

Introduction

Basingstoke College of Technology (BCoT) has at its core a vision of *Inspiring our students to realise their full potential*. Its mission is for *all of its students to leave the College equipped with the skills and knowledge to be successful in their chosen field*. The culture of BCoT is that we have an uncompromising ambition for every student and we take collective responsibility for ensuring the whole learner experience (in and out of the classroom) is excellent. Our students and staff share the common values of Respectful of others, Ready to learn, Safe in and out of college.

The college has strategically committed to ensuring that people and businesses in Basingstoke and beyond have access to excellent technical education and training, and that as a college we are meeting the needs of all our stakeholders, both now and in the future. Our strategic direction is focused on 'Skills for Work' and our aim to ensure that every learner not only achieves their qualification but progresses into sustainable employment. Outstanding quality and outstanding engagement with employers are the hallmarks of our college and are fundamental to the success of our students.

Within our strategic aims, our priorities for higher education are that we:

- provide a curriculum that is responsive to job requirements and skills gaps;
- create an innovative work-based university centre on campus at BCoT;
- develop impactful relationships with key university partners;
- employ industry experts and develop their teaching skills;
- provide a high quality learning environment using industry standard equipment.

BCoT is committed to supporting all of its students including those following higher education courses. Our methods of study are flexible in terms of time and the use of technology to enable life to fit around study.

We have a range of higher education partners that help us support students to reach their goals in terms of widening participation, employer links and progression to further study.

The college has a higher proportion of students from other ethnic groups studying at the college compared with the local population demographic. The gender profile of higher education students is skewed towards males. The proportion of students from low participation in higher education neighbourhoods is higher than the national rate. The proportion of students in their twenties is higher than the national rate. The proportion of students with declared disabilities or difficulties is lower than the national rate.

Pass rates for our students are high. Analysis of performance by metrics such as ethnicity, disability and difficulty and low participation in higher education neighbourhoods is not statistically robust due to small numbers of students.

Continuation rates for students completing higher education courses are not currently available as the courses BCoT currently runs have not been running long enough.

BCoT's ambition and strategy

Our overall ambition is to provide a higher education curriculum that focusses on developing the skills, experience and knowledge required for employment.

We are keen to provide higher level education that is accessible to all irrespective of characteristic or

background and we expect all of those studying with us to achieve the best they can.

We aim to provide our local and regional employers with the talent they need to improve the local and regional economies with a focus on engineering, health and social care, construction, business and creative technologies.

We have established a University Centre at our Basingstoke campus in partnership with the University of Portsmouth and the University of Reading. This will provide higher education courses specifically designed to support progression into employment, training and further education at higher levels. The strategic direction of HE is guided by the HE Strategy 2021-2025, which is aligned to the college’s strategic plan, and sets ambitious targets to develop the college’s current higher level offer with an employer led expansion of higher education.

We believe the provision of the work based university centre will provide higher level study for mature students wishing to retrain, requalify and upskill. It will provide higher education opportunities for those students from low participation in higher education neighbourhoods in and around the Basingstoke area by removing the barriers of significant travel, making education affordable through apprenticeships, employer training and by enabling flexible learning.

We will ensure that not only are our buildings accessible to students with disabilities, learning difficulties and mental health needs but that our use of technology, flexible modes of study and specialist support services enables them to learn effectively.

We have a strong tradition of working with students for whom there are significant challenges to learning such as those that are carers, are care leavers, have complex families and we believe that a work based university at the Basingstoke Campus will provide a higher education offer that is readily accessible to them and fits in with their complex lives.

When our University Centre is fully established we will measure the performance of the different groups described in the bullets above and our targets for recruitment for success and for progression will be that there are no statistically significant gaps in the performance of different groups of students. Our aim will also be for these groups of students to succeed and progress at a rate that is better than the national average.

Improving access, success and progression

BCoT’s higher education student population have the following characteristics and are compared with demographic statistics in the table below:

Characteristic		2020/21 HE Student Population	HESA Data (2020/21)	Basingstoke & Deane Census Data (2011)
Ethnicity	White British	78.5%	74%	88.2%
	Other Ethnic Group	16.9%	26%	11.8%
Gender	Male	90.8%	43%	50%
	Female	9.2%	57%	50%
Percentage from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR 4)		20%	12%	

Age	20 and below	32.3%	40%	
	21 – 24	33.8%	29%	
	25 – 29	18.5%	11%	
	30+	15.4%	20%	
Learning Difficulty/Disability		6%	15%	
Pass rates for higher level courses		95.2%		
Pass rates by ethnicity		Statistical comparisons of pass rates by ethnicity is not appropriate given the small number of students and hence sensitivity of data		
Pass rates by gender		Statistical comparisons of pass rates by gender is not appropriate given the small number of students and hence sensitivity of data		
Pass rates by age		Statistical comparisons of pass rates by age is not appropriate given the small number of students and hence sensitivity of data		
Pass rates by learning difficulty/disability		Statistical comparisons of pass rates by learning difficulty/disability is not appropriate given the small number of students and hence sensitivity of data		
Pass rates by low participation neighbourhoods		Statistical comparisons of pass rates by low participation neighbourhoods is not appropriate given the small number of students and hence sensitivity of data		
Continuation rates		There is no data available as the courses have not been running long enough		

Widening Participation

The college is currently working with the Southern Universities Network (SUN) in support of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) to widen participation in higher education. The SUN has been tasked with increasing HE participation in over 70 wards, working with 101 schools and all further education (FE) colleges in the region.

The NCOP consists of 29 consortia across England, undertaking outreach activity in geographical areas (target wards) where the HE participation of young people is both low overall, and much lower than expected based on GCSE-level attainment. The programme aims to support the Government's goals to:

- double the proportion of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in HE by 2020
- increase by 20 per cent the number of students in HE from ethnic minority groups
- address the under-representation of young men from disadvantaged backgrounds in HE

The measures of overall success will be young people progressing to any course of prescribed HE, whatever the mode of study (HND, HNC, foundation degree, undergraduate degree).

The college is working closely with the M3 Local Enterprise Partnership, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Hampshire County Council along with the secondary schools in the region and universities such as Solent, Reading, Portsmouth, Greenwich, and University of the Creative Arts to understand the higher education needs of the region, to explore opportunities for higher education study and define pathways to employment, training and further learning.

The college, with its extensive range of apprenticeship programmes, works with a large number of local, regional and national employers to meet the skills demand of the region and provide a range of pathways to employment that include higher level education.

Our students' voice

Our students' voice is very important to us and as such we are committed to hearing their views and gathering their feedback about what is great at BCoT and what we could make even better. We have an active Student Union, a Learner Parliament and a position of Student Governor on our Governing Body. Through the college's feedback processes and governance structure students have the opportunity to reflect on and review this access and participation statement on an annual basis.

The activities and support we provide to students

BCoT has extensive support available to all students through its student services and corporate functions. From the point of enquiry through to enrolment and study, students are able to access support with:

- Course information and enrolment
- Travel and transport
- Health and well being
- Welfare
- Finance
- Careers
- Counselling
- Learning support
- Accessibility
- Progression
- Employment

The information that the college provides to students is impartial and intended to help students into education, to support students through education and to enable progression to employment, training or further education following study at the college. Our specialist staff are also able to provide students with help whatever their need or characteristic.

Support for students at the college includes an extensive tutorial programme, specialist staff to help in terms of careers and progression, highly qualified and experienced teams able to help students with specific learning needs, difficulties and disabilities, maths and English specialists along with teachers that have extensive industry as well as teaching experience.

BCoT is Matrix accredited, a Disability Confident committed employer and Disabled Go recognised.