

University of the West of England, Bristol

Summary of 2020-21 to 2024-25 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

You can see the full access and participation plan for University of the West of England, Bristol on our [website](#).

Key points

The focus of our access and participation plan is on improving academic outcomes for particular groups of students.

In particular, we are focused on eliminating 'awarding gaps'. These are differences in the rate at which students achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above. Data shows that compared to their peers, students from the following groups are less likely to achieve a 2:1 or above:

- Black students
- Asian students
- Students with mixed ethnicities
- Disabled students
- Mature students
- Students from areas with the greatest levels of deprivation (as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation)

We have excellent career outcomes for mature students and our access and participation plan is also focused on improving career outcomes for all young students (those who enter university before they are 21 years' old).

See pages 21-25 to read more about our approaches to supporting current students to achieve.

We are committed to widening access to higher education for groups that are underrepresented and we work closely with local schools, colleges and other organisations to ensure there are a range of routes into higher education. We also support young people to understand how to find the best option for them and develop high levels of confidence in their ability to succeed.

See pages 19 -21 to read more about how we work with others to widen access to higher education.

We work closely with students in the design and deliver of our access and participation work and evaluate our work so we can have the greatest impact possible and learn from what works.

See pages 25-28 to read more about how we involve students, how we evaluate and how we communicate our access and participation work to students.

Fees we charge

The maximum fees charged are £9,250 for full-time students and £6,935 for part-time students

You can see a full list of fees for courses at UWE Bristol at [Tuition fees - Courses and applying | UWE Bristol](#).

Financial help available

We offer three types of financial support to undergraduate home fee status students. This helps students to access university, engage in their learning and benefit from extra-curricular activities. The most up to date information about financial support schemes can be found on our website - [Funding and scholarships - Courses and applying | UWE Bristol](#).

Bursaries – these are annual payments to students for each year of study. In most cases, eligibility for bursaries is based on the information you provide to the Student Loans Company about your family income.

- Annual low-income bursary - £500 for each year of study if your family residual income is less than £25,000
- Annual enhanced bursary - £1500 for each year of study if you are a care leaver, estranged from your family, or are recognised as having caring responsibilities

In year financial support schemes – these are one off payments to students to help them manage additional expenses:

- Employability support scheme – 500 x £1000 payments are available to support students from low-income backgrounds to engage with placements, internships, international experiences or other co-curricular activities that will support their learning.
- Student support fund – provides short term financial support for students who are experiencing financial hardship. The fund has a set of priority groups who are likely to receive higher levels of funding than other students, however all eligible students can receive support. Students are required to have completed an online money management module before they can access funding.
- Short term loan scheme – this scheme is open to all students and is interest free with a repayment period of 30 days.

Scholarships – these are targeted funds that recognise academic achievement. There are a number of [scholarships available at UWE Bristol](#), please see our web pages for more details.

Information for students

Prospective students receive information on fees and financial support at in-person and online events (such as open days, offer holder events and specialist outreach activities held in schools), and by email communications. Potential applicants are always encouraged to use our website as the first place to look for information and we have students available to answer questions on our website.

Current students receive information about fees, financial support, support and opportunities through the student portal and internal communications including a newsletter and campaigns.

Students are encouraged to get involved in ensuring the university meets the needs of all of our students through active student voice mechanisms including those run by The Students' Union, our student consultation panel and a range of placements, projects and short-term roles that enable students to contribute to key university projects.

What we are aiming to achieve

Overall, we want to create an environment where all students can thrive and succeed and in which we actively identify and remove barriers for access and success. We want to ensure we recognise and celebrate the immense talents of our students, supporting them to become future leaders who use their full potential to have significant impact.

Based on our assessment of performance, we have identified the following areas to focus on:

Widening access to Higher Education (and UWE particularly) for students from areas where few young people study at higher education and where there are high levels of deprivation (as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation)

Working in partnership with schools and local authorities to raise pupil attainment, focusing particularly on known attainment gaps such as the pupil premium gap.

Diversify our provision and develop clear pathways to and through higher education through sustained partnership working with local colleges and employers.

Reducing the difference in rates of achieving a good degree outcome (2:1 or above) for the following groups of students:

- Black students compared to white students
- Asian students compared to white students
- students with mixed ethnicities compared to white students
- disabled students compared to non-disabled students
- mature students compared to young students
- students from areas with the greatest deprivation (IMD Q1 areas) compared to the most advantaged areas (IMD Q5 areas).

Increase the graduate outcomes for young students so it matches the outcomes for mature learners.

Continue to support care leavers, estranged students and carers to access and succeed in higher education.

What we are doing to achieve our aims

- 1. Continuing to deliver high quality outreach programmes for local schools** – this supports local young people to understand how higher education can help them to achieve success, and how to find the right pathway for them.
- 2. Supporting attainment in schools** – we work in partnership with schools to raise pupil attainment across all ages. We have long-standing partnerships with two large multi-academy trusts in Bristol and research-led partnership work between researchers in our Education and Early Childhood department and the Bristol City Council which focuses on reducing gaps (including the pupil premium gaps). In addition, our Future Quest programme improves attainment and we deliver a primary school reading programme that supports children to reach age-related reading levels quickly.
- 3. Diversifying our provision** – we are working with local partner colleges and employers to continue to create new routes into higher education. This includes degree apprenticeship opportunities and short course provision that can help to build students' skills and confidence in order to facilitate access to higher education routes.
- 4. Financial support packages** – our financial support packages support students to feel connected to the university and to engage in their learning.
- 5. Inclusive teaching and learning** – we are working with students and staff to ensure that all of our programmes are inclusive by design and support students to succeed.
- 6. Developing belonging and providing opportunities** – we continue to develop ways for students to feel part of a learning community and to be able to engage in opportunities that help them to showcase and develop their learning.
- 7. Staff Diversity** – we are continuing to focus on diversifying our staff base so that we create role models for students.
- 8. Speak Up** – we are committed to creating a culture where everyone feels they belong.

How students can get involved

We work with the Students' Union to gather student input which helps us design and review our approaches to access and participation. The committee that approves and monitors this plan (the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee) has student members.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

Our programmes of activity are informed by the best evidence about what works for students. We evaluate our programmes to understand the impact this has, and have developed an evaluation cycle that enables us to evaluate our work at the right time. This means we will evaluate aspects of all of the eight programmes described above. We will also consider how the programmes contribute to our overall targets to widen access and ensure all students can succeed.

When evaluating we consider:

- If the design and approach for our work are the best way to achieve impact
- The impact we are having – this will always include a mixture of data indicators and qualitative feedback from students and/or staff

The Access and Participation Plan monitoring Group will monitor and report on these processes to the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee. The Committee will oversee implementation of actions to ensure ongoing progress against yearly milestones in our access and participation plan. We will monitor impact on our target groups, to ensure we are addressing our aims. Where appropriate, we will adjust our interventions in the best interests of our students. We will publish evidence from our evaluations on our website by January 2024.

Contact details for further information

Please contact edi@uwe.ac.uk for further information.