

Access and Participation Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29 summary

Buckinghamshire New University

Summary of dates for which this plan applies, 2025-26 to 2028-29 Access and Participation Plan

What is an access and participation plan?

An Access and Participation Plan sets out provisions that will be meaningful and effective in promoting equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups, as determined by the Office for Students.

You can see the full access and participation plan for Buckinghamshire New University at [Access and Participation Plan | Buckinghamshire New University](#)

Key points

The focus of our Access and Participation Plan (the Plan) aligns with our university commitment to involve and empower our community, to take action to tackle inequalities, and to build a university community where all our students can thrive and achieve their potential. Our plan intends to close gaps to on-course outcomes (continuation, completion, and attainment) for students where we have identified potential risks to equality of opportunity may be present.

Our data show that some groups of students might be less likely to continue or complete their studies than others. These student groups are:

- Students from Black and Asian backgrounds
- Students from the lowest income backgrounds

Our data also show that some groups of students are less likely to achieve a First or 2:1 degree classification than others. These groups are:

- Students from the lowest income backgrounds
- Students from Black and Asian backgrounds
- Mature students (defined as 21 years and over)

See pages 58-112 in [Annex A](#) of the access and participation plan for more information.

In our Plan, we have committed to a range of activities across our academic, student support and development (including for career progression), and data monitoring provision that we believe will address these challenges.

Fees we charge

The maximum fees we charge for a UK undergraduate student at Buckinghamshire New University is £9,250 per year.

See **pages 141** of the access and participation plan for more information.

See also [Fees, Liability and Instalment Dates | Buckinghamshire New University](#) for the most up to date information about fees we charge.

Financial help available, information and support for students

BNU provides a comprehensive range of financial support for students. This support helps learners access higher education and continue studying until their course is completed. The support includes bursaries (Thrive Bursary, Care Leavers Bursary, Estranged Student Bursary, Gypsy, Traveller, Roma and Boater Bursary), financial aid (Emergency Aid, Hardship Fund), disability assistance, BNU Learning Resource Fund.

See **pages 12-14 and 26-31** of the access and participation plan for more information. We provide information to students via our website, open days, applicant days, school visits, welcome week and directly from the Directorate for Student Success. Our Student Hub provides a 'one-stop-shop' for student support and advice about services available. Our Students' Union also provides a range of guidance and advice to support students.

For the most up to date information, see our website via the links below:

Financial Help

[Undergraduate financial support | Buckinghamshire New University](#)

Student Support

[Student Success and Support | Buckinghamshire New University](#)

What we are aiming to achieve

Our plan contains 9 objectives and 4 targets which aim to tackle our key risks to on-course success that we have prioritised in our plan. Our intervention strategies are designed to address potential risks to equality of opportunity. BNU's targets are:

- Eliminate the gap in continuation and completion rates for Black and Asian students, and those from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (Targets 1 to 5).
- Close the degree outcome gaps for Black and Asian students, mature students, and those from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds (Targets 6 to 9).

See page 8 of the access and participation plan for more information.

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

We have developed strategies to address risks to equality of opportunity and achieve our objectives. These outline activities to mitigate risks and meet our objectives. We have designed five intervention strategies which are:

Intervention Strategy 1 – Preparation, Induction and Transitions Programme

- This strategy focuses on academic support and building students' sense of belonging and social connections
- It supports planned and scaffolded student transitions throughout the entire student course of study as a multi-year approach

Intervention Strategy 2 – Intentional Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, and Monitoring

- This strategy focuses on delivering a curriculum that is flexible, inclusive, and centred on student partnership
- It also includes embedded support, co-creation and expanded one-to-one academic support
- It also includes an approach where employability is embedded in the curriculum with improved targeted in-house and external student support

Intervention Strategy 3 – Enhancing Targeted Student Support

This strategy builds on our existing extensive student support but goes further in line with our priorities to improve on-course success for all learners.

- This includes development of a new Student Hub and 'one-stop-shop' for more responsive support

- It also includes a package of financial support to address cost-of-living pressures, additional advice and support through our Students' Union such as the Big Deal, and a range of disability and inclusion support
- It includes targeted bursaries and hardship funds
- It also includes mentoring support and reverse mentoring programmes between students (mentors) and senior leaders (mentees)

Intervention Strategy 4 – Authentic Employability Development and Placements

- This strategy concentrates on universal placements to enhance on-course success and graduate prospects.
- It includes a whole-university approach to placements to support student careers and employability
- It also includes the development of an employer engagement strategy to inform placement expansion

Intervention Strategy 5 – Partner Support and Development

- This strategy focuses on continued and developed close working with university partners to improve on-course success. This is underpinned by improvement planning strategies, support and development for self-evaluation and migration to a refreshed curriculum
- It also includes strengthened support with data insights and quality improvement
- It also includes supporting partners with wider external engagement with key stakeholders such as TASO and Advance HE

See pages 9-40 of the access and participation plan for more information.

How students can get involved

- Our Students' Union are fully involved in policy making and all areas related to access, participation and inclusivity
- Students' Union officers and management are represented on all levels of governance at BNU
- Student representatives and Students' Union leaders have been fully involved in the development of the access and participation plan. Our APP Oversight Group will have student and Students' Union representation to monitor progress against our targets and feedback about their experience at BNU
- We have implemented a reverse mentoring programme pairing students from our target groups with senior university leaders to inform improvements
- Students who want to get involved in the delivery of APP activity can contact the access and participation team

See pages 46-47 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

Evaluation is part of our commitment to produce evidence-based good practice to improve equality of opportunity. This includes internal monitoring and evaluation and external collaboration with sector bodies such as TASO and SEER (the Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research service) to disseminate good practice and learning from these findings.

See pages 48-49 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Contact details for further information

Please contact Professor Paul Morgan at paul.morgan@bnu.ac.uk (01494 522141) for more information.