

Bournemouth University

Summary of 2025-26 to 2028-29 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

An access and participation plan outlines how higher education (HE) providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups of students to access, succeed in and progress from HE. You can find our full access and participation plan [here](#):

Key points. See pages 1-5 of the full plan

At Bournemouth University (BU) we are committed to creating an inclusive community where all students can thrive. Our Access and Participation Plan (APP) targets improved outcomes for underrepresented groups in HE. At BU, our data highlights these key issues:

Access: Students from Asian, Black, Mixed or other ethnic backgrounds, and those who received free school meals or come from disadvantaged areas, are less likely to begin studying at BU.

Continuation and Success: Students from Asian, Black, Mixed or other ethnic backgrounds and those from disadvantaged areas, along with students with vocational qualifications, are less likely to complete their studies, achieve a 2:1 or above, or secure high-skilled employment.

While we've made progress in continuation, success and employability, outcomes remain inconsistent. Continued efforts are needed to achieve equitable results for all students.

Fees we charge. See page 24 of the full plan

At BU, the maximum fees for the 2025-26 academic year are:

- **£9,535** for full-time students
- **£1,850** for a sandwich/placement year

Tuition fees may increase annually, up to the maximum limit set by the UK government for that academic year. If there is a change to tuition fees, we will inform students in writing and provide details about the reason for the change.

For the most up-to-date information on our fees, visit [Fees and Funding | Bournemouth University](#).

Financial help available See pages 24 – 25 and 56 - 58 of the full plan

Our bursaries support students from low-income households, care experienced, and estranged students, helping with learning and living costs to ease financial pressures and support their success. The bursaries we offer include:

Bursary	Value per year of full-time academic study at BU	Eligibility summary (automatically allocated)
BU Maintenance Bursary	£800 per academic year, paid in 9 monthly instalments (October to June) via a pre-paid card.	Household income of £25,000 or less. Full eligibility details
BU Care Leavers Bursary*	£3,000 per academic year, paid in 9 monthly instalments (October to June) via a pre-paid card.	Verified care leaver; household income of £25,000 or less. Full eligibility details
BU Estrangement Bursary*	£3,000 per academic year, distributed in 9 monthly instalments (October to June) via a pre-paid card.	Verified estranged student, household income of £25,000 or less. Full eligibility details

*with [accommodation guarantee](#)

We offer additional support through:

Financial Support Fund: For students with a full Maintenance Loan from Student Finance England facing financial hardship.

Placement and Professional Opportunity Fund: For students with a household income below £25,000 or from underrepresented groups to support placement years or professional development.

Targeted Support Funds: These funds cover specific needs, including Laptop Support, Interview Expenses, and DSA-related costs.

Information for students See pages 24-25 of the full plan

Prospective Students: Information about fees and financial support is shared at events like Open Days and Taster Days, through emails, and on our website's pre-arrivals and course pages.

Current Students: Information is available on our website and through AskBU, our one-stop information and guidance service for both incoming and current students.

For the latest updates, visit the [AskBU](#) page on our website.

What we are aiming to achieve See pages 2-5 of the full plan

This plan aims to enhance the experiences and outcomes of student groups identified as underperforming in our data. It outlines five objectives targeting those at risk of lower outcomes:

1. **Improving Access:** Increasing opportunities for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds¹ to enter HE.
2. **Closing Continuation and Completion Gaps:** Addressing disparities for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, care-experienced students, Black and minority ethnic students, those with mental health conditions, and students aged 21-24 at entry (subject-specific).
3. **Supporting Vocational Pathways:** Reducing and closing continuation, completion, and degree-awarding gaps for students entering with vocational qualifications.
4. **Reducing Degree Awarding Gaps:** Halving degree-awarding gaps for students from Asian, black, mixed, or 'other' ethnic backgrounds, as well as students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, within the lifetime of the plan.

¹ By this we mean students who have been eligible for Free School Meals and those who come from relatively disadvantaged areas defined as those in Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) quintiles 1 or 2.

5. **Closing Employability Gaps:** Closing gaps for progression into high-skilled employment after graduating for students from Asian, black, mixed and 'other ethnic backgrounds and for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

What we are doing to address key risks to equality of opportunity. See pages 6-21 of the full plan

We are addressing equality of opportunity through six targeted intervention strategies:

1. **Access and Attainment Raising:** Enhancing skills, knowledge, and decision-making about HE through outreach and attainment-raising activities in schools and colleges.
2. **Transitions and Belonging:** Supporting students transitioning to university by increasing confidence and sense of community through tailored programmes.
3. **Engagement Skills and Academic Support:** Using data to identify and support at-risk students, providing academic and personal assistance to improve retention.
4. **Curriculum:** Promoting inclusivity through ongoing review and improvement of curriculum and assessment practices to meet diverse student needs.
5. **Welfare and Finance:** Reducing financial and personal barriers through accessible welfare and financial support, especially for disadvantaged students.
6. **Employability:** Preparing students from target groups for successful careers with access to placements, skill-building, and tailored career support.

How students can get involved. See pages 21-22 of the full plan

Students are integral to developing and delivering BU's APP. They contribute through representation on committees and working groups, participation in intervention strategy teams, and providing feedback to enhance activities and outcomes.

To get involved, contact the SUBU APP Consultants Group via the [SU Vice President \(Education\)](#) or reach out to the [Access and Participation Plan team](#).

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved. See pages 22-24 and Annex B of the full plan

BU evaluates all activities to ensure their effectiveness and impact. This includes collecting and analysing internal and external data, as well as gathering feedback from students and staff. The evaluation process helps refine activities, improve their design, and measure their outcomes for target groups.

Evaluation findings are reported internally, and BU aims to publish more evaluation results on its website during this plan's implementation period.

Contact details for further information

For further information or to provide feedback, please contact Bournemouth University's [Access and Participation team](#).