

Appendix 4

[RNN Group]

Summary of [2021-22 to 2025-26] access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

You can see the full access and participation plan for [RNN Group] at https://www.rnngroup.co.uk/app/uploads/sites/9/2021/11/RNN_APP_2021_22_V1_10005534.pdf

Key points (Page 11 of the full plan)

The focus of our access and participation plan is on improving outcomes for specific groups of students. Data shows that, compared to their peers at the RNN Group, outcomes are lower for certain groups of students.

The following groups of students are less likely to complete their studies.

- Ethnic minority students
- Students with a mental health disability.

The following groups of students are less likely to achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above

- Students who originate from a neighbourhood where not many students go onto high education.
- Ethnic minority students.

Fees we charge (Appendix 2 of the full plan)

At the RNN Group, the maximum fees charged are

£6900 for full-time students

£4400 for part-time students

£7600 for Initial Teacher Training students

You can see a full list of the fees we charge at the RNN Group at https://www.rnngroup.co.uk/app/uploads/sites/9/2022/05/Fee_Summary_2223_10005534.pdf

Financial help available (Pages 17-18 of the full plan)

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

- A **bursary** that provides financial support for full-time students who originate from neighbourhoods where not many students go onto higher education, ethnic minority students,

students with a disability and students who have previously been in care. The bursary ranges from £100 to £250 per year, depending on the year of study.

- A **Higher Education Hardship Fund** which provides financial support to students who are experiencing financial hardship, of up to £400 per term.
- The college has a policy of **addressing digital poverty** and provides digital equipment for students who are unable to access from home due to lack of digital equipment.

Information for students (Pages 21-22)

- **Prospective students** are able to access information regarding fees and financial support through the university centre web-site and prospectus.
- **Current students** receive additional information regarding fees and financial support through the student portal and as part of the induction process, which is co-ordinated by the Higher Education Achievement Coach.

For the most up to date information see our university web-site at <https://ucr.rotherham.ac.uk/>

What we are aiming to achieve (Appendix 1 of the full plan)

Our overall aim is to support students to access higher education. We also want to create an environment where students at the RNN Group can achieve their full potential.

- **Students with a disability** – By 2025-26, we will increase the number of students with a disability, that access our part-time courses by 25%.
- **Students from low participation neighbourhoods** – By 2025-26, we will increase the number of students from low participation neighbourhoods, who achieve a 2:1 or higher by 50%.
- **Ethnic minority students** – By 2025-26, we will increase
 - the continuation rate (the proportion of students continuing to the next year of their course) for students who are from ethnic minorities by 18%.
 - the proportion of students from ethnic minorities who achieve a 2:1 or higher by 17%.
- **Students who declare a mental health disability** – By 2025-26, we will increase the continuation rate for students who have a mental health disability by 17%.
- **Care experienced students** - By 2025-26, we will look to increase the number of students who have experience of the care system.

What we are doing to achieve our aims (Pages 13-18 of the main plan)

We have identified 9 areas of activity to help us to achieve our aims and targets, which are as follows.

1. Increase the **utilisation of the University Centre Rotherham** as the focal point of higher education within Rotherham, which provides a flexible and affordable university level education for the local community with a focus on providing our students with the knowledge, skills and qualifications required by regional employers.

2. Continue to **extend our programme of outreach and engagement activities** within local schools to raise the aspirations of local students to progress into higher education. This will include hosting school graduation celebration events at the UCR and a range of higher education taster courses, that will highlight the benefits of a university level education.
3. As a further education provider, we will **continue to raise the aspirations of our own further education students** to progress into higher education, through our Uni connect (HEPPSY) network and through our own internal FE tutorial model and working in conjunction with a wide range of other regional universities.
4. Continue to support our students through our **Student Progress Reviews** process, which identifies the appropriate support for students who are at risk and which will support them to continue with their studies and to attain the best possible classification profile. As part of this process, we will capture and monitor the knowledge, skills and behaviours of all students, including wider employability skills that will be required to help students progress into their chosen sectors.
5. We will provide students with access to **summer schools and study skills support**, through vocational tutors and the library, which will support students with the academic demands of higher education study. This will include all students having access to **group and individual tutorials**, as part of their timetabled hours.
6. Ensure that the higher education **curriculum is inclusive and relevant** to students from all backgrounds, including those from under-represented groups. Student feedback and opinion will be used to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to student needs and the regional employment opportunities that are available to graduates.
7. The college will continue to provide financial support from each of the under-represented groups identified, in the form of an **annual bursary** of between £100 to £250 per year.
8. Access to a HE Hardship Fund that will provide students from under-represented groups to access financial support of up to £400 per term.
9. Continue to provide the teaching staff with a programme of Continuous Professional Development, which enables teaching staff to develop and deliver an inclusive curriculum, which is relevant to all students and includes high quality teaching, learning and assessment in line with the priorities of the Teaching Excellence Framework.

How students can get involved (Page 18 of the main plan)

Students have contributed to the development of the Access and Participation Plan, through the Student Voice Committee, as well as student representation on the Board of Governors, who also review the performance of the Access and Participation Plan. Feedback from students is acted upon and is used to help modify Access and Participation Plans. Students are able to contribute to the development and review of the Access and Participation Plan, by volunteering to be part of the Student Voice Committee, or applying to be a student governor. Student ambassadors are involved in widening participation and outreach activity, aimed at increasing progression to higher education from under-represented groups.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved (Pages 21 of the full plan)

Our programmes of activity are informed by the best available evidence about what works for students. We will collect data and feedback to evaluate:

- The strategic context of our Access and Participation Plan
- The design of our programmes in helping us to achieve our targets

- The impact our Access and Participation Plan is having on students from under-represented groups.
- How we can learn from this evaluation and how this evaluation will inform future targets in our Access and Participation Plan.
- Progress against the University Centre Rotherham strategic vision and USP, as a HE resource in the heart of Rotherham, that will develop higher level skills within the local community.

Progress against achievement of the targets and objectives outlined in the Self Evaluation Document and this Access and Participation Plan will be reviewed at all levels, including Higher Education team meetings, Senior Leadership Team meetings and by the Governing Body of the college.

Contact details for further information

You can contact Andrew Birch at abirch@rnngroup.ac.uk ([Head of Higher Education](#)) for further information.