

# Yeovil College University Centre

## Summary of 2020-21 to 2024-25 Access and Participation Plan

### What Is an Access and Participation Plan?

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers (such as Universities and University Centres) will improve equality of opportunity. This ensures that people from groups that are currently underrepresented in university-level study can access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

You can see the full access and participation plan for Yeovil College University Centre (YCUC) in the '[Policies and Reports](#)' section of our website, or via this [link](#).

### Key Points

*See pages 1-9 of the full plan for more information.*

Our plan explains how we ensure that anyone with potential and desire to study can access a course and achieve a high-quality outcome at YCUC. As a small University Centre, we are proud of how we serve our local community and support people from underrepresented groups to achieve degree-level qualifications.

However, we aim to do more. Our Plan also explains the focussed work we are doing in areas where there are gaps in access or outcomes for certain groups of students. The four areas where we are working to close gaps are:

1. The proportion of young people from neighbourhoods and communities where not many people go on to higher education who come and study at YCUC.
2. The proportion of mature students who complete their studies.
3. The proportion of mature students who achieve high grades.
4. The proportion of students with dyslexia who complete their studies.

### Fees We Charge

*See page 21 of the full plan for more information.*

The maximum fees that we charge for our courses are published in the '[Policies and Reports](#)' section of our website under 'YCUC Fee Lists'. Once a student starts a course with us, we guarantee that their fee will stay the same until they finish that course. However, fees for new starters may increase each year, in line with inflation. For example, for students starting in 2022-23, the maximum fee for a full-time learner was £7,285, and for a part-time learner was £4,857.

### Financial Help Available

*See pages 17-18 of the full plan for more information.*

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

- A Bursary of £250 for students with a household income under £25,000.
- A Hardship Fund of £250 for students with a household income under £45,000.
- A Diagnostic Support Fund of up to £250 to help students to pay for an assessment (like a Dyslexia test) to access learning support.

Eligible students need to apply for funding, which is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis over the course of each academic year.

### **Information For Students**

*See pages 17, 18 & 21 of the full plan for more information.*

Information about fees and financial support is all published in the '[Policies and Reports](#)' section of our website. We have produced help-guides for prospective students on Funding your Studies and offer webinars to explain funding and financial support to those considering degree-level study.

Current students can also access information about financial support through the YCUC Student Help Zone on 'Moodle' (our student portal). We send regular emails which remind current students of the support available.

### **What We Are Aiming to Achieve**

*See pages 9-10 of the full plan for more information.*

We aim to enable anyone with the potential and desire to study to access higher education at YCUC and be successful. To achieve this, we will strive to continually improve all areas of our work. Based on assessment of our performance, we are focussing in particular on closing gaps across four specific areas, outlined below.

#### **1. Increasing the proportion of young people from neighbourhoods and communities where not many people go on to higher education who study at YCUC.**

We are working with secondary schools and Yeovil College students to support young people to make positive and well-informed decisions about university-level study. By 2024/25, we aim for 25% of our new students to come from neighbourhoods and communities where not many people go into higher education.

#### **2. Reducing the proportion of mature students who do not complete their studies.**

We now have a range of measures in place to support all mature students to remain on their course. By 2024/25, we aim to reduce the gap between the percentage of mature students who complete their studies, compared to young students, to 7% or less.

#### **3. Increasing the proportion of mature students who achieve high grades.**

We provide a range of support to ensure that mature students can achieve the highest possible grades. We aim to remove the 'attainment gap' (the gap between how many young students achieve high grades each year, compared to mature students) by 2024/25.

#### **4. Reducing the proportion of students with dyslexia who do not complete their studies.**

We are improving student awareness of how learning support works at university-level (a system called 'DSA'). We are also improving the quality of support for students with dyslexia at YCUC. By 2024/25, we aim to have no gap between the percentage of students with dyslexia who complete their studies, compared to students without a disability.

### **What We Are Doing to Achieve Our Aims**

*See pages 11-18 of the full plan for more information.*

Most students at YCUC are from at least one underrepresented group. Therefore, we have designed our courses to be fundamentally accessible and supportive to students from all backgrounds. We pride ourselves on having a highly supportive culture and being student-focussed in everything that we do.

We strive to remove any barriers that would stop people from accessing our courses or being successful in their studies. Specific things that we are doing to achieve our aims include:

- Working with schools across the region, as well as students at Yeovil College, to provide high-quality support and information about degree-level study. We also work effectively to support local schools to ensure students achieve good outcomes at GCSE-level.
- Providing information and support around practical areas such as Student Finance and how the HE application process works to prospective students and their families.
- Designing courses that are accessible and appealing to all students, including adults returning to study, students with disabilities, and people with work and/or caring responsibilities. We offer courses at a range of levels so students can choose a level and type of study that suits them.
- Improving awareness of how learning support works at university-level (through a system called Disabled Students' Allowances), so all students can access the support they need.
- Ensuring there is a highly supportive culture at YCUC, where students can easily access wellbeing, academic and practical support.
- Offering financial support, including bursaries and hardship funds, for eligible students.
- Continually listening to students and responding to their feedback, so we can continue to improve what we do.
- Regularly reviewing our data to ensure that we are effectively supporting all students, and so we can intervene if individuals or groups are falling behind.

### **How Students Can Get Involved**

*See pages 18-21 of the full plan for more information.*

We worked with students from all areas of YCUC to design this plan. We use Student Voice meetings and Student Focus Groups to gain feedback on how we are progressing across different areas of the plan. The YCUC Student Governor and the YCUC Student Voice Officer take important roles in monitoring how well we follow this plan on a strategic level.

If students wish to find out more about this work, or become more involved, they should contact the University Centre team via [university.centre@yeovil.ac.uk](mailto:university.centre@yeovil.ac.uk). Alternatively, they can speak to the YCUC Student Governor or YCUC Student Voice Officer.

### **Evaluation – How We Will Measure What We Have Achieved**

*See pages 19-21 of the full plan for more information.*

Our work is informed by evidence about what works best for students. We collect feedback on our activities, as well as looking at data to see what impact we have achieved. Groups of staff at YCUC meet regularly to evaluate the impact of our work, and check we are hitting our stated aims.

Regular reports on what we are doing, and whether we are hitting our targets, are given to the 'Curriculum, Quality and Assurance Committee'. This Committee is a sub-group of our governing body, and they report back to the full Board of Governors on the progress we are making.

As we are a small provider, our data is not generally significant enough to be published. However, we do use our data to adjust our programmes so that we continually improve our support, and share our findings with others, as appropriate.

### **Contact Details for Further Information**

If you want to know more, or have questions about anything in this document, contact our friendly University Centre team via [university.centre@yeovil.ac.uk](mailto:university.centre@yeovil.ac.uk) or 01935 845454. Our Access and Participation Plan work is led by Sian Deasy.