

Bournemouth University

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 Bournemouth University [here](#).

Key points

See pages 1- 6 of the full plan

The focus of our access and participation plan is on improving outcomes for specific groups of students. Data shows that, when compared to their peers at Bournemouth University, outcomes are lower for certain groups of students.

- Ethnic minority students, and students who come from an area where not many people go on to higher education are less likely to start and to continue studying after their first year.
- The following students are less likely to achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above:
 - Ethnic minority students
 - Students who have declared a disability including those with mental health issues
 - Mature students

Ethnic minority students and those who have some forms of disability have been less likely to progress on to highly skilled employment or further study.

Our employability and attainment rates have improved for these groups of students, and we have made progress with helping students to continue their studies. However, this has varied from year to year especially during the pandemic, and we still have further to go.

Fees we charge

See page 24 of the full plan

At Bournemouth University, the maximum fees charged are:

- £9250 for full-time students
- £1850 for Sandwich/Placement year

See page 18 of the full plan

Financial help available

We offer financial support to students from low-income households, and those who have been in care. This is designed to help students with their learning and living costs so that they can continue and succeed in their studies, with less worry about money. Our support includes:

- An automatic bursary of £2400 (£3200 for integrated foundation year courses), paid as £800 per year of full-time study if the student's household income is below £16,000;
- An automatic bursary of £9000 (£12000 for integrated foundation year courses), paid as £3000 per year of full-time study for students who have been in care;
- A Financial Support fund to support students who have received a full Student Maintenance Loan from Student Finance England and are suffering financial hardship;
- A Placement Opportunity fund to help students with household income below £25,000 or from an underrepresented group to take up a placement year.

Information for students

See pages 22-23 of the full plan

- Prospective students receive information on fees and financial support at events such as open days and taster days, by email and in our pre-arrivals and course pages on our website;
- Current students receive information about fees and financial support available through our website and through 'AskBU' our one stop information and guidance service for incoming and current students;
- For the most up-to-date information, see our [AskBU website](#).

What we are aiming to achieve

See pages 7-8 of the full plan

Our overall aim is to support students from all backgrounds to access, continue and succeed in higher education. We want to ensure that all students at Bournemouth University can achieve their full potential.

We have assessed our performance and identified the following areas where we are focusing our work:

- Supporting attainment at school and access to higher education - we plan to expand our programme of successful work with local schools to improve reading and numeracy;
- Diversifying the courses we offer – we have recently introduced Foundation Year programmes for many courses and will continue to consider how our degree apprenticeship provision could help achieve our aims for Access and Participation;
- For students from areas of low participation, and from low-income backgrounds, by 2024-25 we aim to:
 - Increase the number of students from areas of lowest participation coming to BU by 28% from 2017 levels (by between 5 and 6% each year);
 - Increase the proportion of these students continuing into the 2nd year by 2% so it matches students from more advantaged backgrounds.
- For ethnic minority students, by 2024-25 we aim to:
 - Increase the proportion of black students continuing into the 2nd year by 2% to match the continuation rate for white students;
 - Increase attainment of a good honours degree by 9%;
 - Increase progression to highly skilled employment or further study by 6%.
- For disabled students by 2024-25 we aim to improve the attainment of a good honours degree by 6%.

What we are doing to achieve our aims

See pages 11-18 of the full plan

To achieve our aims we are:

- Expanding the work we currently do with local schools to improve English and Maths skills so that more pupils from underrepresented groups can progress to study in higher education;

- Expanding our courses with an integrated Foundation year to help students who do not have the entry requirements to progress onto and succeed on our most popular degree courses;
- Enhancing our study skills provision including English and Maths support so that all students, especially those whose education was disrupted during the pandemic, are able to make a successful start to their Higher Education, continue beyond their first year and succeed in their studies;
- Improving the inclusivity of our teaching, learning and assessment with staff and student input. For example, students are involved in the design and review of our courses. This is so that all our students, whatever their background, have an equal chance to succeed and our attainment gap for ethnic minority students reduces;
- Ensuring that we support student wellbeing and work with the NHS and other agencies to support students with disabilities and those experiencing mental health difficulties;
- Providing flexibility and working to remove barriers for students taking up a placement opportunity as we know this improves their chance of moving on into graduate level employment;
- Working with our BU Alumni and local organisations to provide excellent careers advice and activities so that all our students and graduates can build the skills they need for a successful career.

How students can get involved

See page 19 of the full plan

Students are represented on the committees and groups which discuss and make decisions about Access and Participation at BU. They are also members of our Task and Finish Groups which develop activity to deliver our Access and Participation Plan aims. Students helped develop our Access and Participation Plan, and now provide feedback on the progress we are making, through a Shadow Access and Participation Plan Working Group.

To provide feedback, or become involved in this work students can:

- contact the SUBU Shadow Working Group through our [SU Vice President \(Education\)](#)
- contact our [Access and Participation Plan team](#)

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

See pages 20-22 of the full plan

We evaluate our activity so that we understand how well it is achieving our aims. We design our activity based on evidence about what works for our students at BU. To do this, we collect data and feedback on all of our activities, to understand:

- the impact of all our activity on our aims;
- the design of our activity and how it can be improved;
- each of the actions we have described above;
- how our activity affects each of our target groups.

Evaluation and monitoring is reported back to the Access, Excellence and Impact Committee. This committee oversees how we deliver the actions in our Access and Participation Plan and ensures that we continue to make progress against our yearly milestones. If necessary we will make changes to our actions in the best interests of our students.

Contact details for further information

You can contact our [Access and Participation team](#) for further information.