
Access and Participation Statement 2021-22

Magna Carta College provides higher education by flexible distributed learning (FDL) method of delivery. Our vision is to remove the barriers to higher education, inspire new ways to learn and enrich people and their lives. We support that everyone everywhere has a right to higher education. It is a path that leads to both personal progress and enrichment. Many prospective students are at different stages of life and are constrained in their ability to study and to progress - constrained by expectation, geography, financial circumstances, other commitments or even just by time. But within Magna Carta College's students, and potential students, there is a desire to break free from these limitations, to work hard, enjoy learning and to become the best they can be.

Objectives:

- Provide high quality higher and further education
- Add value to their current qualifications, skills and experiences
- Increase motivation and self esteem
- Enhance their employability and entrepreneurial skills
- Meet the skills gap of the local community
- Continuous improvement of the services through monitoring and review

The College is committed to providing high quality education, which will help the learners to attain a recognised professional qualification, enabling them to progress to university or pursue career progression. We are committed to providing high standards of teaching by qualified, experienced tutors for students within an inclusive and supportive environment.

The HE strategy of the College is focused on the development and delivery of high quality, vocationally relevant programmes to support internal progression, widen participation and to meet external demand.

Magna Carta College is committed to recruiting students from diverse backgrounds and supporting them to succeed. Many of our students are mature students aged over 21. The student groups identified by Magna Carta College are;

- (1) mature adults without HE qualification,
- (2) students with family and/or work commitments and
- (3) disengaged learners who may be young or mature, but they have previously disengaged from education and need guidance and support to progress their learning.

Our student population is international and diverse, bringing students of all nationalities and ethnicities together to study online or in the classroom.

As part of Magna Carta College's vision to provide access to higher education for anyone who is able to benefit from it, we do admit students on the basis of prior experiential learning. Once students commence their studies with us, our virtual learning environment (VLE) Moodle is the main mechanisms through which ongoing student engagement is facilitated. The Moodle platform allows students to feel part of a learning community even if they are studying via distance learning. The Moodle platform also supports our blended learning delivery which provides face to face tuition in the classroom in addition to the full online learning materials, to provide maximum support alongside accessibility. All students have access to resources via Moodle, which are supported by tutor support and are designed to equip students with the skills and attributes they need to succeed in higher education.

Support is provided to applicants throughout the admissions process, with potential students speaking to the admission support team. We do support disabled students and those with special educational needs. Applicants are invited to share any special educational needs during the admissions process, to enable requirements to be assessed and appropriate arrangements to be implemented prior to enrolment, but may be raised at any stage during the student's learning journey, at which point a

student would be signposted to the relevant support team i.e. instructor and tutor. Magna Carta College's learning model facilitates a high level of individualised learning, particularly through assessment methodologies which routinely allow students to apply their learning in the context of their own employment or experience. This is a particular focus throughout distance learning and applies also to blended learning. Magna Carta College's student support team i.e. instructor and tutor, carry out proactive reach out and motivational activities with the students and will tailor these to individual students' circumstances. These activities include a routine check in with student following first assessment submission, extra support strategies for students who fail an assessment or whose academic practice has fallen short of the required standard, or for students returning from a period of leave, or students identified as vulnerable.

Magna Carta College's priorities for 2022-23 are:

- To work with the relevant funding agencies to remove the financial barriers for students to progress towards higher education.
- To continue to build and refine enhanced academic support strategies for students in order to retain students and improve success levels.
- To expand its staff for the provision of distance and blended learning.

Management and Reporting

Learner and wider stakeholder surveys are used to help identify the benefit of the training being provided. This helps ensure that the provision Magna Carta College is offering is right for the local need and adapted accordingly. We are fully aware of the local needs, and we are already working hard to ensure we not only understand the needs of our local community, but also have the right provision in place to ensure our training leads to progression and sustained employment.

We would develop well established links with Jobcentre Plus which would lead to many learners being referred to us; ultimately resulting in further training and employment.

Magna Carta College aspires to become a trusted local provider of skills in near future and, as such, we would develop very close relationships with community leaders. This, alongside our close links with the local authority ensures we are fully aware of the

current and future challenges within Oxford City, further helping to highlight the current and future skill needs. In doing so we are in a position of being able to shape our provision to fit the needs of the community; thus furthering the employment potential of our learners.

The underlying principles of Magna Carta College highlights the College's focus on access, participation, and diversity:

- **Caring for individuals:** we care about the development, success, and well-being of our students, and believe that a better future means quality education for all;
- **Commitment:** we support our students with the help they need to succeed in their professional pursuits;
- **Academic excellence:** we ensure a high quality of success through our standards of teaching and engaging learning methodologies;
- **Community and diversity:** we promote and encourage diversity within the College and are proud to embrace students from all backgrounds.

Widening Participation

Widening Participation is defined by Office for Fair Access (OFFA) as removing the barriers to higher education, including financial barriers that students from lower income and other under-represented backgrounds face. Underrepresented individuals may be:

- people from lower socio-economic groups or from neighbourhoods where higher education participation is low
- people from low-income backgrounds
- mature and part-time learners
- people from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups
- carers
- refugees

Our approach to recruiting students from widening participation groups

Magna Carta College believes itself to be uniquely placed in the UK to make significant contributions in widening access to higher education through its vision of being a quality higher education provider. The College objective is focused on widening student participation from the above groups. This has always been the key strength of the College where we proudly state that about 95 percent of our students belong to these groups. We work to attract applications from mature students and students from minority ethnic groups with the aim to improve success and progression.