University of Bristol

2020-21 to 2024-25 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

Access and Participation Plans (APP) 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 the University of Bristol here.

Key points – for full details see page 9 of the full plan

We are a mid-sized university situated in the Southwest of England. Our advertised entry requirements are an average of 141 UCAS points and many of our programmes are oversubscribed.

In the past our student community was not as diverse as we would have liked. In recent years this has changed, and we now have more students from underrepresented groups than at any time in our history, however, further progress is needed.

This plan explains how we will make our university more diverse. We set out where we have had success, for example in recruiting more Black students, as well as where we need to improve.

The plan highlights that students from low-income households are still underrepresented in our student community. It also shows that students with mental health conditions and mature students are less likely than other students to complete their degree and Black students are less likely to achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above. The plan explains what we are doing to change this.

Fees we charge - for full details see page 23 of the full plan

For most programmes, our home, undergraduate tuition fees are set at £9,250, in line with the Government’s upper limit. If this limit is lifted it is likely that the University will raise fees to reflect this. For terms and conditions please visit: Home and EU | Current students | University of Bristol

For a small number of programmes, our tuition fees are below £9,250. These include our Foundation Years (£5,400) and part time degree in English Literature and Community Engagement (£3,500).

Tuition fees for home students studying part time will be calculated on a pro-rata basis, using £9,250 fee as the full-time equivalent rate. More information on fees for the current year is available here.

Financial help available – for full details see pages 17-18 of the full plan

Our support package for full time undergraduate students entering the University in 2022 is:

- A bursary of £2,060 for all students whose residual household income is £25k or below
- A bursary of £1,550 for all students whose residual household income is £25,001 - £30k
- A bursary of £1,290 for all students whose residual household income is £30,001 - £35k
- A bursary of £780 for all students whose residual household income is £35,001 - £40k
- A bursary of £520 for all students whose residual household income is £40,001 - £42,875
- An accommodation bursary of £1040 for first year students living in University accommodation with an income below £42,875 who normally live in an area of low participation in higher education.
• Participants in intensive outreach projects such as Bristol Scholars and Access to Bristol may also be eligible for a bursary of £3750.
• Hardship funds to provide additional support for students in financial difficulty.

Information for students - for full details see page 23 of the full plan

We understand the importance of providing clear information to all prospective applicants. We will communicate details relating to student finance by: student funding presentations in schools and colleges; open days; widening participation interventions and all offer holder events.

Information on tuition fees and financial support is published on the UCAS and Student Loan Company (SLC), websites. Details of tuition fee levels and the financial support available to students are published in our prospectus and website. Our Student Funding website includes information on the likely costs of studying at Bristol, financial support and eligibility criteria.

What we are aiming to achieve – for full details see pages 10-12 of the full plan

We aim to ensure that students of all backgrounds access the University, thrive and succeed. All students should see Bristol as a University where they will be supported to achieve their potential.

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

• Support attainment at school and access to higher education;
• Diversify entry routes by introducing flexible degrees and foundation years;
• Increase the proportion of our intake from underrepresented groups, such as but not limited to: mature students, students from low income backgrounds and Black students;
• Remove the gap in degree outcomes between students from minoritised ethnic groups and White students;
• Increase the proportion of mature students and students who have a mental health condition who continue in their studies;
• Increase the proportion of disabled students who go on to employment and further study when they graduate.

What we are doing to achieve our aims - for full details see pages 14-17 of the full plan

Support attainment at school and access to higher education: We will work with schools to help young people reach their potential and progress to study for a higher education qualification, if that is what they want to do. We will build on existing partnerships, through the Venturers Trust schools that we co-sponsor, and work closely with other schools in Bristol. Our activity will include regular interactions with the University to support teaching in key subjects and introductions to university life. We’ll do this with partners such as The Brilliant Club, Into University, South Bristol Youth.

Diversifying entry routes to the University by introducing flexible degrees and foundation years: We have recently launched our STEM foundation Year. We plan to introduce different types of degrees to meet the needs of people in Bristol, these could include part time and flexible options.

Increase the proportion of our intake from underrepresented groups, such as but not limited to, mature students and students from low income backgrounds: We will continue to deliver outreach projects for students from these groups in the years before they apply to University, such as summer schools and short courses like Access to Bristol. We also have an extensive contextual offers policy which supports students to access University and thrive when they are there.
**Remove the gap in degree outcomes between students from minoritised ethnic groups and White students:** We will continue to deliver our Be More Empowered for Success programme to improve the experience of students from minoritised ethnicities. We will continue our work to decolonise our curricula. We will launch the UniversalCity platform to connect new students with African and African Diaspora-owned businesses and community organisations in Bristol.

**Increase the proportion of mature students and students who have a mental health condition who continue in their studies:** We will continue to invest in mental health and wellbeing services for current students. We will train staff to ensure that they are able to effectively support students from diverse backgrounds. We will deliver targeted transition support such as the Building Up To Bristol pre-registration programme. This prepares mature students for their studies before term starts.

**Increase the proportion of disabled students who progress to employment and further study when they graduate:** We will partner with EmployAbility, who provide specialist careers support for disabled students. This includes 1-to-1 advocacy for final year students to help them navigate the graduate recruitment process and practice interviews and workshops including “EmployAbility: Mental health: your rights and adjustments”.

**How students can get involved – for full details see pages 19-20 of the full plan**

The role of our Students’ Union (SU), sabbatical officers (students who are elected to represent other students) and full-time members of staff is critical to the development of our work in this area.

Regular meetings take place between University staff and sabbatical officers. Bristol SU has developed its representation of students from underrepresented groups. This includes the development of the Mature Students Network and BAME Students Network. We engage with network chairs and this forms an important mechanism for student consultation.

We have recruited a team of current students from minoritised ethnicities as Be More Empowered for Success Advocates. The Advocates are consulted about a wide variety of areas of student life.

Current students play a large role in the delivery of outreach and student support work. Their experience as current students is invaluable to prospective and other current students.

We have established a scheme to empower students to deliver initiatives to attract a more diverse student community. We also ran an online forum for students and staff to discuss the refresh of the plan, giving them an opportunity to shape the way we work with schools to raise attainment.

**Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved – for full details see pages 20-21 of the full plan**

We will continuously improve our access, success and progression work. We have developed evaluation processes which enable decisions about programme design and delivery to be based on robust evidence. New projects are designed with evaluation built in at the outset. All projects are evaluated as part of annual impact reporting cycles; findings are used to demonstrate impact and improve practice.

**Contact details for further information**

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