

University of Wolverhampton

Summary of 2024-25 to 2027-28 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

An access and participation plan sets 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 Wolverhampton at <https://www.wlv.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/access-and-participation-plans/>

Key points

[See pages 1 and 31 of the Plan for more information]

We have a tradition of attracting students from from our local area with 82% of our students recruited from within a 25 mile radius of the University. We have over 21,000 students and the majority are registered on full-time, first degree courses. We have near equal proportions of White and Global Majority students as well as near equal proportions of young to mature students.

Fees we charge

The maximum fees charged are:

- £9,250 for full-time students.
- £6,935 for part-time students.
- £11,100 for full-time students on accelerated degrees.

You can see a full list of our fees at <https://www.wlv.ac.uk/apply/funding-costs-fees-and-support/fees-and-costs/>

Financial help available [See page 30 of the Plan for more information]

We offer financial support to students from groups that are under-represented in HE:

- An **Access bursary** of £1,000 in the first year of study and another £1,000 in the second year of study for students who:
 - are deaf or have hearing loss or other hearing impairment; or
 - are a Care Leaver or an estranged student.
- A **Hardship Fund** for students experiencing financial hardship. Students can apply to the Hardship Fund if they have had a significant change in circumstances since enrolling on the course and are struggling to cope financially. Students can apply to the Hardship Fund if they have taken up and are in receipt of all statutory support that is available.

We also offer the **WLV Wallet bursary** for all new UK full-time undergraduate students studying at a University campus. Eligible students will receive £200 in their first year and £100 on successful enrolment onto the next level of their studies.

Details and full eligibility criteria can be found at <https://www.wlv.ac.uk/apply/funding-costs-fees-and-support/financial-support/scholarships/>

Information for students [See page 30 of the Plan for more information]

Prospective students can find information about fees and any additional course costs on our [website](#), in our prospectus and other relevant marketing material; we also provide information during outreach and recruitment events and at Open Days.

Prospective students are told about the financial support they may be entitled to through emails and letters as well as through our [website](#) and at Open Days.

What we are aiming to achieve [See pages 2 and 3 of the Plan for more information]

We want all our students to achieve their full potential. We strive to create opportunity, deliver social mobility and transform lives. We have been successful in creating opportunities for students to join the University and we are working to ensure that the right academic and personal support is in place to help students complete their studies and to achieve good outcomes irrespective of their background.

We have identified the following risks to equality of opportunity:

- Students from more deprived neighbourhoods in the local region might think that they do not have the relevant knowledge and skills to enter and achieve in higher education. This may have a particular impact on competitive vocational programmes such as Nursing.
- Students who enter higher education with BTEC qualifications may not have the same knowledge and skills as students who enter with A-Level qualifications and may therefore not achieve the same level of outcome if there is insufficient academic support to provide the necessary up-skilling.
- Global Majority students and students from more deprived neighbourhoods may have had fewer opportunities to acquire and develop the knowledge, skills, information and guidance required to succeed in higher education, and may therefore not achieve the same level of outcome as other students if there is insufficient academic and personal support available. This may also have a direct impact on the mental health and wellbeing of these students.
- Students from more deprived neighbourhoods may not achieve the same level of outcome as other students as a result of cost pressures, which may result in students' having to undertake additional paid work and which may also have an impact on students' mental health and wellbeing.
- Mature students may have had fewer opportunities to acquire and develop the knowledge, skills, information and guidance required to succeed in higher education and may therefore be at risk on not continuing or completing their higher education studies if there is insufficient academic and personal support available.
- Mature students may not be able to continue and complete their higher education studies as a result of cost pressures, which may result in students' having to undertake additional paid work and which may also have an impact on the mental health and wellbeing of these students.
- Global Majority students may have had fewer opportunities to acquire and develop the knowledge, skills, information and guidance, required to succeed in higher education, which may result in lower progression rates compared with white students if there is insufficient academic and personal support available in higher education to allow them to succeed to their full potential.
- Students entering with a BTEC qualifications may not have the same knowledge and skills as students who enter with A-Level qualifications and may therefore not achieve the same level of progression if there is insufficient academic support to provide the necessary up-skilling to allow them to succeed to their full potential.

We aim to:

- Maintain strong access rates for learners from more deprived backgrounds through a targeted programme of attainment raising activity.
- Increase interview success rates for nursing applicants from more deprived backgrounds.
- Eliminate the awarding gap between the following groups of students by 2029/30: students entering higher education with BTEC qualifications and students entering with A-Levels; Global Majority and white students; students from more deprived neighbourhoods and those from the least deprived neighbourhoods.

- Improve the completion rates of students entering higher education with BTEC qualifications and the completion rates of mature students to a minimum of 80% by 2028.
- Improve the progression rates for Global Majority students and students entering the University with BTEC qualifications to a minimum of 75% by 2028.

What we are doing to address keys risks to equality of opportunity

[See pages 3-24 of the Plan for more information]

We have developed intervention strategies to help us address the risks to equality of opportunity listed above. These strategies are made up of a variety of activities; below are some examples of the activities we plan to deliver:

- Science and Maths sessions in secondary schools as well as subject-specific mentoring designed to raise attainment.
- Pre-entry online courses to address the knowledge, skills and academic support required for students who are entering the University with A-Level equivalent qualifications or with little/no background of higher education.
- A revised induction to the University which includes more information about our support services.
- Targeted support from Academic Coaches and Personal Tutors to support those at risk of not continuing or completing their studies.
- Development of students' assessment literacy skills (e.g., increased use of formative assessment opportunities; choice of assessment type, where appropriate; student-led 'What's my assignment?' unpacking activities).
- A peer support scheme to support transition into the University and to increase continuation and completion.
- More involvement of students in the University's decision-making because we believe that increasing students' feelings of empowerment and belonging will make them more likely to continue with and complete their studies.
- Development of our Individual Learner Profile which will help us to identify students who would benefit from more support to help them engage with their studies.
- Use of learner analytics to help us to identify students who might be at risk of disengaging with their studies.
- Embed employability into the curriculum to increase awareness of employment opportunities available to different subjects.
- Tailored career mentoring and Boot Camps for those groups of students who need more support to enter professional employment or enrol upon further study.

How students can get involved [See page 27 of the Plan for more information]

We will develop the activities described above and others in the Plan in close consultation with students from across the University. As well as helping to plan the activities, students are represented on the groups that oversee the Plan.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

[See pages 27-30 of the Plan for more information]

We use evaluation – evidence about what is, or is not, effective – to help us to decided the best way to achieve our aims. We are working on a number of evaluation projects across the University as we seek to make improvements to courses and projects and to identify the activities that work best to improve student experience and outcomes.

Contact details for further information

Professor Phil Gravestock, Dean of Students and Education – P.Gravestock@wlv.ac.uk