

University of Greater Manchester

Summary of 2026-27 to 2029-30 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

This plan sets out how we promote equality of opportunity for our students from underrepresented groups as determined by the Office for Students. You can see the full access and participation plan for University of Greater Manchester at [Access and Participation 2026-27 to 2029-30 | University of Greater Manchester](#)

Key points

We are a medium-sized Teaching Intensive, Research Informed University with an emphasis on professional and vocational education. We especially welcome those whose educational or family background has not easily enabled them to enter into higher education. Around 95% of our students are likely to have faced risks to equality of opportunity, with high proportions of Mature (peaked at 73%), Asian (18%), Black (19%), and those previously receiving Free School Meals (28%).

See pages 2-6 of the full plan

There are a number of priorities that we have identified with students to address through our plan.

Our 'Equality of Access' plans will increase access to university, particularly for young people facing barriers, by improving their prior knowledge and skills, information advice and guidance, and perceptions.

We will improve personal and academic support, which are particular risks for our Black and Asian students and those previously receiving Free School Meals. We will provide additional support to help students on entry to the University through 'Prepare' and during study from the 'Academic Skills Hub'. We will seek to reduce cost pressures for students who have previously received Free School Meals. We will deliver courses by block delivery as part of 'The Greater Manchester Way'.

Our 'Career Passport' will enhance the support available to improve graduate jobs, particularly for students who have previously received Free School Meals.

Fees we charge

At the University of Greater Manchester, the maximum fees we currently charge for full-time home undergraduates is £9,535. You can find the full list of fees at [Access and Participation | University of Greater Manchester](#)

See pages 61-62 of the full plan

Inflationary uplift statement

Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in regulations, we will increase fees each year using consumer prices index including owner occupier housing costs (CPIH).

Financial help available

We offer a range of financial support for home undergraduate students.

See pages 29-31 of the full plan

Our **Student Support Fund** is for current students who would be unable to continue their studies due to financial hardship. Priority groups include care leavers, estranged students, single parents, disabled students, and from 2026-27 First-in-Family to attend university and those who received Free School Meals. Awards are based on assessed income and expenditure.

Standard Award – up to £1,500

Non-standard award – up to £750

Domestic Abuse Award – up to £1,500

Disabled Students' Allowance Contribution Award - £200

In addition, students can apply for emergency loans up to £450 and food vouchers up to £80.

We also offer our **Care Experienced Bursary** for students who have lived in care. Eligible students will receive £1,000 per academic year, and an additional £500 in their final year.

For students progressing from Bolton College, University Collegiate School or Alliance Learning, we offer a **Group Progression Scholarship**. Eligible students will receive £500.

Information for students

We will ensure that students are aware of the support available to them through our Plan. We will deliver information to prospective and current students through our work with schools and colleges, open days, the University's website, social media and email communications.

See pages 28-29
of the full plan

What we are aiming to achieve

Our overall aim is to support students to have equality of opportunity by reducing 7 risks facing our students. The risks are:

See pages 4-5 of
the full plan

Knowledge and Skills. Information and Guidance. Perception of Higher Education. Insufficient Academic Support. Insufficient Personal Support. Cost Pressures. Progression from Higher Education.

We have 3 objectives and 8 targets in our plan.

Objective 1 – Increase the volume of students entering higher education with at least one characteristic most likely to indicate risks to equality of opportunity through the 'Equality of Access' intervention strategy.

- To increase the absolute number of young entrants (including Apprentices) with at least one characteristic most likely to indicate risks to equality of opportunity from 1,045 (2022-23) to 1,330 for 2029-30 entrants.

Objective 2 – Increase Asian students staying on course and improve Black and Asian students achieving a good degree by ensuring sufficient personal and academic support and a new more accessible approach to teaching, learning and assessment through 'The Greater Manchester Way' block teaching.

- To raise continuation of Asian students from 81.8% (2021/22 4-year aggregate) to 85% for 2028/29 entrants (continuing into 2029-30)
- To raise completion of Asian students from 72.9% (2018-19 4-year aggregate) to 80% for 2026-27 entrants (completion 2029-30)
- To raise good honours degrees for Asian students from 58.3% (2022-23 4-year aggregate) to 65% in 2029-30
- To raise good honours degrees for Black students from 49.9% (2022-23 4-year aggregate) to 60% in 2029-30

Objective 3 – Improve course completion and progression to graduate-level jobs for students previously eligible for free school meals by offering academic, personal and financial support through the Greater Manchester Way and Career Passport

- To improve continuation of students who were eligible for free school meals at key stage 4 from 80.4% (2021-22 4-year aggregate) to 85% for 2028-29 entrants (continuing into 2029-30)
- To increase completion of students who were eligible for free school meals at key stage 4 from 69.7% (2018-19 4-year aggregate) to 75% for 2026-27 entrants (completing 2029-30)
- To increase progression of full-time undergraduate students who were eligible for free school meals from 57.1% (2021-22 4-year aggregate) to 65% for those graduating in 2028-29 (cohorts surveyed December 2029 and September 2030).

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

‘Equality of Access’ encompasses a range of activities. These include working in partnership with schools and colleges, Aspire Creative Arts taster days, Success4Life programme for Care Experienced, applicant day experience and open event experience programme.

See pages 5-22
of the full plan

‘The Greater Manchester Way’ is an innovative approach to curriculum and assessment design and delivery that will provide learning and education opportunities through its block teaching model. We will support this through ‘Prepare’ and the ‘Academic Skills Hub’.

‘Career Passport’ will provide ongoing opportunities to access career and employability activities linked to visible recognition of achievements. We have developed this to address the changing needs of the student population and their approach to career planning.

How students can get involved

Students have contributed to the development of this Plan through a panel which included representation from the groups of students we are looking to support. The Students’ Union has also actively supported the Plan.

See pages 26-27
of the full plan

We are introducing the new Students as Partners model which will ensure students have opportunities to engage with implementation and evaluation of the Plan.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

We have based the Plan on evidence of what works to support students facing similar challenges, particularly the block teaching model. This was adopted by the Victoria University, Melbourne and has been highly successful.

See pages 27-28
of the full plan

We have taken Evaluation into account in the design of the interventions within the Plan. We will closely monitor implementation and produce evaluation reports. We will share these externally and publish them on the University website so others can benefit from our experience.

Contact details for further information

Please email enquires@bolton.ac.uk