



NPTC Group of Colleges Fee and Access Plan



Section 1 - Fee levels

Section 1.1 – Fee levels or the determination of a fee level at each location

Fee level	Location of course
Level IV £7500 Level V £7500	All full-time Higher Education provision are either at HNC or HND level on campus and will be charged at £7500 pa which is within the maximum fee limits.

Section 1.2 - Aggregate fee levels

The proposed fees for 2021/22 are £7500 and are the same as for 2020/21. The tuition fee on entry are the same as for continuing students and will not be increased for the duration of the course. The aggregate fees will be £7,500 for and HNC and £15,000 for an HND. The College strives to minimise additional costs but details of any additional costs are published in the prospectus and individual programme profiles on the website. The College website contains detailed information on Higher Education Fees and Financial Support alongside the Fee Policy, and its terms and conditions, to enable students to be clear on their responsibilities and the total cost of their programme. This complies with the Competition and Markets Authority regulations for Higher Education providers. The College Admissions team communicate fees and funding information directly to applicants at the offer stage. The College hosts a number of

Higher Education information events including student finance talks, and provides clear information for parents and students. Fee levels, bursaries and the hardship fund are widely advertised through open events and through publications and online information.

Section 2 - Student Partnership

The College has an active Students' Union (SU), which covers all nine campuses. There are plans to further develop the newly formed SU Management team which was created in 2019/20 and currently consists of five elected student officers, three of whom are Higher Education students; the President, the Higher Education Officer, and the Afan College Representative. The SU President is also a Student Governor on the College Board, and receives accredited Board Member training from the Children's Rights Unit. HE representation on the SU is formally enshrined in the SU constitution, which states that a dedicated Higher Education Officer must be elected each year. As of November 2020, a new SU Executive Committee have been elected (33% of the committee are HE students). As part of the SU elections process, Higher Education students are targeted and encouraged to apply for officer roles. The SU works closely with the college's pool of student representatives to raise awareness of the SU and its work. In 2019/20 we had a total of 215 student representatives across all campuses, 9% of whom were Higher Education students. This is proportionate to the overall student pool, of which 9.5% are Higher Education students. There are several initiatives planned to increase student engagement and participation in developing their learning opportunities including developing a student ambassador scheme. It is anticipated that the student ambassador scheme will not only require student ambassadors to act as ambassadors for the College at various events but will also require them to canvas student opinion and provide feedback to the College. Furthermore, as the time commitment that is required to be a member of the Students' Union Management team is considerable and there have been challenges in ensuring that the HE representatives on the SU Management team are able to contribute fully to the SU, we are planning on introducing a sabbatical post. This would also be of particular use for the QAA QER as there is a requirement for a student submission and a lead student representative to coordinate the review from a student viewpoint. This sabbatical officer will have more time to allow them to represent students in different activities including the development of the Fee and Access Plan. A quality

enhancement activity is ongoing focusing on the improvement of student feedback response rates and it is anticipated that this process will continue in 2021/22 exploring ways to close the feedback loop and enhancing student engagement.

The SU regularly meet with the APHE to discuss objectives and progress. In 2019 the HE Team/SU had a stalls at all of Fresher's Fairs (Neath, Afan, Brecon, Newtown), where promotional materials and prospectuses were handed out to students, and staff spoke to students to make them aware of the HE opportunities available at the College. Students were also made aware of the bursaries and hardship funds. Formal SU Officers' induction is provided by the APHE, to discuss the Higher Education strategy, Student Charter, student bursaries and to identify the under-represented groups that need support through the fee and access plan

The College places students at the centre of their learning experience and values their feedback and contributions. As an FEI providing Higher Education, students are taught in small groups and benefit from the good relationships they develop with staff at College. This allows them the opportunity to regularly provide feedback via informal and formal processes. However, in contrast there are several challenges of being a small provider of Higher Education courses including receiving formal feedback from students. Additionally, the small number of Higher Education students are spread across the five campuses restricting the opportunity for shared activities and regular group activities. To compensate this the SU management team was recently restructured with representatives from each of the campuses now forming part of the Students' Union management team. This management team represents the 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. The Student Charter was reviewed by the Students' Union management team in 2019 and the fee and access plan targets were shared with the SU Management team.

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 Higher Education student representatives. The student representatives are invited to the Senedd meetings where College wide issues are addressed. All students are invited to the annual student conference and past themes have included mental health and resilience. The appointment of a Senior Officer for Student Involvement and Diversity has improved interaction with the student body and this dedicated post provides the focus required to fully implement the student involvement 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 College'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. The Senior Officer for Student Involvement and Diversity is currently working on a process for providing feedback to students on how it has responded to priorities identified by students. Information from the NSS and internal surveys provide useful feedback on student satisfaction. The College 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 the College 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. A variety of mechanisms, including the offering of bursaries and an H.E. Hardship Fund, timetabling to fit around family and parenting commitments, are 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 Higher Education 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. Finally, 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.

Section 3 - Under-represented groups

The under-represented groups the College will support through its fee and access plan to improve equality of opportunity will consist of:

- Students of all ages from the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014.
- Students of all ages studying part-time.

Working with the Reaching Wider Partnerships the College plan to support the following individuals and groups who live in the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh index of multiple deprivation. The College identified the groups under-represented in Higher Education following discussion with the Reaching Wider Partnerships and with those involved with student recruitment and admissions within the College. The groups identified as under-represented:

are within the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation:

- post-16 young people.
- adults without level 4 qualifications, to provide progression to level 4 provision.

and Wales-wide:

- looked after children, care leavers and carers in all age groups.

Whilst students from low participation neighbourhoods are a HEFCW priority under-represented group as NPTC only recruits from Wales we only use under-represented groups from within the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation:

Section 4 - Objectives, underpinning activities and targets as they relate to supporting equality of opportunity and the promotion of HE

Section 4.1 - Equality of Opportunity

No.	Objective	Target(s) for 2021/22	Under-represented groups	Investment
1	Objective 1: Attract more under-represented populations into Higher Education - students who are domiciled in the bottom one/two quintiles of Lower Super Output Areas in the WIMD or who study part-time (EO1)	<p>Target 1: Increase the number of undergraduate all Welsh domiciled students of all ages studying higher education courses at the college who are domiciled in the bottom two quintiles of Lower Super Output Areas in WIMD.</p> <p>Target 2: Increase the number of undergraduate Welsh domiciled students of all ages studying higher education courses at the college who are domiciled in the bottom quintile of WIMD</p> <p>Target 3 : Increase the number of students attending higher education courses at the College that are part-time</p>	<p>Students of all ages from the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014. Additional groups include the RW group of post-16 young people and adults without level 4 qualifications within the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation.</p> <p>Students of all ages from the bottom quintile of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014. Additional groups include RW groups of post-16 young people and adults without level 4 qualifications within the bottom two quintiles of the</p>	27.5%

			<p>Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation.</p> <p>Students of all ages studying part-time. Additional groups include the RW groups of care experienced applicants and carers in all age groups across Wales.</p>	
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2	Objective 2: Maintain retention and completion particularly for students domiciled in the bottom two quintiles of WIMD (EO2)	Target 4: Increase the number of full-time undergraduate students at the College present in higher education one year following year of entry for students domiciled in the bottom two quintiles of WIMD.	Students of all ages from the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 and the RW group of post-16 young people and adults without level 4 qualifications within the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation.	27.5%
Section 4.1.1 Activities and services to deliver each equality of opportunity objective in 2021/22				
Objective 1: Attract more under-represented populations into Higher	In 2021/22 the College will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with primary and secondary schools to provide widening access activities and events for under-represented groups. 			

<p>Education - students who are domiciled in the bottom one/two quintiles of Lower Super Output Areas in the WIMD or who study part-time (EO1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer taster sessions to encourage under-represented groups to enrol on part-time programmes and credit bearing modules to support progression to Higher Education programmes (e.g. the confident learner, short taster courses at outreach centres). • Invite the local community to open evening, College events, promote activities through the Colleges civic and community engagement. • Raise awareness of the opportunities for remote learning and flexible delivery modes. • Raise awareness of Higher Education to potential students through a number of mechanisms including promoting alumni achievements, marketing activities, social media and its website. Raise awareness the employers and employees of the opportunities to study part-time and the funding opportunities (e.g. PLAs). • Ensure that the Schools' Liaison Officer and Higher Education staff undertake regular visits to local Schools to reinforce the opportunities for all individuals from the bottom two quintiles of WIMD to engage in Higher Education. • Provide information explaining the financial support packages available to under-represented groups. • Provide regular opportunities for the local community to engage with the Higher Education staff in a formal or informal setting via organised open evenings or informal drop in sessions. • Work with the Reaching Wider Partnerships to provide taster session in local WIMD areas. • Work with the regional Reaching Wider partnerships to deliver courses in the community/on campus to raise aspirations of underrepresented groups. • Offer bursaries and use hardship funds to attract applications and retain students from underrepresented in Higher Education.
<p>Objective 2: Maintain retention and completion particularly from students who are domiciled in the bottom two quintiles of Lower Super Output Areas in the WIMD (EO2)</p>	<p>In 2021/22 the College will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities and support for under-represented groups to progress from level 4 programmes to level 5 programmes and from level 5 programmes to level 6 programmes. • Provide bursaries for under-represented groups from level 4 programmes to level 5 programmes and from level 5 programmes to level 6 programmes. • Enhance the induction process, incorporating more study skills workshops and activities to aid retention. • Develop a student support process that provides students across all campuses with access to face to face or online support materials.

- Offer bursaries and use hardship funds to attract applications and retain students from underrepresented in Higher Education. Provide students with a high-quality personal tutorial support to facilitate a personalised approach to their learning.
- provide a comprehensive welfare information and support service to meet the needs these students.
- provide the Students' Union with funding to support its clubs/societies, events and social activities facilitating retention and successful completion particular amongst students from underrepresented groups.
- Develop an online student community that facilitates communication between staff and students.
- Develop a one-stop-shop student hub where students can access student support.

Section 4.2 - Promotion of higher education

No.	Objective	Target(s) for 2021/22	Investment
1.	Objective 1: Increase the number of students studying through the medium of Welsh via greater accessibility to, and involvement in the Welsh Language and activities that support the use of Welsh Language (PHE1)	Target 5: Increase the number of students studying higher education courses at the College undertaking at least 5 credits of their course through the medium of Welsh.	6%
2.	Objective 2: Improve the quality of the student teaching and learning experience (PHE2)	Target 6: Maintain the three year rolling average score for the National Student Survey 'overall satisfaction' above the equivalent figure for the UK	39%

Section 4.2.1 Activities and services to deliver each promotion of higher education objective in 2021/22

<p>Objective 1: Improve accessibility to, and involvement in the Welsh Language and develop activities that support the use of Welsh Language (PHE1)</p>	<p>In 2021/22 the College will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity Welsh speaking students at the application stage and identify if they would like to study or be supported through the medium of Welsh. • Ensure that all staff teaching higher education complete an introductory workplace Welsh course and support any staff who are willing to engage in further Welsh language courses. • Provide support for students to engage in tutorial support through the medium of Welsh and where appropriate translate teaching materials. • Work with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to develop materials and opportunities for students to engage in learning through the medium of Welsh • Provide opportunities for students to improve their Welsh Language that will enhance their employment potential.
<p>Objective 2: Improve the quality of the student teaching and learning experience (PHE2)</p>	<p>In 2021/22 the College will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide workshops to assist staff in gaining Fellowship of Advance HE. • Work with professional bodies and local industries to promote learning opportunities. • Support the new Strategic Plan by providing technology enriched facilities to support the student learning experience. • Invest in developing a Higher Education infrastructure that will allow the realisation of the HE strategic Plan. • Invest in enhancing the accessibility of resources and online materials to facilitate online and remote learning • Provide an HE conference for staff to share good practice and enhance their knowledge and understanding of HE in FE. • Continue to support HE staff in CPD activities and upgrading their academic qualifications where appropriate. • Provide extensive staff development activities to ensure staff have the technology and pedagogic skills to provide high quality face to face, online and blended learning experiences for their students.

Authorisation of the fee and access plan application to HEFCW 2021/22 (required for publication)

In authorising fee and access plan applications, the governing body:

- i. has seen and considered appropriate evidence to support the declarations being made in this application.
- ii. confirms that there has been appropriate consultation with its students, both those studying at the institution and at other providers where education is delivered on its behalf.
- iii. confirms that the information provided in this fee and access plan application is accurate and current, at the time of writing, and is based on verifiable data.

confirms that: [delete one or more statements, as appropriate]

- a. it is acceptable for HEFCW to use financial, quality and/or other information/data that it holds about a currently regulated institution, regardless of whether the information/data was originally provided for purposes of regulation under the 2015 Act;
- b. ~~it is not acceptable for HEFCW to use financial, quality and/or other information/data that it holds about a currently regulated institution for purposes of regulation under the 2015 Act; and~~
- c. ~~it is submitting new, up-to-date, more recent information/data to inform HEFCW's assessment.~~
- v. understands that HEFCW reserves the right to undertake a visit to the institution to better understand eligibility related to the organisation and management of financial affairs, the data submitted on fee and access plans and/or the quality of education provided on, or on behalf of, the institution.

- vi. understands that it must provide HEFCW and/or HEFCW's agent, with information, assistance and access to its facilities and the facilities of other bodies providing higher education on its behalf.
- vii. understands that HEFCW may carry out, or arrange for an agent to carry out, a review relating to the quality of education provided by, or on behalf of the institution, and its governing body must take into account any advice given to it by HEFCW or the body appointed by HEFCW for this purpose.
- viii. confirms that all education provided by, or on its behalf, regardless of the level or location of the provision has been taken into account in this fee and access plan application.
- ix. confirms that the institution is at a low risk of failure on financial grounds over the medium- to long- term.
- x. confirms that the accounts are audited each year by a registered auditor and that the registered auditor is not the same firm and/or individual that prepared the accounts.
- xi. confirms that the institution complies with Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidelines for higher education.
- xii. understands that any financial commitments to students made in the fee and access plan, as approved by HEFCW, must be honoured.
- xiii. confirms that the institution will ensure that a copy of the fee and access plan can be made accessible to its students in any format.
- xiv. confirms that the institution will clearly signpost its students to HEFCW's complaints processes.

Fee and access plan application submission to HEFCW¹	
Date of Governing Body approval:	04 March 2021
Governing Body authorised signature:	
Date:	04 March 2021
Final fee and access plan submission once HEFCW has confirmed it has no further issues (where applicable)	
Date of Governing Body approval:	16 June 2021
Governing Body authorised signature:	
Date:	16 June 2021

¹ Fee and access plans published on the institution's websites must only include versions approved by HEFCW.