

## **Plain English version of the Access and Participation Plan**

University of Liverpool

### 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 University of Liverpool at <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/about/APP2020-25.pdf>

#### **Key points (see pages 1-12 for our Assessment of Performance).**

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

##### Access:

- We will reduce the gap in participation between the most and least represented groups
- We will increase the percentage of entrants that have been in local authority care
- We will increase the proportion of Realising Opportunities students entering Research Intensive Universities (collaborative target).

##### Success:

- We will eliminate the gap in continuation between most and least represented groups
- We will eliminate the gap in degree attainment between white and black students, disabled and non-disabled students, students with registered mental health disabilities and non-disabled students
- We will reduce the gap in continuation between mature and young students, care experienced and non-care experienced students
- We will reduce the gap in degree attainment between students from the least and most deprived areas, white and BAME students.

##### Progression:

- We will reduce the gap in Progression between students from the least and most represented groups.

## **Fees we charge (see page 33 for a full list of fees).**

At the University of Liverpool the maximum fees charged are:

- £9,250 for full-time students
- £6,935 for part-time students.

## **Financial help available (see page 26 of our plan, or visit [here](#) for an up-to-date list of our Bursaries and Scholarships).**

We offer financial support based on household income, as well as for several groups identified as being underrepresented at university. Awards cannot be taken in conjunction and students will automatically receive the most generous award:

- Students with a household income of up to £25,000 will currently receive a £2,000 bursary
- Students whose household income falls between £25,000 and £35,000 will currently receive a bursary of £750
- Care Leavers' Opportunity Bursary for UK students who have spent a minimum of 13 weeks in Local Authority care since the age of 14 and are under 28 years of age. Students receive £3,000 which can be taken as a cash bursary or as partial of a fee waiver
- Scholars/Realising Opportunities for UK students who enter the University of Liverpool as part of the programme. Students receive £2,000 per year which can be taken either as a cash award or part of a fee reduction
- Estranged Student Bursary for UK students estranged from their parents or carers who successfully complete an application and attend an eligibility interview. Students receive £1,000 as a cash bursary of a partial fee waiver
- Young Adult Carer Bursary for UK students who are defined as young adult carers (aged 18- 25 providing care for a dependent other than their own child) and in receipt of a carer's allowance. Students receive a £1,000 cash bursary or partial fee waiver
- Mature Student Bursary for students entering the University aged over 25 years old and embarking on their first degree of study and not in receipt of any other University financial award. Students will receive £1,000 as a cash bursary or partial fee waiver for one year
- Postgraduate Opportunity Bursary for UK University of Liverpool graduates who are progressing to a standard master's course, including MRes programmes, within two years of graduation from their undergraduate degree. Graduates must have been in receipt of one of the University's Widening Access Awards during their undergraduate studies. Students will receive £3,000 to be taken either as a cash bursary or partial fee waiver
- Asylum Seekers Bursary available for up to four undergraduate students who have sought asylum in the UK and are embarking on their first degree of study. The bursary covers the cost of tuition and provides awards from £3,000 to support living costs for each year of study
- Employability Bursary of up to £500 to help students with the costs of travel, accommodation or a work experience opportunity or other activity which they intend to pursue to enhance their student employability.

Awards are constantly evaluated during the life of our plan and are subject to change. Our Scholarships and Bursaries webpage can be found [here](#).

### **Information for students (see page 25 of our plan for more detail)**

- Prospective students receive information on fees and financial support at in-person events, such as our open days, and by email communications.
- We regularly update our information for care leavers, who can contact us directly pre-access for support and advice: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/widening-participation/secondary/disruptededucationprogramme/>
- Current students receive information about fees and the financial support available through our student portal, internal communications campaigns, and emails. For the most up-to-date information, see our money advice webpage: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/studentssupport/money-advice/>
- This plan is published online, easily accessible to both current and prospective students. In addition, we are committed to providing relevant and timely information, including articulation of progression routes, to all prospective students. We evaluate the impact of communications to ensure they meet evolving student needs.

### **What we are aiming to achieve**

Our overall aim is to support students to access higher education. We also want to create an environment where students at the University of Liverpool can achieve their full potential.

Based on assessment of our performance, we have identified the following areas on which to focus our work by 2024-25. These can be expressed by the different disadvantaged groups we aim to target:

- Students from low participation neighbourhoods and low-income backgrounds – we will improve:
  - The Access Ratio between the most and least represented to 3:1
  - Eliminate the Continuation Gap between the most and least represented
  - Reduce the gap in Good Degree Outcomes for students from the most and least deprived areas from 10.2% to 3%
  - Eliminate the gap in Progression to Employment/Study for the most and least represented.
- Care experienced students – we will improve:
  - The percentage of our undergraduate entrants that have been in local authorities care from 0.6% to 1.1%
  - Reduce the Continuation Gap between Care Experienced and Non-Care Experienced students from 7.8% to 5.8%.
- Mature students – we will:
  - Reduce the Continuation Gap between Mature and Young students from 5.3% to 2.3%.
- Ethnic minority students – we will:
  - Eliminate the gap in Good Degree Outcomes between black and white students

- Reduce the gap in Good Degree Outcomes between BAME and white students from 9.5% to 3%.
- Disabled students – we will:
  - Eliminate the gap in Good Degree Outcomes between Disabled and Non-Disabled students
  - Eliminate the gap in Good Degree Outcomes between students with a registered Mental Health Disability and Non-Disabled students.

Following recent Office for Students Guidance, we will continue to support attainment at school and access to higher education. Through several projects, we are currently working with schools to raise pupil attainment and expectations to study for a higher education qualification. During 2022-23, we will consult with our local stakeholders to ensure this work is effective and efficient, with the aim of developing a programme of work to start in 2023-24. This will fit with our wider review and development of our School-University Partnership work.

### **What we are doing to achieve our aims (see pages 15-22)**

1. Ensure all prospective students, regardless of background, believe the University of Liverpool offers them a viable and aspirational Higher Education choice. This is particularly visible in our outreach activities with local schools, culminating in our Flagship 'Liverpool Scholars' Programme and our enhanced use of contextual admissions.
2. Create a distinctive Liverpool Welcome and package of support for students to aid their transition, continued study, and sense of belonging at the University.
3. Harness our attainment information at an institutional level to predict, prevent and address unexplained degree outcome differentials within the student body.
4. Develop the cultural capital, professional networks, and work experience of students, to overcome the barriers to their gaining graduate level employment and/or further study.
5. Cultivate an effective Civic University approach to APP delivery, working together with public, private, and charitable partners to achieve a strategic place-based approach centred on Liverpool City Region.
6. Challenge and secure continuous improvements in our access and participation culture, systems, and impacts by evaluating 'what works' and 'why it works'.
7. Develop a Whole Institution Strategic Approach to Widening Participation and Outreach.
8. Launch our internal Access and Participation Hub to monitor and account for the changes we plan to make.

### **How students can get involved (see pages 1 and 22)**

Our Guild of Students have been involved in the APP's development and will continue to be closely involved in the planning, monitoring, evaluation and delivery of our access and participation work.

### **Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved (pages 23-25)**

Building on our experience of taking part in the OfS standards of evidence pilot, UoL will work to embed improved cohort tracking and data analytics into its monitoring of APP

cohorts. This will aid the delivery of all elements of the APP, enabling our Access and Participation Hub to routinely analyse institutional trends.

Each of our programmes has its own Theory of Change, to ensure goals are understood and consistently referenced. This allows us to constantly evaluate and refine Programme Design, Evaluation Design and Evaluation Implementation. Through emerging trends, knowledge, and recommendations we will also Learn to Shape our Improvements and use Effective Research to Ensure Impact.

We will publish evidence from our evaluations on our website by January 2024.

### **Contact details for further information**

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