



Fee and Access Plan 2020/21

Executive Summary

NPTC Group of Colleges (NPTC) is fully committed to encouraging participation from under-represented groups and to promoting higher education. The 2020/21 fee and access plan will continue to ensure equality of opportunity throughout Wales and the regions in which the Colleges are situated. The 2020/21 fee and access plan continues to invest income strategically into activities and interventions to meet NPTC's strategic objectives and to encourage participation in higher education from under-represented groups. In addressing the equality of opportunity and promotion of higher education, NPTC is committing 14.5% of the income it will generate in 2020/21 student fees equating to £110,238.

These RW-related activities will be sustained in the longer-term as the target group would access partner support organisations involved in progression to further and higher education. The costs for this activity will amount to £1,238 per annum, comprising the costs for staffing the event, planning the event, transport, refreshments and administration.

Fee and access plan targets have been aligned with the key performance indicators in the NPTC's Higher Education 2016-2021 Strategy which are organised under three categories; Student Transitions, Standards and Performance and the Student Experience. The 2020/21 fee and access plan builds on the 2019/20 fee and access plan supporting the NPTC's mission statement 'Inspiring Learning, Enriching Lives, Delivering Success' which is underpinned by the vision which states that by 2019 the NPTC will be:

- A key partner in strategic networks;
- A college delivering excellent teaching and learning;
- An enterprising and entrepreneurial college;
- A college that successfully prepares students for positive progression;
- A recognised lead in using technology;
- An employer of choice;
- The employers choice for learning and engagement;
- A college that is helping to tackle poverty by improving economic prosperity;
- A college that promotes Welsh-medium and bilingual learning.

The strategic and operational activities of NPTC are governed by a core set of values which support the equality of opportunity and the promotion of Higher Education to groups under-represented in higher education. Our value statements commit us to being:

- Student and learning centred in our actions;
- Caring and inclusive in our attitudes;
- Responsible and respectful in our behaviour;
- Bound by equality and diversity as our guiding principles;
- Professional and corporate in our conduct;
- Enterprising and innovative in our outlook;
- Tolerant and supportive in our responses.

The setting of targets and delivery of activities, events and interventions to support the achievement of the 2020/21 fee and access plan is a result of the learning and the evaluation of the success of previous fee plan targets and feedback from a number of mechanisms including those from staff, students, surveys, data reports, internal quality assurance, external examiners, external quality review etc. The focus and content of the fee and access plan is based on activities and initiatives to attract and support all students, and especially those from under-represented groups to study higher education and to successfully complete and progress from their programme of study. The 2020/21 fee and access plan is designed to support the objective of the Higher Education Strategy which are:

- To actively encourage students to develop a lifelong relationship with NPTC from pre-entry, to undergraduate and alumni;
- To further enhance the successful outreach and school liaison work to continue to widen participation in higher education and build aspiration and ambition amongst potential students;
- To provide clear advice, guidance and information to enable informed choice, and curriculum which meets student needs and adds genuine value;
- To promote internal progression to higher education from Level 3 to Level 4 and from Level 5 to Top Ups;
- To deliver engaging and inspiring teaching and learning approaches to raise student aspirations and provide a stimulating learning experience;
- To develop a higher education community in partnership with our students and staff. To understand student needs, learn from their experiences and work to continually enhance their experience, helping to secure future levels of recruitment and maximising student retention and achievement rates across the higher education provision;
- To provide an excellent experience for all higher education students which is motivating, rewarding and both challenges and inspires within a supportive environment.
- To continue to proactively engage with a wide range of employers and organisations striving to address the skills needed by local and regional industries, and provide clear information on progression pathways between skills levels to facilitate planned growth. Alongside in-depth subject knowledge, we will equip our graduates for life and work beyond NPTC and enable them to thrive, helping to ensure their success.

As mentioned previously the 2020/21 fee and access plan objectives have been aligned with the key performance indicators in NPTC's Higher Education 2016-2021 Strategy. The 2020/21 fee and action plan equality of opportunity objectives (EO) are to:

- EO1 Attract more students from under-represented populations into HE
- EO2 Promote more awareness raising activities to highlight the value of HE for under-represented groups
- EO3 Provide support to promote progression, retention and completion in students from under-represented groups

The 2020/21 fee and action plan promotion of higher education objectives (PHE) are to:

- PHE1 Develop a Students' Union and infrastructure to support student activities for all types of students.
- PHE2 Improve the student experience
- PHE3 Improve accessibility to, and involvement in the Welsh Language and develop activities that support the use of Welsh Language.
- PHE4 Increase the employability of our graduates
- PHE5 Promote high quality academic and financial support including information and guidance
- PHE6 Raise awareness of the value of higher education to increase the number of students applying to higher education.

Duration of the Fee and Access Plan

The duration of this fee and access plan is from 01 August 2020 to 31 July 2021.

Fee Levels

The proposed fees for 2020/21 are £7500 and are the same as for 2019/20; the tuition fee on entry is the same continuing fee for the duration of the course. NPTC strives to minimise additional costs but details of any additional costs are published in the prospectus and individual programme profiles on the NPTC website.

The NPTC website contains detailed information on H.E. Fees and Financial Support alongside NPTC's Fee Policy and its terms and conditions to enable students to be clear on their responsibilities and the total cost of their H.E. programme. This complies with the Competition and Markets Authority regulations for H E providers. NPTC Admissions team communicate fees and funding information directly to applicants at the offer stage.

NPTC hosts a number of H.E. information events including student finance talks and provides clear information for parents and students. Fee levels, bursaries and the H.E. Hardship Fund are widely advertised through open events and through publications and online information.

Student Partnership

The Students' Union was restructured in 2018 and represents NPTC's student body, providing a student voice throughout the organisation from programme level to the Board of Governors. Students are placed at the heart of the learning experience and their views are regularly considered and are highly valued. Both staff and students have roles and responsibilities to maintain and enhance the student experience. The Student Charter was revised in 2018 to encourage the commitment of all staff and students to the principle of partnership and to make clear the basis on which that partnership rests.

There are currently three HE students on the Students' Union Management team. However, in a small Institution that is located over numerous sites, gaining representative student involvement for all students is challenging. Therefore a co-opted student advisor to the Governing Board was initially appointed.

The elections for the new Students' Union Management team are underway and it is anticipated that there will be at least one HE student representative on the management team supported by campus representatives. The Students' Union President and the HE representative will sit on the Governing Body.

In addition to representing the students in 2019/20 three priority areas of work have been agreed with the Students' Union; namely the environment, LGBT and mental health.

For the environmental priority the Students' Union plan to:

- Organise a Green activity awareness day in Afan, Brecon, Neath and Newtown;
- Work with Estates to increase recycling facilities across all campuses;
- Lobby Catering to reduce single-use plastics in all campus food outlets;
- Consult on the use of paper posters.

On the LGBT agenda the Students' Union plan to:

- Establish LGBT student group on each campus, working with pre-established Neath LGBT+ Group;
- Set up LGBT+ Facebook group containing information on where to go for support.

To raise mental health the Students' Union plan to:

- Develop and distribute mental well-being leaflet for all students
- Lobby College to roll out mandatory mental health awareness

All programmes are represented by students who are elected by their peers. The role of representatives is supported by Student Services and annual training events are provided. Whilst training is provided jointly to FE reps, officers and student governors, the training is also relevant to the HE student representatives. The student representatives are invited to the Senedd meetings where NPTC wide issues are addressed. All students are invited to the annual student conference. Past themes have included mental health and resilience. NPTC has a student involvement strategy which is led by the Assistant Principal: Students. The appointment of a Senior Officer for Student Involvement and Diversity will enhance the workings of the Student Involvement Working Group. This dedicated post provides the focus required to fully implement the Student Involvement Strategy and to oversee the transition of involvement activities from the current staff lead to student lead. This new role aims to put student engagement and participation at the centre of the NPTC's strategic planning and delivery framework and to build a strong and resilient student community where the principles of equality, diversity and respect inform all student involvement activities.

VocalEyes123 was introduced in September 2015 and is the main platform for student engagement. VocalEyes allows students to raise issues that matter to them. Any student can post ideas within one of topic areas selected for each academic year. The topics for this year are environment, LGBT and mental health. These actions taken forward by NPTC are shared within VocalEyes.

The NPTC's Student Involvement Strategy focuses on student involvement under four strands:-

- Individual Applicants and Students
- Student Representatives
- Bursary, Scholarship and Ambassador Programmes
- Students' Union

NPTC follow the principles in the Wise Wales statement on partnership for higher education, which identifies good practice in student engagement and guide to providing information to prospective undergraduate students, which advises institutions on providing easily accessible information for prospective students to use when making decisions about higher education study.

All provision at NPTC is designed to be accessible to all and to be flexible to suit the learners' needs. The modes of delivery vary and there are opportunities for those who need to fit their study in and around their working or caring responsibilities. Through the Student Involvement Strategy NPTC is making the transition to students becoming active participants reflecting the core principle of the Wise Wales Statement on Partnership for Higher Education. NPTC is committed to overcoming the barriers outlined in the "Breaking Down the Barriers to Student Opportunities and Youth Social Action report". Through a variety of mechanisms, including the offering of bursaries and an H.E. Hardship Fund, timetabling to fit around family and parenting commitments, these are also designed to accommodate those who need to work and those that wish to volunteer alongside their studies. Access and referral to advice and support is made as easy as possible, including finance, careers, counselling, mental health, enterprise and study skill support. Traditionally HE in FE enjoy smaller group sizes and informal as well as formal contact with lecturers and a personal tutor provides individual pastoral care and support.

The student body are engaged in regular communication with their Higher Education Coordinators who meet termly to share student views with the other Higher Education Coordinators and relevant staff. There is an Annual Student Conference and this helped to shape the fee and action plan with additional activities for supporting students from under-representatives groups being suggested by the student representatives. Final engagement of the student body with the fee and access plan is undertaken when the fee and access plan is discussed at the Governing Board.

Strategic Review

NPTC's 2016-2021 Higher Education Strategy is aligned and committed to achieving the values, visions and objectives in NPTC's strategic Plan. The 2020/21 fee and

access plan will support all of the objectives of the Higher Education Strategy and in particular will further enhance the successful outreach and school liaison work to continue to widen participation in higher education and build aspiration and ambition amongst potential students. A review of achievements against NPTC Strategic Plan and the objectives of the 2017/18 fee and access plan targets will be presented in later sections.

NPTC has a good track record of attracting individuals from under-represented groups across its portfolio of provision. Many of our students are mature learners returning to study. NPTC's approach to supporting equality of opportunity and the promotion of HE is aligned with its mission. NPTC's mission statement is "Inspiring Learning, Enriching Lives and Delivering Success".

The following section explains the ways in which the fee and access plan contributes to delivering institutional strategic planning priorities, including but not limited to the Strategic Equality Plan. The fee and access plan will contribute to delivering strategic priorities by increasing the number of students from under-represented groups, providing a culture and environment that promotes excellence and achievement, providing opportunities for the student voice and ensuring graduates are prepared for employment. Specifically the following strategic objectives (the numbering relates to NPTC's Strategic priorities) are closely aligned with the fee and access plan, namely to;

1.1 Attract students from all sectors of the community and promote high aspirations and excellence, insisting on the achievement of the highest possible standards of performance from staff and students;

3.1 Develop a culture whereby all teachers aspire and have confidence to deliver excellent lessons and all students enjoy the best possible learning experience;

3.2 Utilise sector leading teaching, learning and assessment strategies that support students in taking responsibility for their own learning and enhance their independent learning skills;

3.3 Promote excellent student engagement by providing effective communication channels for 'the learner voice' and appropriate representation of students on decision making groups and committees at all levels within the organisation;

3.4 Use ILT to enrich and to support teaching and learning and increase the use of blended and e-learning to improve access and flexibility of provision for students;

5.1 Provide a curriculum that allows positive progression and appropriate opportunities for students to move on to H.E., employment or further learning;

8.1 Improve employer engagement and establish effective partnership, networking and collaborative arrangements that provide a good understanding of their current and future training needs;

8.2 Work in partnership with employers to develop workforce skills by providing education and training that will help individuals improve their skills and support improvements in business profitability;

8.4 Ensure provision is flexible to meet employer needs including programme content, mode of delivery, timing and location;

9.1 Target non-traditional and under-represented students in order to increase participation, reduce the number of people classified as NEET and increase the skills and knowledge of those already in employment;

9.2 Work in partnership with other local and national providers of adult and community based learning to provide and encourage access to formal and informal learning opportunities which engage learners, particularly those from disadvantaged communities;

9.4 Engage positively with the regional agenda for the provision of higher education, working with H.E. and F.E. partners to increase participation rates in H.E. in NPT and Powys;

9.5 Identify students most at risk of failure and provide effective tracking and support for all students to progress through the system successfully;

10.1 Increase incrementally the amount of Welsh-medium/bilingual learning in support of the Welsh Government Welsh-medium education strategy;

10.3 Develop the capacity and skills of academic staff to deliver planned increases in Welsh-medium and bilingual curriculum.

At NPTC we aim to ensure we minimise disadvantage, try to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people, and encourage people to participate in public life where they are under-represented. Fostering good relations requires us to tackle prejudice and promote understanding between all people. Staff are aware of the role equality and diversity plays through the recruitment and selection process, during their induction, through an online training module and role specific training.

Students address equality and diversity throughout the induction process and during the tutorial programme to ensure understanding. Tutorial content and delivery is reviewed annually and NPTC gathers student feedback on the relevance and effectiveness of the tutorials. We seek to maximise all opportunities to mainstream diversity within existing NPTC events and also to attempt innovative ideas wherever possible. We believe that equality of opportunity is at the heart of all we do and is central to achieving our mission and promoting success for all our students. NPTC is an inclusive organisation and believes it is essential that all members of the community feel valued and able to fulfil their potential. An important element of this vision is that equality and diversity are not separate or additional concerns but central to our life and work. The NPTC Strategic Equality Plan set out the following objectives:

- Embed the principles of Equality & Diversity across key decision making and policy within NPTC;
- Expand the quantity and quality of data pertaining to protected characteristics on staff and students so that we can measure the impact of SEP;
- Improve enrolment, retention & attainment for all and in particular for students from any under-represented protected characteristic group;
- Improve enrolment, retention & attainment for all and in particular for students from any under-represented protected characteristic group;
- Ensure access to learning opportunities and employment by improving facilities and services for all, regardless of their protected characteristics;
- Consolidate equality & diversity related awareness raising and training for all the NPTC.
- Continue to foster effective working relationships with community groups, partners and public bodies.

NPTC is an active member of the South West Wales and the Mid/North Wales Reaching Wider Partnerships. These partnerships aim to increase participation in HE from under-represented groups and communities in Wales where participation is low, by creating a wide range of study opportunities and learning pathways to H.E. NPTC supports the aims of the both the South and Mid/North Reaching Wider partnerships which is to work in partnership;

- To widen access to level 4 Higher Education with various methods/ delivery, across areas of deprivation in North and Mid Wales with a variety of providers
- To reduce barriers to HE entry and increase educational aspirations of individuals that will transfer into their success at Level 4 Higher Education.

NPTC is highly committed to widening access and improving equality of opportunity for all and the Widening Access Coordinator has responsibility for this area. This role is critical to the achievement of the 2020/21 Fee and access plan targets and will aim to:

- Develop and deliver a widening access programme which aims to facilitate the entrance of people from less represented backgrounds into FE and HE;
- Work closely with primary and secondary schools and partner universities across the geography of NPTC.
- Meet the relevant widening access and other identified targets in NPTC's annual HEFCW fee and access plan and those set for further education;
- Work in association with the North and Mid Wales Reaching Widening Partnership and the South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership to develop and deliver new and existing activities.

Groups identified as under-represented in H.E.

To achieve the aim of widening access across Wales, NPTC will work with the under-represented groups in their regions to ensure equality of opportunity, inclusion, progression and success for individuals from all age ranges and backgrounds, from

socially and economically challenged backgrounds, specifically those from the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Mass Deprivation.

The groups identified as under-represented in HE include institutional Reaching Wider priority groups including WIMD40 young people aged 16+ and HEFCW National Measure priority groups (people of all ages domiciled in the Welsh Index of Multiple Index bottom two quintiles participation (people of all ages from low participation neighbourhoods) and people with protected characteristics.

Working with the Reaching Wider Partnerships NPTC plan to support the following individuals and groups who live in the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh index of multiple deprivation (WIMD) which is the lowest 40% of WIMD population. NPTC identified the groups under-represented in HE following discussion with the Reaching Wider Partnerships and with those involved with student recruitment and admissions within the Group. A social mobility workshop provided the underpinning knowledge and understanding to staff at NPTC and was used to identify the under-represented groups. The groups were identified as:

- Young people from the WIMD lower quartiles who are in their final years of primary school through to Key stage 4 (age 16)
- Adults over the age of 21 who do not have a level 4 qualification
- Care experienced individuals, Looked after children and care leavers of all age groups
- Carers of all age groups.
- Female students who were not in full-time study.

The other target groups that the fee and access plan will support are mature aged learners, female students and students in receipt of bursaries and welfare support.

The objectives in the Higher Education Strategy align with the requirements of the fee and access plan: to promote equality of opportunity to support under-represented groups in higher education and to promote higher education. The over-arching aim of the 2020/21 fee and access plan is to invest income strategically into activities and interventions to meet the strategic objectives and encourage participation of groups that are under-represented in Higher Education.

NPTC has a good track record of attracting and supporting individuals from under-represented groups across its portfolio of provision. Many of our students are mature learners returning to study. The Group's approach to supporting equality of opportunity and the promotion of HE is aligned with its mission. NPTC mission statement is "Inspiring Learning, Enriching Lives and Delivering Success". NPTC continues to engage and provide widening access activities meeting the strategic aims and objectives of the South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership and the North and Mid Wales Reaching Wider Partnership. Activities have a greater focus on promoting and improving access to Higher Education to women and students over 21 years of age.

The Group provides a clear student financial support package that is easy to understand and which is particularly directed to support under-represented groups. This includes bursary awards, Higher Education Hardship Funding and support for disabled students. As part of its widening access and promotion of higher education

the Group offers a confident learners' module at Level 4 module to potential students in order to promote aspiration in under-represented groups. The Widening Access Officer coordinates activities that attract under-represented groups and works with the Reaching Wider Partnerships to ensure that activities are provided for all under-represented groups.

With the fall in the number of 18 years olds NPTC have decided that it will focus on attracting more mature age candidates. A return to learning campaign has been set up with a focus on health care as older learners are often keen to undertake this area of study.

Objectives, Activities and Targets

The institutional objectives and activities in the 2020/21 fee and access plan take into account the Reaching Wider Partnership objectives. The Group has considered the HEFCW National Measures in the fee and access plan in the sections related to objectives, under-represented groups in HE and in designing activities and setting targets.

NPTC Group of Colleges is member of the South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership which aims to widen access to level 4 Higher Education and to reduce barriers to entry and raise educational aspirations and success at level 4 Higher Education for priority groups. The Partnership has identified that it will prioritise work with young people in the final years of primary school to Key stage 4, Adults over 21 years of age without level 4 qualifications in the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) and looked after children, care leavers and carers in all age groups. In discussion with the South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership Manager it was agreed that NPTC Group would prioritise working with Adults over 21 as the partnership has a key focus on young people. Therefore the HE Reaching Wider Institutional Plan is aimed at supporting adults over 21 years of age without level 4 qualifications and within the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation.

The 2020/21 fee and access plan objectives have been aligned with the key performance indicators in NPTC's Higher Education 2016-2021 Strategy. The objectives are shown under equality of opportunity and promotion of higher education. The 2020/21 fee and action plan objectives to improve equality of opportunity are to:

- EO1 Attract more students from under-represented populations into HE
- EO2 Promote more awareness raising activities to highlight the value of HE for under-represented groups
- EO3 Provide support to promote progression, retention and completion in students from under-represented groups

The 2020/21 fee and action plan objectives to promote higher education are to:

- PHE1 Develop a Students' Union and infrastructure to support student activities for all types of students.

- PHE2 Improve the student experience
- PHE3 Improve accessibility to, and involvement in the Welsh Language and develop activities that support the use of Welsh Language.
- PHE4 Increase the employability of our graduates
- PHE5 Promote high quality academic and financial support including information and guidance
- PHE6 Raise awareness of the value of higher education to increase the number of students applying to higher education.

The setting of targets and delivery of activities, events and interventions to support the achievement of the 2020/21 fee and access plan is a result of the evaluation of the success of previous fee plan targets. An overview of the progress against areas identified in the 2017/18 Fee Plan is provided below.

Increase the number and proportion of Welsh domiciled students from all ages studying HE courses who are domiciled in the bottom two quintiles of the WIMD.

NPTC continues to engage and provide widening access activities and meeting the strategic aims and objectives of the South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership and the North and Mid Wales Reaching Wider Partnership. In its strategic plan NPTC recognised the need to work closely with a variety of providers and communities to ensure progression to H.E. opportunities are responsive to employer and local needs and that it seeks out collaborative opportunities to provide and promote education as a life-choice. NPTC undertook this through:

- Widening access activities and events in primary schools, secondary schools, and with under-represented groups as identified in this fee and access plan'
- Operation of fair and equitable admission processes, recognising individual applicant experience and qualifications in line with the Equality Act.
- Operation of DBS and risk assessment procedures on criminal conviction disclosures and for all programmes involving placements with children and vulnerable adults.

Increase the number of full-time students supported through bursary and hardship funds and to increase participation of female full-time students

NPTC continues to promote a clear student financial support package that is easy to understand and which is particularly directed to support under-represented groups. This includes bursary awards, Higher Education Hardship Fund and support for disabled students. As part of its widening access and promotion of Higher education NPTC offered a range of taster HE sessions and whilst the looking forward to HE module was not offered an alternative module (the confident learner) was introduced in 2017/18. This module was well-received by both staff and students and it will be offered to more students in 2018/19. Mature students who were returning to learning were highly supportive of their learning experience on this module.

NPTC is committed to supporting students through the provision of a range of services (including counselling, financial advice, careers advice, referrals etc.) to help students transition into, fully participate throughout and progress strongly from higher education. As part of its widening access and promotion of higher education NPTC offers a range of taster HE sessions to promote aspiration in under-represented groups as well as level 3 students and cohorts in the local community. These sessions aimed to boost confidence, build aspiration and promote progression to higher education. Progress in this area has been highly successful and will continue to be an area of focus in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 fee and access plan.

To improve the retention of full-time undergraduate students one year following year of entry for UK domiciled students and students domiciled in the bottom two quintiles of WIMD

Induction programmes were delivered to all new students, incorporating a range of study skill workshops and activities to introduce NPTC facilities, resources and staff and support transition into higher education. All students were allocated a personal tutor and the higher education tutorial programme provides regular dialogue, academic support, pastoral care and preparation for progression. A range of monitoring and mechanisms support student retention and promote student attainment. The following support is also in place to promote retention, completion and progression; Bursary awards, Student Transition and Retention Officers, monitoring of attendance, retention and withdrawal information and study skill support.

It is anticipated that the recent change in the availability of grants for students from low income backgrounds will provide greater opportunity for students to consider higher education. Therefore this will continue to be a priority area for NPTC in future fee and access plans.

To Improve National Student Survey scores for the quality of teaching and learning and to improve the three year rolling average score in the overall satisfaction in the National Student Survey

NPTC continues to invest in a range of learning technologies, IT facilities and in its learning environments through a continued programme of estates maintenance. NPTC continues to deliver high quality learning and teaching through further strengthening of CPD for staff, the peer observation system of teaching and learning, monitoring and response to student satisfaction levels and improving IT facility developments including infrastructure and hardware including tablets and laptops. Through student feedback systems (module evaluations, focus groups and Vocal Eyes) NPTC received a range of information to consider to support improvements in provision and the student experience.

During the 2017/18 academic year several staff were supported to complete postgraduate qualifications to support them with their academic delivery. Staff were also involved in peer observation and other enhancement activities and an internal HE conference was organised.

To increase the proportion of leavers obtaining undergraduate qualifications that were employed, studying of both 6 months after leaving compared to the equivalent figure in the UK.

NPTC plan to strengthen employability potential of students through a variety of mechanisms outlined including bilingual module development and embedding employability skills and experience through tutorial and curriculum delivery.

The target of each undergraduate programme offering a bilingual module for 2017/18 was over ambitious and not achievable. There has been limited progress against these targets as only four students considered themselves fluent in Welsh and no student wanted to be communicated or taught through the medium of Welsh. However, NPTC are able to deliver a Unit 3: Professional Practice on the new RQF qualification in HND Computing and this unit has been developed in both English and Welsh; 50-75% of the content is already available in both languages. Recent discussions with the CCC have been very positive and NPTC and the CCC are working together to offer some modules to improve the employability of graduates and Welsh in the workplace. NPTC and CCC are considering developing provision to support graduate employment in Wales and we are currently developing a plan for supporting Public Services and Health provision that could be made available to students. Through greater engagement with the CCC it is anticipated that more students will have the opportunity to develop their employability skills. As previously mentioned NPTC are currently working closely with the CCC to further develop Welsh medium provision.

Raise awareness of the value of higher education to increase the number of students applying to higher education.

NPTC worked with schools, the local community and students at lower levels of study to promote the value of higher education. This was achieved through a variety of mechanisms including marketing activities, widening access activities, open events, taster sessions, information evenings, social media and website activity. The NPTC annual graduation ceremony provided an opportunity to show case those students from under-represented groups who have achieved in higher education and these were publicised via a range of media platforms to raise the awareness of the value of higher education.

Fee and Access Plan Investment

This section provides more information on how the plan contributes to Welsh Government and HEFCW widening access and other priorities, including HEFCW national measures. The plan addresses how the achievement of these objectives should improve all of the HEFCW national measures.

NPTC's Reaching Wider Institutional Programme focuses on an "Opportunities to study Higher Education locally" open evening that would provide opportunities to support progression to H.E. This event would serve as a "One Stop Shop" to tackle barriers to entry, progression and achievement in H.E. The event will help individuals to plot out a career path, gain the study skills/confidence to progress, gain

information on the local job market and access information on HE courses. Partner organisations will serve to support adults to provide information on how they could make returning to learning viable. This event would advertise the support that people in HE can access (e.g. NPTC's Student Support, Student Finance Wales, NPTC's Bursary information and NPTC's HE Confident Learner Study Skills Programme) so that they could feel confident in their ability to enter higher education. Joint working with partner organisations such as the Youth Service, Family Partnership Teams and Social Services would mean that there would be targeted outreach provision providing opportunities for hard to reach groups to be supported. This event will provide an opportunity to work in partnership with hard to reach groups in the local community and aligns with fee and access plan commitments to support equality of opportunity and enhance the regional Partnership's strategy. The positive news regarding the increased financial support available to part-time students will form a critical part of this event.

These RW-related activities will be sustained in the longer-term as the target group would access partner support organisations involved in progression to further and higher education. The costs for this activity will amount to £1,238 per annum, comprising the costs for staffing the event, planning the event, transport, refreshments and administration.

The percentage forecast for equality is 66.4% of the proposed £109,238 and expenditure for the equality of opportunities is presented in Table B of Annex B.

The percentage forecast for expenditure on promotion of HE is 33.6% of the proposed £109,238 is presented in Table B of Annex B.

Activities to deliver the equality of opportunities (EO) and promotion of higher education (PHE) objectives.

This section provides more information on how the plan contributes to Welsh Government and HEFCW widening access and other priorities, including HEFCW national measures. The plan specifically addresses how the achievement of these objectives should improve all of the HEFCW national measures.

The activities and services which will particularly support the under-represented students include bursary awards, a hardship fund, a getting ready for HE study module titled the confident learner, Welsh Medium support and additional study skills support. The following section identifies how the NPTC will support these students using a range of activities and services to achieve these objectives. The activities will be linked to the five equality of opportunities objectives (**EO1 to EO3**) and the six promotion of higher education objectives (**PHE1 to PHE6**).

The Group will work closely with a variety of providers and communities to ensure progression to HE curriculum is responsive to employer and local needs and that it seeks out collaborative opportunities to provide and promote education as a life-choice. The Group will provide widening access activities and events in primary schools, secondary schools, in areas with under-represented groups (**EO1**). These events will include:

- Taster sessions both on and off campus
- Outreach activity in the local community.

NPTC will make available and promote widely a clear student financial support package that is easy to understand, apply and which is particularly directed to support under-represented groups. The Group will address objective **PHE5** via:

- bursary awards,
- the H.E. Hardship Fund and
- Support for disabled students.

As part of its widening access and promotion of higher education NPTC will offer a range of taster HE sessions and a level 4 confident learners' module to promote aspiration in under-represented groups as well as level 3 students and cohorts in the local community (**EO2, PHE6**). With support from the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (CCC) NPTC plan to further develop the employability skills of students in preparing them to work in Wales. There will be a specific focus on Welsh in the workplace. NPTC is not in a position to offer Welsh Medium programmes but will work with the CCC to develop a strategy to provide opportunities for students to enhance their employment potential by developing their language skills (**PHE3**).

NPTC is committed to supporting students through the provision of a range of services (including counselling, financial advice, careers advice, referrals etc.) to help students transition into, fully participate throughout and progress strongly from higher education. Sustainable H.E. is promoted through the creation of cohorts and addressing under-representation at lower levels of qualifications, with clear pathways through to study at a higher level, for example Women in Construction (**EO1**).

NPTC will provide support to students entering from under-represented groups needing additional support in academic, numeracy and communication skills diagnosed at application through a range of mechanisms, including literacy programmes, study skill summer schools and series of online tools and resources. This work is supported by Study Skill Support, Student and Transition Retention Officers (**EO3**).

Through a variety of widening access mechanisms NPTC will deliver activities and events to raise aspiration in school students and communities to make higher education a real life choice. Through its alumni mentoring scheme to higher education students and potential entrants to higher education NPTC will work to attract those currently under-represented into higher education. These will include activities to support (**EO1, EO2**) via: School based activities to highlight pathways to and value of HE including:

- Community taster activities and events.
- Integration with local schools and communities.
- Bringing individuals in to the HE environment for taster settings.
- Increasing the visibility of opportunities for HE learning.

Induction programmes will be delivered to all new students, incorporating a range of study skill workshops and activities to introduce facilities, resources and staff and support transition into higher education. All students will be allocated a personal tutor and the higher education tutorial programme provides regular dialogue, academic

support, pastoral care and preparation for progression. A range of monitoring and mechanisms support students to protect and boost attendance levels, protecting retention and outcome levels. Robust data reporting enables interventions, referrals and enhancement project development to support strong retention of all students. The following support will also be in place to promote retention, completion and progression (**PHE2, EO3**):

- Progression bursary awards
- Student Transition and Retention Officers
- Monitoring of attendance, retention and withdrawal information
- Study skill support.

NPTC will provide a variety of activities to boost student employability skills, to give real life work and work-related experiences. Student representative programmes and training, involvement in committee structures, student ambassador programmes, enrichment type activities to develop softer skills and traits all adds value to programmes to boost employability skills addressing objectives **PHE4** by providing:

- Student Ambassador awards
- Student union activities
- Activities aligned to the Student Involvement Strategy
- Employment fairs
- 'More than an education' offer to students.
- 'Degrees on your Doorstep'.

Information provided about higher education study includes targeted information for students under-represented in higher education. This ranges from the support available, financial schemes, study skill support, bilingual and Welsh Medium provision. Guidance and information will be available to all and the Group will support objectives **PHE6 and EO1** via:

- Open day activities and advice
- Taster events
- Level 3 progression events
- Information to prospective students
- Information to enrolled students.

NPTC will continue to invest in student services and specific HE study skill support to ensure students have access to advice, support and help. These services will be communicated through NPTC website, printed information, programme handbooks, induction, and tutorial activities and through promotional events on the campuses supporting objectives **PHE1 and PHE5** by providing:

- Student Services (including welfare support, financial support and advice, counselling, referrals)
- Study Skill support
- Higher education tutorial system
- Funding for Student Union activities
- Supporting student feedback mechanisms and reporting.

Staff are aware of the need to embed employability skills in programme and make explicit links between content and employability in addition to the 'add on' provision

available to support progression to employment or further study. NPTC supports the **PHE4** objective through a number of mechanisms including:

- Career advisor access
- Higher education tutorial system
- Employability Hub.

NPTC has close links with a range of employers. The Business Development Unit NPTC aims to more effectively engage with employers to enhance student opportunities and employability skills addressing objective **PHE4** by providing:

- Employer engagement activities (needs analysis, curriculum enhancement, lectures, visits)
- Work placement and volunteering opportunities for students
- Open evenings with local and national employers present to create aspiration.

NPTC will continue to invest in a range of learning technologies, IT facilities and in its learning environments through a continued programme of estates maintenance.

NPTC will continue to address objective **PHE2** by strengthening the:

- Peer observation system of teaching and learning
- Monitoring and responding to student feedback.

Through strengthening of the student involvement systems, student feedback, focus groups and Vocal Eyes activity NPTC will have a range of information to consider and support improvements in provision and the student experience. NPTC will also use internal surveys, e.g. the enrolment and induction survey to review provision and inform continuous improvement.

NPTC will continue to participate and invest in activities that are reputation enhancing. This in turn will promote higher education nationally and internationally addressing objective **PHE6** via:

- Activities connected with the Assistant Principal, Worldwide Operations
- Promotion of HE through the Assistant Principal, Worldwide Operations
- Engaging in reputational activities (e.g. TEF).
- Monitoring and compliance activities linked to UK Visa and Immigration.

Sustainable higher education will be promoted through strong quality assurance mechanisms and continued investment to ensure programmes remain industry focused and fit for purpose in supporting student transition into employment.

Objectives **PHE4** and **PHE6** will be addressed by:

- Investment in resources and facilities to enhance curriculum delivery
- Employer engagement to ensure fit for purpose curriculum
- Strong and robust quality assurance mechanisms
- Promotion of pathways from FE to HE, from levels 3/4 to level 5/6
- Engaging in reputation building activities.

NPTC will continue to work with schools, the local community and students at lower levels of study to promote the value of higher education. This is achieved through a variety of mechanisms including marketing activities, widening access activities, open events, taster sessions, information evenings, social media and website activity. NPTC ensure high quality information and guidance. NPTC's annual

celebratory graduation event promotes those who succeed at higher education and through student case studies, the value of higher education is promoted generally and in those under-represented in higher education. The use of a variety of media helps maximise awareness of the value of higher education (**EO2 and PHE6**).

Monitoring and Evaluating Fee and Access Plan

The Governing Body will monitor compliance with the general requirements of the fee and access plan and compliance with the fee levels set out in the fee and access plan through reports via the Higher Education Quality and Enhancement Management Group (HEQEMG) have the responsibility to implement and oversee delivery of activities, events and interventions to meet the Fee and Access Plan targets. This group will ensure actions are identified in the Higher Education Quality Development Plan and/or commission enhancement projects to ensure the fee and access plan targets can be met. The HEQEMG monitors the completion of the Higher Education Quality Development Plan actions and through their termly meeting as well as fee and access plan targets allocated elsewhere.

Interim reporting on the progress against the fee and access plan targets is to the Standards and Performance Management Group. This and the HEQEMG meeting are overseen by the Vice Principal, Academic Services. The Standards and Performance Management Group reports to the Senior Management Team and receives minutes of the management group meetings and they and Governors receive interim reporting on the progress and performance against the fee and access plan targets in year and receive the annual monitoring statement in the following October reviewing performance against the fee and access plan targets for approval before submission to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.

All information is compliant with CMA guidelines for Higher Education. The HEQEMG ensures that there is a commitment to CMA guidelines.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of fee and access plans

An evaluation framework is evolving and as stated previously the evaluation framework is led by the Assistant Principal: Higher Education and the Vice Principal: Academic Services who report to and inform the HEQEMG and the Board of Governors. This framework is under development and the Assistant Principal: Higher Education has been in discussion with HEFCW about assistance and support in developing an evaluation framework.

Updated/Final 2020/21 fee and access plan submission (where applicable)	
Date of Governing Body approval:	190719
Governing Body authorised signature:	X 
Date:	190719

The plan was approved by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales on
03 September 2019