



Access and Participation Policy

Policy Owner: Sandeep Athwal

Full Name	Position	Signature	Date	Review Cycle
Sandeep Athwal	Director		01.01.2024 V2 – 02/02/2025 V3 – 13/06/2026	Annual



Introduction

The School of Coding focuses on delivering an excellent academic experience while also ensuring the development of relevant employability and entrepreneurial skills. This focus enables us to deliver a dynamic, enriching and future-focused student experience, which equips all our learners with the opportunities to make significant contributions to society and the economy. We are a successful modern school with the foundational purpose of providing applied learning opportunities relevant to our region and beyond. We support the transformation of our learners, our people and the local communities within which we live, work and engage

Our academic strategy is the framework through which we deliver our Strategic Plan to ensure the academic benefits and outcomes of our students' experience. Our academic strategy is delivered through a consistent educational philosophy across all our courses. It was developed to:

- meet our commitments for access and participation to increase equality of opportunity.
- develop a modern portfolio which meets the needs of the regional and national economy and global civil society.
- ensure the success of students from diverse backgrounds.
- embed research inspired education at the heart of our curriculum.
- co-create pioneering approaches to pedagogy and digital infrastructure with our students, trainees and apprentices.
- recruit, develop and retain high-quality staff, reflecting the region we serve.
- develop sector leading approaches for pedagogic evaluation to raise the standards of evidence for what works.

Risks to Equality of Opportunity

There are several risks that can hinder equality of opportunity and limit access and participation for certain student groups. It is crucial for our school to identify and address these risks as part of our Access and Participation Plans to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to succeed in their academic endeavours. The following are some of the key risks to equality of opportunity that our School could face:

1. Socio-Economic Background: Students from low-income households may face financial barriers. These students may struggle to afford textbooks, and other expenses associated with school life. As a result, they may be at a disadvantage in terms of accessing secondary education and achieving academic success.
2. Ethnicity and Race: Ethnic minority students, particularly those from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, may face discrimination, stereotyping, and systemic barriers in secondary education. These students may experience lower levels of attainment, higher dropout rates, and limited access to opportunities for academic and career progression compared to their white counterparts.



3. Disability and Mental Health: Students with disabilities and mental health conditions may encounter physical, sensory, cognitive, or psychological barriers that impact their ability to fully participate in school life. These students may require additional support, and resources to ensure equal access to education and a positive learning environment.

4. Gender and Sexual Orientation: Gender disparities and discrimination based on sexual orientation can impact access and participation in secondary education. Females, transgender individuals, and LGBTQ+ students may face challenges related to gender stereotypes, harassment, and exclusion, affecting their educational experiences and opportunities for academic success.

5. Geographical Location: Students from rural or remote areas may have limited access to secondary education institutions, resources, and support services. They may face challenges related to transportation, connectivity, and social isolation, which can impact their ability to engage in school life and access the opportunities available to urban students.

By recognising and addressing these risks to equality of opportunity, SoC can develop targeted interventions and support mechanisms to promote inclusive practices, address disparities, and create a more equitable learning environment for all students. Through their Access and Participation Plans, SoC can enhance access, retention, and success rates for underrepresented and disadvantaged student groups, fostering diversity, equity, and social mobility in secondary education.

Widening access to secondary education remains key to supporting the life chances of young people in our region. Through our assessment of performance, we have identified four areas of risk from the EORR that may impact equality of opportunity to access secondary education for students. They are:

Risk 1. Knowledge and skills. Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to be accepted onto secondary education courses that match their expectations and ambitions.

Risk 2. Information and guidance. Students may not have equal opportunity to receive the information and guidance that will enable them to develop ambition and expectations or to make informed choices about their secondary education options.

Risk 3. Perception of Alternative Provisions and secondary education. Students may not feel able to apply to certain types of providers within secondary education.

Risk 4. Students may not have equal opportunity to access a sufficiently wide range of secondary education.



Risk 5. Insufficient academic support. Students may not receive sufficient personalised academic support to achieve a positive outcome.

Risk 6. Insufficient personal support. Students may not receive sufficient personalised non-academic support or have sufficient access to extracurricular activities to achieve a positive outcome.

Risk 7. Mental Health. Students may not experience an environment that is conducive to good mental health and wellbeing.

Intervention Strategies:

1. Outreach Programs: The School of Coding AEP can implement outreach programs targeting secondary schools, community colleges, and underrepresented communities to raise awareness about Coding and AI opportunities at SoC. These programs can include coding workshops, AI demos, and information sessions to inspire students to pursue studies in these fields.

2. Mentoring and Tutoring: TSoC can establish mentoring and tutoring programs to provide academic support and guidance to students, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds. Mentors and tutors can offer assistance with coursework, exam preparation, career planning, and personal development to help students succeed in their studies.

3. Inclusive Curriculum Design: SoC can review and update its curriculum to ensure that it is inclusive, diverse, and accessible to students with different learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds. The curriculum can incorporate real-world applications of coding and AI, collaborative projects, experiential learning opportunities, and interdisciplinary perspectives to engage all students in their studies.

4. Disability Support Services: The school can enhance its disability support services to accommodate students with disabilities and ensure equal access to coding and AI education. This may include providing assistive technologies, alternative assessment methods, flexible learning arrangements, and disability awareness training for staff and students.

Expected Outcomes:



1. Increased Diversity: By implementing outreach programs, SoC can expect to see an increase in the diversity of its student population, with a greater representation of underrepresented groups, such as ethnic minorities, students with disabilities, and students from low-income backgrounds.

2. Improved Retention Rates: Through mentoring, tutoring, and academic support services, SoC can expect to see improvements in student retention rates, with a higher percentage of students successfully completing their programs and progressing to the next stage of their education or entering the workforce.

3. Enhanced Academic Performance: By offering inclusive curriculum design and disability support services, SoC can expect to see improvements in student outcomes, with higher levels of academic performance, engagement, and satisfaction among all students, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Overall, by implementing these intervention strategies and monitoring their impact on access and participation, SoC can create a more inclusive, equitable, and supportive learning environment for all students.

What we are aiming to achieve

We want all our students to achieve their full potential. We strive to create opportunity, deliver social mobility and transform lives. We have been successful in creating opportunities for students to join SoC and we are working to ensure that the right academic and personal support is in place to help students complete their studies and to achieve good outcomes irrespective of their background.