Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Annual Report 2019/20

Our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Contents

Introduction

Reaseheath College is fully committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in all our activities within the College and wider community. We are committed to advancing our duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and foster good relations between different groups. We are committed to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is at the heart of all College life, embedded into everything we do, and this is reflected in our vision, values and strategic plan.

We believe that the broadest experiences and perceptions are needed to help us create, design and deliver innovative education, and we strive to create a welcoming working and learning environment which enables everyone to bring their whole self into the college environment and positively contribute.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are the responsibility of the whole Reaseheath family and we are committed to developing and implementing good practice and removing barriers to progression and achievement.

We welcome feedback and input and the sharing of lived experiences to ensure that our College continues to listen, learn, take action and improve.

Marcus Clinton
Principal and CEO

Reaseheath's Strategic Plan and its approach to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Our Mission

Industry Focused, Career Ready

Our Vision

Our vision is to be the leading specialist land-based college in the UK and the preferred place to learn, work and progress.   To deliver an inclusive offer facilitating appropriate progression for everyone whilst placing our students and staff at the heart of our college.

Our PRIDE Values

Our values are core to everything that we do and are the foundation of all College led activity.

Our Strategic Plan

Our 5-year strategic plan sets out our journey to achieve our vision and brings to life our 5 strategic priorities centred around our offer, our people, our environment, our employers and our processes and systems.   These are underpinned by our 5 guiding principles of excellence, leading edge, sustainability, relevance and financial strength.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN
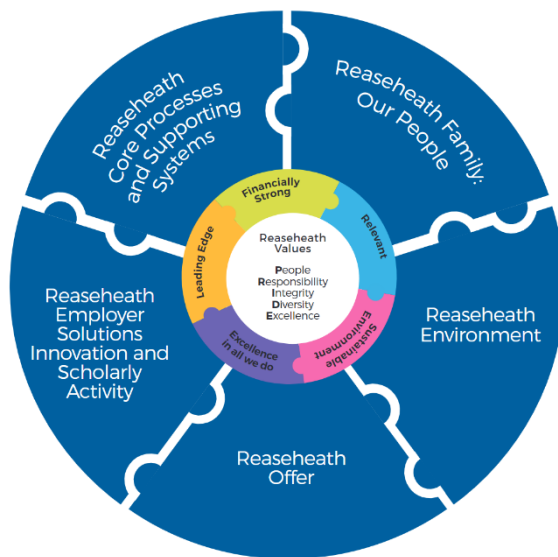
Industry Focused, Career Ready

Our People

The College's People priority clearly places Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the forefront of its agenda, with a commitment to creating and delivering a clear action plan to drive and embed change, informed by the views, feedback and lived experiences of its students and staff.

Our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We embrace our Equality duty as a public body and are committed to driving change and moving towards equality for all.
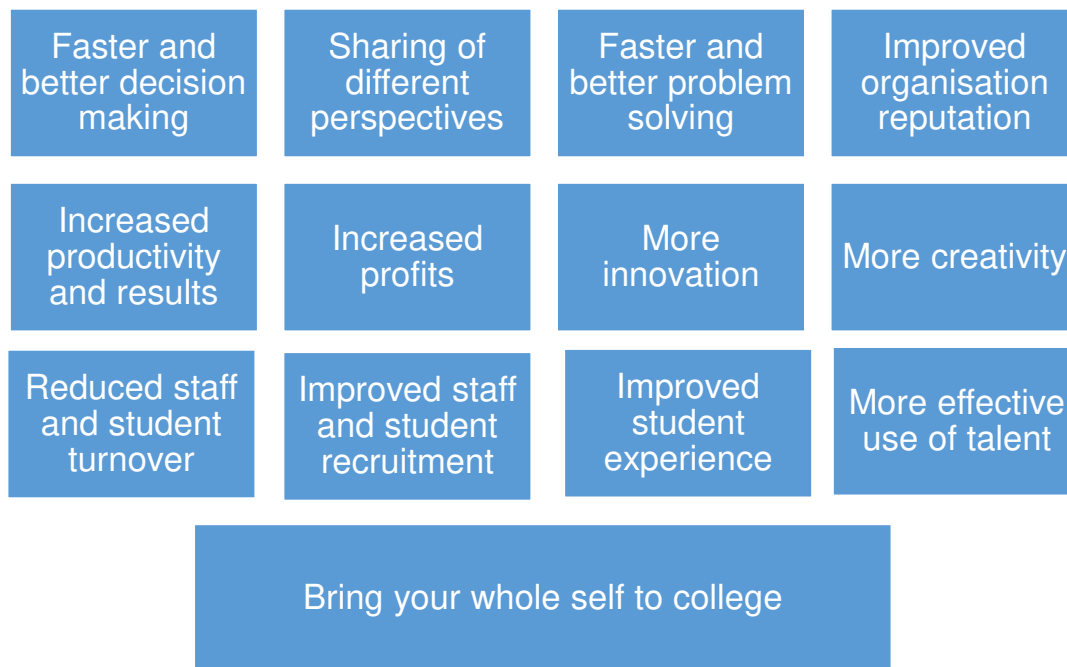
Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 states that a public authority must in the exercise of its function have due regard to the need to:

(a) **Eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.

(b) **Advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

(c) **Foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The broad aim of the general equality duty is to integrate consideration of the advancement of equality into the day-to-day business of all bodies subject to the duty.

The general equality duty is intended to accelerate progress towards equality for all, by placing a responsibility on bodies subject to the duty to consider how they can work to tackle systemic discrimination and disadvantage affecting people with particular protected characteristics.

In addition, there are immeasurable business benefits to increased diversity within an organisation which cannot be ignored.

Faster and better decision making	Sharing of different perspectives	Faster and better problem solving	Improved organisation reputation
Increased productivity and results	Increased profits	More innovation	More creativity
Reduced staff and student turnover	Improved staff and student recruitment	Improved student experience	More effective use of talent

Bring your whole self to college

By taking a positive and proactive approach to the equality duty, we can deliver these and more.

We are committed to:

- continuing to publish this annual report with information on our journey
- continuing to assess and consult on the content of new policies introduced
- training staff on both the general and specific duties and widening their EDI knowledge
- undertaking regular monitoring, consultation and review of our action plan against our equality objectives
- continuing to monitor and report on equality and diversity information through consulting and involving people
- improving our data capture and analysis to help us identify any gaps or disadvantage and taking steps to address these
- implementing the Prevent Duty alongside our Equality Act obligations
- engaging widely with groups who can help us to broaden our experiences and understanding and input into our decision making

Building and embedding EDI – leading cultural change

We asked our students –

What does DIVERSITY mean to you at Reaseheath?

Our Student Association has also launched a new culture society for 2020/21 which is open to all students with the aim to educate and support students from different backgrounds, races and religions. We will be actively working with this group and other Student Association groups such as our LGBTQ+ group, British Sign Language group and our ATypicals group to start reaching out to protected groups within the college community to increase engagement and representation and share their lived experiences of college life.

Our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

We have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee to oversee our work in this area and deliver our action plan. The terms of reference for the EDI Committee for 19/20 set out that it would meet 4 times per year to oversee progress against the EDI objectives set. Unfortunately with the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing lockdown it was difficult for the committee to continue to drive its priorities as strongly from March onwards. Staff were furloughed and the majority of others were working remotely from home and the College focus shifted to supporting everyone to deliver education remotely and continue to provide a quality Reaseheath experience to our students, apprentices and employers.

With the re-opening of education in full from September 2020 the College has taken this opportunity to review the EDI chair, membership and terms of reference. Chair of the committee has moved to the Director of People & Culture and EDI now sits firmly within the People agenda and Strategic Plan. Membership has been reviewed and members have been invited to apply to join the committee outlining their skills, experience and passion for driving EDI forward. Applications are welcomed from all areas of the College to improve representation across protected characteristics and other groups.

To achieve positive change and ensure that EDI is embedded into everyday College life, the committee will meet each half term and act as an action group as well as a committee.

The Terms of Reference have been reviewed and updated with a focus on delivering our obligations under the Equality Act and Public Sector Equality duty.

Our EDI objectives – 2019/20

We have steadily made progress in key EDI areas over the last 4 years against our objectives of:

- Enhancing and embedding EDI within our teaching and related CPD
- Maximise opportunities to positively promote and celebrate EDI across College
- Develop a range of student led projects and initiatives to celebrate and promote EDI
- Staff CPD – EDI, safeguarding and prevent topics
- Inclusive campus and environment
- Monitoring of performance measures to narrow achievement gaps across diversity of the College

This year we added our HE Access and Participation Plan to the list to enable a clear focus to be held in this area by the Committee.

We have created positive change against these objectives by:

- successfully helping to close the gap between disadvantaged students
- embedding opportunities to explore EDI into our teacher training, staff induction and our assessment of teaching
- creating resources and lifting the awareness of all staff through training in EDI and unconscious bias,
- delivering staff safeguarding and prevent updates
- engaging with our student association to celebrate diversity, educate others and promote our PRIDE values through our annual Pridefest celebration and wider student society activity
- gathering views from staff and students through an annual survey and wider feedback and using these views to direct action. The committee has resolved issues around preferred name use on college systems, accessible toilets, developed a transgender policy and accompanying guidance for both students and staff, and an assistance dog policy.
- Continuing to promote and open up channels of communication for staff and students through Your Views Matter, See it Say it and engaging with Staff Voice and Student Association and representatives.

Going forward – Equality Objectives (2020/21 – 2022/23)

In thinking about our EDI objectives for the next 4 years, we took the brave decision to return to basics and re-examine our foundations. Therefore, our EDI objectives for the next 3 academic years are designed to review, rebuild and relaunch the foundations upon which our approach to EDI is built by:

- Actively increasing representation from protected characteristic groups across the EDI Committee and wider decision-making groups
- Undertaking a wider and more in-depth review of the College supported by EDUK, seeking feedback on all aspects of EDI to assist in identifying where priority areas for action are
- Introducing and promoting wider engagement activities such as reverse mentoring, affinity groups, allyship and engagement with external EDI and community networks, to encourage a wider appreciation of lived experiences both within the college and beyond

- Taking positive action to improve reporting rates amongst the workforce, explaining why supplying data will improve diversity and the wider business
- Examining and improving our data collection to provide meaningful reports by protected characteristic groups and intersectionality, which give insight into the College and enable us to identify areas for improvement
- Reviewing our approach to Equality Impact Assessments and cascading this and accompanying training through the college for new and reviewed policies and activities
- Maximising the accessibility of our campus, website, language, technology and approach for our learners
- Tackling our gender pay gap
- Driving HE Access and Participation and sharing good practice across FE
- Utilising every opportunity to celebrate diversity and inclusion
- Taking opportunities to start brave conversations around diversity and inclusion within the workplace and learning environment.
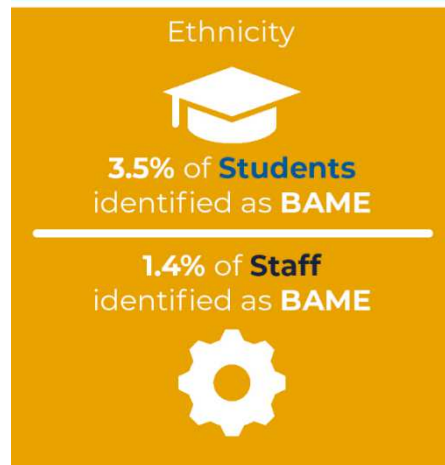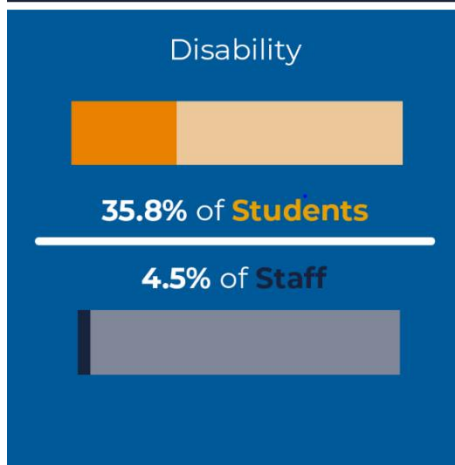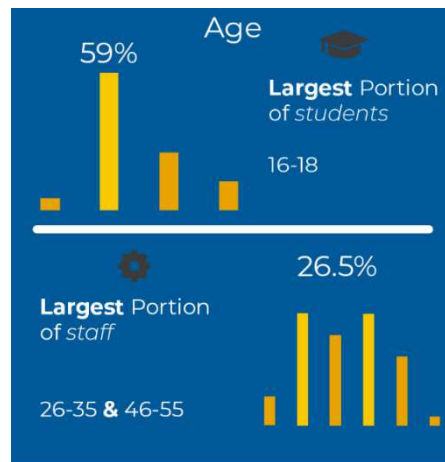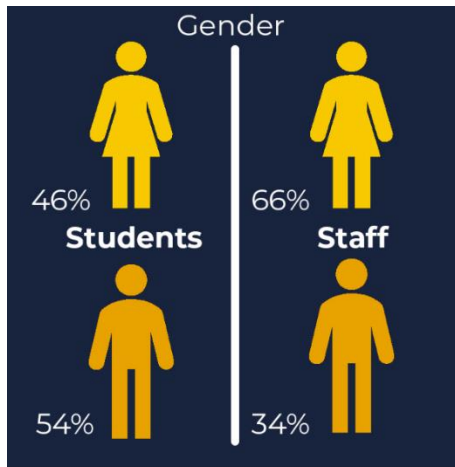
After these three academic years we will set our EDI objectives for the next 4 years with full engagement and consultation with our staff, students, community and supporters.

We will continue to take opportunities to thread EDI throughout our everyday college lives and also ensure it is integrated into other development initiatives we are driving such as our College Management Team development programme and line management programmes. We will also use the EDI Committee to bring together all of the good work being done to promote, develop and embed EDI across the College to ensure that it is part of a coherent plan. This includes the numerous kitemarks that the College holds such as Mindful Employer, Disability Confident Employer, Autism friendly. Our Principal has also pledged his support to the Black Further Education Leadership Group committed to eradicating racism within education.

Key Performance indicators against our objectives will be set through the EDI Committee and progress will be communicated to governors via the Finance & General Purposes Committee through the regular Strategic People Report.

Demographics 2019/20

Headline demographics for staff and students:

Gender

46% **Students**

54%

66% **Staff**

34%

Age

59%

Largest Portion of *students*

16-18

26.5%

Largest Portion of *staff*

26-35 **&** 46-55

Disability

35.8% of **Students**

4.5% of **Staff**

Ethnicity

3.5% of **Students** identified as **BAME**

1.4% of **Staff** identified as **BAME**

Additional demographic information:

Declared mental health condition	Declared a religion	Identified as LGBTQ+
Students	Staff	Staff
7%	33%	2%
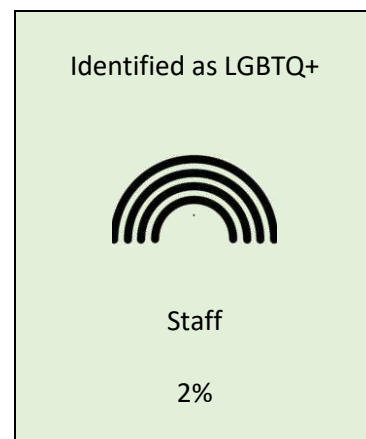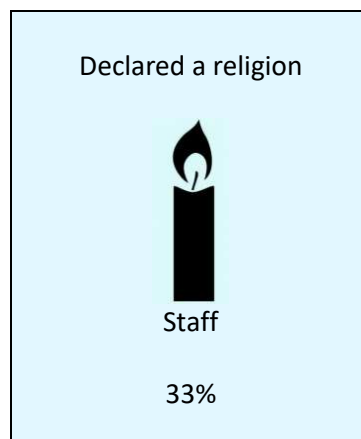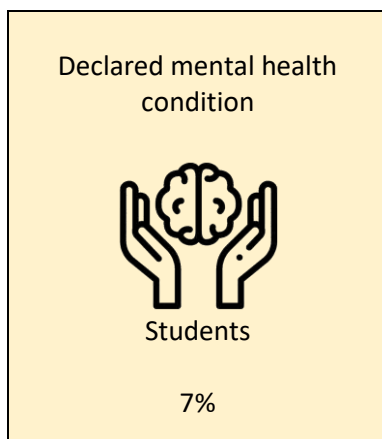
College Performance 2019-20

Further Education

The percentage of FE learners declaring a learning difficulty or disability has risen in recent years and is understood to be above sector norms. In 2019/20 the percentage of FE learners (16-18 and 19+) declaring LLDD was 45%, whilst those with an Education Health Care Plan has risen to over 170.

Total Learners

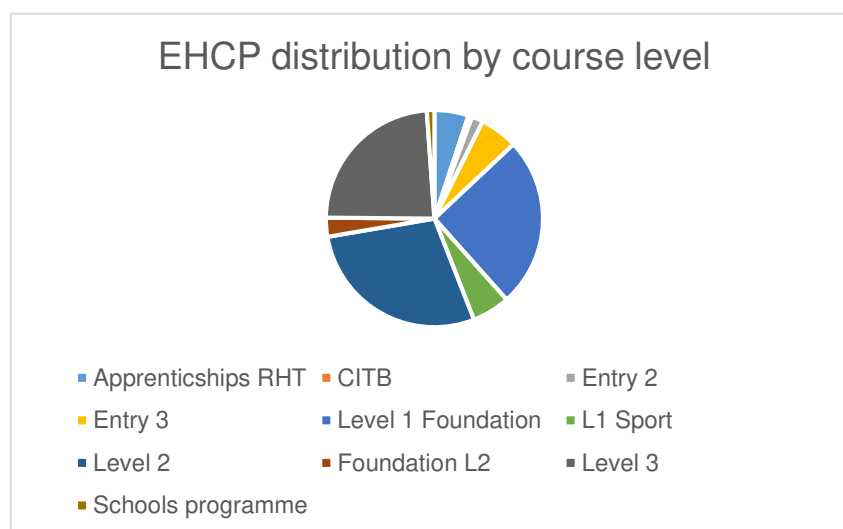| Age Group ▲	17/18	18/19	19/20
16-18	1477	1533	1472
19 +	222	250	220
Total	**1696**	**1782**	**1691**

Those declaring LLDD

Age Group ▲	17/18	18/19	19/20
16-18	557	611	663
19 +	82	78	95
Total	**636**	**688**	**758**

2019/20 saw the highest number of students with EHCPs and, for the first time, the number of students with EHCPs studying across college exceeded the number studying Foundation Level qualifications.

- 171 students with EHCPs completed the year
- 184 EHCP reviews completed (14 left within the year)
- 8 students with EHCPs left before 42 days (no review completed)
- 7 students with EHCPs left after 42 days (no review completed)
- 22 HNF students withdrew overall (21 had an EHCP)
  - ➢ 17 before 42 days
  - ➢ 5 after 42 days

Students with EHCPs (135 of whom received HNF) studied at all levels across the College group across all curriculum areas;

EHCP distribution by course level

- ■ Apprenticships RHT ■ CITB ■ Entry 2
- ■ Entry 3 ■ Level 1 Foundation ■ L1 Sport
- ■ Level 2 ■ Foundation L2 ■ Level 3
- ■ Schools programme

Widening participation data in 19/20 demonstrates very few achievement gaps between at risk and non at risk groups. There has been some increase in this gap compared to the prior year and it is considered this is primarily due to the impact of Covid-19 and the move to remote education from

March 2020. It is recognised that remote learning had a more significant impact on learners with learning difficulties/disabilities and those from disadvantaged backgrounds due to limited access to support and/or digital poverty. The College worked very hard to provide a wraparound support package during lockdown offering remote 1:1 support and also providing face-to-face learning for those in most need, as a result the large majority of learners were still able to successfully achieve their qualifications and whilst the achievement gaps did widen slightly on 18/19 they were still within very good tolerances and all groups achieved above national averages.

AgeGroup	16-18				19 +			
Criteria	Starts	Ret %	Pass %	Ach %	Starts	Ret %	Pass %	Ach %
Female	3263	95.84	98.30	94.21	198	93.12	95.45	88.89
Male	2369	93.39	95.36	89.05	175	92.40	94.94	87.72
White British	5477	94.78	97.08	92.01	328	92.38	95.88	88.57
Other	155	96.10	97.30	93.51	45	95.56	90.70	86.67
Disability/Learning Difficulty	2444	93.76	95.77	89.79	170	93.29	95.42	89.02
Non Disability/No Learning Difficulty	3188	95.63	98.08	93.79	203	92.35	95.03	87.76
FSM - Yes	294	91.10	95.11	86.64	3	0.00	NaN	0.00
FSM - No	5338	95.02	97.19	92.35	370	93.56	95.21	89.08
High Needs Funded	357	95.79	94.43	90.45	42	100.00	95.24	95.24
NO High Needs Funded	5275	94.75	97.27	92.16	331	91.82	95.21	87.42

(this table displays data by learning aims)

- Attendance for HNF learners was 91.26% and 90.95% for students with EHCPs which is near to the College attendance target of 92% and above the overall College attendance rate of 89.24%.

- All students participate in work experience placements and are provided with industry relevant experience to support their career progression and employability skills development. Students benefit from either independent or supported work experience offsite wherever possible although COVID-19 limited the work experience opportunities in 19/20.

- Overall progression was very positive with over 96% of learners progressing into further training, higher education or employment and this profile was similar for learners with LLDD with a large number progressing internally to higher level programmes at Reaseheath (55%).

- Apprentices with identified learning difficulties or disabilities also had access to bespoke and individualised support in 2019/20 provided by a specialist team of staff. As a result there were no significant achievement gaps in the RHT data for 19/20.

Support During Lockdown – Student survey

This survey was launched after the Easter break to ensure students were able to feedback about the support they have had during lockdown. Students were still able to access our Wellbeing, Safeguarding, Student Services, Learning Support, Careers and Library services remotely during lockdown, and this is reflected in the survey results.

A total of 1054 students responded from all areas across the FE departments.

Departments	Responses
Adventure Sport	82
Agriculture	126
Animal Management	351
Business Studies	66
Construction	69
Countryside	64
Engineering	70
Equine	111
Food	47
Foundation Learning	30
Horticulture	38
Grand Total	**1054**

How Positive is your online learning experience?

Department	Average Score
Adventure Sport	7.0
Agriculture	7.1
Animal Management	7.3
Business Studies	7.6
Construction	7.9
Countryside	6.8
Engineering	7.2
Equine	7.1
Food	8.3
Foundation Learning	7.0
Horticulture	7.3
Grand Total	7.3

Are you in contact with all your course tutors:

Department	In contact with your course tutors
Adventure Sport	91.5%
Agriculture	88.9%
Animal Management	91.5%
Business Studies	95.5%
Construction	98.6%
Countryside	96.9%
Engineering	91.4%
Equine	91.9%
Food	97.9%
Foundation Learning	93.3%
Horticulture	100.0%
Grand Total	92.9%

Are you in contact with your M&E Tutor

Department	In contact with M&E Tutor if applicable
Adventure Sport	87.5%
Agriculture	78.3%
Animal Management	93.0%
Business Studies	85.7%
Construction	85.7%
Countryside	88.9%
Engineering	92.9%
Equine	97.5%
Food	86.7%
Foundation Learning	93.3%
Horticulture	90.9%
Grand Total	90.1%

How are you communicating with your tutors

Moodle	124
Teams	980
Zoom	15
Email	465
Text Message	87
Other	10
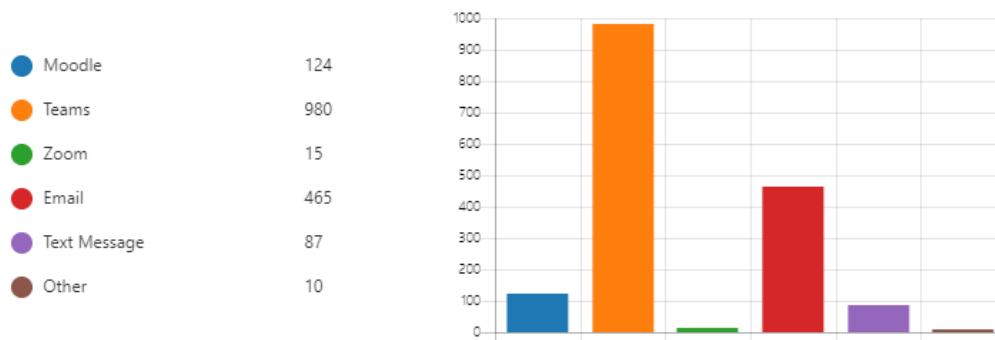
How much time are you spending a week on your college course

Departments	1 – 3 hours	3 – 6 hours	6 – 9 hours	9 – 12 hours	More than 12 hours	None
Adventure Sport	19.5%	32.9%	19.5%	14.6%	13.4%	0.0%
Agriculture	34.1%	30.2%	20.6%	7.9%	4.8%	2.4%
Animal Management	11.1%	23.9%	21.4%	19.7%	22.5%	1.4%
Business Studies	9.1%	39.4%	22.7%	19.7%	7.6%	1.5%
Construction	55.1%	30.4%	10.1%	0.0%	2.9%	1.4%
Countryside	23.4%	42.2%	14.1%	12.5%	3.1%	4.7%
Engineering	28.6%	25.7%	30.0%	10.0%	2.9%	2.9%
Equine	9.9%	27.9%	22.5%	23.4%	15.3%	0.9%
Food	17.0%	46.8%	21.3%	4.3%	8.5%	2.1%
Foundation Learning	40.0%	33.3%	10.0%	10.0%	6.7%	0.0%
Horticulture	15.8%	28.9%	18.4%	23.7%	13.2%	0.0%
Grand Total	20.3%	29.9%	20.3%	15.1%	12.8%	1.6%

Remote access of other college support

Department	Careers	LSC	Library	Wellbeing
Adventure Sport	2	24	25	8
Agriculture	19	33	60	12
Animal Management	69	58	160	47
Business Studies	6	11	36	11
Construction	12	28	19	9
Countryside	8	25	26	5
Engineering	19	19	23	8
Equine	26	16	40	27
Food	12	9	14	12
Foundation Learning		20	6	4
Horticulture	2	12	22	1
Grand Total	175	255	431	144

Higher Education – Access and Participation Plan Progress

Significant development work has taken place during 2019/20 around the Access and Participation Plan (APP). We have analysed our 2018/19 data and used this to evaluate our initial target setting and as a basis for reviewing our original target and monitoring groups. A steering group with terms of reference for managing the APP has been established with meetings held from June onwards. We have ensured student representation and a direct feed into the EDI Committee.

Our key strategic measures are:

- **Strengthen the culture of inclusive practice through increased levels of staff awareness and training surrounding differential outcomes and implementation of interventions for disadvantaged groups.**
- **Identify designated PATs within course management teams who specialise in supporting disadvantaged students.**
- **Review current bursary offer with a view to re-aligning towards target groups.**
- **Investigate the potential for development of new curriculum offers attractive to underrepresented groups.**
- **Review & strengthen widening participation activity directed at groups who are underrepresented in our Higher Education student population.**
- **Development of an on-line Graduate Toolkit to support the development of graduate skills and characteristics.**
- **Review and enhance our model of support for disabled students.**

Staff CPD resources and a dedicated Sharepoint microsite have been developed and were launched at the 1st September Staff Development Event. We have also established a clear brand, with corporate logo, slogan 'Closing the Gap' and accompanying promotional materials (posters and booklets).   We are continuing to strengthen our approach to monitoring and evaluation and are finalising a 'Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy'. Beneficial partnership activities have taken place with the University of Chester which entailed the sharing of resources and training sessions for Personal Academic Tutoring. Investigation into both FE and HE outreach activities has taken place and meetings have also been held with Higher Horizons to look at securing funds for an intervention to raise

aspirations and awareness of the University College Reaseheath (UCR) offer and potential for graduate employment opportunities.

The OfS Financial Support Toolkit has been used to gain intelligence about our current bursary offer and we interviewed students in receipt to gain feedback to ensure greater alignment to the needs of both APP Target and monitoring groups. We have identified areas for curriculum development specifically within Construction and Engineering.

The UCR Graduate Toolkit was developed and made available to students with a range of resources and activities available 24/7 to support continuation, achievement and progression. An evaluation of the impact of the toolkit will be undertaken. We will also offer an 'early access' programme for this academic year to give students access to campus, accommodation and support facilities earlier if they have a declared disability and mental health condition and then follow up with an impact analysis.

Supporting, Celebrating, Engaging with EDI 2019/20

The College's 'Pridefest 19/20' celebration this year was delivered remotely, and the Student Association worked with our Marketing team to create Sharepoint pages around each of the letters of the PRIDE values to celebrate each value. Each page contained a visual summarising the feedback from students about what each value meant to them. There were also videos, information, facts and links to explore each value. Information on student and staff projects were also showcased such as – the pink box project, AOC beacon award runner up for mental health, Remembrance Day activities, food bank donations, knife crime video, and PRIDE awards.

Accessibility

We have also continued with our improvement of campus accessbility and have added automatic doors to the Wellbeing centre, restaurant and Weaver building. We have installed a new Closomat specialist toilet within the HE accessible toilet and installed additional accessible toilets in our new office conversions. Signage for accessible toilets is now clear and in place. We have also relaid footpaths to reduce trip hazards and fitted hand rails and ramps to the residential Student Services offices.

At the start of the 2019 Autumn term we finalised the pedestrian areas in front of the halls of residence and installed raising bollards so that the area is only trafficked by service vehicles and created an area around the Farm which was limited to staff parking to reduce vehicle movements during the college day and create a safer environment. Other walkways across campus were completed and protective handrails and kerbs were installed around the bus area.

Lighting on campus pathways was reviewed and improved especially around the sports pitches and engineering stores. Reflective bands were added to the columns outside of the Food building to make them more obvious to partially sighted students and the lighting and dropped kerbs were completed to enable a more accessible foothpath from Animal Management across campus. Zebra crossings will be installed in the next academic year.

We have also continued to improve the accessibility of our College websites. The newly designed DART and Reaseheath Business Hub websites have been developed and will be launched in the Autumn term. These new sites have been built with accessibility in mind. Both have a plug-in which enables keyboard navigation, adaptations to contrast and colour and the ability to resize text. All images have alt tags for users accessing the sites on a screen reader.

Whilst the Reaseheath College and University Centre websites are under development we are adding accessiBe software to the site. This software will scan all content on the site and make alterations to ensure the site is WCAG 2.1 compliant. It provides an accessibility statement and a statement of compliance. This will be in place before the end of the Autumn term 2020.

The College Health & Wellbeing Team includes a wide range of specialist staff and resources to ensure every learners' physical, emotional and mental wellbeing is appropriately supported. This includes a team of Wellbeing Advisors, Wellbeing Officers, Qualified Counsellors, Sexual Health Advisors, a Registered Nurse, a Mental Health and Wellbeing Specialist, a College Chaplain and a College Safeguarding Lead. A bank of guidance and resources, including a self-help website called BeWell is also available and easy to access. Learners can access support from the Wellbeing and Safeguarding teams 24/7 for any immediate physical or mental wellbeing issues. In addition, a programme of personal, social and emotional wellbeing topics is delivered to FE and HE learners throughout the year to help equip them for the challenges of life including healthy lifestyle, substance and alcohol misuse, sexual health and consent, relationships, avoiding abuse and radicalisation, and financial health.

A real focus this year during the Coronavirus pandemic has been on supporting learners and staff to access as much information and advice and guidance as possible around COVID-19 and safely access wellbeing support. This has focused on understanding the virus, how it spreads and how to keep yourself safe, but also on building resilience, managing anxiety, self-isolation and poor mental health associated with the current situation.

The BeWell site contains a raft of information, advice and guidance for learners with links to specialist sites such as Young Minds, Mental Health Foundation, Mind, CAMHS, Charlie Waller Memorial Trust (CWMT), NHS IAPT, Visyon, Papyrus and The Samaritans. There are also links to the new wellbeing app developed by Thrive and Healthshield, along with podcasts and videos. A similar Sharepoint site

has been developed for staff with useful resources, videos and self-help material. Managing your mental health, wellbeing and resilience were covered by our Head of Wellbeing at our summer staff development online event, with guest speaker Sinead McBrearty, CEO of Education Support.

Our College nurse also holds regular clinics and we continued to deliver wellbeing and counselling support remotely to staff and students throughout lockdown and self-isolation. Our College Chaplain holds regular sessions both remote and face-to-face for individuals to explore and strengthen their faith.

High Needs Learners

The Learning Support Centre (LSC) moved rapidly to a model of online learning support delivery from 23rd March providing students with in-class and 1:1 learning support via MS teams. The Department continued to undertake single and multi-agency EHCP reviews for students and worked with Marketing and Curriculum teams to offer additional transition support online. In addition the LSC, Wellbeing and Reaseheath Training Apprenticeship team regularly reviewed risk assessments and support plans for all students classed as vulnerable including those who are supported by an EHCP, PEP and those who have a social worker. The College continued to remain open to vulnerable students until mid-July offering online, face-to-face support and access to learning technologies for vulnerable students or those in need of additional support. From mid-August onwards the LSC supported students with EHCPs visiting the campus for extended transition visits and offered support with the online enrolment processes.

Since September the LSC has worked collaboratively with Local Authorities and local colleges to ensure we are offering full learning support provision including support on campus provided by third party agencies to students. The LSC continues to offer a blended model of online and in-class/face-to-face learning support in addition to providing drop-in study centres with access to IT in both the Learning Support Centre and a further designated learning zone on campus.

This is an area where the College sees continued growth year on year with the numbers of High Needs students for 2020/21 continuing to follow that trend, with an increase from 135 in 19/20 to 172 for 20/21. Furthermore, the Exam Access Arrangements team have received over 1300 requests for Exam Access Arrangement consideration reflecting that more than 55% of the student cohort self-identify as having SEND or additional support needs.

The College has also taken steps to address digital poverty and has surveyed learners and purchased additional laptops and devices to loan to learners who have difficulty accessing learning remotely through lack of a device. The College continues to monitor and review usage and provide loan equipment. We have also created a designated learning zone on campus equipped to enable learners to access remote delivery whilst on campus if they are not able to do so from home.

Staff Updates and CPD

We have continued to provide Safeguarding and Prevent updates to staff delivered through our online Staff Development events in July and September. We also ensured a renewed focus on wellbeing covering managing anxiety and building resilience and the Executive team filmed a short video sharing what strategies they had been using to manage their mental health during lockdown. Our Head of Wellbeing also shared her experiences of returning to campus after lockdown and offered reassurance and support.

We have continued to deliver our Introduction to EDI and Unconscious Bias training for staff online, and we have also trained our new Student Ambassador team. We have developed a Sharepoint Coronavirus site with a wealth of information for staff covering anxiety, mental health, FAQs, government guidance, dealing with self-isolation and good hygiene tips. These supported the College risk assessment, department action plans, individualised risk assessments for those staff more vulnerable, and the COVID secure measures in place.

We have also been promoting LGBTQ+ through a member of the Committee delivering an hour's CPD session for Foundation, Student Services/safeguarding and Motor Vehicle Teams specifically focusing on the use of associated vocabulary and terminology used when discussing LGBTQ+ rights and identity with students and parents. Included in this session were discussions around associated legislation and safeguarding, dispelling myths and preconceptions and the effects of approaches in building relationships.

In response to the tragic killing of George Floyd in America and the subsequent protests around Black Lives Matter (BLM), we shared resources with staff to enable them to instigate discussions within their classes and we developed Be Ready materials for both students and staff exploring a number of aspects around BLM. EDUK provided the College with the opportunity to engage in open discussion and enabled us to act as allies and hear the lived experience of black colleagues within education. We were able to bring this insight back to the EDI Committee. It was important that this topic was discussed as our role as an education establishment is to create a safe space to explore world events and the implications and ramifications of those both on our lives and those of our colleagues, family and friends.

Schools and Engagement

We have a pilot project running in conjunction with Westlake CIC to explore and address the need for alternative provision within CWAC/North Wales/Wirral High Schools for SEND students. This is supporting inclusive and alternative learning programmes that promote equality of opportunity of learning to pupils, irrespective of age, gender, ability or disability, attainment and background, to raise aspirations and engagement (particularly with pupils who are at risk of disenfranchisement or disaffection). Woodchurch School has succeeded in IQM Flagship status, with their Westlake alternative programme forming part of the evidence.

We have also developed our onsite Forest College programme addressing the need of NEET/PRE-NEET alternative provision within Cheshire East/Shropshire local authority areas. This is supporting inclusive and alternative programmes, irrespective of age, gender, ability or disability, attainment and background, to raise aspirations, promoting re-engagement to pupils who have become disenfranchised/disaffected and unable to remain in full or part-time compulsory education through low stakes activities. 80% of our Forest College learners, who had previously been unable to access any form of mainstream education, progressed onto a full time FE programme in September 2020.

Our onsite KS4 programme has seen significant growth in Elective Home Educated Year 10 and Year 11 pupils accessing Reaseheath College for their essential English and Maths qualifications alongside their vocational programme of study. We have been actively supporting pupils who are not in formal compulsory education to gain the qualifications required for entry at FE level.