



Access and Widening Participation Statement

Introduction

St Patrick's College has a proud history of promoting educational access. Since its foundation in 1803 as a school for the children of Irish labourers in London, the college has prioritized providing full access to education, especially for those overlooked by the official system and from deprived areas or backgrounds.

Our Access and Widening Participation Mission

We believe strongly in second chances, and our goal of increasing educational opportunities for all goes hand in hand with our dedication to innovation and diversity.

We aim to empower our students through the best possible vocational education at an affordable price, enabling them to change their lives for the better. We offer people from all walks of life the opportunities they need to improve their career prospects.

It is a great privilege to support our students, help unlock their potential, and see them successfully complete their courses.

We are committed to being the best-in-class for employability, and eagerly await feedback from the Destination of Leavers' Survey in HE (DLHE) which we entered in 2016 for the first time, alongside other alternative providers.

College Commitments to Access and Widening Participation for Students

At St Patrick's, we are committed to:

- Ensuring that our students are at the heart of everything we do. We were delighted when the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) confirmed this commitment in 2016, commending student engagement at the college and especially the active role of our Student Council.
- Offering education to everyone with the drive to succeed, supported by intensive one-to-one tuition (which was also commended by the QAA in 2016).
- Exceeding the benchmark for alternative providers in the National Student Survey, which we will participate in for the first time in 2017. In our own 2016 student satisfaction survey, 76% were satisfied overall - one percentage point above the average for alternative providers as reported by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in 2016. We will opt into the new Teaching Excellence Framework at the first opportunity in 2017 as part of our commitment to be best-in-class.

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- Recognising innovation, diversity, and individual success. A number of our students have or aspire to have their own businesses, and our vocational courses are designed to support these ambitions.
- Aspiring to be a model of good equality and diversity practice. Our student profile is very different from the young, white, undergraduate norm in established universities and is a matter of great pride. In 2015, 67% of our students were between 35 and 54 years old, 72% were female, and over 90% were drawn from ethnic minorities - the largest group self-identifying as black African (59%).

Future

We will invest in new programmes to further diversify our student profile, providing greater support and opportunity at entry level to deepen our accessibility. This will be coupled with new fields of study to attract a yet wider range of students and new progression opportunities (for example, top-up degrees) to enhance our students' educational and employment outcomes.