

# **Morley College London**

## **Access and Participation Statement**

### **Introduction**

Morley College London is a specialist designated adult education college located in Central London. It provides learning opportunities to some 13,000 people every year. Morley was founded in 1889 for working men and women and developed from a series of 'penny lectures' by eminent scientists and scholars at the Old Vic Theatre. Morley provides an inclusive adult learning environment that encourages and supports individuals to engage in learning, whatever their learning goals.

The College is located on the border between Lambeth and Southwark. Based on the average ranking of local authorities within the English Indices of Deprivation 2015, Lambeth and Southwark are ranked respectively as the 8th and 9th most deprived boroughs in London, and the 22nd and 23rd most deprived in England. The College holds a contract with Lambeth Council for the provision of Community Learning covering a wide range of curriculum areas, in response to the needs of community groups and organisations and in line with the main local strategic priorities. In 2016-17 Community Learning courses were delivered in partnership with over 60 community, voluntary and statutory organisations and groups.

Morley College London is a culturally diverse learning community, with more than 132 languages spoken in the area and over 120 languages spoken by the student body. In 2016-17 45% of students were drawn from Lambeth and Southwark, and the College is increasingly also focused on meeting the learning needs of adjoining boroughs, with many students also coming from Lewisham and Wandsworth. The College is close to London's cultural centre on the South Bank and to the transport hub of Waterloo station and surrounding businesses.

As a learning community we remain committed to a renewal of the founding principles of Morley College London. First and foremost, we put our students first, which means that we:

- Respect diversity and promote equality
- Evolve, adapt and develop to meet students' needs
- Nurture potential and inspire ambition
- Enhance the positive impact and outcomes of learning
- Work in partnership to achieve shared ambitions

### **Higher Education**

In September 2017, the College launched its first Higher Education provision following approval from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). The College also received approval from Pearson to deliver six BTEC Higher National Diplomas:

HND Art & Design (Fashion)

HND Art & Design (Product Design- Ceramics)

HND Business

HND Health and Social Care

## HND Music HND Performing Arts

Our approach to student admissions to Higher Education remains committed to the broader community-based focus of Morley College London. Our aim is to encourage internal progression from our community learning courses, through to level 2 and 3 accredited courses and eventually into Higher Education. Throughout the academic year, we host taster sessions and open evenings to encourage internal progression and external interest from the local community.

As a part of our commitment to widening participation, the College runs application clinics for prospective students, primarily to advise on the writing of personal statements, recognition of prior learning and to assist with issues of digital literacy. This proves to be a successful widening participation initiative, with approximately 25% of HND applicants having attended the clinics in the summer of 2017. Recognition of prior learning and careful evaluation of work experience is another important element of our recruitment policy, with many of our students returning to education after a gap of ten years or more.

Morley College London works with a range of Higher Education Institutions (HEI) across the full range of adult education provision, and by 2019 will have validation arrangements for collaborative provision in place with partner HEIs for level 6 delivery. This will fulfil demand from HE students to complete a BA or BSc at Morley, benefitting from the College's adult learning approach and community focus. With smaller class sizes and personalised tutorial experience, the College is an ideal learning environment for learners who have not followed a formal route to HE and perhaps benefit from a level and focus of tailored study support that may not be as readily available within a traditional university experience.

Following many years of successful Access to HE delivery at Morley, principles of student retention, additional learning support and student progression have been inculcated amongst teaching and support staff in the College, providing for a smooth transition into HE with requisite additions to the staffing infrastructure. Regular training sessions are held to ensure that teaching and support staff are fully aware of HE expectations, further reinforced through QAA review and the College's relationship with external stakeholders and partners.

### **Widening Participation**

Morley College London has long been dedicated to serving the educational needs of local communities in Lambeth and Southwark, as well as other neighbouring boroughs. As an Institute for Adult Learning (IAL) we seek to ensure that learners returning to education are fully supported through innovative curriculum design, individually focused learning and teaching practices and employer involvement.

In 2017-18, 52% of the College's students were from BAME communities, whilst 73% of students were female. Just over 12% of students had declared disabilities or learning difficulties, and 55% of students fell into the age category 35-54 years of age. The College's success in enabling sustained engagement in learning for the full diversity of our student body is evidenced by student retention rates across the curriculum schools, which are all over 90%.

In order to continue and support our focus on widening participation, the College has developed three cross-cutting themes which will be key performance indicators for progress standards at the College: Progression, Employability and Digital Inclusion.

### **Progression**

Central to the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy is the objective that “Tutors stage learning in supportive steps, to give the greatest opportunities for all students to achieve and make them confident and independent students”. Ensuring progression, with continuity in learning once a student has achieved their initial learning aim, is an extension of this objective within and across curriculum disciplines.

The College aims to facilitate and encourage continuity in learning through its range of programmes whether from one level to another (“vertical progression”) or a change in learning aim at a similar level (“lateral progression”). Key performance indicators for student progression and destination are monitored with a range of practical initiatives and interventions around communication, advice and support in place to achieve progression and destination targets.

### **Employability**

In identifying employability as a cross-cutting theme within its Strategic Plan, Morley is seeking to stimulate greater awareness and understanding of a broad interpretation of employability and its potential to enhance the impact of adult learning. Rather than a narrow definition equated with a student acquiring a job, employability refers to the way in which each learning opportunity can make a positive impact in a variety of ways, depending on the learning goals, motivation and life-stage of the learner.

Our aim is to ensure that employability is fully integrated into learning and teaching, and that students are aware of the broader context and purpose of their learning in developing a wide range of skills. Morley recognises the potential that an effective employability approach has in benefiting students, the College, and London’s employers. At Morley, employability skills are not narrowly defined but can be identified as a wide range of skills and attributes relevant to every student and every course. In particular the College recognises its role in making a positive impact on the professional and personal lives of students and is committed to ensuring that all students are empowered to embrace skills and attributes that enhance their ‘learning for life’.

### **Digital Inclusion**

Digital inclusion at Morley is about supporting people, particularly those facing a range of barriers, to access online resources to enhance their life, work and study, and for tutors to use digital technology to support an ongoing enhancement of learning, teaching and assessment. Morley encourages students to be active in their use of technology, to learn from each other and connect to wider networks. The digital inclusion agenda seeks to enrich the learning experience, using capabilities online as a means of externalising accomplishments, develop portfolios, websites and creative content that demonstrate students’ creativity and artistic vision as well as progression in the development of employability skills.