



# **ACCESS & PARTICIPATION STATEMENT**

Last Reviewed – September 2024

Next Review Date – September 2025

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Approved by	Principal & CEO
Oversight	DMP, SLT, SMT

## 1.0 BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The following *Access and Participation Statement* outlines the commitment of EFI Group and its Divisions<sup>1</sup>, to ensuring fair access to education and the means by which we continue to improve equality of opportunity regardless of students' circumstances or background.

The statement has been developed with consideration of our student profile and on the basis of an analysis of our admissions process, student surveys, regulatory advice and guidance, guidance from our Awarding Bodies<sup>2</sup> and progression data.

## 2.0 OUR COMMITMENT

FRA is committed to extending the reach of our offer and fair access to education. Increasing access, retention, achievement and progression of students is at the heart of our mission and purpose.

To this end, our *Access and Participation Statement* outlines our commitment to support individuals from all backgrounds, abilities and aspirations to fulfil their potential. Our ambition is to continue to be recognized as an outstanding provider of further and higher education that is inclusive, inspiring and free from barriers to learning. This includes a commitment to addressing financial barriers to learning through our bursary programmes.

In recognition of this commitment, the FRA Division was awarded The Mayor's Skills Academies Quality Mark in the 21/22 academic year and as such, were found to set a high standard in terms of actively engaging and promoting good work opportunities, particularly for underrepresented groups.

## 3.0 OUR ACTIVITY

We continue to work in partnership with a range of agencies and organisations to achieve our widening participation goals. These include the following:

- Employers.
- Children's Services and other Local Authorities.
- Targeted secondary schools, further education institutions and universities.
- Voluntary sector agencies.

In addition to the above, EFI Group considers students to be key partners in our efforts to widen access and participation. Student engagement and feedback is a priority embedded across various strategies and this ensures we continue to strive to be innovative and inclusive in terms of the student experience.

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<sup>1</sup> Fashion Retail Academy (FRA), London College of Beauty Therapy (LCBT), Education for Industry Training (EFIT)

<sup>2</sup> For Level 4 Diploma provision at the FRA, this is also informed by the [UAL Insights Programme](#).

In relation to *access and outreach*, we will continue to:

- Deliver high quality widening participation outreach.
- Encourage applications from students from all backgrounds, including under-represented groups with protected characteristics where identified.
- Work with our partner institutions to support the educational progression of young people from all backgrounds, and those professionals supporting them.
- Provide an effective package of financial support, including bursaries, to students from low-income backgrounds or experience targeted barriers to learning through.
- Explore opportunities to broaden the financial support schemes our students can access.

In relation to *success and progression*, we will continue to:

- Develop initiatives that support students from any background to engage fully in academic life; thereby increasing their potential to achieve and progress.
- Work towards providing a fully inclusive environment where all students are able to excel. We regularly review and look for ways to develop our learning environment and learning technologies to be more inclusive and accessible.
- Embed an inclusive approach to curriculum design and content, and learning and teaching practice, which aims to improve access and successful participation.
- Improve and expand the provision of student support services, including mental health support and coaching and mentoring.
- Provide employability and progression opportunities for students from all backgrounds with an emphasis on access to work enrichment opportunities such as pathways in placement, careers, and UCAS (referred to as the 'Futures Programme').

Key to underpinning all of the above, will be a programme of development to ensure staff are able to offer advice and guidance to all students to signpost and encourage uptake of support available to them.

## **4.0 CONTINUOUS REVIEW**

The FRA will review this statement on an annual basis as part of its regular review of all policies and procedures. This will include exploring differential outcomes of students between group, including protected characteristics, in order to continuously inform our access and participation agenda and ambition.

The statement is ultimately overseen by the Principal & CEO who delegates authority to Divisional Performance Meetings (DPMs) to scrutinize and evaluate the areas outlined under section 3.0 via standard internal reporting structures.