

Oxford Brookes University

Summary of our 2025-2029 Access and Participation Plan

What is an access and participation plan?

An access and participation plan is a document every university must have that sets out how it will improve and promote equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups of students.

You can read the full [Access and Participation Plan for Oxford Brookes University](#) on our website.

Access and participation at Oxford Brookes

Our founder, John Henry Brookes, believed that everyone should have access to education. That's why he created the college that we were founded on over 150 years ago, and it's why ensuring everyone has an equal opportunity to access an education at Oxford Brookes remains central to our mission today.

Our Access and Participation Plan sets out where we need to do more to provide equality of opportunity for students in our region and who study with us, and what we will do to achieve this. The University has five core beliefs - we call them our Guiding Principles - that drive what we do and how we do it. The work in this plan sits within our Inclusivity guiding principle: we take positive steps to create an environment in which we celebrate, value, and provide equal opportunity to all.

See pages 1-2 and 35-36 of the [Access and Participation Plan](#) for more information.

Fees we charge

Our undergraduate tuition fees for UK students are usually £9,250¹ a year for full-time study. Some of our foundation years, foundation degrees, and work placement years charge a lower fee. You can find [more information about our fees on our website](#).

Financial help available

The Oxford Brookes Bursary is available to UK students from households with lower incomes. If you complete a household income assessment through the Student Loans Company, and allow this information to be shared with universities, we'll pay the Bursary automatically to you if you are eligible.

Household income	Oxford Brookes Bursary (per year, for each year of your course)
Under £35,000	£1,250
£35,000 - £45,000	£1,000

We also offer specific financial support for care experienced students, young carers, students who are estranged from their families, and students seeking asylum. Use our [funding finder tool](#) to find out what financial support is available to you and how to apply.

See page 37 of our full [Access and Participation Plan](#) for more information.

¹ Following the government's announcement of 4 November 2024, we expect to increase our undergraduate tuition fees for UK students to £9,535 from the start of the 2025/26 academic year. Please visit [The Education Hub](#) for more information about the changes. We will confirm our fees for 2025/26 as soon as possible.

What we are trying to achieve

Our objectives set out what we are trying to achieve through our Access and Participation Plan. We used information about our current students and those from other universities, as well as feedback from our students and staff to identify the areas where we have most progress to make.

We aim to:

- increase the proportion of new students at Oxford Brookes from low socioeconomic backgrounds and those of black and mixed ethnicity.
- improve the number of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds who progress to their next year of study.
- increase the proportion of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and students of black and mixed ethnicity who are awarded a 2:1 or first class honours degree.
- improve the rates of progression into further study or higher level employment for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and for students from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities.

We have identified seven key risks to equality of opportunity that are specific to Oxford Brookes:

Risk 1: Perceptions of higher education and of Oxford as a place to study: Students may not apply to higher education, or consider Oxford as a place for them to study, despite being qualified.

Risk 2: Knowledge, skills and experience: Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills needed to enter into, succeed and progress from higher education.

Risk 3: Recruitment and selection: Students may not have an equal chance of being accepted onto a course at Oxford Brookes despite having the potential to succeed.

Risk 4: Belonging and shaping: Students may not have a positive student experience while at Oxford Brookes because they don't feel they belong within the university community.

Risk 5: Student support: Students may not have equal access to, or do not feel able or confident to reach out to, the academic and personal support that is available for them at Oxford Brookes and that will support them to succeed in and beyond higher education.

Risk 6: Mental health: Students may experience mental health difficulties that may impact their studies.

Risk 7: Affordability: Increased cost of living may affect a student's ability to access and succeed in higher education.

See pages 3-9 of the [Access and Participation Plan](#) for more information.

What we at Oxford Brookes are doing to address key risks to equality of opportunity

For students before they start university

- We will deliver a range of projects to support students considering university to develop the skills and knowledge they need to make an informed choice about higher education. We will target this particularly at students who are underrepresented at Oxford Brookes. This will include working with teachers and careers advisors (for example our Teacher action research project on page 10 of the [Access and Participation Plan](#)) as well as working directly with school, college and adult learners to support specific groups of students (for example our Brookes and Beyond programme for children in care).
- We will improve our understanding of why some applicants are less likely to receive an offer from Oxford Brookes, and use this to take action to ensure that all applicants who have the potential to succeed at Oxford Brookes have an equal chance of receiving an offer, and are supported to transition into University.

- We will provide additional support for students who may face financial barriers or concerns, to support them to understand and access the financial support that is available to them.

See pages 9-18 of our [Access and Participation Plan](#) for more information.

For students studying at Oxford Brookes

- We will offer direct financial support through the Brookes Bursary and targeted scholarships.
- We will implement buddy schemes to provide peer support at all stages and throughout a student's programme of study.
- We will provide targeted support to help students through major changes or transitions in their university journey from starting university through to graduation.
- We will evaluate existing University initiatives for impact on students identified within our Access and Participation Plan, and provide recommendations for improvements that would benefit the students.
- We will develop opportunities to enable students to undertake a variety of quality part-time work within the University.

See pages 19-28 of our access and participation plan for more information.

Preparing students for postgraduate employment or further study

- We will extend existing placement mentoring schemes for current students and explore how this could be enhanced to support students in preparing for postgraduate employment or further study.
- We will deliver and evaluate workshops within our Thrive Festival week, which promotes enterprise and entrepreneurship, and provide tailored industry-focused events throughout the academic year.
- We will develop materials to support Oxford Brookes colleagues in applying good practice in the recruitment and professional development of students employed by the University.
- We will embed the activities identified within our Access and Participation Plan within the BrookesEDGE framework that provides recognition for students who take part in certain co-curricular activities. Students who contribute to the activities will be able to gain and articulate the competencies developed, and use these as evidence for future employers.

See pages 29-34 of our [Access and Participation Plan](#) for more information.

How students can get involved

Our Access and Participation Plan has been developed with students, through our Student Partners initiative and [Brookes Union](#). Student Partners are paid positions, offering students the opportunity to become involved in a variety of projects across the University. We advertise these posts through the Careers Service [JobShop](#) at the beginning of each academic year. We will continue to engage with students as we deliver and evaluate the plan.

See pages 36-37 of our [Access and Participation Plan](#) for more information.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

We will evaluate the activities within our Access and Participation Plan to monitor whether they are having the impact we expect to see. We will use this to inform the ongoing development of activity at Oxford Brookes, and will share findings with colleagues working across the higher education sector to support their practice. Wherever possible we will include students and stakeholders to work with us to design and implement our evaluation activities.

See pages 34-36 and Annex B of the [Access and Participation Plan](#) for more information.

Contact details for further information

We would like to hear from you. Please contact us at wp.evaluationteam@brookes.ac.uk for more information.