

Blackpool and The Fylde College - summary of our 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 and succeed in their degree level programme and progress to jobs or further study.

Blackpool and The Fylde College (B&FC)'s full [Access and Participation Plan](#)

See pages 5-14 of the [full plan](#)

Key points

Our focus is on improving access and outcomes for specific groups of students. Data shows that, compared to their peers at B&FC, higher education participation and outcomes are lower for certain groups of students:

- There are fewer B&FC 18-year-old students from neighbourhoods with low participation in higher education compared to the UK population
- Part time students over 21 and those living in deprived areas are less likely to stay on programme
- Students from deprived areas, full time students with disabilities, those over 21, or in an ethnic minority are all less likely to achieve a 2:1 or above
- Full time students who are disabled, black, Asian or in minority ethnic groups are less likely to progress onto highly skilled jobs or further study

Fees we charge

At B&FC, the fees charged for new students in 2022/23 are:

- £6500 - £8750 for full time degree level students
- £2500 - £6563 for part time degree level students

B&FC's full list of [tuition fees](#)

Financial help available

We offer financial support to students from underrepresented groups. This helps students access higher education and continue studying until their course is completed. The support includes:

Full details of B&FC's [financial support](#) on our website and pages 20 and 23 of the [full plan](#)

Advantage bursary	£500 for full time level 4 students from low-income households in the first year of their programme.
Access scholarship	£1,000 per year for students who are care leavers, young carers or students under the age of 25 without the support of a family network.
Opportunity scholarship	Which pays tuition fees for up to three years for full time level 4 new higher education students from black, Asian or minority ethnic groups.
DSA contribution award	Covers the one-off £200 contribution fee currently required for disabled students to access the computer equipment needed to study
Hardship fund	To support students from households who experience financial hardship during their time at college.

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Information for students

- **Prospective students** can access information on fees and financial support through the College website, at open days and applicant events.
- **Current students** can also access information about fees, financial support and academic support through induction, the careers team, HE learning mentors and progress tutors

Full details of [financial support for higher education students](#)



How we give you this information is on pages 27 and 28 of our [full plan](#)

What we are aiming to achieve

Our overall aim is to support students from all backgrounds to access higher education. We also continue to raise aspiration and to ensure that every student who chooses to study with us develops the knowledge, skills and behaviours that will lead to highly skilled employment or further study. Based on assessment of our performance, we have identified the following areas on which to focus our work:

- **Support attainment at school and access to higher education** - we are working with local schools to raise pre-16 attainment and to help equip and prepare students for future higher education study. From 2022-23 we will provide additional transition, taster and experience sessions for students from years 7 onwards in disadvantaged areas.
- **Diversifying our provision** – from 2022-23, we will expand our portfolio of access to higher education, level 4 certificates and higher technical qualifications.
- **Students from low participation neighbourhoods and low-income backgrounds** – By 2025, we will increase the number of full and part time 18-year-old students who live in areas where not many people their age go to university.
- **Students living in deprived areas** – By 2025, we will increase the number of part time students, retain more part time male students and enable more full time students from deprived areas to gain a 2:1 or above.
- **Mature students** – By 2025, we will ensure that part time mature students continue on their programme and enable full time mature students to get a good degree outcome of 2:1 or above. We will monitor and address the attainment of a 2:1 or above in students aged 21-25 and compare this to other age groups.
- **Black, Asian or minority ethnic students** – By 2025, we will aim to increase participation of black, Asian and minority ethnic students to at least 4% of the B&FC student population and enable this group to gain a 2:1 or above
- **Students with disabilities** – By 2025, we will enable students with disabilities to achieve a 2:1 or above and support them in gaining highly skilled employment or further study
- **Other underrepresented groups** – By 2025, we will aim to:
 - improve access to higher education, retention and achievement of 2:1s or above for care leavers, young carers and young students under 25 without family support
 - closely monitor participation and explore disclosure and progress of the LGBT+ community, children from military families and single parents
 - remove barriers to staying on programme for underrepresented students, such as students under 25 living independently without family support, bereaved ex-carers and single parents

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What we are doing to achieve our aims


We have identified several programmes of activity to support achievement of our aims and targets. For example:

See pages 17-24 and annexe of the [full plan](#)

- Stronger partnerships with schools, organisations, local employers and the local community will contribute to aspiration and attainment raising in disadvantaged areas.
- Summer programmes to prepare underrepresented students for higher education to help them stay on programme and achieve good outcomes.
- Financial investment and support to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds participate in degree level programmes.
- Targeted academic support interventions alongside mental health and resilience practice will help students to stay on programme and achieve good outcomes.
- A study skills and wellbeing support package for care leavers, young carers and students estranged from their families will be extended to include other underrepresented groups such as bereaved carers and single parents.
- An enhanced teaching, learning and assessment strategy to include staff development on inclusive practice, and involving students, curriculum and service areas to promote engagement, retention and achievement of students.
- A refreshed equality, diversity and inclusion strategy to ensure students in underrepresented groups have a comparable experience to their peers.
- A focussed and disability specialist careers team to offer a range of information, advice and guidance to prepare our students for employment or study.
- Research involving underrepresented groups to address barriers to students staying on programme, achieving good outcomes and gaining employment or further study.

How students can get involved

We worked with the Students' Union to gather student input into the design and monitoring of our access and participation plan. Students are represented on our Access and Participation Plan Steering Group which is responsible for overseeing implementation of the plan.

[Provide feedback](#) to the Students' Union or [become involved](#) in our plan at B&FC 

See pages 24-25 of the [full plan](#) for more details

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

Evaluation at B&FC is used to show the impact of our activities and shape future practice. Progress against our plan is regularly reported into committees, cross college and to the student body.

See pages 25-27 and annexe of the [full plan](#)

Good practice is shared externally through OfS insight briefs and our engagement in wider collaborative groups outside of the College. From 2023, B&FC will publish on our website an annual report to make the delivery of our plan and evaluation more visible outside of the College.

Contact details for further information

You can contact our access and participation lead for further information.

Contact our [access and participation lead](#) at B&FC 