



UNIVERSITY CAMPUS OLDHAM

ACCESS AGREEMENT 2017/18

Institution: University Campus Oldham

Contact: Katherine Griffiths (Director of Development and Learning)

Telephone 0161 344 8847

Email Katherine.griffiths@oldham.ac.uk

INTRODUCTION

The University Campus Oldham (UCO) forms part of the Oldham College and, in an area such as Oldham, represents a key driver for economic and social progress for the locality as well as being personally transformational for students who chose to study at UCO. UCO has developed from an outpost for the University of Huddersfield into an integral part of the Oldham College family. The ongoing development of the curriculum has the potential for more students to progress through from further education into a higher education experience and a new partnership with the University of Teesside is enabling the College to develop employer focussed foundation, top up degrees and higher level education that will enable students to progress into employment.

Given its economic and social working environment, the College already has well established widening participation strategies to make higher education accessible to learner locally regionally and nationally from a diverse range of backgrounds. This access agreements provides an indication of how the College' widening participation strategies are to be adapted and/or restructured and enhanced as a consequence of the decision to increase fees for 2017/18.

Widening Participation Strategy

Vision, Management and Culture

The College's vision is:

To help our students gain the skills, knowledge and experience they need to progress in life and work

And its values are **“ambition, integrity, inclusion, responsiveness, courage”**

The College's strategic objectives are included at Appendix A and these indicate that the College is already committed to widening participation at every level within its governance, management and academic structures.

LOCAL EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

Oldham and the City Region

According to 2012-13 data, Oldham residents generally have access to a high concentration of higher education provision (based on being within a one hour drive of higher education provision) – as Oldham is within the Greater Manchester local authority the large universities of that area are easily accessible but being to the East of the city, the universities of South and West Yorkshire are also readily accessible (Appendix B). However, despite this accessibility in terms of geographical position there is not a correlation with the participation of young people in HE. The majority of the Oldham wards are classified as 8/10 on the HE provision decile, although participation is generally well below the national average. Somewhat perversely, Saddleworth East is lower in terms of accessibility to HE, but has the highest young HE participation rate in Oldham.

Although Oldham's school and college performance has improved, the proportion of Oldham residents who have acquired a degree has fallen increasingly behind Greater Manchester and national averages. The number of graduates per head of the population was 30% higher in Greater Manchester than in Oldham in 2004, and nationally 45% higher than in Oldham. By 2013, this gap had grown to 41% in Greater Manchester and 55% nationally.

Within Oldham, an average of 29% young people aged 15 years old (leaving school in 2005-6) entered HE by the time they were 19 (by 2010-11). This compares poorly to the national average of 34.8%. As might be expected based on socio economic data, the central wards within Oldham are classed as low participation in HE amongst young people. St James ward is just 11%, whereas Saddleworth East has very high participation at 58%. (Appendix C). Within Oldham's surrounding areas, the lowest participation wards tend to be based in North and East Manchester (Harpurhey, Beswick and Clayton, Blackley, Newton Heath and Bradford), although Middleton West is the poorest at 10%.

The expected % of young people entering HE is based on GCSE attainment. Nationally, the expectation is that 36.6% of young people will enter HE, whereas the actual percentage who do is 34.8%. There is a very mixed picture in Oldham. Centrally within Oldham, HE participation is much lower than expected. Chadderton North, Saddleworth East and Royton North all have higher participation in higher education than expected. In addition, surprisingly, at 29% the Waterhead ward also has much higher participation in higher education than expected – i.e. – the expectation is low based on GCSE performance. Within the wards surrounding Oldham, Hyde Newton is the poorest, followed by the three Middleton wards.

Within the North West, the majority of areas around Cheshire and Liverpool have a higher proportion of young people participating in HE than expected given GCSE attainment. However, there are numerous clusters of areas, particularly around Manchester where participation in HE is much lower than expected.

SCOPE OF THE AGREEMENT

This agreement relates to the tuition fees for full and part time UK and EU students on the following programmes in receipt of HEFCE funding delivered by the University Campus Oldham:

- Foundation degrees
- Undergraduate honours degrees
- Higher national certificates and diplomas
- Initial teacher training qualifications
- Other undergraduate programmes

Students applying to the above courses which start from September 2017 will be included in this agreement.

FEE LEVELS

UCO intends to charge all full time undergraduate entrants tuition fees of £7,500 for all programmes of study for the academic year 2017/18 and following.

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENTS

UCO was originally a development by Huddersfield University to provide a local campus for Oldham for the same socio economic reasons as described above. In 2012 it became part of the Oldham College family and at that time the College was advised that Huddersfield University would be withdrawing from the validation of degrees. UCO has suffered a reduction in student numbers with the introduction of higher fees but for UCO this has been compounded by the withdrawal of a number of courses as Huddersfield University exited the agreement and therefore a reduction in the academic offer available for student. UCO is therefore in a transitional phase as it completes the teach out of the existing degree portfolio and replaces some of the

support mechanism that have been provided through Huddersfield University (for example access to the electronic library resources attaching to the courses taught, access to the careers service).

As the planned withdrawal of Huddersfield University has progressed UCO has entered into negotiations with other universities and was briefly in discussions with Salford University but has now achieved what is needed for the Oldham area by developing an agreement with new partner universities. The first stage of this was completed in March 2015 and UCO succeeded in validating 10 new degrees to expand the portfolio of courses available. These courses started in September 2015 and the academic subjects have been selected and developed using local economic and employment data so that the students progress into employment locally. Further curriculum developments are planned on an annual basis.

UCO was initially inspected by the Quality Assurance Agency in March 2013 and an interim visit has taken place in February 2015. This had a positive outcome and in terms of good practice referred to course handbook and employability as a result of the academic and vocational skills which result from the focus on the teaching and learning strategy.

WIDENING PARTICIPATION PLANS

Access Agreement Statement for Greater Manchester Higher 2017-18

UCO is committed to working in partnership with other HE providers to raise aspirations to HE. UCO are part of Greater Manchester Higher, one of the HEFCE-funded National Networks for Collaborative Outreach, which we have sustained beyond the lifetime of the HEFCE funding. Through this Network we will continue to promote our existing outreach activities and contribute to the development of a collaborative programme of HE awareness-raising activities for state schools in Greater Manchester. We will use the Network as an opportunity to share best practice, grow the evidence base for what works and identify and reduce cold spots within our region.

Schools liaison/Outreach

UCO is already part of the Manchester Network for Collaborative Outreach which is run through Manchester Metropolitan University.

The UCO is planning to increase its outreach work with local schools and colleges to raise aspirations and develop progression of local students into higher education students. This will also run alongside the development of academic pathways for students at Oldham College to progress either into access provision and thence into university level education or directly into study at the University Campus at Oldham.

Scholarship/Bursaries for students

Given the economic and social environment, the College would like to continue with its bursary scheme and is making available bursaries of £500 for each new starter to higher education. The students who satisfy the criteria for the bursary will be monitored to assess the impact in terms of their retention and achievement as a result of the bursary. We have based this figure on £500 per new first year students. We have proportioned it to 75% relating to Student with household residual incomes up to £25000 and the remaining 25% relating to other under-represented groups. The bursary will be paid in two instalments of £250 following the satisfactory attendance and engagement with the course. The payment dates will be November and July.

Support for academic achievement

As a general Further Education college working in Oldham, the pre university level students are already well supported through the College's infrastructure for student services and learning support. However, the ability of these existing services to deliver for UCO is limited for a number of reasons, not least of which is the fact

that the university campus is geographically separate from the main College campus. As the number of students is expected to increase as a result of the expansion of the degree portfolio this will enable the UCO to provide additional support for the needs of HE students from non-traditional backgrounds.

UCO already has academic support tutors and it is planned to increase the number of these through the access agreement funding available. The tutors already in place support students in their study through one to one sessions, timetabled classes on academic English and academic skills e.g. referencing, and drop in session – all students have access to this resource.

Support for personal, financial and health issues

The additional resource that will be available from the increase in fees will be used to increase support for student counselling and help in personal, financial and health issues. The exact nature of this, be it with an external agency or a new member of staff is yet to be exactly determined but this will give specific support to students who, given the Oldham demographic, are in need of support other than academic to enable them to progress through their degree course successfully.

The new UCO Hardship Fund will be broken down into categories corresponding to the nature and urgency of the need.

- One-off payments to address immediate need, e.g. the delays experienced by some students awaiting their first payment from SFE (Student Funding England) in September. This has particularly affected carers and parents.
- Funds to carry out assessment of learning needs for current and prospective students – many of our students require their Learning Needs statement updated for HE and a significant number have not had their Learning Needs identified during prior educational experiences
- Larger payments for emergency situations e.g. a house fire

The change to the bursaries from previous arrangements⁴. Rather than award £1,000 to students from specific local feeder colleges this has been changed to apply to an award of £500 to all 1st year students. The former scheme did support local students but students from neighbouring areas of Greater Manchester (e.g. Rochdale) who faced the same range of challenges missed out. The reduction to £500 remains a significant amount, however this enables UCO to channel funds to a broader range of financial needs and circumstances e.g. study trips, help towards IT equipment, specialist equipment on Creative Arts courses, one-off emergency payments.

Assessment of performance¹

The funds being applied for will assist in enhancing UCO's success across the student lifecycle from access, progression through each stage, success at the culmination and successful preparation for employment/further study. In evaluating where we can improve on **access** while the majority of our current students are from the local area and we have a diverse student population work needs to be continued to address the following:

- i) Improving progression from The Oldham College Level 3 programmes
- ii) The recruitment of young white males from working class low participation backgrounds
- iii) The current make-up of e.g. the Business Management programmes – white males are under-represented; and the Health programmes are over-represented by non-traditional females from BME groups.

Student Success and progression through the programmes is satisfactory, however the support we could deliver to improve this would include additional resources:

- i) Additional Academic Skills tutors working with individuals and groups (we do have 2 Full time colleagues currently). The areas to address here are in numeracy and computer literacy.
- ii) The provision of peer Assisted Learning (PALs), we already run these projects but not across all courses
- iii) Additional staff to support the Learning Needs of students, again this is a skeleton provision which would benefit from more specialist input
- iv) Additional pastoral care – this is currently not supported on site but part of the wider College provision and a limited service.
- v) Student feedback has consistently requested the provision of on-site mental health support.
- vi) In addition, the recruitment of student interns to support peer assisted projects and develop activities and events will assist in making key connections with the student body.
- vii) A student Engagement officer will be employed with a brief to assist in enhancing student engagement and participation across QA processes, cultural events and an NUS style-position as an advocate for student engagement.
- viii) A student employability officer will be added to work alongside the placement officer and careers team and be equipped and charged with employer liaison events and activities e.g. competition briefs for Graphic Design students and school pupils
- ix) Resources will be earmarked to support student exhibition of work – ranging from poster displays showcasing dissertations at our annual scholarly symposium, to support for finished work at our creative arts' end of year Festival of Creativity.

We would like to be able to enhance progression opportunities to further study/employment and develop additional careers support for students. We do currently employ a 0.5 worker via the Positive Steps organisation whose input has been praised by students in this, her first, year.

Indication of expenditure²

We intend to include £126,000 on access, of which £50,000 is OFFA accountable funding; £98,000 on progression, of which £30,000 is OFFA accountable funding; and £338,000 on success activities, of which £70,000 is OFFA accounting funding. This refers to the amounts in table 4a.

The varying figures are based on the need for support at an early stage which ensures students are prepared for the programme. It will be key to assess and support their individual Learning Needs, this work may begin prior to starting their programme as we target e.g. specific schools/colleges and potential feeder courses.

Once on programme the progression through the stages will be supported on both individual and group levels - group activities will increase hence spreading the resource implications.

The larger investment in activities to support success, incentives, support around pastoral and academic interventions and addressing the specific needs of the WP groups is needed. Students face real difficulties in maintaining their motivation and energy mid-way and towards the end of their programmes – this is a real challenge. It can be exacerbated by financial challenges and impacts on mental health and stress levels.

Access, student success and progression measures³:

We intend to provide a range of activities, events, initiatives and build-infrastructure and services to address each of the above – inevitably too there will be overlap of these:

For example, UCO has already recruited 5 GM Higher Student Ambassadors who are extending these skills and roles to becoming ambassadors within UCO, this will continue each year. A specific event related to GM higher targets and cold spots wards in Oldham is a schools' taster in July 2016. We intend this to

become an annual event. This could be further enhanced by competitions, prize-giving events, exhibitions of school pupils' work judged by UCO students and a celebration event as the culmination. Further recruitment and involvement of UCO students and ex-students as ambassadors would add to this and give traction as we make inroads into the hard to reach communities.

The additional staffing as outlined above will address supporting progression and success. In addition, cultural and study trips will enhance the student experience where such activities have not been a part of many students' worlds.

Progression

Students will be supported in progressing from Foundation Degree to the relevant Top-Up Degree in their subject area. This will include transition activities prior to completing their programme, a series of activities and links with level 6 learners, peer support systems during their final year and academic support sessions during the summer in preparation for Level 6 study. The expectations of study at Level 6 will be clearly signposted utilising a range of informative and interactive methods.

Students in the final year of their Honours Degrees will be able to access information on further specialist Masters/professional study. Our careers service will provide 1 to 1 and group sessions, timelines for submitting completed application forms and support in preparing personal statements. There will be a calendar of visits from admissions tutors from Masters courses e.g. in popular areas in Health from Salford University.

Supporting students' attendance and participation at the annual UCO Research Symposium will enhance the connections across each year and beyond e.g. as 3rd year students present their work to fellow students and staff – many of these will then embark on study at Masters level, and will return to present the following year as alumni of UCO.

Submission of work to a range of competitions will be encouraged and supported for each programme e.g. the D&AD competitions for creative arts students, the annual British Conference of Undergraduate Research for Social Science students. This will be embedded into the programmes and will result in raising students' aspirations – whether further study or employment – through these undertakings.

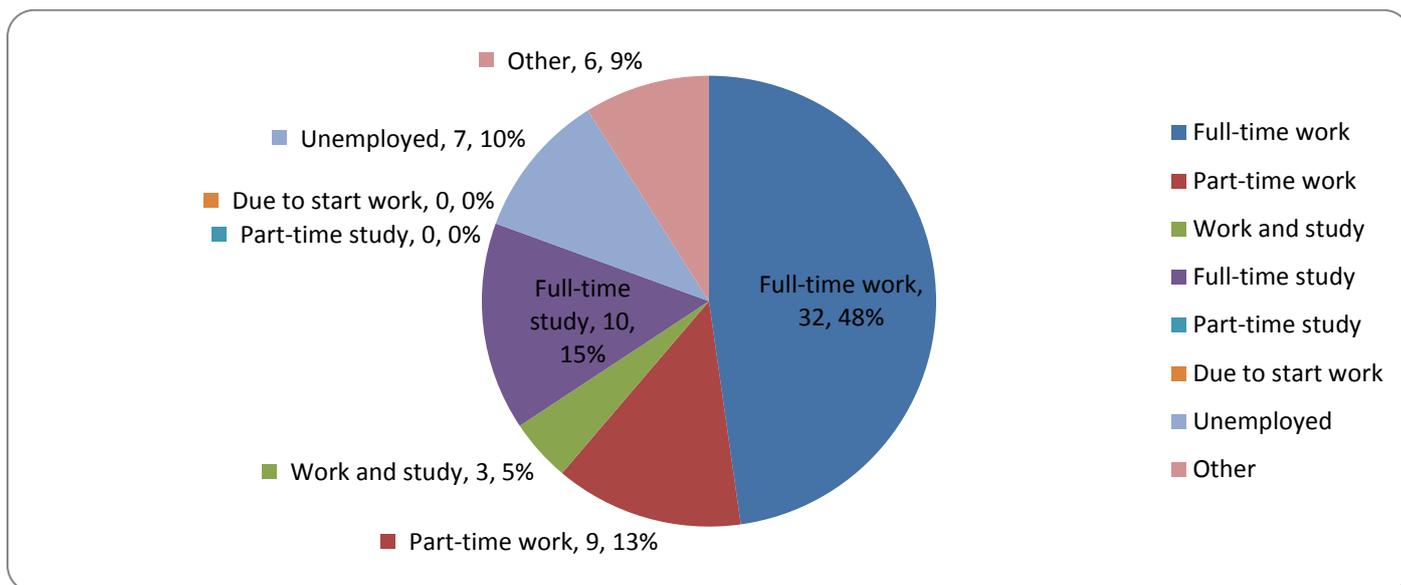
Alumni activities and links will be further enhanced, UCO is developing a LinkedIn alumni group and there are closed subgroups attached to most courses. Cultural events, themed events e.g. workshops on entrepreneurial skills, social events and bite-sized sessions throughout each year and the holiday periods will celebrate the educational and work achievements of the UCO Alumni and provide a critical forum for sharing and further development.

The engagement of local and regional employers will be facilitated where students will meet employers, be engaged in work based activities/live briefs and develop the skills to apply for roles in the workforce, hone skills and continue as Life Long Learners. The Careers service will provide employability sessions alongside the HE Work Placement Officer – these will cater for 1 to 1 requests and groups. The annual 'Industry Week' will provide a focus for each course to invite guest speakers, employer links and will be open to all students. These 2 services will develop a Job Shop service for students and employers and will tap into local and regional networks supporting student progression into work. This service will remain available to our alumni beyond the completion of their programme.

In targeting this support and enhancing the progression outcomes of our graduates we have 2013/14 data to inform the activities:

Fig 1.

UCO Student Destinations 2013/14, All courses. Total Number of Graduates: 130, Total Number of Respondents: 67, Response Rate: 51.54%



Of the students who responded to the survey the majority remained in Greater Manchester, reflecting the make-up of our students.

Region	No Employed
Greater Manchester	36
West Yorkshire	2
Fife	1
Inner London	1
Lancashire	1
Nottingham	1
Warrington	1

38% of these were in undergraduate level work that related to their studies:

Job Title	Total
Teaching assistants	6
Care workers and home carers	5
Teaching and other educational professionals n.e.c.	3
Nursing auxiliaries and assistants	2
Further education teaching professionals	2
Graphic designers	2
Medical secretaries	2
Primary and nursery education teaching professionals	2
Receptionists	1
Records clerks and assistants	1
Sales and retail assistants	1
Nursery nurses and assistants	1
Bar staff	1

Call and contact centre occupations	1
Health services and public health managers and directors	1
Higher education teaching professionals	1
Management consultants and business analysts	1
Managers and directors in retail and wholesale	1
Marketing associate professionals	1
Childminders and related occupations	1
Cleaners and domestics	1
Construction project managers and related professionals	1
Elementary storage occupations	1
Functional managers and directors n.e.c.	1
Other administrative occupations n.e.c.	1
Playworkers	1
Transport and distribution clerks and assistants	1
Waiters and waitresses	1
Welfare professionals n.e.c.	1

13 of these students progressed to further study:

Course	Total
BA Early Years (Top-Up)	1
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	1
Early Years Teacher Status	1
MA Investigative Psychology	1
MA Social Work	1
Master Social Work	1
Mental Health Nursing	1
MSc Investigative Psychology	1
MSc Project Management	1
MSc Psychological Studies	1
MSc Social Work	1
PGCE Primary Teaching with QTS Early Years and Key Stage 1	1
PGDE early years	1

Our targets are to improve those progressing to further study through the support activities outlined above.

In addition we are focussed on supporting progressing students into higher paid, graduate level roles through our enhanced engagement with careers, employability services and activities, our alumni and contacts with employers.

We are awaiting the 2014/15 destinations information which will further inform our activities and targets in progression to education and employment.

Equality and Diversity

UCO, as part of the Oldham College family, has developed this access agreement in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the agreement forms part of the equality and diversity programme. Equality and diversity is embedded in all our processes and interactions with students. UCO already monitors its student body annually to gauge the success of this work and identify where targeted action may be required.

The portfolio of courses available at UCO over last 2 years has resulted in a concentration of traditionally female occupations in health and social care which has resulted in a student population that is largely female

(2013/14 and 2014/15 70%). The increasing number of courses and wider choice of academic subject that is being extended through the new validations over the next few years will help redress this balance going forward.

Student Engagement and Student Union⁷

UCO is planning to recruit a student engagement officer who will provide the link between students, academic staff, services and resources and will be the enabler for the development of student involvement in curriculum development, social activities and societies and the student union. As UCO has a relatively small number of students this resource will be key to developing involvement from the wider student population. UCO already has a student representative on the Governing body of the College and this post will also enable support for this development. During 2015/16 we have been developing the modes and channels of student engagement e.g. we now have a termly Student Forum where student representatives meet directly with members of the Principalship team and heads of the support services – IT, Estates, Library. From this we have scheduled a more student facing induction which will include a Fresher's Fair – the first at UCO. We are also eager to include students in all activities and QA and see the students as partners in an evolving collaboration. The first UCO Scholarly Symposium takes place in July 2016 and includes contributions from students and staff. This will henceforth be an annual event.

A suite of Student Rep training events are planned for 16/17 to be added to in 17/18. An accompanying handbook is planned. A tutor and student rep have recently attended a Student Engagement Partnership event and we would like to support more attendance at conferences for students to support our strategy.

Monitoring Arrangements

UCO is part of the Oldham College and as such has a sophisticated data management system which enables the interrogation of data and analysis of trends. Therefore the measures agreed within the access agreement will be monitored and discussed at faculty, UCO and whole College level. This will ensure that progress is monitored and the necessary actions or adjustments made to targets as further information and analysis is available.

Monitoring and Evaluation⁶

UCO is committed to monitoring and evaluating the use and allocation of the funds, the activities and importantly ascertaining and measuring (where possible) the impact these have. For example, we carried out an initial survey on this year's £1,000 Bursary award – 25% of the recipients responded and further work is planned as the year closes. Significantly many of respondents stated that they were carers, without the bursary they would have had to find part time work and the majority used the funds on transport, food and course-related materials.

Provision of information for students⁸

UCO hereby makes an explicit commitment to publish clear and accessible information for existing and prospective students on fees and available financial support.

APPENDIX A – UNIVERSITY CAMPUS OLDHAM

OLDHAM COLLEGE

Strategic Priorities:

Oldham College's Strategic Plan 2013-16 clearly sets out how the College intends to deliver its vision and mission by identifying the following strategic priorities:

- Priority 1:** Provide an outstanding vocational educational experience to ensure all learners reach their potential and are equipped for progression
- Priority 2:** Engage with employers and industry bodies to develop an offer and a curriculum that is aligned to the labour market and employer needs and enables learners to progress
- Priority 3:** Work strategically with key partners in Oldham and the City Region around skills delivery, planning and development, to improve outcomes for Oldham's residents
- Priority 4:** Be inclusive and engage with all of Oldham's communities to improve participation and skills levels in the area
- Priority 5:** Be enterprising and innovative in the way we work and develop new models of education
- Priority 6:** Lead and manage the College effectively to ensure that we are able to achieve our first five strategic priorities

The Higher Education and Higher Skills Strategy 2016-18 outlines the way in which UCO will contribute to address the educational gaps prevalent within Oldham and the City Region.

The overarching themes in relation to the College's strategy are demand led growth based on high quality, including expansion of progression routes, a clear community focus and the raising and meeting of local aspirations.

UCO is part of the Oldham College Family and, therefore, this strategy also supports the delivery of Oldham College's Vision, Mission and Values and Strategic Objectives.

Strategic aims

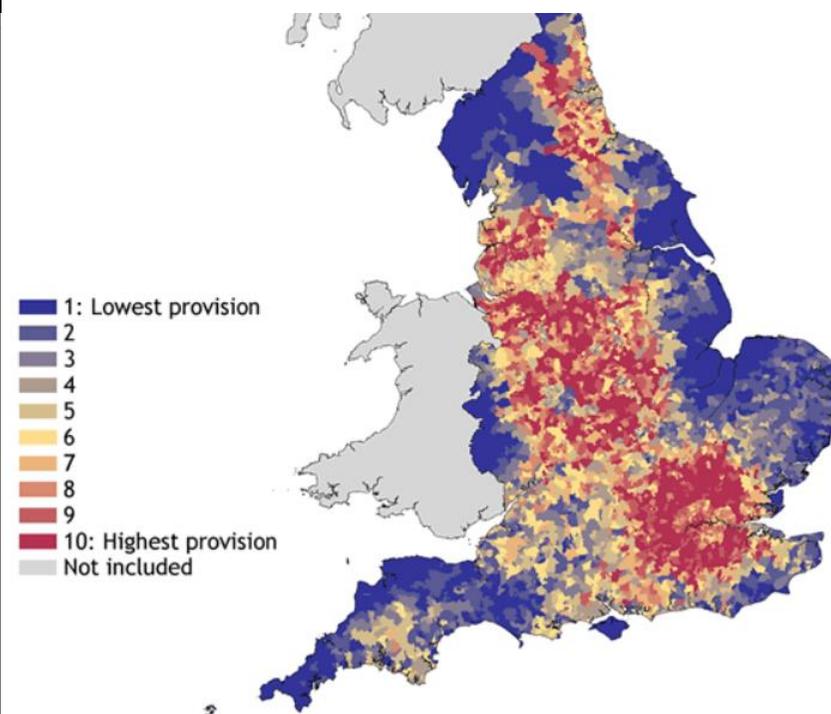
- UCO will achieve sustained growth in HE and Higher Skills provision which meets employer, student and community needs, keeps students engaged locally and is linked to the regeneration of the area
- UCO will engage with the community to raise awareness and increase the number of people in Oldham and surrounding areas engaging with HE and higher skills, transforming lives through education, experience, support and inspiration
- UCO will deliver the highest standard in inspirational teaching, learning and assessment informed by professional practice, research and scholarship to enhance the learning experience
- UCO will provide an excellent HE and Higher Skills experience and strong HE identity, sharing our passion, enthusiasm and energy to enhance the development of students before, during and after their studies

- UCO will provide governance and strategy to HE to support its growth, development and enhancement, building the brand, reputation and influence of UCO at Oldham College, with employers and the community
- UCO will develop external partnerships that provide tangible benefits to HE and Higher Skills students
- UCO will enhance the career outcomes of all HE and Higher Skills students through supporting employability, enterprise and innovation and develop individuals who will shape the social and economic fabric of the future

APPENDIX B - HE COLD SPOT DATA

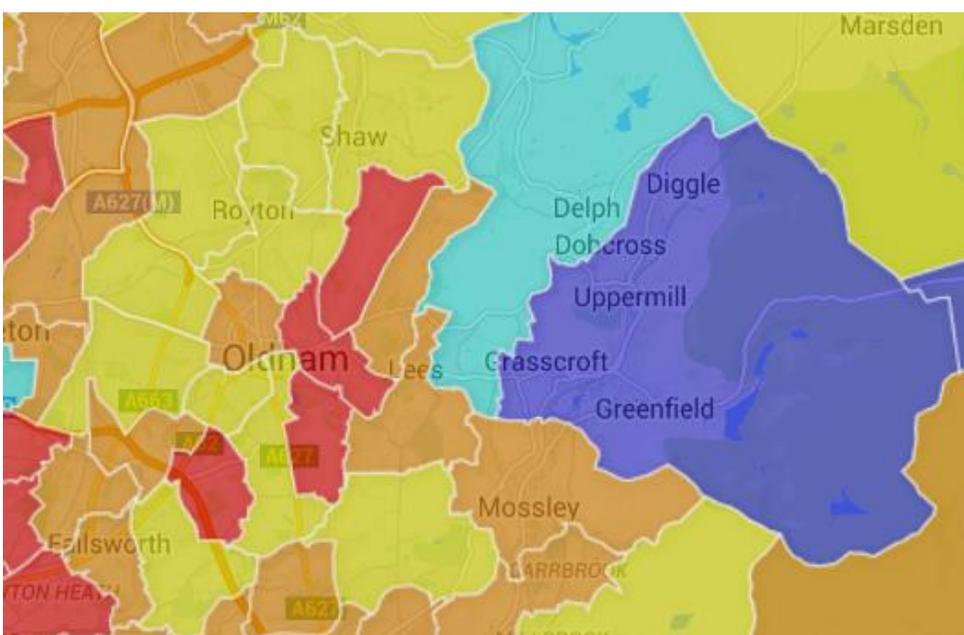
The table shows students studying HE from Oldham in 2012-13 in relation to the population of young people in the area who could enter HE (based on being within a one hour drive of HE provision). If an area has a concentration of provision that could reasonably meet its young population, then it will appear in red. If the young population in an area has little access to HE, then the area will appear in blue. Oldham residents are relatively well served with HE provision with an average score of 8/10. Ironically, the Saddleworth areas are quite low in terms of access to HE, however they have the highest young HE participation rates in Oldham

2001 Census Ward	*Undergraduate Entrants into HE	Potential Demand for HE	HE provision over population	HE provision decile
Alexandra	69,555	915	75.9	8
Chadderton Central	70,915	705	100.7	8
Chadderton North	72,065	805	89.7	8
Chadderton South	73,515	615	119.3	8
Coldhurst	71,120	1,200	59.2	8
Crompton	68,625	585	117.1	8
Failsworth East	63,240	665	95.4	8
Failsworth West	70,690	580	121.9	8
Hollinwood	71,490	800	89.5	8
Lees	63,910	690	92.4	8
Royton North	69,885	585	119.1	8
Royton South	70,285	635	110.7	8
Saddleworth East	54,980	780	70.4	7
Saddleworth West	62,960	750	83.8	8
St. James	64,215	705	90.8	8
St. Mary's	70,880	1,110	63.8	8
St. Pauls	69,825	830	84.1	8
Shaw	66,045	585	113.1	8
Waterhead	66,875	855	78.4	8
Werneth	72,510	935	77.5	8



APPENDIX C – PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN HE IN OLDHAM

This map shows the young participation rate across Oldham & GM. The rate is defined as the proportion of young people (15 year olds) who entered HE by the age of 19 (aged 15 in 2005-06, aged 19 in 2010-11 academic years). The table shows young participation in Oldham wards.



Ward	Young Population	Young Entrants	Young Participation	Nat Av Diff (34.8%)
St. James	717	79	11.00%	-23.8%
Hollinwood	873	127	14.60%	-20.2%
St. Marys	1,117	217	19.50%	-15.3%
Alexandra	997	196	19.70%	-15.1%
Chadderton South	769	163	21.20%	-13.6%
Lees	739	157	21.30%	-13.5%
Coldhurst	1,099	269	24.50%	-10.3%
Failsworth West	655	162	24.80%	-10.0%
Waterhead	935	261	28.00%	-6.8%
Failsworth East	684	201	29.40%	-5.4%
Royton South	705	211	30.00%	-4.8%
Chadderton Central	746	232	31.10%	-3.7%
St. Pauls	793	258	32.50%	-2.3%
Chadderton North	728	245	33.70%	-1.1%
Werneth	914	309	33.80%	-1.0%
Crompton	738	252	34.20%	-0.6%
Shaw	731	256	35.10%	0.3%
Royton North	739	270	36.50%	1.7%
Saddleworth West	752	347	46.10%	11.3%
Saddleworth East	829	482	58.10%	23.3%