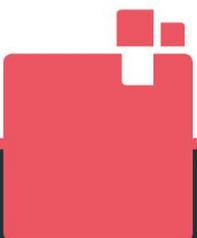




For the future you want

# Access and Inclusion Strategy

2018 - 2020



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## 1. MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

As Principal of Edinburgh College, I am delighted to present our Access and Inclusion Strategy.

At Edinburgh College we are committed to ensuring access and inclusion is at the forefront as the college develops and continues to deliver a high-quality student experience for all our learners.

This strategy aims to ensure all students are supported throughout their learner journey and have an equal chance of successfully completing their course. We want every student, regardless of barriers, to succeed in moving onto a positive destination following their studies with us.

This is an exciting time for our College and we are committed to the vision and the outcomes proposed in this strategy. Our ultimate goal is to support all students to access the College, ensure they have a positive and seamless learning experience whilst here, gain their qualifications and ultimately move onto a successful career or further studies.

## 2. CONTEXT

Edinburgh College opened its doors on 1 October 2012 following the merger of its legacy colleges - Telford College, Jewel and Esk College and Stevenson College. We serve the communities of Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian providing further, higher and vocational education in a style and setting that meets their needs. Although much has been achieved since the merger, the change agenda is set to continue with ambitious objectives for growth and reduced dependency on government funding.

The College is working towards its potential of achieving sector leading status. Our purpose is to ensure the needs of students, staff and local communities are at the forefront of our strategic aims.

Edinburgh College has a vibrant and connected community with an excellent track record of student achievement. The College curriculum portfolio is large and diverse with numerous stakeholders, partners and target audience groups. We

have a very important role to play, both in society and the economy, in widening access to enhance social mobility, reducing unemployment, improving employability and entrepreneurial skills, up-skilling the workforce and engaging with universities and industry to provide the best possible opportunities for further study or employment.

The context for this Access and Inclusion Strategy is informed by, and supports, the Regional Outcome Agreement, the Quality and Equality Outcomes Agreement and the Edinburgh College Blueprint: Delivering the Strategic Plan 2017 - 2022. It is dependent on, and aligned with, all other areas of the College to support its delivery.

We will continue to collaborate with community partners to ensure sufficient provision is made available to those in our region most at risk of not achieving a positive outcome. We will strive to widen access and increase participation from the most deprived areas in our region and we will endeavour to enhance social mobility by engaging with our most hard to reach communities. We will also improve reporting and data to evidence wider reach of demographics.

We want to ensure that all Edinburgh College students, including SFC priority groups, feel respected in College and have an equal opportunity to fulfil their potential. We want all students to complete their programmes of study and progress into employment or further study.

In Academic Year 2016/2017:

- 9.1% of students at Edinburgh College had a recognised and declared additional support need
- There was a 34% increase in referrals for student support
- There was a significant increase in the number of referrals of students with significant mental health issues
- Edinburgh College had over 500 Price Group 5 students who require high levels of support to ensure they meet their potential
- 15.5% of students reported having a disability in 2015/16

### 3. EDINBURGH COLLEGE VALUES

**Student Centred; Trustworthy; Responsible; Respectful; Working Together**

### 4. ACCESS AND INCLUSION APPROACH

**Delivering a Superb Student Experience; Providing an Excellent Curriculum; Supporting and Inspiring Our People; Valued in Partnership and Our Communities; An Efficient and Effective College.**

Edinburgh College is committed to access and inclusion for all students. We believe that access and inclusion of all will help to tackle the economic and social challenges in our communities, and our approach will encourage and enable all of our students to be independent learners. This has been reflected in the increasing number of students requiring additional support as previously highlighted.

The College has a student-centered approach. We provide support, advice and guidance on characteristics which may impact on a students' learning or their ability to integrate into College. This will be realised through better targeting of under-represented groups; strong School-College Partnerships and outreach; improved transition arrangements; cohesive IT systems; blended and assistive learning; focused support and guidance; and study skills. And through increased opportunities for CPD linked to mental health and specific learning difficulties e.g. autism awareness.

The following key actions are being addressed by Edinburgh College in line with the SFC and Access and Inclusion guidance:

- New, and improved Alternative Assessment Arrangements are being put in place which embed support in the curriculum as well as with support teams.
- Current policy and procedures are being adapted to reflect the changing requirements and demands which are being made on Edinburgh College. The increase in students requiring support for a range of needs including physical disabilities, mental health, dyslexia and autism is presenting increased challenges which will be addressed through the Access and Inclusion Strategy.
- Improved transitions with schools, 'Throughcare' and Social Work to ensure additional support where most required.
- Care-experienced young people will be offered early and ongoing support.

- Funding applications will open in April to ensure those needing more support can be given it to ensure funding is in place for the start of courses.
- A new Retention Policy which focusses on strategies to improve retention rates by 4% in full-time FE programmes, and support students facing challenges, is being developed.
- New Register marking guidelines have been implemented.
- The Student Code of Conduct and Positive Behaviour policies have been updated to be more supportive to students.
- Edinburgh College has rewritten safeguarding procedures and set up new teams across all four campuses and has improved the information available for staff and students.
- Learn to Learn and Welcome Events are being rolled out to ensure all students have the best possible start at College.
- Edinburgh College Students' Association carry out Student Satisfaction surveys to improve the student experience. In order to improve the return rate future completion will be within class or tutorial time.
- Learners will have improved ways of self-referring and gaining additional support. They will no longer have to seek out support but will be offered a pre-meeting prior to starting their course. Additional support will be offered at inductions and drop-ins.
- The recruitment and admissions procedures have been streamlined and a process for tracking school leaver applications has been implemented. This will be further developed to include tracking for Schools College Partnerships.
- All progressing students are given support with their progression choices and will be made an appropriate offer of progression where appropriate. Students will be given a decision as soon as their application is processed instead of waiting until course closing dates.
- Edinburgh College recognises that the previous model of PLSP's needs to be updated and available electronically.
- The College system - Pro Monitor - needs to be used across learning and teaching to ensure clear communication of student support and achievements. Currently only some staff have been trained and its use is sporadic. A group has been set up to address this which includes support and curriculum staff.

- IT is undergoing a service review which will take into account the updating and streamlining of systems to improve communication and system use.
- IT is working on the implementation of a student swipe card system to improve register systems and student access to resources.
- An Assistive Technology Strategy Group has been set up to take account of the new and emerging technologies.
- The new model of extended learning support will help the College improve numbers accessing courses at SCQF Level 3/45 as these fell from 37% in AY 2014/15 to 31.6% in 2015/16.
- There is an increased demand from school leavers who have identified support needs. Edinburgh College is working closely with the local authorities to develop improved approaches to transition arrangements. This will include sharing support arrangements and learning plans where appropriate to ensure support is in place on entry to College. These will then be reviewed during the first semester and adapted to meet their new learning environment. This will also include students on School-College Partnerships.
- Curriculum Planning is devoted to ensuring a smoother transition for articulation and a more appropriate offer of courses from SCQF level 1-5 to promote cross-college widening access.
- The College monitors the frequency and volume of applications for all courses and therefore has the ability to meet both regional and national demand. It has already made changes to the curriculum offer for 2017/18, which have led to a 3% increase in the provision of entry-level courses compared to last year's curriculum offer.

## 5. ACTIONS

Edinburgh College admission processes will reflect a commitment to inclusive practices	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES/ TIMESCALES
<b>Improve the recruitment procedures for schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guaranteed Place for school leavers</li> <li>• Open Days</li> <li>• Improve engagement Events for the most hard to reach</li> </ul>	January 2017
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility in the curriculum to ensure students can move when appropriate</li> </ul>	August 2017
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-entry course guidance and advice which sets out clear progression routes</li> </ul>	April 2017
<b>Improve admissions procedures and policies to ensure support and information is given at the earliest possible opportunity</b>	<p><b>Guidance and support service staff will be involved in discussions and consultations to produce new:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support strategy</li> <li>• Early confirmed places</li> <li>• Early enrolment and induction</li> <li>• Funding /childcare information</li> <li>• Early assessments</li> <li>• Start coursed earlier to increase the volume of credits and improve retention rates</li> <li>• Introduce an automatic flagging for students to be assessed if required.</li> </ul>	April 2017 onwards

Edinburgh College admission processes will reflect a commitment to inclusive practices	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES /TIMESCALES
<b>Improve information on courses, funding and guidance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restructure support and guidance to improve the student experience</li> </ul>	October 2017
<b>Improve Reception Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement new reception guidelines for staff</li> </ul>	August 2017
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider evening reception</li> </ul>	February 2018
<b>Assessments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement new guidelines for Alternative Assessment Arrangements</li> </ul>	August 2017
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve timetabling for assessments</li> </ul>	August 2017

**Edinburgh College will strive to ensure that strategies are implemented to reach underrepresented groups (SFC Priority Measures 4 )**

INCLUSIVE PRACTICES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES/ TIMESCALES
<b>Improve care leaver</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve links with Throughcare and Aftercare Service Participation in development of a Care Experienced Hub with other Regional Colleges and Universities</li> <li>• Initiated better links with Throughcare and Aftercare, Activity Agreements and Youth Justice and Young People’s Units to agree better transition pathways</li> <li>• Earlier enrolment and support including interventions to address barriers. Support over the summer period</li> <li>• Identification of a key worker in college</li> </ul>	
<b>SIMD</b>  <b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10.4% of credits were delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas (1857 students), in line with AY 2014/15 (10.5%);</li> <li>• Improve link with Job Centres as a lead in to offer a wider range of short courses</li> </ul>	
<b>Curriculum Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised Curriculum which takes into account future labour market requirements</li> <li>• Flexible pathways</li> <li>• Blended learning</li> </ul>	
<b>To ensure those from geographical areas which are underrepresented are supported to take up opportunities offered by Edinburgh College</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Outreach Team to deliver a range of credits including the Certificate of Work Readiness for Christmas School Leavers</li> <li>• Work with the Local Employability Hubs to provide outreach and progressive pathways e.g. Routes to Market</li> <li>• Work with Activity Agreements to support participants into college where appropriate</li> </ul>	

Edinburgh College will work with Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian to ensure they work in partnership to support young people with Additional Support needs with a smooth transition into College	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES/ TIMESCALES
New transition arrangements will be implemented to ensure smooth transitions from school to college for all school leavers entering Edinburgh College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School leavers with support needs will be identified at the point of application</li> </ul>	May 2017
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLSP Information will be shared when agreed and appropriate</li> </ul>	August 2017
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports will be put in place at earliest opportunity</li> <li>Better use of data to plan resources and support from Local Authorities.</li> </ul>	June 2017
	Increase support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rewrite the Alternative Assessment Arrangements</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supply dyslexia packs to students at Inductions</li> </ul>		August 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-to-1 support in class</li> <li>assistive kit</li> <li>alternative exam arrangements</li> </ul>		September 2017
Improve Student Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a new Student Retention Policy</li> </ul>	September 2017

Edinburgh College recognises the increase in the number of students presenting with a range of mental health issues and is proactively addressing this	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES/ TIMESCALES
<b>Designated learning and development tutors specialising in mental health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce mental health support into the Student Experience Team</li> <li>• Raise awareness of mental health across college with all staff</li> <li>• Early detection and support</li> </ul>	February 2017
<b>Appointment of support staff to support mental health on all campuses</b>		January 2018
<b>Access to counselling service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a SLA with the voluntary sector to provide flexible access to counselling for students</li> </ul>	August 2017

Widening Access	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES/ TIMESCALES
<b>PLSP's will continue to be used for all students with additional support needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The existing PLSP's will be reviewed and updated electronically where appropriate</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards
<b>Priority for individualised support will be given to students studying up to SCQF Level 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACE</li> <li>Project Search</li> <li>SWAP</li> <li>Outreach</li> </ul>	
<b>Edinburgh College will consider the use of Learning Plans for all students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This will be reviewed to consider a standardised approach</li> </ul>	May 2018
<b>Study Skills support for all students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a Study Skills Review Group</li> <li>Study Skills centres at each campus</li> <li>Core Skills drop-ins including:- literacy and numeracy interventions - employability skills</li> <li>Dedicated area on student Moodle – Study Skills and Support</li> <li>New materials, guides, resources and skills environments online within Moodle</li> <li>Related connections to software, technologies, devices etc.</li> </ul>	January 2017
<b>Develop School-College Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve links with Special schools</li> <li>Increase SCP provision</li> <li>Update SLAs for SCPs and local authorities</li> </ul>	May 2017

Health and Wellbeing	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES/ TIMESCALES
<p><b>Improve health and wellbeing support across the College</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from LDT's for all F/FE and HE students. Looking at approaches to further support students on part-time courses with a view of moving them on to full-time provision</li> <li>• ECSA promotes the health and wellbeing of all students through the development of sporting and additional activities throughout all campuses. This has supported students who would not ordinarily engage in such activities.</li> <li>• ECSA reviews the services offered to enable all demographics and preferences to engage</li> </ul>	2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ECSA are working with Student Experience staff to develop a peer mentoring scheme</li> <li>• ECSA are supporting Mental Health first aid development with curriculum and student experience</li> </ul>	June 2017
<p><b>Inclusive approaches/Inclusive teaching</b></p>	<p><b>Induction and course planning</b></p> <p>Learning needs of individual students have been planned prior to them starting their course to ensure all identified needs are reflected in the tutors teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course delivery</li> <li>• Welcome Events/Open Days</li> <li>• Equality and diversity in the curriculum</li> </ul>	June 2017
<p><b>Edinburgh College is committed to the high quality delivery of learning, teaching and support, and will ensure that a comprehensive CPD programme is delivered across the college</b></p>	<p><b>Develop a range of CPD opportunities including increasing awareness of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autism</li> <li>• Dyslexia</li> <li>• First Aid</li> <li>• Needs Assessments</li> <li>• Safeguarding</li> <li>• Equalities</li> <li>• Assistive Technology</li> <li>• Pro Monitor</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards

Improve Virtual/ blended and student learning environments and Access	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES/ TIMESCALES
<b>Assistive Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistive Technology area created on Moodle (Staff Zone and Student Area) – outlining technologies, hardware, usage, access, training and contextual usage (targeted accessibility – to all student usage / suitability)</li> <li>• Training programme (online and workshops) for all lecturing and related support staff – all aspects accessed through Moodle. – LTAS (TQFE / PDA courses etc. – new inductions)</li> <li>• Assistive Technology to be part of the Learning Technologies and Learning and Teaching specialist group. To advise and develop cross-college AS areas.</li> <li>• Investment in ICT</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards
<b>Provide dedicated student areas that provide information and access, training and support information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Textware</li> <li>• Mobile devices</li> <li>• Apps and free software</li> <li>• Assistive software and hardware</li> <li>• Study skills</li> <li>• Sign writing area to be developed</li> <li>• Links to approved and relevant A&amp;I web environments</li> </ul>	
<b>Partnership Working</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DYW College Group and Link to regional Group</li> <li>• Youth Employment Partnership</li> <li>• SDS- Drop ins on all campuses</li> <li>• Joined Up for Jobs</li> <li>• City Deal</li> <li>• Community Planning Partnerships</li> <li>• Employers</li> <li>• CITB</li> <li>• NHS</li> <li>• Local Authorities</li> <li>• Young Carers</li> <li>• ECSA</li> </ul>	
<b>ESOL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve entry procedures and language levels for participants</li> </ul>	August 2017

IT developments	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES/ TIMESCALES
We need to invest in our IT systems and ensure that students can bring and use their own devices and have assistive technology support available so that students can make the most of available packages and apps (which are very often free or low cost)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased promotion, integration (through curriculum teams)</li> <li>• Development and building of an Edinburgh College app.</li> <li>• Digital Ecosystem</li> </ul>	

We need to ensure that progression/careers advice is available for all students with a focus on those with additional needs or limited progression opportunities	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES/ TIMESCALES
<b>DYW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links with Regional Skills Assessment, DYW and City Deal to ensure that courses are linked to the future labour market and the College equips young people with the required skills</li> <li>• Support from Skills Development Scotland and LDT's on employability and personal development</li> <li>• Representation on the DYW Regional Group</li> </ul>	
<b>Employer engagement</b>		
<b>Pre exit guidance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure we have the information required to support those with significant challenges, for example, a sensory impairment, physical disability, mental health difficulties etc. into pathways or positive destinations</li> </ul>	
<b>Improve positive destinations for all students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the College uses the intelligence from the Regional Skills Assessments and local labour markets to increase the chances of a student going progressing to a positive destination after leaving the College.</li> </ul>	

## 6. MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT

Edinburgh College will continue to work closely with the SFC and Education Scotland to strive for continuous improvement. As a College we will complete an Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan each year.

**Self -evaluation will continue across all College faculties and departments and will focus on the key questions:**

- What's good?
- What needs to be improved?
- What are we going to do about it?
- What CPD do we need?
- What was the impact?

Faculties will continue to have regular performance reviews and we will continue to work in partnership with ECSA to develop the Student Satisfaction Surveys to gain valuable information on the student experience.

Edinburgh College Student Records team provides data to support the management of student monitoring and progress of individuals who have extended support requirements. We will look at improving mechanisms to routinely analyse student recruitment, retention and progression. Through the College application process students are encouraged to provide information regarding additional support needs to improve the quality of their teaching, learning and support.

Students will be reassured that the identification of their support needs is confidential and will be used to ensure they receive all appropriate support, and will not impact on their application or progression opportunities.

## Impact

Through the successful implementation of this Access and Inclusion Strategy Edinburgh College hopes to see impact in the following areas:

- Improved application and retention rates particularly with groups with additional support needs or those previously under represented
- Students will receive prompt assessments
- Improved positive destinations and progressions
- Improved attendance
- Higher level of credits
- Staff are motivated and feel the impact of the strategy in their practice
- Student successes are celebrated and acknowledged
- Students with additional needs are supported and included in cross-college and extra-curricular activities
- Student spaces are well used and well equipped
- Learning is evident across campuses at extended hours
- Improved student satisfaction rates
- Schools report improved service and delivery.