Lakes College



ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Powerful Futures

2026 - 27

INTRODUCTION

Lakes College West Cumbria is committed to ensuring that higher education is accessible to all those with the ability and aspiration to benefit from it, regardless of their background, personal circumstances or characteristics.

As an Office for Students (OfS) registered provider, the College seeks to promote equality of opportunity throughout the student lifecycle, from outreach and recruitment through to achievement, progression and successful graduate outcomes.

This statement sets out the College's commitment to widening participation and supporting the success of students from all backgrounds.





OUR CONTEXT

Lakes College serves West Cumbria and the surrounding region, an area characterised by:

- Rural and coastal communities.
- Areas of socio-economic disadvantage.
- Communities with historically low participation in higher education.
- Significant local employment opportunities in engineering, nuclear, science, health and technical sectors.

The College recognises that some groups may experience barriers to accessing, succeeding in and progressing from higher education.

These barriers can include:

- Financial constraints.
- Geographic isolation and travel challenges.
- Caring responsibilities.
- Disability or health-related needs.
- Educational disadvantage.
- Underrepresentation in higher education.

OUR COMMITMENT

The College is committed to:

Access

We will:

- Promote awareness of higher education opportunities within local communities.
- Work collaboratively with schools, colleges, employers and community organisations.
- Provide clear and accessible information about courses, fees, funding and support.
- Encourage progression from further education into higher education.
- Support mature learners, part-time learners and those returning to education.

Student Success

We will:

- Provide high-quality teaching and learning opportunities.
- Ensure students have access to appropriate academic and pastoral support.
- Monitor student engagement, continuation and achievement.
- Identify students who may be at risk of withdrawal and provide timely intervention.
- Promote inclusive learning environments that support diverse student needs.

Our higher education provision includes academic tutoring, learning resources, digital learning support and referral pathways to wellbeing and specialist services.

Evidence from programme monitoring confirms the College provides academic support, wellbeing referral arrangements, disability support and reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The College values diversity and aims to create an inclusive environment where all students feel respected, supported and able to achieve their potential.

We will:

- Comply with the Equality Act 2010.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled students.
- Monitor outcomes by student characteristics where data permits.
- Take action where gaps in access, continuation, attainment or progression are identified.
- Promote a culture of mutual respect and belonging.

Programme monitoring processes already require consideration of outcomes by characteristics including disability, ethnicity, gender and entry route, and actions to address any identified gaps.

Progression and Employability

The College works closely with employers and industry partners across key regional sectors.

We will:

- Support students to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for employment.
- Provide opportunities for work-based and employer-engaged learning.
- Promote progression to higher-level study, professional registration and skilled employment.
- Support students in achieving successful graduate outcomes.

Programme monitoring demonstrates extensive engagement with employers including Sellafield Ltd and other regional employers to support curriculum relevance and employability.

Financial Support

The College seeks to minimise financial barriers to participation by:

Providing clear information on tuition fees.
Signposting students to student finance support.
Promoting bursaries, scholarships and hardship support where available.
Providing advice and guidance to prospective and current students.

Monitoring and Review

The College monitors:

- Recruitment and access data.
- Student continuation and completion.
- Academic achievement.
- Student feedback.
- Graduate and progression outcomes.

This information is reviewed through the College's higher education quality assurance and governance arrangements to identify areas for enhancement and to ensure continuing compliance with Office for Students requirements.

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PUBLICATION AND REVIEW

This Access and Participation Statement is published on the Lakes College West Cumbria website and will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains accurate, relevant and aligned with Office for Students expectations.

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