

Access and Participation Statement 2019/20

Newbold College (the College) was founded in 1901 as a Missionary College in order to train pastors to serve in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It has been situated in its present site in Binfield, near Bracknell, since February 1946. The focus of the College has evolved from a missionary training school into a fully-fledged international college of higher education offering degrees and diplomas in a wider range of subjects. Many of our theology students still enter the ministry of the Church. However, others go on to have other careers (for example, in teaching or counselling) following completion of their studies. The College also offers degrees in Business Studies, Humanities and Religious Studies.

As a Church, we operate throughout the UK and globally, engaging with people of all ethnic backgrounds, gender, age and socio-economic backgrounds. The College is a student-centred, inclusive and innovative learning community, dedicated to widening participation and reducing barriers to Higher Education. The diversity of our educational network is reflected in our campus community, in our staff, our students and our graduates, and through the universities in the UK, Germany and the United States with which we partner in the provision of our programmes.

The College engages with the local community through its programmes and activities, and hosts events that the local community can attend. The College works closely with local schools and, as well as attracting local visitors on Open Days, encourages work experience programmes, where students typically in Years 11, 12 or 13 work in either the Recruitment, Marketing and Retention department or in the Finance department. The College also holds Impact Days on which students visit local care or nursing homes and work with a gardening community project. The College is involved in community sports, with local teams using our facilities, and is included in the FA-sponsored Reading & Berkshire Sunday League, where individuals from the local community regularly join the Newbold football team.

As part of their Campus Ministries, the students help out with a Homeless Ministry project, whereby the local church and College staff and students visit London to give food and clothing to the homeless.

The College has organised a 'Visit Us' programme for several years, whereby prospective students can sample a taste of life at the College. This is well attended, with seventy attendees in the 2018/19 academic year.

The College defines entry criteria for each of the courses it offers based on the requirements of the course details. Our Theology courses are validated by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, or offered through Andrews University in the United States. However, we are a niche provider of Theology degrees, as the majority (though by no means all) of our students are drawn from the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In particular, mature students can be accepted without formal qualifications above Level 3, depending on prior experience.

The College encourages its academic staff to engage in public speaking, most frequently by speaking in churches and at international conferences. This raises the profile of the College and also encourages prospective applicants to discuss studying at the College with staff members, leading some who may not have imagined studying in Higher Education to attend Newbold for this purpose, and in doing so, widening access.

Courses are offered on a full- and part-time basis on a flexible and distributed learning basis, including online and face-to-face learning and teaching. The College provides a number of educational opportunities at Level 3, and three-year degree courses have a foundation year available for those applicants who may not have the formal qualifications required at Level 3.

College fees are set below sector norms. At present, only 3% of our undergraduate students are funded via the Student Loans Company. Most of our students are either sponsored by the Church or are self-funded. The College provides some hardship grants for students with particular financial needs.

Our students are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds and countries, with 71% of our students classed as Home/EU (52% from the UK), and 29% classed as Overseas students. Of our total intake in 2018/19, 85% are classed as mature students, and 23% are studying part-time.

The ethnic backgrounds of our students are mixed, with 59% from a White or Other White background, with 33% BAME, and 1% information refused.

The College's approach is to support access, retention, progression and success for all our students. The student retention rate on our degree programmes is at 82%, with a similar progression rate between academic years.

The College offers support to all our students, and nurtures and supports students throughout their student experience while at the College. We provide and facilitate high-quality, creative and challenging learning opportunities for all our students within a

Christian context. We offer regular study skills workshops and personal tutorial sessions to help prepare students for success on their course, including areas such as writing skills, referencing, examination preparation and personal development sessions.

Our students are encouraged to become student members of committees and boards, which means they are actively involved in the College's decision-making processes, and which provides a valuable source of student feedback for the College, as well as encouraging an atmosphere of inclusivity.

As well as halls of residence, the College provides family accommodation for many of its mature students. It also offers a range of part-time employment to students, thus providing a useful extra income for students who are self-funded, or who may require additional finance.

The College provides a wide range of extracurricular activities for its students. These include Christian devotionals, student trips and away-days, and sporting activities in the recently-refurbished Sports Hall-Auditorium, on outdoor football pitches, on tennis/basketball courts or in games rooms.