

University of Suffolk: Summary of 2025-26 to 2028-29 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. This supports underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

You can see the full Access and Participation Plan for the University of Suffolk at:
<https://www.uos.ac.uk/about/our-university/widening-participation/>

Key points

The focus of our access and participation plan is on improving the diversity of students who **access** the University of Suffolk, making sure students from specific groups **continue** and **complete** their studies while they are here, and narrowing the **degree outcome** and **progression** gap which exists between specific groups of students.

See Annex A,
page 30 for more
details

- Our data shows that students are less likely to access the University if they have a declared disability or are 18 years old and come from Global Majority backgrounds.
- Our data also shows that some groups of students might be less likely to continue or complete their studies than others. These student groups include:
 - those from low income backgrounds
 - those from Global Majority backgrounds
 - male students
- Our data also shows that male students may be less likely to achieve the same degree outcome as female students.
- Our data shows that we have some gaps in progression rates to highly skilled employment or further higher study for:
 - students with a declared disability
 - male students
 - younger students

Risks to Equality of Opportunity

It is important that our access and participation plan is evidence-based, draws on robust data, and reflects the experiences of our students. Comparing gaps in performance against the sector, we analysed external and internal data to develop our plan and prioritise our risks to equality of opportunity. We have also undertaken consultation with our students, staff, and external partners. These have helped us to identify our 10 key risks to equality of opportunity which may be reasons behind some of the gaps:

See pages 7-8 for
more details

- prior knowledge and skills
- information and guidance
- perception of higher education

- application success rates
- access to academic support
- access to personal support
- mental health and wellbeing
- ongoing impact of coronavirus
- cost pressures
- opportunities for progression from higher education.

Fees we charge

At the University of Suffolk, the maximum fees we charge are published on our website: <https://www.uos.ac.uk/life-at-suffolk/funding-your-studies/undergraduate-study/>. Current fees for full time undergraduate study is £9535 per year.

Financial support and information for students

We offer financial help for students from underrepresented groups. This helps students to access higher education and to continue in their studies. Current students can also access additional financial support, if needed, during their studies which is tailored to meet the needs of individual students. Full information is available on our website: <https://www.uos.ac.uk/life-at-suffolk/funding-your-studies/bursaries-and-scholarships/>

See page 29 of the plan for more information

Achieving our aims

To achieve our overarching goal of increasing access to higher education and enabling success prior to and post-graduation, we have developed three intervention strategies. Each of our intervention strategies includes a range of activities that will support our students throughout their studies. Our intervention strategies are:

See pages 13-19 of the plan for more details

- **Access:** this strategy delivers activities to support students in accessing higher education and in understanding their educational choices. It includes:
 - Targeted support to increase secondary school attainment in English and Maths.
 - Outreach work with local schools, for example school visits and campus events.
 - Increased information and guidance through application, enrolment, and transition into the University.
- **On Course:** this strategy delivers activities to support our students once they have started their course, these activities are designed to help students continue and complete their studies. It includes:
 - Our work with students before they begin their course to support the development of skills and confidence for a positive transition into higher education study.
 - Tailored financial support to enable students to fully engage in university life.
 - Holistic approaches to providing academic and pastoral support to students, particularly those who have declared disabilities, or who may be at risk of early withdrawal from their course.

- **Progression:** this strategy delivers activities which support students progressing into graduate level study or highly skilled employment after they complete their studies. It includes:
 - Opportunities for students to engage in a range of employment opportunities alongside their courses, including micro-placements.
 - A range of information, advice, and guidance to support career preparation.

How students can get involved

Students are represented in all levels of governance at the University of Suffolk, through student memberships on our institutional committees and by the Student Union. Students will be able to participate in our access and participation plan through activity design workshops, consultation events and continuous feedback opportunities. Students who would like to be involved in the design or evaluation of our activities can contact the Access and Participation Team directly.

Measuring progress and achievements

We are committed to ensuring that the strategies and activities outlined in our plan are both effective and continuously improved. Our evaluation commitments are to:

See page 22 of the plan for more details

- Regularly monitor and evaluate all activities through our institutional governance structures, ensuring that findings inform our strategic decisions and future improvements.
- Strengthen our evaluation capabilities by developing bespoke staff training.
- Share our evaluation outcomes widely, including through internal reporting structures, peer-reviewed publications, and open-access channels.

Contact details for further information

Please visit our [webpages](#) or contact the Access and Participation Team on APP@uos.ac.uk for more information.