DAVID GAME
HIGHER EDUCATION

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PROGRESS REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-2025

PROGRESS ON OUR APP TARGETS

Since we began implementing our Access and Participation Plan (APP) in 2023, David Game has widened participation and improved outcomes for underrepresented students.

We have set ambitious access targets to ensure that students who identify as having disabilities and those from minority ethnicity backgrounds are better represented among our student body. Our mostly mature student cohort lags behind the Higher Education average in identifying with a disability at entry, but we offer free assessments that have helped people identify and manage disabilities while studying.

We far exceeded our access target for minority ethnicity students! We also achieved target milestones for improved continuation and attainment.

This report reflects on our progress in the Academic Year of 2024-2025. Note that 'Continuation' refers to students continuing from Year One to Year Two of studies and 'Attainment' refers to the achievement of Merit or Distinction.

43.7%
MINORITY ETHNICITY ENTRANTS

Far above our target 11% milestone for 2024-2025. Percentage in 2021: 8%

9.3%
DISABLED ENTRANTS

Above our target 7% milestone for 2024 - 2025. However, only 5.9% identified a disability at entry; 3.4% identified through Advice and Wellbeing Services (AWS) assessment during studies.

52.2%
OF MATURE STUDENTS ACHIEVING MERIT OR DISTINCTION

Above our target 39% milestone for 2024 - 2025 Percentage in 2021: 30%

5.3pp
GAP IN CONTINUATION BETWEEN WHITE & MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS

Beat our target 10pp milestone for 2024-2025. In 2021, the gap was 12 pp.

-22.2pp
GAP IN ATTAINMENT RATE BETWEEN MOST AND LEAST DEPRIVED STUDENTS

Reversed the gap since the 54 percentage point gap in 2021.

"we have made the admissions process clearer and more accessible for applicants from a wide range of educational backgrounds. This includes clearer guidance on entry requirements, structured interviews, and improving how applicants navigate the application process so that those returning to education or applying through alternative pathways feel confident engaging with higher education."

~ Seran Dalvi, Head of Admissions

ACTIVITIES DELIVERED

1. Financial Support

DGHE now offers bursaries and other financial support to students, including:

Student Success Bursary

£750 bursary for each year of study for students from low-income households living in areas of high deprivation.

Refugee Support Bursary

£750 bursary for each year of study for any student holding refugee status.

Veterans Support Bursary

£750 bursary for each year of study for all students who previously served in the UK Armed Forces – and their children.

Care Leavers Scholarship

20% Fee Waiver plus £1000 for each year of study for students who were in care.

2. Student Support and Development

In recent years, we have significantly expanded our student support services.

- Increased staffing and budget for Advice and Wellbeing Services (AWS)
- Supplemental English classes offered to ESL students to support their learning
- Expanded One-on-One tutoring and additional IT/tech skills support
- Careers and employability skills integrated into course curricula in the classroom.

Hardship Fund

We will double available hardship funds in our 2026-2030 APP to assist students in financial need because of emergency circumstances, so that they may continue studying without disruption.

Total Dispersed

Between September 2024 and August 2025:

- 20 HND students received the Student Support Bursary
- One HND student received a Refugee Bursary
- Three HND students received hardship fund grants.

Our franchise programmes students also benefitted from additional financial support as part of our Whole Provider Approach.

"The bursaries I have received have been very helpful in supporting my studies and easing financial pressure. They have allowed me to focus more on my course work without worrying as much about living costs or study materials. The application process was straightforward, the university provided clear information and guidance throughout.
I'm very grateful for the support offered through these schemes."

~ 2024-2025 Student

3. Community Outreach and Marketing

We organised new Community Outreach programmes to share skills and encourage people in our local community to pursue higher education.

This included many events, such as:

- Visiting local A Level School Fairs and hosting guest lectures for them at DGHE
- Engaging with community groups in Aldgate and Tower Hamlets such as Aldgate Connect BID, AccessHE, Switch Back and an Eid Market
- Hosting workshops for unhoused people with the organisation Accumulate
- Providing 'Back to Education' public taster seminars on presentation skills, Cybersecurity, research skills, etc. for local mature learners.

In addition to outreach activities, our Marketing department has dedicated a portion of its digital ad budget to reaching a more diverse ethnic mix of prospective students, through geo-targeting our nearby communities in East London, different languages and ensuring a diversity of our students were invited to photoshoots so that our ads include real students representing different ethnic communities.

Pie chart:
- Asian 24%
- Not Reported 34%
- White 22%
- Black 13%
- Mixed 7%
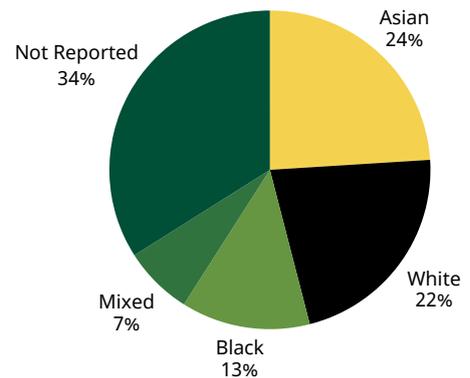
44%

Participants reported being of Minority Ethnic descent

"It was a really interesting session, which brought home to me the importance of Cyber Security and how it will only get more important over time."

"It helped me to understand options from studying this sector"

~ Outreach event participants

DGHE

15-16 JAN
ONLINE & IN-PERSON

BACK TO EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

LOOKING TO CHANGE YOUR CAREER OR RETURN TO EDUCATION?

ATTEND FREE WORKSHOPS ON AI, CYBER SECURITY, AND MUCH MORE. PERFECT FOR ALL LEVELS.

REGISTER NOW

4. New Campus in Croydon

In the 2024-2025 academic year, we embarked on a new initiative in Croydon with a recruitment partner that provided space to deliver our courses in South London. Offering more accessible classes situated closer to home for students outside Central London significantly improved our student diversity.

5. Staff Trainings

93% of DGHE staff say they personally value widening access and success in higher education and 75% say they feel able to initiate and implement widening participation interventions themselves.

In the past academic year, Academic Skills tutors and Advice and Wellbeing Services (AWS) supported Academic and Administrative Staff to develop knowledge and skills across our organisation to foster an inclusive, supportive learning environment. Training has included unconscious bias, inclusive teaching practices, and supporting underrepresented and minority student groups. We also received APP training from Specialist Evidence Evaluation and Research (SEER).

We are expanding opportunities for staff to receive ongoing training, including on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Mental Health, Prevent, Suicide Prevention, Safeguarding and First Aid, and to pursue professional fellowships and further research related to our APP goals.

6. Curriculum Review and Improvements

We have embedded careers and inclusivity across course curricula, introducing more employability-focused assignments and providing a diverse range of assessments styles and case studies. This offers student the practical value they demand from their education.

Regular curriculum reviews include staff and student feedback to ensure texts, resources and curriculum content reflects diverse perspectives and experiences, and is practical and useful to students' career aspirations. Internal training and development work is enhanced through membership of Independent Higher Education (IHE) and the Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education (AMOSHEE).

"Curriculum feels relevant to the area of study and career ambitions."
~ 2025 Student Focus Group

"They used different teaching methods to ensure we understood everything clearly and were always kind and patient."
~ 2024 Graduate

7. Hybrid & Online Learning Access

In response to the needs of busy mature learners, David Game has introduced a hybrid model of learning, offering a portion of the classes online to increase flexibility. This model leverages our Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to make learning more accessible and responsive to the schedules of mature students.

Since 2024, we have expanded our hybrid provision to three HND subject areas: Business, Public Services and Digital Technologies. We also increased our investment in Digital Learning Technologist personnel to develop interactive Moodle content for these courses and are now tracking engagement rates against set targets.

"I feel very much part of the supportive and friendly community of staff and students. There are plenty of opportunities to work with others on projects and group activities, which helped me with team work and communication skills. The inclusive environment makes it easy to engage with peers and feel connected to the wider university community."
~ 2024-2025 Student

"I'm so confident now it's unbelievable!"
~ 2024-2025 Student

"The tutor worked with one of our mature female students who on arrival had poor English and very fragile IT skills [...] Via the Disability Support Allowance... [The student] is scoring Merits and Distinctions... clearly a result of taking up DSA support."
~ Advice & Wellbeing Staff

Looking Ahead

The Office for Students (OfS) has now approved our new APP for 2026-2030, following good progress on our 2023 APP. We are continuing the interventions where we see real impact and applying lessons learned, activating more robust internal data collection on access, success and progression. We are committed to continuing APP investment to reach our updated access and participation targets, and encourage our community to join in the effort!

Access and Participation Targets for 2030

8.1%
Students identifying as Disabled upon entry, and supporting more students to identify during their studies.

60%
Attainment rate (achieving Merit or Distinction) for Mature Students.

2.6pp
Gap in continuation rate between White and Minority Ethnicity students

* Maintain at least industry average percentage of Minority Ethnicity entrants.

* Improve Alumni communications and data keeping on Progression.

17pp
Gap in attainment outcomes between the most and least deprived students.

2.5pp
Gap in attainment outcomes between disabled and not disabled students.

Conclusion

DGHE has made strong progress in diversifying access to higher education, particularly among minority ethnicity and most deprived learners. In some areas we are already over-performing in relation to our targets, and we aim to sustain this development. Support structures like Advice and Wellbeing, one-to-one tutoring, careers advice and IT support are expanding, and new initiatives like hybrid online learning, expanded community outreach, a new Croydon campus and additional financial aid are addressing barriers to success and progression. We will continue to review lessons learned and enhance our approach as we transition towards implementing our next APP.

DGHE's full APP for 2026-2030 can be found on our website's Policies page at:
https://dghe.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/David-Game-College-Ltd_APP_2026-27_V1_10015688.pdf