

Appendix 1

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



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What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans describe how higher education providers (universities or colleges providing higher education, or degree level, study) will improve equality of opportunity for individuals that are currently under-represented among higher education learners.

These plans focus on an individual's admission to university (**access**); their academic progress whilst at university (**success**); and whether they continue to study or secure a graduate-level job when they have completed their study (**progress**).

You can read our full 20/21 to 2024/25 access and participation plan here: [LBU Access and Participation Plan](#). Our additional activities for academic year 2023/24 are included in Appendix 2.

Key points

Leeds Beckett University's access and participation plan focusses on: raising the attainment of learners in schools where a significant proportion of pupils are from under-represented groups; as well as increasing the proportions of students with specific characteristics who come to university, are successful in their studies and secure graduate level jobs or continue in education after graduation. This has been informed by analysis of our own data. Compared to their peers at Leeds Beckett University, entry rates and outcomes are lower for some groups of students with certain characteristics:

- Ethnic minority/global majority students are less likely to achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above and progress to highly skilled graduate jobs and further study than their white peers
- Students from deprived areas (where household incomes are low) are less likely to access university, continue in their studies, achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above, and progress to highly skilled graduate jobs and/or further study than students from areas with higher household incomes
- Students from low participation areas (areas where the proportion of people who attend university is below the national average) are less likely to access, continue in their studies, and achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above than students where higher proportions of people have benefited from a University-level/ higher education
- We need to increase the numbers of students with disabilities and mature students.

Fees we charge [see the fee information appendix of the full plan]

The maximum fees we charge are (correct for academic year 2021/22):

- £9,250 for full-time undergraduate students
- £6,935 for part-time undergraduate students

Financial help available [see page 24 of the full plan]

We have five financial support packages for students from underrepresented groups. These are designed to help students to attend university and continue their study until their course is completed:

- A **hardship fund** to support students who experience financial hardship during their studies
- An annual bursary of between £1,000 and £1,500 for students who are **care leavers or estranged** from their family
- An annual bursary of £1,000 for students who are **primary carers** of a dependent adult
- A total **summer fund** of £50,000 to enable care leavers, carers and students estranged from their families to study during school holidays
- A **disability bursary** of up to £200 for students with disabilities and a household income below £25,000 to help with purchasing IT equipment

Information for students [see page 28 of the full plan]

Prospective students receive information on fees and financial support at in-person events, such as our open days, and by email and website communications.

Current students receive information and support about fees and the financial support available through internal communications and our dedicated staff in our student support team.

For the most up-to-date information, see our [University website](#) .

What we are aiming to achieve [see pages 13-17 of the full plan]

Our overall aim is to support students to access higher education and receive a good degree. We want to create an environment where Leeds Beckett University students can achieve their full potential. Based on assessment of the performance of all our students, we focus our access and participation work in the following areas:

- **Students with ethnic minority/global majority heritage** – by 2024-25, we will:
 - reduce the access gap to 51.9 percentage points
 - reduce the attainment gap between White and Asian students to 5 percentage points
 - reduce the attainment gap between White and Black students to 9 percentage points
 - reduce the attainment gap between White and BAME students to 5 percentage points
 - eradicate the attainment gap between White and BAME students with high tariff points
 - eradicate the gap in progression to highly skilled employment and further study for Black and Asian graduates compared to their white peers

- **Students from deprived areas (low household income)** – by 2024-25, we will:
 - reduce the access gap to 20 percentage points
 - eradicate the gap in continuation rate
 - reduce the attainment gap to 5.5 percentage points
 - eradicate the gap in progression to highly skilled employment and further study
- **Students from low Higher Education participation areas** – by 2024-25, we will:
 - reduce the access gap to 5.6 percentage points
 - reduce the gap in continuation rate to 2 percentage points
 - reduce the attainment gap to 1.9 percentage points
- **Students with disabilities** – by 2024-25, we will reduce the access gap to 73.3 points
- **Mature students** – by 2024-25, we will reduce the access gap to 70.1 percentage points

What we are doing to achieve our aims [see pages 17-24 of the full plan]

We have identified five areas of activity to support the achievement of our aims and targets:

1. Partnership **work with schools**:
 - supporting pupils from underrepresented groups to achieve good A level and Btec exam grades in order to progress to study for a higher education qualification
 - Working with pupils and teachers to raise attainment among pre-16 year old learners
2. **Contextual admissions** – which take into consideration the prior educational experience of pupils from under-represented groups when applying for a place at the university.
3. Achieving the key aims of our **Education strategy**, which are:
 - *Inclusive learning* – we are continuing to develop inclusive learning practices and materials to ensure our education is relevant to all our learners. We are diversifying our staff body; and aligning our processes and teaching with best practice, as outlined in the Race Equality Charter
 - *Course coherence* – we review all courses to ensure that the content helps the learner to progress logically through their chosen subject area. We identify and reduce potential barriers to students continuing in their studies and achieving a good degree.
 - *Attainment* – we examine the unexplained attainment gaps between global majority students at subject, course and module levels, when compared to white students, in order to reduce those gaps in the future.
4. **Graduate progression** – we analyse data from our employability activity, including the profile of students who participate in employability activities, and their progress into a graduate job. This informs how we increase student participation with our activities as well as their impact and value to our students, graduates and employers.
5. **Financial support** – we offer bursaries and hardship funding for eligible students as well as practical support for students applying for financial support.

The University also has a range of expert colleagues who provide a range of services to students including mental health support, and specialist learning support. The size and scale of this service is regularly reviewed to respond to student demand.

How students get involved

We worked with the Students' Union to gather student input into the design of our access and participation plan. Students are represented on our Access & Participation Scrutiny Committee (APSC), which oversees all aspects of our access and participation work and which reports to the University's Academic Board, on which student representatives are also included.

To provide feedback, students can contact their [student union representative](#) or our access and participation lead (see contact section below).

Evaluation – how we measure what we have achieved

Our programmes of activity are informed by the best available evidence about what works for students. We will collect data to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of our five strands of activity
- Monitor progress against our targets using our internal data and the annual data release from the Office for Students. This prompts an annual review of our Theory of Change and the effectiveness of our range of programmes
- Assess the appropriateness of our areas of focus throughout the career of a student while studying at the university
- Ensure school fora and student representative recommendations are acted on where they are reported to APSC and/or Academic Board

The APSC monitors and reports on all aspects of access and participation to the University Executive Team and to Academic Board. The Committee oversees progress against targets and yearly milestones in our access and participation plan. We will use the official and internal data to ensure the focus of our access and participation plan remains appropriate and effective. We have recently introduced a monitoring and evaluation sub-committee of data specialists who report to the APSC.

Contact for further information

You can contact us at schoolsandcolleges@leedsbeckett.ac.uk for further information, marking your enquiry 'LBU APP'.