

## Access and Participation Plan 2024-25 to 2027-28 – Summary

### What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans describe how universities will ensure that students, especially those who are currently underrepresented, have better chances to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education. You can see the full access and participation plan for the University of the West of England, Bristol on our [website](#).

### What are the key points of the plan?

The main focus of our APP is on closing our awarding gaps. These are differences in the rate at which students achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above. We are committed to closing these gaps by 2030, in part by striving to become an anti-racist university by listening to and utilising the lived experience of ethnically minoritized students and staff. We are committed to widening access to higher education for underrepresented groups, we hope to achieve this by working closely with local schools, colleges and other organisations to ensure there are a range of routes into higher education. We will also be continuing to support young people to understand how to find the best option for them and build their confidence in their ability to succeed. We are aiming to ensure that students who are currently underrepresented are supported to complete their studies, through activities such as financial support, promotion of good mental wellbeing, and supporting students in practice-based learning opportunities.

### What fees do we charge?

Our undergraduate study fees in 2023/24 are a maximum of £9,250 a year for full-time UK home 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](#).

### What financial help is available?

We provide a range of financial support for students including:

- £500 bursaries for students from household incomes of <£25K.
- £1650 enhanced childcare bursary (household income of <£25K and in receipt of Childcare Grant from student finance).
- UWE Cares enhanced bursary of £1650 per year + £500 on graduation (household income of <£25K and eligible for UWE Cares support).
- Sanctuary scholarship and other scholarships targeted at low-income households and specific ethnic groups.
- Hardship funds of up to £400.
- £1000 employment bursary for students undertaking eligible optional employability activities, expanded to cover global travel, degree shows, course trip costs etc

We will also be promoting opportunities for students to work on campus by scrutinising and expanding student job opportunities and taking a student first approach to part time work.

### How are we informing students about the provisions of the plan?

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, we even 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 are we 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:

- Eliminating the difference in rates of those accessing university between students from the least deprived areas and the most deprived areas (as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation), by increasing the proportion of successful applications from students living in the most deprived postcode areas.
  
- Eliminating the difference in rates of achieving a good degree outcome (2:1 or above) for the following groups of students:
  - White students and Black students, by putting mechanisms in place to increase the award of good honours to Black students.
  - White students and Asian students, by putting mechanisms in place to increase the award of good honours to Asian students.
  - Students from the least deprived areas and the most deprived areas (as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation), by putting mechanisms in place to increase the award of good honours to students from the most deprived postcode areas.
  
- Eliminating the difference in rates of degree completion for the following groups of students:
  - White students and Black students, by increasing the rate at which Black students complete their studies.
  - Students with no known disability and students with a **declared** mental health condition, by increasing the rate at which students with a mental health condition complete their studies.
  - Female students and male students, by increasing the rate at which male students in specific subject areas complete their studies.

### **What are we doing to achieve our aims?**

1. **Widening Access and Raising Attainment** – working in partnership with local schools to raise attainment before aged 16 and ensure that applicants will have the knowledge and support to make the right decisions regarding higher education.
2. **Financial Support** – our financial support packages support students to feel connected to the university and to engage in their learning.
3. **Inclusive Learning Experiences** –working with students and staff to ensure that all of our programmes are inclusive by design and support students to succeed.
4. **Deepening Practice Based Learning** – improving the experiences of students on placement to promote positive academic outcomes and ensuring students are better prepared for work after graduating.
5. **Mentally Healthy University** – embedding a strong whole university culture of prioritising good mental health focusing on the academic programme, pastoral and academic support, and specialist student services.

### **How can students get involved in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the plan?**

Students were involved throughout all stages of the APP development process. Students were firstly invited to meetings to discuss our suggestions and were then asked to complete a survey to provide feedback once the plan was drafted. The Students' Union presidents' team was also given the opportunity to review the draft APP and provide comment before submission. Now that the plan has been approved, students will be invited to get involved with the monitoring and evaluation of the plan. We will hold regular meetings with students once the activities in the plan are underway, to ask them how they think the activities are going and find out if they have any suggestions for improvements.

### **How is the plan being evaluated?**

All of the activities in our plan were designed based on existing evidence about what works for students. We have a dedicated team of EDI data and evaluation experts, whose priority is to ensure all activities included within our APP are evaluated to the highest level. We will explore how effectively the activities meet their aims and will consider how well the activities are helping us achieve our overall targets and ensure that all students can succeed. We will be using a wide range of different evaluation methods over the course of the APP. This will include listening to individual stories from staff and students, using techniques to explore whether activities appear to be *related* to positive results, and using more complex techniques to explore whether activities are likely to have *caused* a positive effect. We will be using methods such as surveys, data analysis, interviews, uptake rates of financial support, and monitoring of recruitment processes.

We have developed a plan to publish our evaluation findings on an external web page, where we can routinely upload all evaluation findings, both those that support our activities and those that show what is not working. We publish an annual UWE Bristol EDI impact report which we are hoping will be another route to sharing our evaluation findings.

### **Contact details for further information**

Please contact [edi@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:edi@uwe.ac.uk) for further information.