



Access and Participation Statement 2018-19

Severn Business College provides higher education by distance learning and blended learning. 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's a path that leads to both personal progress and enrichment. Many people are at different stages of life, 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 SBC 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.

SBC is committed to recruiting students from diverse backgrounds and supporting them to succeed. The majority of SBC students are mature students. Our student population is international and diverse, bringing students of all nationalities and ethnicities together to study online or in the classroom.

SBC offers different learning modes: online distance learning and campus-based blended learning. SBC blended learning allows students to combine the full benefits of its online learning materials and resources with face-to-face teaching across just two days per week, enabling them to fit their studies around work, family and other commitments. As part of SBC vision to provide access to higher education for anyone who is able to benefit from it, SBC does admit students on the basis of prior experiential learning. Once students commence their studies with SBC, its virtual learning environment Moodle is the main mechanisms through which ongoing student engagement is facilitated. Moodle platform allows students to feel part of a learning community even if they are studying via distance learning. Moodle platform also support 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 instructor/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. SBC 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. SBC 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. SBC 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.

SBC priorities for 2018-19 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.
- To strengthen the data collection, in order to identify its markets/students.
- To improve the employability skills of students with activities (as applicable) such as industry speakers, industry visit, incubation centre, internship etc.