

Access and Participation Statement

Introduction

This Access and Participation Statement sets out Markfield Institute of Higher Education's (MIHE) commitment to widening participation. The institute supports students in accessing and succeeding in higher education, further studies or graduate-level employment. The Institute will comply with the law in promoting equality, and is committed to ensure all learners succeed in their studies.

This Statement will be shared with our students. Their feedback will be considered when the Statement is next revised/updated. Overall monitoring and evaluation of this Statement will be undertaken by Senior Management Committee and reported to the Academic Board.

This statement applies to all programmes of study at the Institute that lead to awards from its validating universities. The content follows the recommendations and guidance contained in the Regulatory Notice 1 Access and participation plan guidance for 2019-21 provided by the OfS and can be accessed [here](#).

The Markfield Institute of Higher Education (MIHE), founded in 2000, has an established reputation as an Islamic Higher Education provider with a commitment to inclusivity and widening participation. It specialises in HE Islamic subjects and hence caters for a niche market. See our website (www.mihe.ac.uk) for our academic offering. The Institute is committed to recruiting high-quality students by identifying merit and potential, and ensuring that its admissions process is fair and transparent to all, regardless of background. We value a rich diversity of students, and through our admissions policies and procedures, assess applicants consistently, transparently, fairly and equally without discrimination.

Access to Higher Education

The Institute sees widening participation as an integral part of its mission and ensures that its strategy is sufficiently proactive and continually under review. Our recruitment data indicates that the majority of our students come from communities that would not traditionally encourage its members to pursue

Higher Education at UK HEIs. Our courses are open to everyone who meets our entry requirements, though the majority choosing to study at our Institute are from a Muslim background (from primarily ethnic minority groups) due to the subjects that are offered.

The Institute caters for students from a broad range of backgrounds (male and female and from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds). We recruit students who have the potential to complete an award successfully. We also ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants irrespective of colour, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, age, disability, religion or socio-economic background. Also, in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, students with criminal records may apply to undertake courses at MIHE. The Chaplaincy students may be required to obtain Disclosure and Barring Services checks (DBS) with regard to placements.

Tuition Fees

As the majority of our students tend to come from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, we have kept our tuition fees low to facilitate access.

Please see details for the tuition fees for both UK and overseas students at: [**Fees**](#) on this website.

The fees are at the basic fee amount or below (£6,000) as set by OfS. However, tuition fees will not remain fixed. The institute may increase the fees annually in line with the Retail Prices Index and take account of the institution's increased costs of delivering educational services. The fees information will be updated on our website annually.

In light of our recruitment data analysis, we aim to focus our efforts in the following areas over the next three years:

- Increase the entry rates of students on our HE courses, particularly those from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds and those from groups who would not normally access higher education, including students from families with no previous HE experience. Currently, the majority of our students fall into this category. Our outreach efforts will aim to continue facilitating access to students from these backgrounds.

- Increase the entry rates of mature students on our HE courses. Currently, the majority of our Masters students are mature students. The mature students tend to take our courses for different reasons – some to develop further specialisation, others to change their career paths, while some others to simply advance their knowledge because of their personal interest in the specific subject. We will continue to reach out to mature students and facilitate their access. In addition to standard entry qualifications, we also consider professional/work experience of mature applicants to facilitate their entry into HE through our RPL process.
- Increase the number of overseas students. The Institute historically registered a larger proportion of overseas students compared to UK/EU students. However, due to changes in UKVI regulations over the few years, we have not managed to recruit overseas students. Currently almost all of our students are from the UK/EU. We will endeavour to reach out to the overseas markets to recruit students onto our HE courses.

The Institute has an established RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) system in place. We endeavour to facilitate the entry of participants into HE by considering applicants recognised qualifications (or other record of achievement) or their maturity and professional/work experience. Offers are given to those who are likely to fulfil their specific learning objectives and have the ability to benefit from the learning experience and achieve the standard of the award. Our programmes attract mature students who aim to advance their specialisation or broaden their career prospects. All those who are capable of benefiting from Higher Education are encouraged to apply and consult our **Recognition of Prior Learning (RP) policy**. Where appropriate, students are offered transitional support to assist them in reaching the standards required.

To facilitate a wide range of students in their studies, particularly for working professionals and carers, we are aiming to introduce block mode delivery in addition to the normal delivery mode for full-time and part-time students (which includes blended learning). In the longer term we are aiming to offer programmes that can be delivered via distance learning.

The Institute welcomes students with disabilities and seeks to facilitate their inclusion. We have registered students with a number of disabilities. However, health and safety considerations of staff and students and the physical location of sections of the MIHE campus may restrict access for a few students.

Applicants are encouraged to talk to us for assistance in making informed decisions. We will make reasonable adjustments where existing arrangements or provision place disabled candidates at a substantial disadvantage, and offer all reasonable assistance in enabling such students to meet academic requirements. The Institute will operate strict, legally compliant procedures in maintaining confidential procedures.

We appointed an outreach officer to manage and enhance our outreach work more effectively. Our outreach efforts will actively seek to develop MoUs with a number of schools and Islamic seminaries from across the UK to recruit students. Those completing from Islamic seminaries are offered a pathway to build on their qualification, obtain a BA award, and thereby improve their prospects in the job market or to pursue further higher educational awards. These efforts to build closer relations with schools will continue. We are in the process of developing a stronger outreach programme so that we can reach out and introduce our courses to a more wider number of schools, Islamic seminaries, FE colleges, community organisations and potential employers. This plan will include increasing the number of open days per year (from one per year) to assist potential students to visit our campus, meet the academic staff, talk to current students, find out more about our courses and experience life at MIHE first-hand.

The Institute will ensure that all information issued in the course brochures and on the website is comprehensive and accurate at the time of publication or posting. Any changes to programmes will be notified to those applicants who are affected at the earliest opportunity. Where a programme has to be withdrawn, the Institute will explore with the applicant transfer of the offer to an alternative programme, where appropriate.

MIHE is keen to ensure that its recruitment and admissions processes work effectively, are fair and transparent and are subject to continual enhancement. All policies, procedures and processes related to recruitment, admissions, selection, induction and enrolment are reviewed on a regular basis. We will ensure that effective and appropriate arrangements are in place for providing feedback to applicants who have not been offered a place. We will regularly review our admissions policies and procedures to ensure that they continue to support the mission and strategic objectives of the Institute, and that they remain current and valid in the light of changing circumstances.

Success

The Institute is committed to ensure its students succeed in their studies and future careers. We believe that the success of our students is our success. To

ensure our students succeed in their studies and go onto pursue successful careers; we carefully consider the level and quality of the learning support we provide to them. For this, students' engagement and feedback in improving the quality of learning opportunities and their sense of belonging to the Institute is essential. We, therefore, consider our students as partners in shaping and developing the Institute.

We encourage and support our students to achieve academically, grow in confidence and realise their potential. Tutors work with students, individually and in small groups, and provide them with the required support to help them improve the attainment rates and outcomes. We work with students from the very start of their studies – from the induction sessions to providing pastoral care and academic support throughout their time at the Institute, providing basic careers guidance.

New students are invited to attend induction sessions prior to the commencement of their courses so that they are appropriately introduced to their courses, tutors, and to the culture and operation of the Institute. During induction sessions, students are introduced to higher education and provided with important information such as the Terms of Offer (contract), students' charter and general responsibilities of students, Students Handbook, students engagement processes, Moodle, assessments, deadlines, plagiarism, GDPR compliance policies, responsible ICT use policy, library resources, health and safety issues, pastoral support available, etc.

The Institute offers ongoing academic support to students through lectures, seminars/tutorial sessions, one-to-one academic support, special academic skills workshops and academic writing surgeries. These aim to provide academic support to help students improve the attainment rates and outcomes. A number of academic support workshops are available to students in addition to their tutorial sessions and individual support provided by tutors. These workshops include: reading strategies and critical reading and writing skills; writing effective essays, reports, and critical reflection writings; referencing and bibliographies; approaching assignments, revision and examinations, and dissertation workshops.

We analyse students' attainment data for each module and course. We also take into consideration the results of the NSS and DLHE surveys. In light of the data analysis and students' qualitative feedback, the Institute attempts to put in place structures/means to improve attainment levels through enhancing support or providing more focused support for specific groups of students who are underachieving. The Institute also helps with non-subject specific academic support such as time management planning, developing an individual

study/learning plan, or making sense of tutor feedback.

The Institute provides a number of mechanisms for the ongoing engagement of students in the strategy and operations of the Institute, as well as to ascertain their feedback on the delivery of their programmes and the quality of learning opportunities provided. Student representatives are invited to course committees, programme review committees, and Academic Board meetings. In addition, all students are invited to provide their feedback and evaluation on the delivery of each module – we have in place mid-module feedback and end of module evaluations. These are analysed and issues identified for quality enhancement. All students are also invited to ‘tea with the Principal sessions’ (held once each semester, with separate sessions for postgraduate and undergraduate students). The Principal discusses the broader development of the Institute and how students can engage in these, as well as, seeking to understand directly their experiences at the Institute.

We recognise that non-academic factors also contribute to non-completion of degree courses. Besides pastoral and welfare support, we assist students who are under financial pressure and who, as a result, are at risk of withdrawing from the Institute. Depending on the circumstances, we provide hardship (bursaries) support; give fee discounts and also scholarships where available in a given financial year. In addition, we develop an individual payment plan to help students pay their fees gradually over the academic year in instalments.

Progression

The Institute is validated by Newman University, which issues HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Report) to all students graduating from its programmes. This provides a basis for encouraging students to identify the broader social and employability skills/experience they wish to gain/develop during their studies at the Institute to help them in their future personal and career development. They are then supported in engaging in opportunities beyond the curriculum to develop these skills and experiences, and in recording appropriate achievements in relation to these.

In addition, a wide range of workshops are offered to support students in their broader personal development, employability skills awareness and career planning. These include: employability skills awareness; personal branding, ethics and integrity; problem-solving approaches and decision making skills; interpersonal and team-building skills; leadership skills; CV and letter of

application writing; etc.

The Institute has an established public speakers series, where guest speakers who are senior academics or professionals are invited to share with students their research or professional experience. It also, invites potential employers from schools, charities, development agencies, and other fields to give presentations to students and staff.

We are working with Association of Muslim Schools (a network of Muslim schools from across the UK), community organisations, financial institutions, charities and development organisations to help us reach out to potential students and also to assist our graduating students to find employment and internships. These organisations are invited to attend our annual students day (which is linked to one of the open days) to meet with our students and discuss career opportunities.

Summary

Central to our institutional mission is to provide meaningful and valuable education, and ensure we produce scholars and professionals who are able to play a positive and constructive role in society. This underpins everything we do. In view of this, we will continue to strive to improve outcomes for all students from pre-application stage through to degree completion and employment. We are small Institute which aims to expand. Therefore, to facilitate access to higher education is in our institutional interest. We also aim to make our students our ambassadors and, therefore, their success in their studies and progress in higher education and, subsequently, their post-study lives are also very important for us. This Access and Participation Statement outlines our intentions and efforts to enable higher education access, success and progression, thereby providing valuable education, achieving our Institutional mission and ensuring the continued success of our students.