

RTC Education Ltd t/d as Regent College London

Summary of 2020/21 to 2023/24 Access and Participation Plan and Variation Appendix

What is an Access and Participation Plan?

Access and Participation Plans (APP) set out how higher education (HE) providers will improve equality of opportunity for under-represented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

Regent College London (RCL) had its first APP for the period 2020/21 - 2024/25¹ approved in 2020 (which is [available here](#)). This summary covers details of the existing APP and its recent appendix from 2022 up to 2023/24.

Key Points

RCL has one London campus that spans over multiple buildings, offering qualifications including: a Foundation Degree (FdSc), HNDs, (Higher National Diplomas) at Level 4 and 5, undergraduate programmes, including top-up degrees at L6 and post graduate degrees at Level 7 which are delivered through 4 academic schools: School of Business and Enterprise; School of Allied Health; School of Computing and Artificial Intelligence; School of Engineering and Creative sciences. RCL degree programmes are delivered in partnership with Pearson, University of Bolton, University of Northampton, Buckinghamshire New University as awarding bodies. RCL recently secured a new partnership with St Mary's University and franchised programmes will launch for AY2022/23.

RCL has seen the number of students increase, for both directly (DAS) registered by RCL and indirectly (IAS) registered by RCL partners, between 2019 to 2021, and the student population remains a majority mature learner profile. Currently, 96% of students at RCL are mature students (over 21 yrs.) with 50% from areas of deprivation across north and central London. RCL students are usually returning to education later in life to fulfil their potential, often with a complex range of learning needs; commuting to study, caring responsibilities, full or part time work commitments, English as a second language and digital poverty. RCL is committed to supporting students and working closely with them through formal and informal mechanisms to discuss and co-create programmes that optimise their learning environment, fully develop their academic and professional skills, ensuring widening participation students are supported into, through and progress on from their HE journey successfully.

RCL is working towards and is broadly on track to achieve the targets set out in its APP, which are:

- Reaching out to and supporting differently abled students to access and thrive at RCL.²
- Supporting underrepresented groups to stay in education and complete their qualifications working collaboratively to overcome barriers to study.³
- Ensuring equality in achieving good degree outcomes between different ethnic groups.⁴
- Supporting equality for male and female graduates from disadvantaged postcodes to progress into work or stay in education.⁵

Fees RCL charge

For degree programmes (with and without Foundation years) £9,250 per year for full-time students and for part time £4,625 per year of study⁶

Financial help available with RCL (more information available here)

Bursaries: a) Postcode Bursary: an automatic payment to students from a postcode designated areas of deprivation of £250pa. b) Care Leaver Bursary: an offer of £1,000pa to students who qualify. c) Disability Bursary: offered to eligible students who have a disability affecting their ability to study.

Financial Support. a) Hardship Fund: for students facing unexpected and significant short-term financial

¹ Regent College London (RCL) dated 2020/21 to 2024/25 <https://www.rcl.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/rcl-access-and-participation-plan.pdf>

² Target: To increase the proportion of entrants with a known disability and To halve the attainment gap for disabled students ([p30 of APP](#))

³ Target: To eliminate the continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups ([p30 of APP](#))

⁴ Target: To halve the attainment gap for white and BME students ([p30 of APP](#))

⁵ Target: To eliminate the progression gap between male and female qualifiers from IMD Q1/2 ([p30 of APP](#))

⁶ Regent College London (RCL) APP dated 2020/21 to 2024/25 ([p28 of APP](#))

hardship outside their control. b) Emergency Loan Scheme: assessed on an individual basis. c) Technical support. Computer Loan Scheme available to every student for the duration of their studies.

Information for students

100% of RCL students apply direct, not through UCAS. RCL operates a one-to-one 5-step admissions service to all applicants, offering personal support for information advice and guidance, assessment of prior qualifications, work experience, relevant subject knowledge and level of English. Prospective students are allocated a case worker who talks them through the process of application, academic interview, student finance application and expectations via phone, email and video calls. For unsuccessful students alternative study options are identified, whilst successful students are made aware of the services available to them for any specific mental health or physical need, of bursaries and financial aid and choosing the best study option for them around their lives. The RCL Director of Students leads a dedicated support team who understand the cohorts' pastoral requirements well.

Once enrolled, students are signed up to Hub X to continue one-to-one support. RCL case workers are allocated to students (1:250) and contact them regularly to discuss any financial, academic, personal, professional or health concerns they may be facing. Conversations also highlight opportunities to engage with the College on Student Representation, Student President and other self-development services such as SCOPE, Career X and the Alumni Association.

What RCL are aiming and doing to achieve

At pre-entry (Access) RCL is committed to: supporting the widening participation students to enter higher education with confidence, irrespective of background, disability, or existing commitments. One of the targets is to increase the number of students with a disability by 2024/25. Support measures include:

- **One-to-one support:** 5 step admissions process for all students.
- **Flexible entry options:** 4 entry points per year (Sep, Apr, Jun, Jan) daytime, evening, weekend, am and pm study options to adapt to existing time commitments students have outside college.
- **Adaptive Learning:** options for blended learning to take into account commitments outside study.
- **Academic routes:** various academic options including HND, Top-Up Degrees, Foundation year undergraduate degrees and Foundation Degree, to support students back into education at the appropriate pace to their level of prior learning.

In addition to these measures, RCL is working with the current student body to understand their needs and the apparent cultural barriers to declare a disability, by highlighting the support available through the College.

We recognise that RCL provision is geared towards mature students, and as RCL expand the number of students recruited, it is aware of the requirement from the OfS to support pre16-attainment. In working toward this priority RCL will develop an age appropriate and flexible programme focusing on metacognition, engaging pre-entry students via RCL's "Thinking into Character" transformational programme. This is underpinned by the concept of a growth mind-set, supporting students to think more clearly, set and achieve their goals and take actions to meet their full potential.

For Continuation and Attainment RCL is committed to: enabling all students to achieve their full potential holistically. RCL's strategic plan "Transforming Access to Education, Employability and Opportunity",⁷ outlines this holistic approach and how RCL will achieve these targets by 2023/24 including:

- **Governance:** setting in motion robust governance structures to review, reflect and deliver equality and inclusion strategically and operationally. The Teaching, Learning, Assessment and the Curriculum Continuum is a cross institution approach to assess both the curriculum and non-curriculum offer. The Equality, Diversity, Access and Participation committee reviews and reports on operational delivery of the APP. The Advisory Board is a cross partnership committee with the University awarding body partner reviewing the APP's across different institutions.

⁷ <https://www.rcl.ac.uk/strategic-plan-pdf/>

- **Student Support:** meeting the specific needs of individual students and student groups to halve and eliminate attainment and continuation gaps outlined in the targets, measures include:
 - o **Hub X:** effective one-to-one student support across RCL enabling academic, personal and professional concerns to be dealt with holistically in a timely manner across the student journey.
 - o **Financial:** bursaries and access to sources of financial support where required.
 - o **Student Wellbeing and Inclusion:** personal support plans for those with specific needs such as: learning difficulties, access to assistive technology, mental health concerns or maternity.
 - o **Mental Health support:** Many Hands peer to peer mentoring for and by students.
 - o **Computer loan scheme:** to overcome digital poverty, supporting continuation and attainment.
 - o **SCOPE – Success, Character, Opportunity, Progression, Enhancement** – a series of workshops, presentations, external speakers and webinars offering career advice, support for mental and physical health, preparation for work, inspirational speakers and more to maximise academic, personal, and professional learning and development. This includes Thinking into Character.

Student co-creation is at the heart of developing new programmes, with opportunities for all students to engage through formal and informal forums such as attending committees with senior management, academics, professional service staff and student only forums.

An enhanced welfare provision across the student body is being implemented through the RCL inclusive curriculum framework that supports activities such as SCOPE providing accessible learning activities via creative teaching spaces.

To support students to progress into successful careers, RCL is committed to: ensuring equality of access to graduate level employment or progression into further studies. The specific target is to level progression into employment between male and female students and to meet these measures are:

- **Career X:** a service for students coming up to graduation (and graduated) to access the job market with professional interactive career related workshops, one-to-one career coaching and access to industry networks and work experience, or simulated industry briefs for experience.
- **Alumni Association:** to encourage ongoing networking between alumni of the College.

How RCL students can get involved

Student Voice is integral to the learning environment and RCL are proud of rising from 90% in 2021 to 93% in 2022 Overall Satisfaction Rating in the NSS Survey, and having increased in almost all the NSS measures. RCL's commitment includes:

- Representation at course level: with student course reps addressing the needs of the entire student body, along with an annually elected Student President, who attends management committees.
- The Student Voice Committee discusses student experience at a course level.
- Student Council led by students and reporting into academic boards.
- Student Open Forum, open meetings for "town hall" discussions.
- Drop-In sessions for student reps to bring any classroom issues for resolution.

Evaluation – how RCL will measure what RCL has achieved

The evaluation and monitoring of data at a narrative level through to quantitative and qualitative data, offers a meaningful representation of a widening participation student journey. RCL has developed digital capabilities and systems to deliver the evaluation framework, evidencing what works for the student body. These include RCL core competencies of Digital In-person, Online and On Demand.

RCL governance arrangements support close partnership with the university partners who attend the overarching advisory panel. Collectively, RCL shares best practice across the student body and ensures that programmes of study are diverse and flexible, meeting the needs of the widening participation students. RCL is committed to evaluating the enhanced welfare provision across the student body which is being implemented through the inclusive curriculum framework.

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