

Northumbria University: 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 Northumbria University at <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/access-and-participation-plan/>

See pages 1 to 7 of the full plan

Key points

Northumbria has the highest number of graduates entering the local job market out of all the North East Universities. The North East is the region where young people are least likely to access Higher Education. We have historically been highly successful as a widening participation university.

Priority areas for Northumbria are:

- **Access: (1)** Students from low participation neighbourhoods (where not many people go on to Higher Education) **(2)** Care Leavers (students who have been in care).
- **Success (as measured by how many students do not progress year-on-year at University): (3)** Students from low participation neighbourhoods.
- **Success (as measured by degree outcomes): (4)** Students from low participation neighbourhoods **(5)** Black students **(6)** Asian students **(7)** Disabled students.
- **Progression (Those in work or further study within six months of graduation): (8)** Students from low participation neighbourhoods **(9)** Students from all other ethnicities except White **(10)** Disabled students.

Overall we have done well in all areas, but have stretched our targets to further our progress in all areas.

Fees we charge

At Northumbria University the maximum fees charged are:

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

You can see a full list of fees for course at Northumbria University at <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/study-at-northumbria/fees-funding/>

See pages 20 to 21 of the full plan

Financial help available

We have a range of financial support to help students access Higher Education and continue studying until their course is completed. This support includes:

- A Care Leavers bursary of £2000 per year
- Funds for reasonable adjustments for disabled students
- A hardship fund to support students who experience financial hardship during their studies
- Academic scholarships – around 40% of students who receive scholarships are from underrepresented groups.

See page 26 of the full plan

Information for students

Northumbria is committed to the provision of accurate, timely and relevant information for all potential and existing students. Information is delivered via:

- Published materials, such as our prospectus.
- Our website.
- Personal email, phone and SMS communications to enquirers, applicants and students.
- At events on-and off-campus, in schools, colleges, community venues and employers.
- Our Student Support & Wellbeing Service, which provides support and advice for current and potential students.

For the most up to date information, see our university website <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/>

What we are aiming to achieve

See pages 8 to 11 of the full plan

The University is aiming to:

- Minimise and eliminate, where possible, the gaps in access, success and progression between different groups of students to progress towards achieving equality of opportunity
- Continue to develop inclusive learning, teaching and assessment in which all students, regardless of background, are able to achieve their full potential
- Minimise and eliminate, where possible, the gaps in outcomes between different groups of students through better understanding of why students perform at different levels, and deliver targeted strategies to work to improve this
- Support the Government's Social Mobility goals by ensuring that investments in widening participation have maximum impact

Our objectives are to:

- Increase the intake of students from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4 Q1), reducing the gap between Q1 v Q5 to 3% by 2024/25.
- Maximise the impact of our outreach in the North East and other target regions through collaboration, with a particular aim to increase the number of care leavers progressing to HE in the North East from 7% to 9% by 2024/25.
- Develop a partnership scheme aimed at improving relationships with key feeder schools and colleges for the purposes of both aspiration and attainment raising. Attainment raising to be targeted at GCSE and other Level 2 qualifications, specifically working with students who meet at least one widening participation criteria. Our objective is to work with a minimum of 40 schools and colleges in 2023/24.
- Improve the continuation rates of students from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4), reducing the gap to 3% by 2024/25.
- Improve the attainment rate of disabled students, reducing the gap between disabled and non-disabled students to 0% by 2024/25.
- Improve degree classification outcomes for Black students, reducing the gap in attainment between White and Black students to 14% by 2024/25.
- Improve degree classification outcomes for Asian students, reducing the gap in attainment between White and Asian students to 5% by 2024/25.
- Improve degree classification outcomes for students from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4), reducing the gap between most and least represented groups to 4.5% by 2024/25.
- Improve degree classifications outcomes for students from IMD 1, reducing the gap between IMD 1 and IMD 5 to 9% by 2024/25.

- Improve the progression of students from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4) into highly skilled employment and further study, reducing the gap between the most and least represented groups to 3% by 2024/25.
- Improve the progression of students from all other ethnicities into highly skilled employment and further study, reducing the gap between White students and students from all other ethnicities to 2% by 2024/25.
- Improve the progression of disabled students into highly skilled employment and further study, reducing the gap between disabled and non-disabled students to 0% by 2024/25.

See pages 12 to 20 of the full plan

What we are doing to achieve our aims

We have identified a number of programmes of work to help us to achieve our aims. These include:

- Extend our programme of work with schools – this supports more people from underrepresented groups to get good grades and to go to university.
- Tailored access activities for underrepresented groups including mature students and Black and minority ethnic groups.
- Subject specific activity to support engagement
- Collaborative initiatives working with other North East Universities, colleges and organisations to support aspiration and attainment raising.
- Enhance support for study throughout the institution so all students can access tailored support.
- Peer support, coaching and personal tutor schemes to support students to succeed.
- Wellbeing support
- Transition support for students joining the university and progressing between years, including practical opportunities for progression.

See pages 22 to 23 of the full plan

How students can get involved

We have worked in partnership with the Students' Union to gather student input into the design 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. To provide feedback students can contact their [student union representative](#). To become involved in this work, please contact our Access and Participation Team (details below)

See pages 23 to 26 of the full plan

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:

- Student satisfaction
- How well our activity works
- Progress against our aims as listed above
- The impact of our work

The Access and Participation Steering Group will monitor and report on these processes to the Education Committee and the University Executive. These forums will oversee the implementation of actions to ensure ongoing progress against yearly milestones in our Access and Participation plan. We will monitor impact on our target groups to ensure we are addressing our aims. Where appropriate we will adjust our interventions in the best interests of our students.

Contact details for further information

You can contact the Northumbria University Access and Participation Team at accessandparticipation@northumbria.ac.uk for further information.