

Provider's name: Kensington & Chelsea College

Provider's UKPRN: 10003564

Introduction & Context

Kensington & Chelsea College trades on its excellent reputation as a provider of high quality learning experience. Many of our HE students' progress to university undergraduate, postgraduate courses or to employment. We are ardent in celebrating our alumni and remain committed to supporting our students after they leave. Our teaching staff practice professionally and draw extensively from their experience and training.

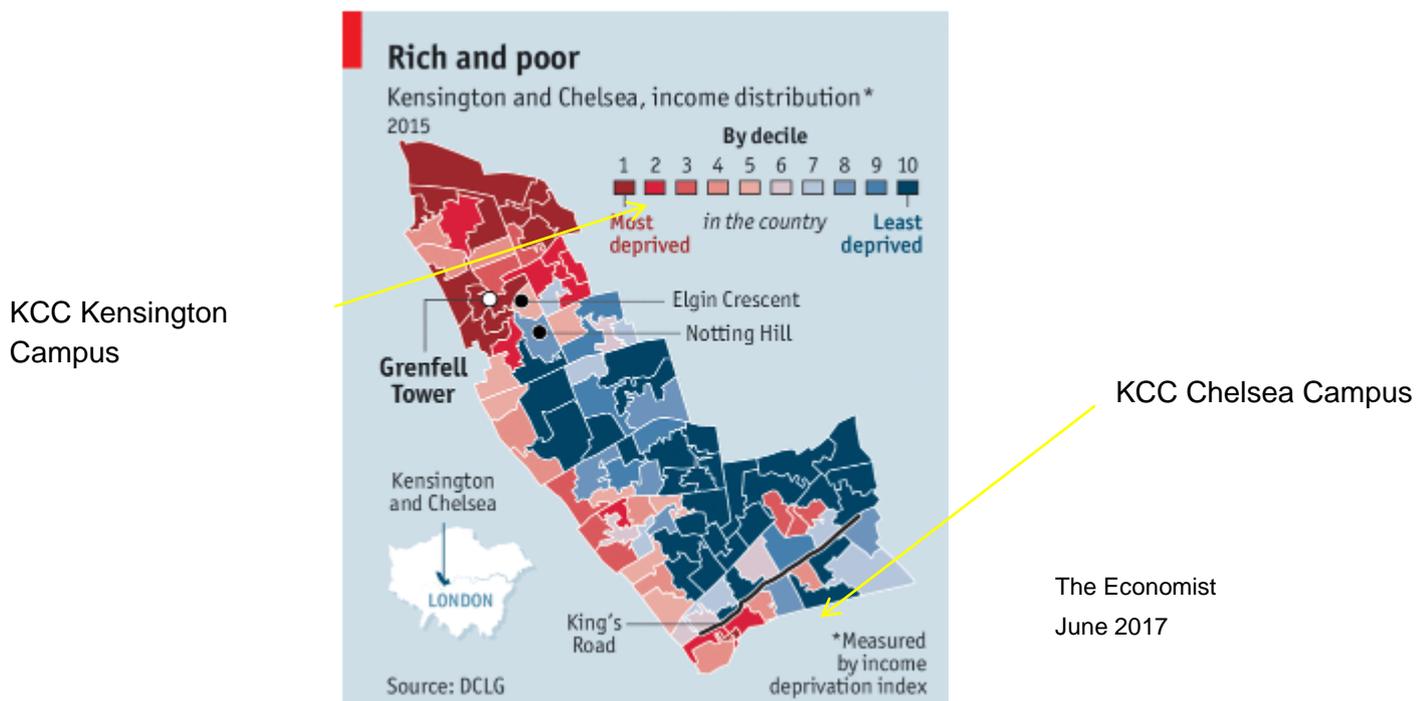
Our Higher Education curriculum provision includes a range of courses in Fine Art, Photography, Millinery, Interior Architecture, Teacher Training and Early Years. The surrounding curriculum structures provide opportunity for new or returning learners to begin a course at entry level and to progress internally to a degree equivalent qualification or to progress to higher-level courses at other colleges or to employment. Our aim is to build learner skills, confidence and independence whilst instilling enthusiasm and passion for their subject.

Under 19 learners are supported through Full Time study programmes that provide tutorial support, work experience and targeted help with English and maths. Thereafter students can progress to higher-level programmes. Mature students or late returners to education are encouraged to aspire to higher education and career development through supportive programmes of study that recognise their needs and the potential barriers to study.

Over time we have established partnerships with several universities to either deliver or validate courses and as conduits for progression. These have included London South Bank University, Kingston University, Canterbury Christchurch, Middlesex and London Metropolitan. We have just concluded a revalidation of our BA top up course with new partner University of East London.

Theme 1: The areas we are seeking to address

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) is an inner London borough of royal status. As the smallest borough in London and the second smallest district in England, it is one of the most densely populated in the United Kingdom. The borough is immediately west of the City of Westminster and east of Hammersmith and Fulham. It contains major museums and universities, department stores such as Harrods, Peter Jones and Harvey Nichols, and several international embassies. It is home to the Nottingham Hill Carnival, Europe's largest. It contains many of the most expensive residential properties in the world. The borough is a 'Tale of Two Cities' with startling income differentials. The average (mean) salary is £123,000 (\$156,000), among the highest in Britain. But the median (the point which half the population is above and half below) is just £32,700 (\$41,400). The gap between the two, one of the widest in the country, reflects the gulf between earnings at the very top and the very bottom.



53% of our residents have a level four qualification (equivalent to a university degree). The fourth highest proportion nationally and Kensington and Chelsea is ranked second to bottom for those with no qualifications (10%).

More than one-fifth of all households in the borough (16,389) have a first language that is not English; this is the fourth highest proportion in the country. 61% of our residents have a UK passport, the lowest proportion of any local authority in England and Wales. Less than half of all residents (48%) were born in the United Kingdom, the fourth lowest proportion of all local authorities in England and Wales. Kensington and Chelsea has the highest proportion of residents who describe themselves as belonging to a non-British identity (38%).

KCC aspires to being genuinely inclusive and at the heart of this are our core values enshrined in the KCC way. Our enrolment policies and procedures enshrined in "Right Student Right Course" focuses attention on making sure from the beginning that new students have a realistic opportunity to succeed and progress. We draw students from across London and consequently cohorts reflect the diverse ethnicity and socioeconomic character of our multicultural capital city.

For those learners who are identified, Additional Learning Support (ALS) is used in class or with supporting one to one tutorials. HE students are encouraged to declare at the interview stage as to whether they require ALS for a learning difficulty, mental health problem or physical disability. BKSB testing is used with some cohorts to establish the working level in English and maths. If HE students declare the need for ALS then they are supported in their application for Disabled Students Allowance (DSAs) after interview.

Statistical Trends

Overall trends indicate that over a three-year period our HE success rates remain comparatively stable and above national averages.

Most HE students declare their ethnicity and at 62% identified as White British or Other White this would be consistent with the boroughs statistic on holders of a British Passport. Three year trends indicate very small differentials in those not providing ethnicity information. Where ethnicity information was not provided and Black African categories there were 2 students who were retained in each group but of those two, one did not achieve. Overall retention and achievement for all identified groups is above national averages.

Identified Gender indicates that of the HE student population over three years 17% is male. Although overall HE numbers have fallen there is an indication of a rise in male students by 6% points in 16/17. Female learners are retained and achieve above the national average. Male students indicate a slight decline in retention for 15/16 which impacted overall achievement but this became more closely realigned with national averages in the following year.

Almost all of our HE students are in the 19+ age category and so it is difficult to meaningfully differentiate. A snapshot from a HNC cohort from 16/17 indicates an average age of 36 which when considered against national trends (Patterns & Trends in Higher Education 2017 published by Universities UK) would demonstrate representation of a group that has showed decline over ten years.

Just over 20% of HE students declared a disability or learning difficulty. Almost all who declared were retained and achieved. Where Dyslexia was declared it had an impact in 14/15 on one student who was retained but did not achieve and in 16/17 where one student was not retained. In 15/16 one student with mental health difficulties was not retained. Effective use of specialist staff within Fine Art to support learners with ALS needs. It was considered effective to have specialist staff employed by the ALS department supporting students in the studio as they were familiar with studio practice and course needs.

Theme 2: Our ambitions & strategy

Across the three priorities of Access, Success and Progression there are indicators that KCC recruits from a wide range of nationally underrepresented ethnic groups and maintains an above average profile of mature students that are retained and complete their courses. For those with declared disabilities, there is not a significant impact of their disability or learning difficulty having an adverse impact on their ability to complete a full time course of study and to achieve. As a college we are always striving to improve on the progression opportunities for our HE students.

Our College Mission is encapsulated in our statement 'First Class, First Choice' 'Kensington and Chelsea College aims to be a first class, first choice provider of Education for learners and employers in a wide range of skills.'

The College's HE provision has developed in areas of expertise in response to the need of learners and employers for local, flexible progression routes. However, of equal importance has been the development of HE in relation to raising achievement standards and student aspirations throughout the College. Our HE students are role models to other students progressing through the College and evidence of the effectiveness of our commitment to equality and diversity. The diversity of our HE intake and the high student retention and achievement rate at this level compared with other HE providers, demonstrates progress towards achieving our Mission.

London is well served by Higher Education Institutions. Many have International reputations for research and teaching excellence and there is great competition for places for home and overseas students. Whilst HEIs have developed strategies to widen participation, their structures and the way that students from families with no tradition of attending higher education perceive them means that there is a significant place for HE within FE Colleges.

KCC does not seek to duplicate higher education courses already available but because of its roots within its communities and the specialised FE curriculum with strong employer links already in place e.g. Millinery, ESOL teacher training and Early Years, it makes educational and economic sense to maintain and further develop our HE provision in the College.

The Government focus on employability has resulted in changes in course content and delivery in order to place students in a strong position for progression from courses into the chosen industry or promotion within their careers. Running some of our HE courses as franchise provision provides CPD opportunities for staff and support for both staff and students via the HEI.

As previously stated, HE provision in the College has grown out of identified need in the community and has built on established strong curriculum provision at level 3. In recent years new level three courses have been developed and there is now potential to extend the progression pathways for these students where there is no existing provider catering for this. The level 3 Access to HE programmes offer alternative pathways for adult learners who have not acquired sufficient qualifications to gain places in HE. The good practice and links with HE form the groundwork for further development of level 4 courses in other curriculum areas.

The key priority for the College is to increase its student numbers through the development of a diverse, responsive and competitive higher education curriculum. The College's Higher Education Strategy is informed by its broader curriculum strategy, the interests of its partner HEIs, the government's widening participation, the QAA Quality Code, previous HEFCE priorities and new priorities from OfS. The College's curriculum is also informed by the skills needs identified through the Local Enterprise Partnerships.

Theme 3: Our activities and support for students

The College's broader strategic aims for its Higher Education provision are:

- To maximise funding opportunities
- To deliver a better student experience through better teaching and greater transparency in the management of its courses
- To ensure better information for students before they apply in accordance with Government requirements to provide Key Information Sets and the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education;
- To actively involve the student population in the quality assurance and enhancement of the College's Higher Education provision
- To support the development of employability skills and better preparation for the job market
- To continue to increase social mobility and widen participation into Higher Education
- To engage more actively with local employers through provision of higher level work-based learning
- To maintain the high quality of its Higher Education provision and carry out its quality assurance in line with the principles set out in the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
- To develop the curriculum to aid progression from other level 3 programmes in KCC and local institutions.
- Review relevance of current qualifications to keep them 'refreshed'
- To maintain and further develop collaborative working arrangements with HEIs and employers
- To develop staff to deliver high quality HE courses and enhance opportunities for scholarly development
- To strengthen internal progression routes into HE and external progression from HE
- To provide accommodation and resources that support level 4 provision to at least the standards required by Awarding Bodies
- To develop curriculum materials within VLE and negotiate access to university VLE for franchise students
- To ensure efficient delivery of programmes

Specific developments must support the overall College Development Plan and its strategic objectives. All changes will be scrutinised by our HE Standards Board and based on review of current practice and completion of a development plan prior to recommendation to Executive and the Corporation. Our HE Strategy aims to meet the identifiable needs and add value in line with employers and local economic responsiveness including a coherent response to the Government agenda on higher level technical skills and employability

A key priority for the College over the next several years is to further develop as a centre of excellence for student engagement. It is essential that as providers of Higher Education we actively engage with our students in the quality assurance and enhancement of their programmes. This is a key priority for OfS and the QAA and one that is of great focus during any review activity. The College seeks to continue to meet the expectations of the sector in the area of student engagement through the following activities:

All HE cohorts have at least one student representative to sit on course boards of study/programme committee meetings so that the student voice is included.

The Student Engagement VLE area where all HE students can access key QA documents for their course includes external examiner reports, end of year course evaluations, minutes of meetings and institutional/periodic reviews

KCC intends to continue to engage with organisations such as the National Union of students, the Association of Colleges, the QAA and OfS to further to develop and enhance the way in which the College engages with its students

By continuing with these strategies the College is maintaining consistency of representation and transparency in all its programmes.

Quality Assurance and Management of Higher Education

The College will continue to manage its Higher Education provision in line with the principles set out in the revised UKSCQA / QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Over the next few years the College will further revise existing policies and implement new ones to ensure compliance with the indicators and expectations of the Office for Students and the Teaching Excellence Framework. In addition, the College will review the standardisation of all internal QA practices across programmes including the College regulations and standardised pro-forma.

Our HE provision will continue to be subject to development and review in line with college procedures. The development of new HE provision and for the annual review of the current effectiveness of College HE will ensure continuing relevance and excellence. All new HE courses will be approved by the HE Quality and Standards Committee before submission to Executive and Governors Quality and Quality Committees.

In the first instance the demand for any programme will be considered. This will be with reference to a review of demand in relation to other providers and KCC's ability to deliver a relevant learning programme to a high quality. This will also be in line with annual college SAR where the current provision at level 4 and above is evaluated in relation to:

- Demand from employers
- Fit with regional skills priorities and supported by Sector Skills Council (if vocational)
- Unique provision that compliments HEIs
- Progression from other level 3 programmes in KCC and local institutions,
- Contribution to wider issues of equality and diversity e.g. Flexible delivery to attract groups who otherwise might not consider HE, APEL

Funding for any new programme must take into account financial viability and cost effectiveness and be based upon a realistic costs benefits analysis. It should include reference to:

- Availability of funded student numbers
- Direct,
- Via HEI
- Fees via learners or employers
- Development costs/investment
- Staffing

Resources

- Is the staff team qualified to deliver HE?
- What training is required to develop the team to deliver high quality HE
- Are the equipment and accommodation fit for purpose (including libraries)?
- Are there external resources e.g. Employers or HEIs who can enhance or support delivery?
- Is the programme cost efficient?

Timescale and targets

- When is the proposed start date and does it take into account awarding body processes and timescales?
- Is there a development group with the right skills to produce and oversee an implementation plan?
- Implementation plan must include costings and respond to the above issues.

Planned changes, the existing position and how HE is being taken forward.

Management and governance of HE

The direction and quality of HE provision is reported in the Self-Assessment Report to Management and Governors.

Curriculum development

The HE Standards Board agrees developments in line with the criteria above and reports the Curriculum and Standards Committee of the Governing Body which has HE representation.

Resourcing of higher education

College staff teaching on HE programmes are well qualified and maintain their currency via CPD and scholarly activity, which includes professional updating. Teacher Training and Early Years are supported by their respective HEIs.

Equipment, studios and other teaching rooms, equipment and materials are up to date and under continuous review and up-grade.

Recruitment, retention and progression into and through HE

College marketing is good although much recruitment comes via internal progression. Learner retention and success is currently very good and has maintained a three year trend.

Relationships with employers

Relationships with employers are well developed and a strength.

Relationships with higher education institutions, agencies and networks

Relationships with other higher education institutions are good. There are progression agreements with several HEIs for level 3 Access students, partnership with three HEIs for level 4 and 5.

The College is also involved with the AoC HE in FE group, Linking London and LONCETT.