

## University of Worcester: 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 the University of Worcester at <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/documents/University-of-Worcester-Access-and-Participation-Plan.pdf>

### Key Points

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 Worcester, outcomes are lower for certain groups of students.

- Students are less likely to complete their studies if they come from a neighbourhood where not many people participate in higher education.
- The following groups of students are less likely to achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above:
  - Students from low-income backgrounds
  - Students from an ethnic minority background
- The same groups of students are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study.

Our data shows that since 2012/13 the achievement of a degree award of 2:1 or above and overall progression to employment or further study for students from low-income backgrounds and/or from a minority background has improved year on year. However, we believe that there is more that can be done.

### Fees we charge

At the University of Worcester, the maximum fees charged are:

- £9,250 for full-time students
- £6935 for part-time students. Part-time students are charged pro-rata.

You can access a full list of fees for courses at the University of Worcester at <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/study/fees-and-finance/course-fees.aspx>

### Financial help available

We offer financial support to students via the **Access to Learning Fund**. This helps eligible students experiencing financial difficulties continue studying until their course is completed through the award of non-repayable grants.

Further information is available at <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/study/fees-and-finance/access-to-learning-fund.aspx>

### Information for Students

- **Prospective students** receive information on fees and financial support at in-person events, such as our open days, and by email communications.
- **Current students** receive information about fees and the financial support available through our student portal, internal communications and emails
- **All students** can access the most up to date information about fees and financial support via the University website at <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/study/fees-and-finance/>

### What we are aiming to achieve

**Our overall aim** is to support students to access higher education. Our aim is to provide an environment where each student at the University of Worcester can achieve their full potential.

Based on our analysis of our performance over a number of years, 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 schools to raise pupil attainment and expectations to study for a higher education qualification. During 2022-23, we will expand the number of schools we work with focussing on those from where fewer pupils access higher education and develop a programme of work to commence in 2023-24.
- **All students regardless of entry qualification, family experience of higher education, household income or protected characteristics** - by 2023-24 we will have made significant progress towards eliminating any gaps in: access, continuation (the proportion of students continuing to the next year of their course); attainment of a good degree; and progression to highly skilled employment or further study.

### What we are doing to achieve our aims

We have identified a range of programmes of activity to support achievement of our aims and targets

1. Extend our **programme of work with schools** – this supports more pupils from underrepresented groups to attain good grades and progress to study for a higher education qualification
2. Offer **financial support**, including hardship funding for eligible students, and practical support for students applying to Student Finance England
3. Establish and embed **flexible and easily accessible forms of learning** to support students' study skills, personal growth and mental health challenges.
4. Enable students to **develop their own personal, social and professional skills** through active engagement in academic and specialist clubs and societies.

### How students can get involved

We work closely with the Worcester Students' Union to gather student input into the design of our access and participation plan. Students are represented on all our internal groups which are responsible for overseeing implementation of the plan.

To provide feedback, students can contact their [Students' Union representative](#)

### **Evaluation: How we will measure what we have achieved**

Our programmes of activity are informed by the best available evidence about what works for students. We will collect data and feedback to evaluate:

- The impact of the programme of activity we are doing to achieve our aims
- The actions outlined above
- The impact on achieving our overall aim of improved access and an inclusive environment

Progress against the aims and actions will be monitored by our Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee. The Committee will oversee implementation of actions to ensure ongoing progress against yearly milestones in our access and participation plan. We will monitor impact on the target groups, to ensure we are addressing our aims. Where appropriate, we will adjust our programmes to ensure they are in the best interests of our students.

We will publish initial evidence from our evaluations on [our website](#) by January 2024

### **Contact for further information**

[accessandinclusion@worc.ac.uk](mailto:accessandinclusion@worc.ac.uk) for further information.