Additional study skills sessions that will provide additional academic support for students with access to Additional Learning Support staff.	2 hours x 10 weeks @£100per hour = £2000 per programme.	Students to have 2-hour introductory sessions, which will be available to all students. Targeted academic advisor	Yes PTS_3, PTS_4 and PTS_5

	Drop in Sessions to be every two weeks	3 programmes to run per year = total cost £6000	referrals for drop in sessions will made as part of monitoring student progress.  Study Skills Workshops - Drop-ins covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• general study skills</li> <li>• academic writing</li> <li>• research methods</li> <li>• referencing</li> </ul> 30% of full-time students access drop-ins in 2024/25. 50% by 2027/28	
Personal development programme	Suite of Personal Development initiatives to support students with declared disabilities. Additional non-academic support relating to welfare, resilience and mental health.	Cost of delivery of presentations from external organisations and guest speakers.  @£3000	Students will have access to attend events and guest speakers to inform and support students on a wide range of subject relating to self-care, mental health and well-being. Supporting students' resilience and welfare to continue on their programme.	Yes PTS_3, PTS_4 and PTS_5.
Counselling services	Referrals through Welfare Officer to external partner organisations in local community.	Contribution to Talk Campus licence for online support included in PTS_3 costs	Welfare officer to support males with referrals to online support, college services and external partners.	Yes, PTS_3, PTS_4 and PTS_5.
<b>Evaluation</b>				
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Method(s) of evaluation</b>		<b>Summary of publication plan</b>
Student questionnaire	Statistical data on students' views on the usefulness of the service provided. Quantitative and	Type 1: Narrative evaluation – examining how this intervention activity has been delivered and engaged with and positive outcomes achieved.		Student voice to be shared with students with actions to improve if appropriate. Internal publication to students all HE students. 'You said'

	qualitative data to be collected and measured for effectiveness	Type 2: empirical data with recognition of small numbers with ongoing risk of statistical uncertainty. Statistical analysis of scores on each measure.	'We did' response. Shared through student union and class posters.
Data analysis	To evaluate engagement and quality of service and its impact on continuation and completion data of target group. Improvements in performance in line with target profiles	Type 2: empirical data with recognition of small numbers with ongoing risk of statistical uncertainty. Statistical analysis of attendance data and students' progress on programme through submissions, and attainment levels.	Report to be produced with impact evaluation submitted to relevant monitoring committees and boards. Internal only.
Internal Review	Review of programme, its impact and requirements of change to be implemented. Quality audits to sample the standard of support students receive.	Type 1: Narrative evaluation – examining how this intervention activity has been delivered and engaged with and positive outcomes achieved. Sample of observations of meetings and audit of student progress.	Report to be produced with impact evaluation submitted to relevant monitoring committees and boards. Internal only.

<b>Intervention Strategy: 2. Personal Support</b>		
<b>Risks to equality of opportunity 7: Insufficient personal support</b>		
<b>PTS_3</b>		
Risks to equality of opportunity	<b>PTS_3</b>	There is indication of a gap in continuation rates between male and female students. This indicates that male students are less successful at continuing their full-time studies than females. The TEF Indicators (2023), covering a four-year period, and including students on Degree and other Undergraduate programmes indicate that 80.4% of males successfully continue their studies but female students are significantly more successful, with 86.2% continuing. This represents a gap of 5.8pp and a risk to the equality of opportunity for full time male students.
Objectives and Targets	<b>PTS_3</b>	The College will eliminate the gap in continuation rates (currently 5.8pp, as indicated in the TEF 2023 data for the preceding four-year period) between male and female full-time students at the rate of 1.5pp per annum. This will be achieved by means of improved on-programme student support specially targeted at males.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Progress monitoring - Additional Academic support – Academic Progress Tutorials (APT)	<p>Individual tutorials with Academic Advisors to create ILP for all learners with additional learning needs. through Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Progress monitoring and personal development.</p> <p>Individual Academic Progress Tutorials (APT) with Academic Advisors to create Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for all male learners. Through ILP Academic Tutorials progress monitoring and personal development will be supported with interventions and targets set for students. All students to have 1 ILP progress meeting with their academic advisor 1 x per term (across 3 terms).</p>	As above costed into PTS1_ and PTS_2	<p>Additional subject specific one-to-one tutorials available to all male students. These tutorials will provide students with additional opportunities to work with academic staff to address issues related to forthcoming assessments in terms of subject knowledge, assessment requirements and grading criteria.</p> <p>All male students will be required to engage with Academic Progress Tutorials for the whole of their programme. Where support and concerns can be addressed or raised through monitoring ILP student progress.</p>	Yes, PTS_1 and PTS_2, PTS_4 and PTS_5
Targeted interventions for males Welfare Support	Guest speakers and partner organisations to offer suite of events targeted to support and address male issues and agendas.	Guest Speakers targeted for male topics @£500	Male students will have additional support. This will ensure their specific and unique male needs are met where possible.	No
Counselling services	<p>Referrals through Welfare Officer to external partner organisations in local community. Students can also make self-referrals.</p> <p>Publicise this service to through classroom noticeboard, induction and tutorials</p>	Contribution to Talk Campus licence for online	Welfare officer to support males with referrals to online support, college services and external partners. Male students to have better access to services and support specific to them and their unique needs.	Yes, PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_4 and PTS_5

		support @£2000		
Evaluation				
Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation		Summary of publication plan
Student questionnaire	Review of statistical data on students' views on the usefulness of the service provided. Quantitative and qualitative data to be collected and measured for effectiveness. Findings to inform any change to service.	<p>Type 1: Narrative evaluation – examining how this intervention activity has been delivered and engaged with and positive outcomes achieved.</p> <p>Type 2: Empirical data with recognition of small numbers with ongoing risk of statistical uncertainty. Statistical analysis of scores on each measure.</p>		Report to be produced with impact evaluation and the extent to which planned inputs and outputs have been achieved. Report to be submitted to relevant monitoring committees and boards. Internal only.
Data analysis	Improvements in performance in line with target profiles. Full evaluation of engagement and quality of service and its impact on continuation and completion data of target group.	<p>Type 1: Narrative evaluation – examining how this intervention activity has been delivered and engaged with and positive outcomes achieved.</p> <p>Type 2: empirical data with recognition of small numbers with ongoing risk of statistical uncertainty. Statistical analysis of attendance data and students' progress on programme through submissions, and attainment levels.</p>		Report to be produced with impact evaluation submitted to relevant monitoring committees and boards. Internal only.

<b>Intervention Strategy: 3. Financial Advice and Support</b>		
<b>Risks to equality of opportunity 10: Cost pressures</b>		
<b>PTS_4 / PTS_5</b>		
Risks to equality of opportunity	<b>PTS_4</b>	Students from the most deprived communities are less successful in continuing their studies than students from the less deprived communities. Whilst the data is not available for all quintiles, the 4-year aggregate shows 80.7% of students from IMDQ1 continuing compared with 89.9% from IMDQ3 (other quintiles are not published), a gap of 9.2 percentage points (this is from a reasonably large student population). The 2-year aggregate data shows a much larger

	<p>gap/risk to equality of opportunity with only 75.3% of students from IMDQ1 (the lowest performance of all quintiles) the most deprived communities continuing their studies compared with 88.9% from IMDQ3 (a gap of 13.6pp).</p> <p><b>PTS_5</b> Students from the most deprived communities are less successful in completing their studies than students from the less deprived communities. Whilst the data is not complete for all quintiles, the 4-year aggregate shows 81.7% of students from IMDQ1 completing compared with 85% from IMDQ3 (other quintiles are not published), a gap of 3.3pp (this is from a reasonably large student population). The 2-year aggregate data shows a much larger gap/risk to equality of opportunity with only 78.4% of students from IMDQ1 (the lowest performance of all quintiles) the most deprived communities completing compared with 90.6% from IMDQ3, and 81.1% from IMDQ4.</p>			
Objectives and Targets	<p><b>PTS_4</b> The College will reduce the continuation gap (currently 9.2% using 4-year aggregate data) between the most deprived communities (IMD Q1 &amp; Q2) and those from the least deprived (IMD Q3, Q4 and Q5) communities. We will narrow the gap by 2pp per annum, to virtually eliminate the gap by the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will be achieved through targeted financial help, targeted personal, welfare, and financial advice support.</p> <p><b>PTS_5</b> The College will almost eliminate the completion gap (12.2% using 2-year aggregate data) between the most deprived communities (IMD Q1) and those from the least deprived (IMD Q3, Q4) communities. We will reduce the gap by 3pp per annum, to virtually eliminate the gap by the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will be achieved through targeted financial help, targeted personal and welfare interventions and financial advice support.</p>			
Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Personal Development programme	Suite of Personal Development initiatives to support students with financial management. Additional non-academic support relating to welfare, resilience and mental health.	Cost of delivery of presentations from external organisations and guest speakers. Cost included on PTS_1 and PTS_2	Students will have access to attend events and guest speakers to inform and support students on a wide range of subject relating to self-care, mental health and well-being. Supporting students' reliance and welfare to continue their programme.	Yes, PTS_1, PTS_2 and PTS_3
Internal hardship fund	Hardship fund available to all students to apply for financial support. We will ensure this is promoted and all students are reminded of fund and how to apply.	Applications from students for support average @£200 per application x 80	Easy application with clear criteria for eligibility meaning students can apply and have support quickly.	No

	Students must be in attendance to be eligible for hardship support.	applications on average per year = £16,000	College will also pay for bus passes for students who are in financial hardship and travel costs are affecting attendance.	
Bursary entitlement	Bursary for all full-time degree students. This will be awarded to eligible students whose house hold income is under £25,000. Student must maintain attendance above 80% to be eligible and be in attendance 6 weeks prior to the bursary being awarded. Mitigating circumstances for low attendance will be considered case by case.	Full time degree students @£500 x 120 students on average per year = £60,000*.  <i>*This cost included in out Fees Investment Targets under Financial support investment</i>	Students receive additional income to support them during periods of financial hardship and can plan budgets accordingly. Therefore, keeping students on programme to continue their studies and complete their programmes.	No
Counselling Service	Referrals through Welfare Officer to external partner organisations in local community. Students can also make self-referrals.  Publicise this service to through classroom noticeboard, induction and tutorials	Contribution to Talk Campus licence for online support is costed in PTS_3.	Welfare officer to support males with referrals to online support, college services and external partners	Yes, PTS_1, PTS_2 and PTS_3
External referrals – community partnership hub	Create a partnership hub in the college with local community partners to support our HE students with social and economic difficulties	0.3 FTE welfare officer @£25,000 = £7500 per year	Community referral partnership. Referrals through Welfare Officer to external partner organisations in local community.	No
<b>Evaluation</b>				
Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan	
Student questionnaire	Understanding students' views on the usefulness of the service provided. This summary information will inform any adaptations needed to the service.	Type 1: Narrative evaluation – examining how this intervention activity has been delivered and	Report to be produced with impact evaluation and the extent to which planned inputs and outputs have	

		<p>engaged with and positive outcomes achieved.</p> <p>Type 2: Empirical data with recognition of small numbers with ongoing risk of statistical uncertainty. Statistical analysis of scores on each measure.</p>	<p>been achieved. Report to be submitted to relevant monitoring committees and boards. Internal only.</p>
Internal audit to review quality of service	Review of the programme, its impact and evaluation of strategies. This summary information will inform any adaptations needed to the service.	Type 1: Narrative evaluation – examining how this intervention activity has been delivered and engaged with and positive outcomes achieved.	Report to be produced with impact evaluation submitted to relevant monitoring committees and boards. Internal only.
Data analysis	Improvements in performance in line with target profiles. Full evaluation of engagement and quality of service and its impact on continuation and completion data of target group.	Type 2: Empirical data with recognition of small numbers with ongoing risk of statistical uncertainty. Statistical analysis of attendance data and students' progress on programme through submissions, and attainment levels.	Report to be produced with impact evaluation submitted to relevant monitoring committees and boards. Internal only.



## Evaluation of the Plan

This is the third APP written and published by Wirral Metropolitan College, the first written in 2019. The pandemic and its impacts, and more recent college restructuring, has resulted in a slower development of specific APP evaluation practise than had been envisaged. However, the college has extensive, broad and developing experience of self-assessment and evaluation of its majority 16–18-year-old and adult student population, including the analysis of the performance of different student groups, identification of gaps of performance and impact of change.

The College has been effective in the oversight of its HE provision, and HE student performance, including the application of its university partners' and awarding bodies' quality and academic standards requirements and the ongoing monitoring of the college's compliance with the OfS Conditions of Registration, and the QAA Quality Code.

Using the OfS Evaluation Self-Assessment Tool, with the aim of understanding the scale of further development of the evaluation skills required for effective monitoring of APP performance, and informing the approach to be taken, the College scored as follows:

- strategic context (11/24)
- programme design (13/18)
- evaluation design (3/9)
- evaluation implementation (7/20)
- learning from evaluation (9/22)

This indicates that the College has overall “emerging” evaluation practice (and below minimum evaluation implementation) which is understandable given the impacts of the pandemic, the recent college restructures, and the context of the College with a much smaller HE student population and level of activity compared with other providers, including the College's partner universities. However, the College recognises the need to uplift the level of this activity, the increased focus upon understanding the effectiveness and impact of APP activity, whilst recognising its context. The exercise has provided the College with a clear understanding of the internal processes and practices to be developed, the skills and knowledge required of those staff involved and the type of external assistance that will be helpful.

With the College's very small current (and likely future) HE student population, statistical analysis is subject to a greater level of uncertainty than in other settings. Many of the planned interventions are new, bringing further uncertainty. Evaluation activity will mostly be limited in the early years of this APP cycle to OfS Type 1 evidence: Narrative Evaluation – examining how the theory of change adopted has been applied, individual interventions delivered and engaged with, and the extent to which planned inputs and outputs have been achieved. During the latter stages of this APP cycle the College will explore OfS Type 2 evidence: Empirical Data – although it recognises that with small student numbers, and the ongoing risk of statistical uncertainty, comparisons over time and between groups will require careful consideration.

Inhibited by the reliability of statistical data because of small student numbers, OfS Type 3 evidence: Evaluation of Causality, will be beyond the scope of this APP cycle. Therefore, in working with others, including partner universities and other external partners, consideration of this will be given for the future. However, the College's context may restrict this development and the application of more fully researched and firmly founded sector-based evaluation may ultimately be the most effective route to explore causality.

The College also recognises that with the volumes of past and future student data being small, in real, and a sector context, qualitative research and evidence gathered directly from students (individually and via groups) will be of significant value and importance whilst quantitative data analysis will remain relatively small scale.

The College will look to benefit from its memberships of local and national representative bodies such as, Association of Colleges (AoC) and AdvanceHE to develop aspects of comparative evaluation of its performance and benefit from external input. The College is an active member of the AoC Northern HE in FE network and will continue to use this resource to develop methods of evaluation.

The College recognises that Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO) Evaluation Guidance, and the OfS's "Using Standards of Evidence" publication, will continue to be vital to the staff development required. The use of the Qualitative aspects of the OfS "Financial Support Toolkit" will be further developed for the evaluation of the impact of financial support.

The College's Access and Participation Group (APG), which meets termly, monitors the impact of the current APP and has been the driving force behind the creation of this new plan. This group is led by the Director of Higher Education and includes within its membership HE students, HE teaching staff, managers responsible for the delivery of Student Support Services, Additional Learning Support, Admissions, Management Information Services, Marketing and Finance.

The College's Higher Education Quality Cycle (HEQC) provides a framework for the oversight of the compliance with OfS conditions of registration, university and awarding body regulations, and other agencies (e.g. CMA), academic integrity, transparency and student access and performance. Within this framework deliberative committees are active in the evaluation of the performance of students at different points in the lifecycle and of the performance of different student groups and subgroups.

- The Quality and Standards Scrutiny Committee (QSS) is a committee of the Board of Governors. In addition to monitoring outcomes and experience of HE students, this committee will measure the impact of the APP. It is responsible for the strategic direction of the College's HE, including growth and responsiveness to employer needs of the local economy and student demand.
- The Academic Scrutiny Panel (ASP), which reports to QSS has the fundamental objective to ensure the continuous monitoring and maintenance of academic standards and has within its remit the monitoring of student outcomes, success and feedback (from students and employers).

- The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group will monitor progress on intervention strategies and hold the ASP accountable for meeting targets and ensuring responsive action if targets are not met.
- The HE Student Liaison Committees (HESLC) are held for all HE programmes. They are chaired by a programme leader. This is HE student representation from the group providing feedback from their peer students about recruitment, enrolment, teaching and learning, environment, resources, student support, assessment and quality of provision and feedback to the Academic Scrutiny Panel.
- The Higher Education Forum's focus is upon the quality of teaching and learning and to develop and share best practice, address feedback from the boards, committees and panels above and to disseminate emerging themes from the sector including those of access and participation.

The College is mindful of the need for publication of the outcomes of its APP evaluation activity, and in due course, will place this on an appropriate part of its website, and for students within an accessible part of the virtual learning environment.

### **Whole Provider Approach**

The earlier "Introduction and Strategic Aim" section (pages 1-2) of this APP explained in detail the history, development, mission, purpose and objectives of Wirral Met College.

The "About us" section of the College's website includes the "Principal's Welcome" which explains "At Wirral Met College, we are proud to be an inclusive and forward-thinking organisation, recognising the key role the College has in our community on the Wirral and also across the wider Liverpool City Region. We offer a wide range of courses to students of all ages and backgrounds, from entry level programmes to degree level study; from apprenticeships and bespoke employer-led programmes to vocational and technical full-time study programmes".

Also available on the College website, and as discussed in the earlier "Introduction and Strategic Aim" section (pages 1-2), the College's Mission is explained as "Empowering Success, Enriching Communities, Supporting Industry", its Purpose "To provide inclusive, highest-quality education and training opportunities to meet the aspirations of students and the needs of local community and industry", and "For our core values to really matter, it goes far beyond a simple list of guiding principles. Our core values authentically define how we as a team, operate, behave, and interact on a day-to-day basis. They set the direction and framework for our strategic behaviours" and include "we are ambitious, we are resilient, we are inclusive, we are empowering, and we are accountable."

The first of the five complementary, but distinctive, "Pillars" designed to ensure that the College can deliver on its purpose, is explained in the College's Accountability Agreement 2024 to 2025; "Students: To create a nurturing and inclusive learning environment that prioritises student success, holistic development, empowerment, and progression".

Wirral Met's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement explains that the "College is committed to valuing diversity, and to promoting and implementing equality of opportunity in all its activities. This commitment is based on the principle that those who learn, work and are

involved in the College should be treated fairly and with respect. The performance of the College depends on all people having a stake in its future and recognising that everyone has both rights and responsibilities within this context.

The College will work towards an environment and culture where everyone is encouraged and supported to develop their full potential; this includes giving due regard to protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010, and the Technical Guidance on Further and Higher Education". The aim of the policy is summarised in the following words "to ensure that Wirral Metropolitan College is an organisation that actively recognises and values diversity. It will do this by appreciating individual needs and differences and treating everyone with dignity and respect".

The earlier "Introduction and Strategic Aim" section (pages 1-2) also explained that the College sits within a subregion that suffers from significant deprivation and the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement makes particular reference to this point and how it influences the College's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion: "Social deprivation is not a protected characteristic in the Equality Act, but the College is nevertheless very aware of the impact this can have on students' life chances and ability to achieve their educational goals. We therefore pay due regard to this with respect to aiming to ensure our students' needs are met".

The College has an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group that encompasses HE provision. The purpose of this group is to ensure all students are treated fairly, in line with current legislation and college policy. There is also student representation on the panel from across the provision. The group reviews outcomes for all students and monitors achievement gaps, identifies areas for improvement and approves mandatory training for all staff in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.

The College has a formal governance process, including committees that meet throughout the academic year, that aim to evaluate the impact of the range of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion measures implemented across the college against a set of key performance indicators, and reports through a formal agenda to the Corporation's Board of Governors. The committee's membership includes HE representation and receives the output of the Access and Participation Group's evaluation of APP activity/interventions and progress against objectives (further details below, and within the "Evaluation of this Plan" section).

In October 2023 Ofsted recognised the application of these principles in practice and reported that students "enjoy studying at WMC. Staff promote a culture of inclusivity, care and support, ensuring that students feel welcome and well supported" and that "leaders and managers set clear expectations for behaviour, attendance and punctuality".

The creation of this APP has been driven by the Access and Participation Group (APG) that comprises staff and student representation from across the College, and its functions, ensuring that the principles of diversity and inclusion espoused in its mission, purpose, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies/statements are applied to the planning, implementation, and ultimately, evaluation of the strategies and interventions of this APP. This

process has been mindful to ensure that the whole student lifecycle has been considered from enquiry/application through to progression.

The APG is led by Director of Higher Education, who will also lead the oversight of its operation, impact, and its evaluation. The College recognises that access and participation interventions, whilst delivered by different functions across the College, such as Student Support Services, and by all teaching teams, is a cross-college activity. This is irrespective of the point of the student journey or where and how they study, or by whom, or where the intervention it is delivered.

The section of this APP entitled “Evaluation of this Plan” (pages 16-17) explains how a range of committees, at different levels, involving staff and students from different parts of the College and its functions, will be involved in monitoring, and evaluating impact and will report to the Board of Governors.

### **Student Consultation**

Wirral Metropolitan College’s engagement with students to inform, drive and improve student experience, performance and outcomes (at all stages of the student lifecycle and for all groups of students) is strong, effective, and timely.

The engagement contains aspects of a formal nature via student consultation meetings, with every programme having an elected student representative who receives training and support throughout the year from the College’s Students Union. Those student representatives studying on a course delivered in partnership will also provide feedback to partner institutions and receive support and training from them. Student representation is present at deliberative committee meetings (as part of the college quality cycle explained in the “Evaluation” section) and student surveys (external, including the National Student Survey, and internal, course and college based) collect quantitative and qualitative feedback which is analysed and discussed at deliberative committees explained in the “Evaluation” section of this APP.

With a small student body, and small group sizes, there are many more opportunities than in other settings to gather informal student feedback, and suggestions for improvement. These opportunities are valued and encouraged and captured by the regular Higher Education Forum where teaching staff follow the principle of track-monitor-intervene to continually improve the quality of student experience.

These same features and functions of the student engagement process have been used to gain input to the review of the current APP, the planning of the College’s new APP activity/interventions, and obtain feedback upon those plans.

Recent opportunities, including two revalidation events, with partner universities, which have involved student representation have been taken advantage of to explore student opinion on widening participation, support for disadvantaged groups and the range of future interventions that will make a difference. The College’s APG, which includes a range of staff drawn from across the college and its functions, and student representatives (described more fully in the “Evaluation” section of this APP) has been very receptive to these views and recommendations.

Student feedback and recommendations have particularly focused on:

- Facilities in terms of spaces to study outside of the classroom
- Additional academic support 'outside of timetable'
- Study Skills sessions to develop academic writing
- Student Voice – lack of Student Union identity for HE within the FE provision
- Course changes and communication
- Employment opportunities
- Personal and financial support

These student contributions have influenced APP planning and thinking, and planned interventions have been positively influenced by student input. For example, students raised the need for targeted support in terms of academic writing and research methods. One of our interventions is focused on this activity.

As the APP cycle progresses the monitoring and evaluation of impact will be made available to students at course level, via programme management meetings, at college level via the Student Council, and will be published on the student accessible VLE.

The College offers HE Fellowships for students who have completed their degree. These Fellows are able to register as students at the College and use the facilities such as Art Studios etc. In return, the HE Fellows are expected to engage in the development of HE provision through consultation on the APP, Quality Cycle and mentoring of students in the subject area. The College will invite one of the HE Fellows to sit on the APG to support the panel in its endeavour to meet its set targets, close gaps in performance and drive forward improvements for all HE students.

## **Provision of Information to Students**

The College will publish clear and accessible information on its website for existing and prospective students on the fees that it intends to charge and the financial support available. Relevant web pages will be referenced in a range of communications and printed media as the most up to date source of information and advice due to the lead in time needed to create other communications.

The College's website at the time of writing this APP includes a landing page tailored to the HE audience, currently entitled "University", which provides a "welcome to Wirral Met College University Centre" and contains links to important information for applicants and students including pages entitled "supporting your learning", "funding your studies", and links to additional information about "additional learning support", "financial support" and a link to the Competition Markets Authority (CMA) website to help "undergraduate students be well-informed about their rights". Tuition fees appear, for each course, on the application link page, along with other detailed course information. A link entitled "Find out more about student loans for higher education programmes" and a link to "Student Services" are also available.

For courses offered under a franchise agreement explanation is included on the course website page guiding applicants to the franchisor's website for information about finance/ financial support.

The College also publishes an HE Prospectus which contains information and guidance for students on the application process. This includes contact details of Student Advisers and Admissions. Information also includes associated tuition fees, loans and grants. The document also contains details about making an application for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) and the College offers support to students who wish to make an application to DSA.

College HE Events and Open Days involve teaching and learning support staff providing advice and guidance to potential students and family members whilst maintaining students' confidentiality. The College delivers and attends a range of external events and exhibitions within the local community, to further promote and support access to HE for all.

The College provides timely and accurate information to relevant organisations and agencies e.g. UCAS, the Student Loans Company. Course information is available in good time for applicants.

The College's "HE Admissions Policy" published within the "Higher Education Policies" tab of the "College Documents" domain of the College website explains in sections 1.5, 1.6 and 1.7 and 4.1 of the policy:

1.5 To ensure that prospective students make informed choices, the College will provide clear, consistent and accurate information. This will be available on the College website (in line with Competition and Markets Authority guidelines) and will include:

- 1.5.1 Course entry criteria, content, workload and methods of assessment.
- 1.5.2 Course target qualifications and awarding bodies. 1.5.3 Student support services.
- 1.5.4 Registration, tuition and examination fees and any other financial charges associated with a course.
- 1.5.5 Bursaries, grants, loans, subsidies, fee remissions and other financial assistance which may be available to students for childcare, transport, equipment, work experience, accommodation and fees.
- 1.6 If a Higher Education course is cancelled or its content or cost changed at any point from when a student applies for the course, the College will advise all current applicants of the cancellation or change as soon as possible, and provide impartial information, advice and guidance on alternative provision if required.
- 1.7 The College will be registered with UCAS as Wirral Met College and adhere to standard UCAS regulations and procedures for those courses offered through the UCAS system".

4.1. "Wirral Met College positively encourages applications from students with a learning difficulty and/or disability. As part of our commitment to providing a fully inclusive learning environment Wirral Met College actively encourages applicants to disclose the relevant information and contact the Additional Learning Support team early on within the application process. All requests for support will be considered in line with the criteria for 'reasonable adjustments' as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. However, if the provision of support following an assessment of need is considered by Wirral Met

College to be unreasonable or unavailable, for reasons that are beyond the Institution's or the student's control, the application will be subject to further review in conjunction with the applicant. In certain circumstances the outcome of such a review may be to defer or withdraw the offer of admission or enrolment. Assessment of need will not normally take place before an offer is made".

The College website provides details of the two bursaries that it makes available to its HE students paying higher tuition fees and referenced in other parts of this APP. It explains that:

Students studying on a full-time degree programme and who are paying the full fee of £8500 (2025/26 onward new starts) are eligible to access bursaries, as long as they meet the below criteria:

1. Support Bursary - £500 per annum for students with a household income below £25,000.

OR

2. Access and Progression Bursary - £500 per annum for students with a household income between £25,001 and £30,000 and who have studied at Wirral Met College in the previous two years.

3. Both these bursaries are related to attendance eligibility. Students must be in full attendance 6 weeks prior to the bursary issue date and maintain an attendance of 80% and above for each bursary period. Mitigating circumstances are considered for individuals who have valid reasons for low attendance, this is on a case-by-case assessment.

The bursaries are paid in two instalments, the first at the end of term 1 in December, and the second at the end of term 2 in April.

The College will continue maintaining a flexible hardship fund into which students can apply for funding to meet urgent or excessive personal needs. This is a policy that was operated under the previous APP and is one that has proved very successful in helping disadvantaged students to remain in study when they might otherwise have withdrawn.

Applicants will be provided with information about the college financial support they are entitled to (including eligibility criteria) at the point of enquiry (via the College website), upon application, at offer, enrolment and induction.

Students and Applicants are also provided with the following information:

- The cost per year of the programme, as well as the course duration and total course cost within the offer letter which is also emailed to students.
- The College provides details of the Students' Protection Plan against potential risk associated with continuity of provision and the likelihood of those risks occurring.
- The course handbook, which details the implications of continuous, unauthorised absence on tuition fees and links to the college Fee Policy and Attendance Policy
- A student regulations and policy document which includes the College's HE Fees Policy



- Any details of standard optional additional costs such as equipment
- Accompanying information and conditions of offer document, which provides details regarding the payment of fees, the total amount of tuition fees payable and contact details of the College's Finance Team and cancellation arrangements.

This renewed APP for 2025/26-2029/30, once approved, will be published on the college website for the duration of the study period of students affected by the plan (alongside an accessible summary) – the current APP sits within the “Financial Support” section of the University landing page.

### **Annex A: Further information and analysis relating to the identification and prioritisation of key risks to equality of opportunity**

Wirral Metropolitan College is a very small HE provider. In the analysis of the key risks to the equality of opportunity the College is mindful that its data contains limitations, complexities and uncertainties which are common when analysing small datasets.

The investigation has been informed by reference to the following data sources.

- The OfS APP Data Dashboard
- The OfS TEF 2023 Data Dashboard
- The OfS TEF Shape and Size Data Dashboard (2023 and 2022)
- The College's own student data records sourced from college ILR returns.

The OfS APP data dashboard provides a reasonable volume of data about student groups in the Access stage of the student lifecycle, although this is less complete in the most recent years. The volume of data about student groups in the later stages of the student lifecycle – continuation, completion, attainment, and progression - is much smaller and for some stages is absent. Where the APP data dashboard has been used 4 and 2 year aggregate values have been considered a more reliable indicator of the risk to equality of opportunity due both to data volumes and some changes in curriculum offer over recent years. All the data quoted here is drawn from the OfS APP Data Dashboard unless otherwise indicated.

The College collects and reports its HE student data via its ILR and where used here is referenced specifically.

The analysis also draws upon 2023 TEF indicators, comparison to benchmarks, the TEF Data Dashboard and the TEF 2022 and 2023 Shape and Size of Provision Dashboard (including the updated 2023 version).

Due to the small student numbers, it has not always been possible or appropriate to explore intersections of student characteristics or disaggregate into smaller groups.

Wirral Metropolitan College has a very different HE offer (particularly in terms of qualification type and level) to the sector overall. Where appropriate use has been made of the “all undergraduate” and “other undergraduate” level of view when comparing to the sector.

Whilst the College recognises that its core course offer to adults and 16-18 year old students is different in terms of level, duration, accreditation and outcomes (and the student experience is also different) some reference has been made to wider college student data and performance, where it is significant and synergetic with the analysis of the HE student

population and its performance (e.g. data about the composition of the overall college's student population).

The College has applied the principles of the OfS' sector wide Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) to its own context, offer and student characteristics.

The number of risks to equality of opportunity identified are less than is likely at larger providers due partly to the absence of volumes of data that provide the opportunity for reliable judgements. Where it has been considered that this may have led to a failure to identify a risk to the equality of opportunity other evidence (significantly student and staff consultation) has been used along with other college-based data, such as uptake of student services and financial support.

Apart from our Teacher Training programmes (which are offered under a franchise agreement), all the higher education courses now offered at the college are full time (over a maximum of 3 days per week). Historically, the college did offer more part time provision but demand has fallen, and the specific part time offer has been withdrawn. Only a small number of students will study part time on directly funded courses as a result of a need to re-sit or complete part of their full-time study under mitigating circumstances. Therefore, there has NOT been analysis of part time student performance, and NO objectives will be set with regard to part time students.

Wirral's TEF 2023 outcome indicates a recent history over the previous 4 years of successful outcomes for most full-time students and most groups. The TEF student indicators for the overall student population show "materially above benchmark" performance in all three student outcome categories.

- Continuation 84.5% (benchmark 80.85) – "materially above benchmark"
- Completion 82.6% (benchmark 76.3%) - "materially above benchmark"
- Progression 65.4% (benchmark 58.6%) – "materially above benchmark"

The TEF indicators also show most as "materially above benchmark" for continuation, completion and progression for the different student groups - a strong performance with little evidence of risk to equality of opportunity.

There are some limitations of data sufficiency, which are also explored in the analysis of the APP data dashboard below. For example, in the case of ethnicity, the only TEF indicators available are for the majority white student group with no data available for the separate, and very small, non-white ethnic groups of students.

The only student group where TEF indicators appear to show a risk to equality of opportunity are for those students drawn from the more deprived communities (IMD quintiles 1 and 2) – continuation is 7 percentage points below the rate for students from the least deprived communities (IMD quintiles 3-5), where completion is 1.3 percentage points below, and progression 13.7 percentage points below. Whilst the Wirral performance here is still above benchmark, the risk to equality of opportunity identified here is explored below (with the use of APP Data Dashboard data), within the main body of the APP, in the "Risks to Equality of Opportunity" section, and objectives to improve this situation have been set.

### **Student Lifecycle Stage – Access – Full time**

Understandably, data (within the OfS APP data dashboard) which is available for most groups here shows a good performance with strong recruitment from some underrepresented groups.

DEPRIVATION – the student population from the most deprived community – IMD quintile 1- is the largest group of students studying at the College, and significantly exceeds the sector average. While this is unsurprising bearing in mind the demographics of the locality it is a strong feature of the college’s ability to draw students from a group that is underrepresented across the country. The 4-year average shows most students, 51.1%, are drawn from IMD quintile 1 (the most deprived community), far more than the sector average, and seven times the 7.4% of the population drawn from the least deprived community drawn from IMD quintile 5. The 2-year average shows an even larger population from the poorest community – IMD quintile 1 55.6%. This is more than 9 times the population drawn from IMD quintile 5 (the least deprived community) 6.1%. The annual data, which is available for this group and lifecycle, shows in the most recent year (2022/23) 59.8% of students are from IMD quintile 1, the most deprived. There is no risk to equality of opportunity identified here. Indeed, much opportunity is being provided to an underrepresented group.

AGE – students over the age of 21 is the largest group of students studying at the College, and significantly exceeds the sector average. This is a strong feature of the college’s ability to draw students from a group that across the sector has dramatically fallen over the past 10/15 years. The 4-year average shows most students, 70.2%, are aged over 21, far more than the sector average. The 2-year average shows a majority student population of 60.9%. The annual data, which is available for this group and lifecycle, shows in the most recent year (2022/23) 63.3% of students were aged over 21. There is no risk to equality of opportunity here. Indeed, much opportunity is being provided to an underrepresented group (mature +21-year-olds), for whom opportunity has reduced across the sector in recent years.

The proportion of students declaring a DISABILITY has significantly increased at the college over recent years and is a strong feature of the college’s ability to draw students from an underrepresented group and recognise their needs. The 4-year average shows 42.1% of students declaring a disability, far higher than the sector average. The 2-year average shows a higher proportion – 53.8%. The annual data, which is available for this group and lifecycle, shows in the most recent year (2022/23) 54.4% of students declared a disability. There is no risk to equality of opportunity here. Indeed, much opportunity is being provided to an underrepresented group, far in excess of the sector and a much-improved situation since 2017/18.

In terms of ETHNICITY, the only data available is for the 4-year aggregate and for the majority white student population (94.7%) (mixed (5.3%)), with no comparative data for other ethnic groups which are so small. Whilst this does indicate a situation which is much less diverse than the sector, the population mix matches the local community, and Wirral Metropolitan College, unlike a university, will attract from its locality This is acknowledged as a situation different to the sector and shows an under representation of students from non-white ethnic groups. This is considered in the College context NOT a risk to equality of opportunity that can be addressed by the college, but best addressed by larger providers (such as the College’s university partners), with larger resources and the ability to draw students from areas other than their local community.

ELIGIBILITY for FREE SCHOOL MEALS – the proportion of the student population eligible for Free School Meals significantly exceeds the sector average (18.1%, OfS data Dashboard 2024). Whilst this is unsurprising bearing in mind the demographics of the locality it is a strong feature of the college’s ability to draw younger students from a group that is underrepresented across the country. The 4-year average shows 40.2% were eligible for Free School Meals - more than twice the national average. The 2-year average shows a larger proportion eligible, 41.5%, which is again more than twice the sector average. The annual data, which is available

for this group and lifecycle, shows in the most recent year (2022/23) 32.1% of students were eligible for Free School Meals. This is reduced, but still 14 percentage points above the sector average. There is no risk to equality of opportunity here. Indeed, much opportunity is being provided to an underrepresented group.

The data for TUNDRA only relates to students under the age of 21 (the minority student population) and whilst Associations Between Characteristics of Students (ABCS), which amalgamates student characteristics, is available, the sufficiency of data for each of the separate characteristics means that this is less relevant.

### **Student Lifecycle Stage – Continuation – Full time**

Data for most student groups in connection with their continuation of study is available here (within the OfS APP data dashboard) and some gaps/inequality of opportunity have been identified, explained within the “Risk to Equality of Opportunity” section of the main body of the APP and objectives have been set (see “Objectives” section).

When looking at DEPRIVATION there is some indication that students from the most deprived communities (IMD quintile 1) are less successful at continuing their studies than those from the least deprived communities. Whilst the data is not available for all IMD quintiles, the 4-year aggregate shows 80.7% of students from IMD quintile 1 continuing compared with 89.9% from IMD quintile 3 (other IMD quintiles are not published), a gap of 9.2 percentage points (this is from a reasonably large student population). The 2-year aggregate data shows a much larger gap/risk to equality of opportunity with only 75.3% of students from IMD quintile 1 (the lowest performance of all IMD quintiles) the most deprived communities continuing their studies compared with 88.9% from IMD quintile 3 (a gap of 13.6 percentage points). This is based on a smaller number of students, but the 4-year aggregate data is sufficiently large in volume to be noteworthy and is referred to in the main body of this APP, the “Risks to Equality of Opportunity” section and is included as an objective (PTS\_4).

Child poverty is a strong indicator for families living in poverty. According to the government report in 2024 ([Child poverty: Statistics, causes and the UK's policy response - House of Lords Library \(parliament.uk\)](#)), one of the key factors driving child poverty is a lack of parental qualifications. Namely no or low levels of parental qualifications has a strong correlation to long-term worklessness and low earnings. These factors in themselves also perpetuate future child and family poverty. There are a number of relative influencing factors on future poverty, but Parental Qualifications are among the most influential. Regarding child poverty, Wirral has concerning statistics. Around 20.6% of children live in families with absolute low income, and 24.4% live in families with relative low income. These figures are significantly above the national averages of 15.3% and 18.4%, respectively. A large proportion of our HE students are mature with many being parents or having care responsibilities.

The AGE profile of success in continuing study is similar for both age groups (under and over 21 years). The 4-year data shows 84.3% of +21-year-old students continuing and 83.3% of under 21-year-old students. The 2-year data shows a similar situation– 80% of plus 21-year-olds continue their study, and 79.2% of under 21-year-olds. There is NO risk to equality of opportunity to address, with younger and more mature students successfully continuing their study at approximately the same rate.

DISABILITY data does appear to indicate a gap and risk to equality of opportunity for students reporting a disability when continuing their study. The four-year aggregate indicates that only 80.1% of students reporting a disability continue their study compared with 86.4% who do not report a disability (a gap of 6.3 percentage points and significant). The 2-year aggregate data based on a smaller, but still reasonable volume, indicates a similar but worsened situation –

83.5% of students not reporting a disability continue their studies but only 75.6% of those reporting a disability continue (an increased and very significant gap of 7.9 percentage points). This represents a risk to the equality of opportunity for this group of students and is included within the main body of this APP within the “Risks to Equality of Opportunity” section and an Objective has been set (PTS\_1).

There is indication of a gap in continuation rates between male and female full-time students. This indicates that male students are less successful at continuing their full-time studies than females. The TEF Indicators (2023), covering a four-year period, and including students on Degree and other Undergraduate programmes indicate that 80.4% of males successfully continue their studies but female students are significantly more successful, with 86.2% continuing. This represents a gap of 5.8 percentage points and a risk to the equality of opportunity for full time male students.

Whilst both of these continuation rates are above benchmark (male students by 1.7 percentage points and female students by 3.6 percentage points) it is considered that this gap, in this college context, is too large to be overlooked and a target to eliminate this gap during this APP cycle appears in the “Objective” section (PTS\_3).

The profile of success in continuation for student ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS is a little mixed with the situation changing between the 4- and 2-year data. The differences are not significant, show neither of the groups at a clear risk, and are based on small student numbers. The 4-year data shows 88.6% of students eligible for free school meals continuing but only 75.9% of those not eligible continuing. The 2-year data shows this situation reversed and with a bigger gap – only 66.7% of students eligible for free school meals continue their study, but 87.5% continue who were not eligible. Both aggregates are based on small student numbers, indeed very small for the 2-year aggregate and whilst this is worthy of note, a specific objective is not warranted due to the very small numbers and doubts to statistical validity.

Data is only available for the significant white majority student population with no comparative data for other ETHNIC groups. This is entirely understandable due to the very small size of the non-white student population. No reliable analysis can be made of subgroup continuation performance.

### **Student Lifecycle Stage – Completion – Full time**

Data for most student groups in connection with their completion of study is available here [within the OfS APP data dashboard] and some gaps/inequality of opportunity have been identified, explained within the “Risk to Equality of Opportunity” section of the main body of the APP and objectives have been set (see “Objectives” section).

When looking at DEPRIVATION there is some indication that students from the most deprived communities (IMD quintile 1) are less successful at completing their studies than those from the least deprived communities. Whilst the data is not complete for all quintiles, the 4-year aggregate shows 81.7% of students from IMD quintile 1 completing compared with 85% from IMD quintile 3 (other IMD quintiles are not published), a gap of 3.3 percentage points (this is from a reasonably large student population). The 2-year aggregate data shows a much larger gap/risk to equality of opportunity with only 78.4% of students from IMD quintile 1 (the lowest performance of all IMD quintiles) the most deprived communities completing compared with 90.6% from IMD quintile 3, and 81.1% from IMD quintile 4. Whilst this is based on a smaller number of students (170 in IMD quintile 1), it is sufficient to be noteworthy in this is discussed in the main body of the APP at the “Risks to Equality of Opportunity” section and an objective has been set (PTS\_5).

The AGE profile of success in completion is a little mixed with the situation different between the 4- and 2-year data. The differences are NOT significant and show neither of the two age groups at a clear risk and therefore not worthy of further analysis. The 4-year data shows 83.2% of +21-year-old students completing but only 78.4% of under 21-year-old students. The 2-year data shows this situation reversed and the gap smaller – 82.3% of under 21-year-olds complete their study, now slightly higher than the 80.7% of plus 21-year-olds completing.

DISABILITY data appears to indicate a gap and risk to equality of opportunity for students reporting a disability when completing their study. The 4-year aggregate indicates that only 76.4% of students reporting a disability complete their study compared with 84.7% who do not report a disability (a gap of 8.3 percentage points and significant). The 2-year aggregate data based on a smaller, but still reasonable volume, indicates a similar but worsened situation – 86.3% of students not reporting a disability complete their studies but only 69.7% of those reporting a disability complete (an increased and very significant gap of 16.6 percentage points). This is referred to in the main body of the APP at the “Equality of Opportunity” section and an objective has been set (PTS\_2).

No data is available for TUNDRA, ABCS, and FREE SCHOOL MEALS and data only for the significantly white majority is available with no comparative data for other ETHNIC groups. This data situation is entirely understandable in the context of the college and with its student numbers and mix and no risk to equality of opportunity is explorable.

#### **Student Lifecycle Stage – Attainment – Full time**

Attainment data applies only to students studying a full honours degree and is therefore very limited in volume for Wirral and unhelpful (but understandable).

For AGE the only data available is for 21+ ages and therefore no gap or risk to equality of opportunity can be explored.

For DISABILITY there is only 4-year aggregate data available which shows 68.4% of students with a disability attaining (a first or upper second) and 72.4% of students without a disability attaining – a gap of 4 percentage points. Whilst this is worthy of note this gap is based on a very small overall population of 70 students and there is no data available from the more recent 2-year aggregate data. The College considers this a “concern” which will be explored with more internal enquiry, and data, but a specific objective will NOT be set due to the statistical unreliability and historical source of the data.

In terms of ETHNICITY, the only data available is for the white majority student population, with no comparative data for other ethnic groups which are so small, therefore there is no ability to explore any risk to equality of opportunity.

No data is available for TUNDRA, ABCS, DEPRIVATION, FREE SCHOOL MEALS. This data situation is, in the context of the college, and with its student numbers and mix, entirely understandable and no risk to equality of opportunity is explorable.

#### **Student Lifecycle Stage – Progression – Full time**

Quite understandably because of the overall small student population, the modest take up of the Graduate Outcomes Survey, the relatively recent introduction of this survey and the built in time lag the only student groups where there is any data available and published for AGE (+21 and under 21) is only the 4 year aggregate data (nothing is published for the more recent 2 year aggregate). DISABILITY has the 2 and 4 year aggregate data available.

In terms of DISABILITY, there appears NO gap or risk to equality of opportunity. The 4-year data shows 65.2% of those with disabilities progressing, which is in line with those without disabilities (65.6%). The more recent 2-year aggregate data shows a similar matching, 73.9% of those with disabilities progress compared with 74.5% without disabilities. Even here, the student numbers are very small. Should there have been a gap it would have been doubtful if the College would have thought it wise to explore this as the statistical reliability would be uncertain.

Students under 21 are less successful in progression than those aged over 21. However, the data set is very small with only 90 students included in the 4-year aggregate data.

Only 53.6% of under 21-year-olds progressed, whilst 71.6% of 21+ progressed – a gap of 18 percentage points. This is noteworthy. However, there is no more up to date – there being an insufficiency for the 2-year aggregate. The 4-year aggregate is based only on 90 students all together, with a 40% take up of the survey, therefore is a very unreliable sample size. The College will NOT set itself an objective but will monitor progression internally.

In terms of ETHNICITY, the only data available is for the majority white student group, with no comparative data for other ethnic groups which are so small and therefore there is no ability to explore any risk to equality of opportunity.

No data is available for TUNDRA, ABCS, DEPRIVATION, FREE SCHOOL MEALS. This is entirely understandable. This data situation is, in the context of the college, and with its student numbers and mix, entirely understandable and no risk to equality of opportunity is explorable.

**Annex B: Further information that sets out the rationale, assumptions and evidence base for each intervention strategy that is included in the access and participation plan.**

Wirral Metropolitan College recognises that despite its significance to the College, and to the provision of higher learning opportunities (particularly to its adult learners), its past and current HE student population is small.

The rationale for planned activities for the three Intervention Strategies planned are based upon the following, and draws not only from feedback and commentary from HE students but also other learners, including adults on Access to HE courses and 16-18 year olds studying at the college, and aspiring to progress to HE;

1. The principles of successful practice and support applied across Wirral Met in its provision of education and learning to all its students.
2. Feedback from higher education students about their enquiry and application experiences, their subsequent induction and study experiences and support for progression and what “worked and didn’t”.
3. The recognition from feedback from students during consultation, and in exploring the College’s EORR, that adult learners (the majority college population) and those from underrepresented groups have specific support needs and learning preferences resulting from a gap since prior study, past learning experiences, the ease/difficulty of accessing learning and other resources outside colleges, and financial challenges faced in their own, and their families lives, worsened by the recent cost of living crisis.
4. As explained on page 22, student feedback and recommendations, garnered from contributions in recent university revalidation events have particularly focused on:

- Facilities in terms of spaces to study outside of the classroom
  - Additional academic support 'outside of timetable'
  - Study Skills sessions to develop academic writing
  - Student Voice – lack of Student Union identity for HE within the FE provision
  - Course changes and communication
  - Employment opportunities
  - Personal and financial support
5. An understanding of Wirral Met's catchment area, the economic, social, and educational backgrounds of potential students.



# Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Wirral Metropolitan College

Provider UKPRN: 10007553

## Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

\*course type not listed

### Inflation statement:

Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations we will increase fees each year using RPI-X

Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	All courses of this type are charged the same fees	N/A	8500
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	All courses of this type are charged the same fees	N/A	8500
HNC/HND	All courses of this type are charged the same fees	N/A	7000
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2025-26

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2025-26

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

# Fees, investments and targets

## 2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Wirral Metropolitan College

Provider UKPRN: 10007553

### Investment summary

A provider is expected to submit information about its forecasted investment to achieve the objectives of its access and participation plan in respect of the following areas: access, financial support and research and evaluation. Note that this does not necessarily represent the total amount spent by a provider in these areas. Table 6b provides a summary of the forecasted investment, across the four academic years covered by the plan, and Table 6d gives a more detailed breakdown.

#### Notes about the data:

The figures below are not comparable to previous access and participation plans or access agreements as data published in previous years does not reflect latest provider projections on student numbers.

Yellow shading indicates data that was calculated rather than input directly by the provider.

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

"Total access investment funded from HFI" refers to income from charging fees above the basic fee limit.

"Total access investment from other funding (as specified)" refers to other funding, including OIS funding (but excluding Uni Connect), other public funding and funding from other sources such as philanthropic giving and private sector sources and/or partners.

**Table 6b - Investment summary**

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£23,000	£26,000	£26,000	£28,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£76,000	£79,000	£79,000	£81,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£5,000	£6,000	£6,000	£7,000

**Table 6d - Investment estimates**

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£8,000	£10,000	£10,000	£11,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£15,000	£16,000	£16,000	£17,000
<b>Access activity investment</b>	<b>Total access investment (£)</b>	<b>£23,000</b>	<b>£26,000</b>	<b>£26,000</b>	<b>£28,000</b>
<b>Access activity investment</b>	<b>Total access investment (as % of HFI)</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>
<b>Access activity investment</b>	<b>Total access investment funded from HFI (£)</b>	<b>£23,000</b>	<b>£25,000</b>	<b>£26,000</b>	<b>£28,000</b>
<b>Access activity investment</b>	<b>Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£60,000	£62,000	£62,000	£63,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£16,000	£17,000	£17,000	£18,000
<b>Financial support investment</b>	<b>Total financial support investment (£)</b>	<b>£76,000</b>	<b>£79,000</b>	<b>£79,000</b>	<b>£81,000</b>
<b>Financial support investment</b>	<b>Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)</b>	<b>25.3%</b>	<b>25.3%</b>	<b>25.3%</b>	<b>25.0%</b>
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£5,000	£6,000	£6,000	£7,000
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)	1.7%	1.9%	1.9%	2.2%

# Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Wirral Metropolitan College

Provider UKPRN: 10007553

## Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
	PTA_1														
	PTA_2														
	PTA_3														
	PTA_4														
	PTA_5														
	PTA_6														
	PTA_7														
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
The College will reduce the continuation gap (currently 6.3% using 4-year aggregate data) between those who declare a disability and those who do not declare a disability.	PTS_1	Continuation	Reported disability	Disability reported	No disability reported	We will narrow the continuation gap between disability reported and no disability reported by 1.2 percentage points (pp) per annum. This will reduce the gap to 1.5% by the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will be achieved through targeted on-programme academic study skill support, additional non-academic support relating to welfare, resilience and mental health.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2022-23	Percentage	6.3	5.1	3.9	2.7	1.5
The College will reduce the completion gap (8.3% using 4-year aggregate data) between those who declare a disability and those who do not declare a disability.	PTS_2	Completion	Reported disability	Disability reported	No disability reported	We will narrow the completion between disability reported and no disability reported gap by 1.5pp per annum. This will reduce the gap by the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will be achieved through targeted on-programme academic study skill support, additional non-academic support relating to welfare, resilience and mental health.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2022-23	Percentage	8.3	6.8	5.3	3.8	2.3
The College will reduce the gap in continuation rates (currently 5.8 pp, as indicated in the TEF 2023 data for the preceding four-year period) between male and female full-time students.	PTS_3	Continuation	Sex	Male	Female	We will narrow the continuation gap between males and females gap by 1.5pp per annum. This will eliminate the gap by the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will be achieved by means of improved on-programme student support specially targeted at males.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2022-23	Percentage	5.8	4.3	2.8	1.3	0
The College will reduce the continuation gap (currently 9.2% using 4-year aggregate data) between the most deprived communities (IMD Q1 & Q2) and those from the least deprived (IMD Q3, Q4 and Q5) communities.	PTS_4	Continuation	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations (IMD))	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5	We will narrow the continuation gap between males and females gap by 2pp per annum. This will virtually eliminate the gap by the end of this APP cycle – 2028/29. This will be achieved by means of improved on-programme student support specially targeted at males.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2022-23	Percentage	9.2	7.2	5.2	3.2	1.2

