

# Trafford and Stockport College Group (TSCG)

## Summary of Access and Participation Plan 2026-27 to 2029-30

### What is an access and participation plan?

An access and participation plan sets out provisions that will be meaningful and effective in promoting equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups, as determined by the Office for Students (OfS).

You can see the full access and participation plan for Trafford and Stockport College Group (TSCG) at <https://tscg.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Trafford-and-Stockport-College-Group-The-APP-2026-27-V1-10005998.pdf>

**Key points** (See pages 1-4 of the access and participation plan for more information.)

We are a college serving the communities in two distinct local authority areas of Stockport and Trafford, the most prosperous of the Greater Manchester city region. We are a civic partner and educator with a strong sense of place and service to our communities.

In 2007, North and South Trafford Colleges merged, becoming Trafford College, and in 2018 joined Stockport College to form the Trafford and Stockport College Group (TSCG). In May 2021, Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College joined the Group, which now operates from 5 campuses, employs over 900 colleagues, serves around 5,500 young people, 6,000 adults across further and higher education and 1,500 apprentices.

With an average, over recent years, of 250 Higher Education (HE) students, we are a small HE provider. The majority of HE students, 90%, study at our University Centre Stockport, and 10% at the Stretford campus, both attracting students from Greater Manchester.

Our Strategic Plan 2024-2030 sets out our mission: to 'elevate skills, shape futures and transform lives'. The College's strategic priorities, which are key to ensuring that we are successful in our sustained efforts to widen access and participation include, for example, "aiming to provide civic leadership to positively influence our communities", ensuring "equality, diversity and inclusion is at the heart of what we do", and providing "a curriculum that delivers the skills our economy needs – locally, regionally and nationally". We will ensure that those from underrepresented groups benefit from the delivery of an exceptional student experience, are encouraged, have access to our high quality technical and skills-based curriculum and are supported to continue, achieve their qualifications and progress to positive destinations.

Our commitment to improving the quality of education, experience and outcomes for our HE students is reflected in our voluntary submission in 2023 to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) (a national exercise to assess excellence in HE teaching) which was awarded Bronze. The TEF submission emphasising the enhancement of student experience and outcomes for all students, aligns with the objectives of this plan to continuously improve the student experience, offer high levels of support and foster an inclusive culture that encourages students from diverse backgrounds to thrive during study and as they progress.

Our HE curriculum offer is diverse, flexible, vocational and skills focused. Subject areas include Early Years, Health, Computing, Engineering, Construction, Teacher Education and Creative Arts. We offer full and part time courses, combining Higher National provision, Higher Level apprenticeships, Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs), and undergraduate courses including Foundation Degrees, one-year Top Ups, and Certificates in HE, validated by university partners.

### Fees we charge

Details of tuition fees for the academic year 2026/7 can be found here <https://tscg.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/HE-Fee-Information-2026-27.pdf> and on our website, alongside each course description.

**Financial help available** (See page 30 of the access and participation plan for more information.)

We will provide 3 types of bursaries and a hardship fund.

**Elevate Bursary** - This bursary is available to students stepping up internally from L3 study at the College to an eligible HE course (BA/BSc, FdA, HNC/D, PGCE/CertEd.) The bursary will be £750 for full time students and £375 for part time students and will be payable in termly instalments. This will be available in the first year of study only. In addition to earlier study at the College (within the previous 3 academic years), students will need to meet ONE of the other of the following criteria: live in a postcode classified as within TUNDRA Q1, be the first of their family to enter HE, and/or have a household income of below £30,000.

**Opportunity Bursary** – this bursary is available to students at any point of their study and is designed to support those from more deprived situations to successfully continue and complete their HE studies. This bursary is available to students studying at any level on an eligible HE course (BA/BSc, FdA, HNC/D, PGCE/CertEd.) The bursary will be £750 for full time students and £375 for part time students and will be payable in termly instalments. Successful applicants will need to meet BOTH of the following criteria: live in a postcode classified as within IMDQ1/2 and have a household income of below £30,000 per annum.

**Independence Bursary** -This bursary is available to students who have left local authority care within the 3 years prior to enrolling on an eligible HE course (BA/BSc, FdA, HNC/D, PGCE/CertEd.). The bursary is for £1,000 (full time- £500 part time) in each year of study recognising the additional financial pressures this group of students are likely to face and will be payable in termly instalments.

Students will only be eligible for ONE of the above bursaries in any one year of study. Bursaries will be available to students who have “Home” status and, where applicable, have applied, and fully utilised, the available funding from the national funding body (eg. Student Finance, England).

We will use data provided by applicant organisations to assist with the identification of potential beneficiaries, but all applicants will be required to apply by completing an application form. On receipt of an application to study, or on enrolment to a second or third year of study, a student will be advised of the financial support available to them and invited to submit a bursary application. If residing in a qualifying postcode, they will be advised in writing of their eligibility.

**Emergency Assistance Fund** – this recognises that unexpected issues arise that impact upon study. This hardship fund, titled to emphasise its purpose, will support students in emergencies that create hardship, providing financial support, via individual application on a case-by-case basis.

### **Information for students**

The full version of TSCG’s access and participation plan will be available on the college website <https://tscg.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Trafford-and-Stockport-College-Group-The APP 2026-27 V1 10005998.pdf>. See pages 29-30 of the access and participation plan for more information.

**What we are aiming to achieve** (See pages 9-10 of the access and participation plan for more information.)

We have set ourselves the following FOUR objectives to address risks to the equality of opportunity for the student groups identified below, at the named stage in the student lifecycle.

PTA1 - We will address the risk to equality of opportunity for full time students from the least represented communities [in HE] in accessing HE (TUNDRA Q1 - a measure which classifies local areas into five groups – or quintiles – based on the proportion of young people who enter higher education – TUNDRA Q1 being the lowest). This is demonstrated by the significantly lower percentage of students (15.1% - 2-year average) recruited from TUNDRA Q1, compared with the higher percentage of students (27.9%) who access full time study from the most represented TUNDRA Q5. We will eradicate this access equality gap between TUNDRA Qs1 and 5 (12.8pp – 2-year average) over the 4-year period of this plan.

PTS1 – We will eradicate the continuation gap between full time students from the most deprived communities ('Index of Multiple Deprivation' (IMD Q1 and 2)) and from the least deprived communities (IMD Qs 3,4 and 5). Using data drawn from the 2-year average, we will adopt as an objective the eradication, over the period of this plan, of the 6.3pp continuation equality gap that exists between the College's average for IMD Q1 and 2 and IMD Qs 3,4 and 5 students.

PTS2 -We will significantly reduce the completion gap between full time students from the most deprived communities (IMD Q1) and from the least deprived communities (IMD Q5). The completion gap, (2-year aggregate data) is 14.7pp. We will aim to reduce this by 10.0pp to 4.7pp, by the end of this plan's cycle.

PTS3 -We will significantly reduce (by more than a half), during the period of this plan, the completion gap between part time students from the most deprived communities (IMD Q1) and from the least deprived communities (IMD Q5). The completion gap (2-year aggregate data) is 21.3pp. We will aim to reduce this by 11.3pp over the plan period to 10pp, and the remainder to be addressed in the next plan period.

**What we are doing to address keys risks to equality of opportunity** (See pages 11-26 of the access and participation plan for more information.)

We take a whole college, whole student lifecycle, and targeted approach to supporting access and participation. We are committed to an inclusive and holistic approach to widening participation, and to providing equitable opportunities to all students and particularly to those from underrepresented groups. Our values are “ambitious, collaborative, inclusive, respectful and resilient”.

We will deliver three targeted interventions to achieve our aims set out above– (1) “Promoting Access and Aspiration for Full Time students from Communities with Lower Levels of HE Participation” - to support access to HE for students from neighbourhoods with lower HE participation , (2) “Promoting Success for Full Time Students from Economically Deprived Communities to Continue and Complete [their studies]”, and (3) “Promoting Success for Part Time Students from Economically Deprived Communities to Complete [their studies]”.

**How students can get involved** (See pages 27-28 of the access and participation plan for more information.)

Our engagement with students to inform, drive and improve student experience, performance and outcomes (at all stages of the lifecycle and for all student groups) is robust, effective, and timely. Our process of consultation with students is strong, regular and multi-faceted, providing the opportunity for them to be active partners in shaping their experience and learning. Our engagement contains aspects of a formal nature, via student consultation meetings, with every programme having an elected student representative attending termly course-based meetings and contributing to the creation of a termly Student Voice Report.

**Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved** (For more information see pages 28/29 of the access and participation plan, and pages 14, 22, 25 and Annex B for the evaluation plan for each intervention strategy).

Evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of our plan, and its activities, will include the analysis of data to determine whether there is any correlation between engagement in activities and their desired aims. Students will be involved in evaluation via survey, as contributors to focus and student representative groups, and the student voice arrangements explained in the plan.

Evaluation commentary will be placed on an appropriate part of our website, and for students within an accessible part of the virtual learning environment.

**Contact details for further information**

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