



# Access and Participation Plan

## 2025/26 to 2028/29

### Introduction and strategic aim

We are the connected university. We are also among the UK's most modern Universities, having been awarded university title in 2001, but our roots go back some 175 years. Our predecessor organisations include a range of specialist colleges and providers of professional training. That inheritance continues to shape us today, in our focus on providing high quality higher education that equips our students for successful professional careers, in our values, and in our commitment to promote the wellbeing of our community in Gloucestershire. We are deeply embedded in our place, working for the long-term good of society, devoted to supporting our students, staff and community to flourish and achieve their full potential. We aim to create an inclusive culture where everyone is treated fairly and with respect, where we feel valued and have a sense of belonging; a culture where it is safe to speak up and speak out and where we are empowered to grow and realise our full potential.

Belonging, our [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy](#), encapsulates our ambitious objectives for change. It signals a deliberate move towards a fully integrated approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion where structures and systems are aligned, and inclusive behaviours are recognised and rewarded. To foster an inclusive culture, we need to ensure staff and students feel welcomed, respected, safe, and empowered to share their cultures, heritage, and identities. We want everyone to feel they belong to the University community and valued as an individual.

Our strategic aim for access and participation is to reduce and remove barriers, challenge perceptions and provide continual support to all students to ensure we are fostering, enabling and promoting equality of opportunity and outcomes at all stages of the student lifecycle: access, success (continuation and attainment) and progression.

### Risks to equality of opportunity

The University of Gloucestershire (UoG) assessed the data on student access, continuation, completion, attainment, and progression to identify any gaps in access or performance which indicated a risk to equality of opportunity. We examined the data available through the Office for Student's (OfS) Access and Participation dashboard, recent census data for England and the south-west region, as well as additional data collected by UoG on applications, offer-making processes and conversion, and student engagement. The primary focus of our analysis was on statistically significant gaps in performance when considering the aggregations of the past two and four years of available data.

This assessment identified statistically significant gaps which could indicate a risk to equality of opportunity for student groups at any student lifecycle stage. Intersections of student groups/characteristics were considered where sufficient data were available, but small population sizes limited the statistical significance of some intersectional data.



A large majority of undergraduate students at UoG are registered on full-time, first-degree courses. Small populations on part-time first-degree courses, courses leading to another undergraduate qualification, and apprenticeships limited the statistical significance, and therefore indications of risk, of absolute performance gaps on these kinds of provision.

Our analysis of the data confirmed a clear primary focus for this Access and Participation Plan. Students from minority ethnic backgrounds, particularly where these students are from households with one or more indicators of socio-economic disadvantage, are less likely to continue with their studies, to complete an award, and to obtain a good first degree than other students. The indications of risk for these students are substantial and persistent and this plan sets out how we will look to address this.

More broadly, indications of risk to equality of opportunity at UoG are:

**Indication of Risk 1: Students from the most deprived local areas in England are consistently under-represented at UoG.**

Students from the most disadvantaged quintile of local postcodes in England, as measured by the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (EIMD), are consistently under-represented at UoG, while students from the least deprived quintile of local postcodes are over-represented. A significant gap in access exists between these two quintiles for all undergraduate provision at UoG. Closing this gap was identified as a target in the University's Access and Participation Plan for the 2020/21 – 2024/25 academic years but the gap has remained largely constant in recent years. This gap can be tracked back to a comparable gap in application rates and is not materially impacted by offer-making practices or differing rates in successful conversion of applicants to entrants.

**Risk:** The OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that this indication of risk may be caused by three underlying sector-wide risks related to: knowledge and skills; information and guidance; and perception of higher education.

**Indication of Risk 2: Students from all minority ethnic backgrounds are less likely than white students to continue with their studies or to obtain a good first degree. This risk is particularly high where there are indicators of socio-economic disadvantage, for example where minority ethnic students are from households in deprived areas or areas under-represented in higher education, or the students have been eligible for receipt of free school meals.**

Minority ethnic students are significantly more likely than white students at UoG to be from households in deprived areas, but intersectional data indicate that ethnicity has a stronger correlation with lower rates of continuation and attainment at the University than deprivation. White students from households in deprived areas (EIMD Q1-2), although less likely to continue than white students from less deprived areas (EIMD Q3-5), are more likely to continue into their second year of study than minority ethnic students from less deprived areas and significantly more likely to continue into their second year of study than minority ethnic students from deprived areas.

Lower continuation rates for students from households in local areas which are less likely to participate in higher education (POLAR4 Q1-2) are also closely linked to ethnicity, with intersectional data indicating that these lower continuation rates are primarily a result of lower continuation rates for minority ethnic students who live in areas of lower participation in HE.



This gap in continuation has been more significant in the years most affected by the Covid19 pandemic for all minority ethnic groups and, again, particularly affecting those minority ethnic students from deprived local areas and areas of low participation in HE.

Black students and students of mixed ethnicities are also less likely than white students to complete an award, again most significantly where these students are from areas of high deprivation or areas of low participation in higher education.

Students from all minority ethnic backgrounds are less likely than white students to obtain a good first degree. Black and mixed ethnicity students are least likely to obtain a good first degree, but students from all minority ethnic backgrounds are less likely to obtain a good first degree than white students. This gap in good degree attainment is again compounded for minority ethnic students from households in deprived areas (EIMD Q1-2) or in areas of low representation in HE (POLAR4 Q1-2), for whom gaps in attainment are particularly significant.

Black students have the lowest rates of attendance at teaching sessions at UoG, with students from other minority ethnic groups also attending a lower proportion of taught sessions than white students. Black students are also significantly more likely to apply for, and receive, financial support from the University because of financial hardship which is impacting on their ability to continue with their course.

**Risk:** The EORR suggests that this indication of risk may be caused by four underlying sector-wide risks related to: insufficient academic support; insufficient personal support; mental health; and cost pressures.

**Indication of Risk 3: Students from deprived local areas or who have been in receipt of free school meals are less likely than other students to complete an award.**

Students from the most deprived quintile of local postcodes (EIMD Q1) are consistently less likely to complete an award at the University than those from less deprived (EIMD Q3-5) and the least deprived (EIMD Q5) local areas. Intersectional data indicate that this gap is largest for minority ethnic students, but white students from areas of high deprivation are also less likely to complete an award than white students from less deprived areas. Data on eligibility for free school meals indicate that students from households eligible for free school meals are also less likely to complete an award than those who were not eligible.

**Risk:** The EORR suggests that this indication of risk may be caused by four underlying sector-wide risks related to: insufficient academic support; insufficient personal support; mental health; and cost pressures.

**Indication of Risk 4: Students with cognitive or learning difficulties are less likely to obtain a good degree classification than students without any declared disabilities.**

Although this gap fluctuates year on year, the aggregate data over the past two and four years indicate that the gap is statistically significant and that these students are less likely to obtain a good degree classification.

**Risk:** The EORR suggests that this indication of risk may be caused by four underlying sector-wide risks related to: insufficient academic support; insufficient personal support; mental health; and cost pressures.



## Strategic objectives

Following the assessment of the risks to equality of opportunity at UoG the following objectives were agreed:

Risk	Equality of opportunity risk register	Objectives	Targets
Risk 1	1,2 & 3	1.0- Increase applications and progression into the university from IMD Quintile 1 and 2.	PTA_1: Close the two-year aggregate gap between the proportion of entrants to full-time undergraduate programmes at the University living in IMD quintile 1 and IMD quintile 5.
Risk 2	6,7,8 & 10	2.1- Improve completion rates of students from a minority ethnic background 2.2- Reduce the awarding gap for our students from a minority ethnic background.	PTS_1: Close the two-year aggregate gap in the proportions of black and white students who successfully complete an award on a full-time undergraduate programme. PTS_3: Close the two-year aggregate gap in the proportions of minority ethnic (excluding white minorities) students from IMD quintiles 1-2 and white students from IMD quintiles 3-5 who successfully complete an award on a full-time undergraduate programme. PTS_4: Close the two-year aggregate gap in the proportions of black and white students who obtain good first degrees on full-time courses. PTS_6: Close the two-year aggregate gap in the proportions of minority ethnic (excluding white minorities) students from IMD quintiles 1-2 and white students from IMD quintiles 3-5 who obtain good first degrees on full-time courses.
Risk 3	6,7,8 & 10	3.1 - Improve completion rates of students from IMD Quintile 1 and 2. 3.2- Reduce the awarding gap for our students in IMD Quintile 1 and 2.	PTS_2: Close the two-year aggregate gap in the proportions of students from IMD quintile 1 and IMD quintiles 2-5 who successfully complete an award on a full-time undergraduate programme. PTS_5: Close the two-year aggregate gap in the proportions of students from IMD quintiles 1-2 and IMD quintiles 3-5 who obtain good first degrees on full-time courses.
Risk 4	6,7,8 & 10	4.0- Reduce the awarding gap for our students with cognitive or learning difficulties.	PTS_7: Close the full-time first-degree attainment gap between the proportions of students with cognitive or learning difficulties and those with no disabilities obtaining good first degrees.

## Intervention strategies and expected outcomes.



## Intervention Strategy Risk 1

<b>Risks to equality of opportunity</b>	Risk 1: Students from the most deprived local areas in England are consistently under-represented at UoG.
<b>Equality of Opportunity Risk Register</b>	This intervention strategy will address: Risk 1: Knowledge and skills Risk 2: Information and guidance Risk 3: Perception of Higher Education
<b>Objective 1</b>	Increase applications and progression into the university from IMD Quintile 1 and 2.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Inputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Cross intervention</b>
<p>1.1 Embed Regional Student Recruitment and Outreach Officers</p> <p>Regional officers to act as relationship managers, meet with their partnership schools and colleges to agree programme of activity and commitment to engagement. Supported by the WP 10 (our selected widening participation partner schools), predominantly located in the West Midlands. Future plans to increase partners in London and South East.</p>	Staffing Travel and expenses	<p>Increased engagement with outreach activities through partnerships with schools and colleges with higher proportion of EIMD Q1/2 &amp; minority ethnic students. University of Gloucestershire to fill gaps in current CEIAG provision at target schools and colleges, including exposure to an out of region HE provider.</p> <p>A collaborative approach to working with schools and colleges who are selected as WP partners, resulting in strategic, data led and engaged institution partnerships.</p> <p>Increased engagement with programmes of activity and increased take-up of financial assistance.</p>	1
1.2 Establish and continually review engagement strategy.	Platform costs	<p>Establishing a contract with data platform to encourage a data-led strategy. Re-tiering schools and colleges and targeting partnerships.</p> <p>Increased engagement with programmes of activity and increased take-up of financial assistance.</p>	1



<p>1.3 Summer Residential programmes (Y10 &amp; Y12) Parents and Carers Information session. On the final day of residential parents/ guardians are invited to an IAG session sharing information on funding and applications to help to support their young person in their future choices.</p> <p>New intervention- anyone who attended 100% of Year 12 Summer Residential secures an adjusted offer for next academic year if they apply to UoG in the following academic year.</p>	<p>Staffing Student Ambassadors Summer School expenses</p>	<p>Increased applications from and places prioritized for students from the least represented backgrounds at UoG, including Black and Asian ethnicity and students from the most disadvantaged quintile of local postcodes in England, as measured by the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (EIMD).</p> <p>Attendance at residential leads to increased knowledge and cultural capital by empowering students to understand how to apply for HE should they wish to do so, resulting in increased applications to University of Gloucestershire by underrepresented students in the future.</p> <p>Parents/ supporters attending informative session results in increased understanding of higher education, more confidence and willingness to support UCAS applications and personal statements.</p> <p>Increased support and adjustments to support most deprived students to make successful applications to the university. Additional support given to offer holders via the mentoring scheme as mentioned in this table resulting in more successful application to enrolment – supporting the diversity of the future student population.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1, 2 &amp; 3</p>
<p>1.4 Supporting Collaborative outreach programs: GROWS (Gloucestershire Uniconnect): Attainment raising for pre-16 students A) 3-day English booster programme for Y10 students B) 9-week literacy tutoring programme delivered by UoG students for Y8. GROWS</p>	<p>Staffing Travel and expenses</p>	<p>Impartial and collaborative activities, improving cultural capital and widening participation via activities in FE &amp; HE settings in Gloucestershire. Increased likelihood of most disadvantaged students from EIMD Q1 to make informed decisions about their study pathways.</p> <p>Increased attainment in literacy, leading to increased likelihood to achieve English GCSE Grade 4 or above, as required for HE access.</p> <p>Access to university student role models (from diverse backgrounds) to increase tutee ambitions to apply to university in the future. More information here: <a href="https://sites.glos.ac.uk/cep/">https://sites.glos.ac.uk/cep/</a></p>	<p>1</p>



Cheltenham Educational Partnership subject tasters delivered on campus. Outreach Manager sitting on the Steering Group		In 2023/24 UoG collaboratively delivered two large scale subject tasters on campus.	
1.5 Year 12 e-mentoring Transitions Mentoring	Online platform subscription Staffing Student Ambassador DBS	Priority access to mentoring programme given to WP target schools and colleges.  Priority access to mentoring programme given to WP UG Offer Holders. Increased likelihood to enrol at UoG Increased confidence among applicants Increased sense of belonging for applicants, pre-arrival.	1, 2 & 3
1.6 Pre-16 Aspiration Days & Pre-16 guide booklets	Staffing Student Ambassadors Pre 16 guides	Prioritising schools from the WP partnership 10 to deliver impartial advice and guidance to students who may otherwise face barriers to accessing higher education. Bringing students on campus, resulting in increased applications to university more generally and the University of Gloucestershire by WP students in the future.	1
1.7 Year 12/ 13 Higher Education Preparation Days / On campus Subject Taster Days	Staffing Student Ambassadors Resources Travel	Prioritising schools from the WP partnership 10. Bringing students to campus. Providing additional support in making UCAS applications / personal statements and providing information about student finance and support/ bursaries. Informative and explorative subject sessions led by academic colleagues. Encouraging WP students to explore subject areas. Resulting in increased diversity of applications to UoG. In 2023/24 (correct as of 6 <sup>th</sup> June) 139 on campus subject taster events were delivered In 2023/24 (correct as of 6 <sup>th</sup> June) 68 subject taster session in school or college were delivered.	1
1.8 Travel Funding to support on campus attendance.	Allocated Student Travel support costs.	Providing travel reimbursements for coaches to campus. Providing travel support for individual students attending events on campus, including residential programmes. Assisting schools with large numbers of WP students to attend a HE campus and overcome what may otherwise be a financial barrier in participation. Increasing WP and diverse participation.	1
1.9 Partnership School Bursary	Bursary funds	Supporting diverse applications to University of Gloucestershire by WP students and encouraging students to transition from	1, 2 & 3



Available to WP 10 Schools		application to enrolment. Breaking down financial barriers and improving fair accessibility. <a href="https://www.glos.ac.uk/information/knowledge-base/welcome-to-gloucestershire-award-2024-25/">https://www.glos.ac.uk/information/knowledge-base/welcome-to-gloucestershire-award-2024-25/</a>	
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### Detail of intervention strategy

The Student Recruitment and Outreach team delivers a rich menu of activities each academic year, as outlined in the table above. These activities have a specific focus on increasing access to higher education for students identified as meeting widening participation criteria. This includes students with home addresses identified as being from EIMD Quintile 1 / 2 areas within the lowest quintile for representation in HE. Students who are first in their family to study at Higher Education. Students who identify as being from a Black, Asian, and minority ethnic background. Students who are in receipt of free school meals at Key Stage 4 (FSM). Students who identify as having a disability. Students who are or have been care experienced.

The activities outlined within the table above are predominantly within the delivery phase and are the product of knowledge gained from the previous plan's life span via evaluation of previous activity and assessment of the support and needs of widening participation students who are 18 years old or younger. The activities above are anticipated to continue to run for the duration of the new plan's lifespan and will aim to mitigate the risk to equality of opportunity and meet the strategic objectives set, as outlined within this document, specifically objective 1.

### Undergraduate pre-19 student access

Using previous evaluation of the Access and Participation Plan combined with a sector literature review the University has identified thematic areas of focus. Acknowledging that WP students under the age of 19 are likely to encounter specific barriers to accessing HE, including financial hardship, travel, disability (unseen and seen) and social mobility. UoG has focused on delivering support and programmes which will aim to increase WP students' ability to access higher education by raising aspirations, increasing understanding and cultural capital therefore it is intended that this will result in increasing the diversity of applications and volume received from WP students.

### Identifying Widening Participation Schools/ Colleges

The Student Recruitment and Outreach Team reviewed its schools and colleges partnership agreements in 2023/24 ahead of the conclusion of the previous Access and Participation Plan. The new list of partnership schools and colleges was formed using WP criteria applied in HEAT and DataFiltr to identify 10 WP schools to target for a programme of activity. Schools were identified in the West Midlands and the Southwest. It was noted that due to shifts in student data (changes in EIMD / Polar measures) meant some schools and colleges previously identified as WP partnerships would no longer be suitable.

### Financial barriers, Assistance and Travel support.

Following feedback from partner schools on the cost of coach travel, the decision was made to make financial support more accessible and supportive. Previous funding was allocated to partners three times a year in denominations of £500 for coach travel to on campus visits. Funding has been opened





up on a first come first served basis for all schools and colleges, with WP 10 partners having priority funding. WP partners bid for full funding to cover the cost of coaches to campus. Since beginning this new approach, the university has continued to regularly monitor and review engagement and there is evidence that this is resulting in more regular use of the funding available and higher levels of engagement with WP programmes across the WP partners.

### **Measuring progress of engagement with WP10**

Based on the reviews undertaken and reforms made to the partnership agreements, the university has invested in regional officer roles within the Student Recruitment and Outreach team. Regional roles were implemented, firstly a role was created in the West Midlands region in 2021/22, where it is recognised, there is more potential due to the demographic population to work with students from minority ethnic groups and higher EIMD Q1/ 2. This resulted in regular face to face meetings with gatekeepers at key WP schools, as well as in-school delivery of outreach activity, this has seen a positive growth in impact on engagement with the university and this is beginning to filter through into diversifying applications to the university. Based on this successful trial of a regional model the university identified the London and Southeast regions to hold significant potential to support Objective 1 in further diversification of ethnicity / EIMD Q1/2 within the profile of student applications to the university. A London/SE regional officer was appointed in March 2024 for a fixed term period, and it is expected that this will result in UoG having secured two WP partnerships from the London/SE regions with a targeted increase to five by the completion of the plan.

### **Progressive programme of outreach**

The University offers Pre-16/ Post-16 work including subject tasters, working in collaboration with schools/ colleges and CEP/ GROWS, improving social and cultural capital and general advice and guidance on how to apply/ interview support/ personal statements / finances and SFE/W. A programme of activity has been agreed for WP partners to fully benefit from the agreement this can be seen here.

The regional officers will monitor engagement using HEAT activity reporting which will take place termly. This will be supported by evaluation data – inputted into HEAT. Regional officers will regularly meet with key stakeholders, WP partners will be supported to attend a Teachers and Advisors Conference each academic year. Support will include travel and accommodation bursaries and financial support to fund lesson cover.

### **Collaboration – GROWS, Cheltenham Educational Partnership (CEP) and UCAS**

Collaborative outreach is ongoing through partnerships including the CEP, GROWS and UCAS connection service. The mission of the CEP includes bringing together disadvantaged students from state schools, to collaborate with independent schools. This is to create a social, cultural and knowledge exchange peer to peer and broaden the access state schools have to extra-curricular programmes in lessons such as Latin. The university has been the home for the CEP for over two years and the program has grown in success. There are now fifteen formal partners of the CEP, of which the university is one. This is set to rise to eighteen in the new academic year.

The university is a key partner and in 2023/24 the University worked with the CEP to deliver events for four schools in the local area. It is estimated that inputs will double for delivery in 2024/25 and it is expected that engagement with Gloucestershire schools from year 9 – 12 will grow as a result. The



university will continue to provide support for the CEP through staffing, systems access and being on the steering group and operations meetings. More information about the CEP's programmes, mission and aims can be found here <https://sites.glos.ac.uk/cep/>.

UoG has registered for the new UCAS Outreach Connection Service, which aims to provide a one-stop-shop for teachers. We will display with transparency all relevant opportunities including pre-16 Aspiration Days, Higher Education Preparation Days, Summer Residentials, Mentoring and subject taster masterclasses.

UoG will continue to support GROWS with pre and post 16 programmes, providing space and staffing to support subject tasters and events. It is intended that UoG, in collaboration with GROWS and the School of Education, will continue to develop, with support from current PGCE undergraduate students, tutoring programmes for schools in Gloucestershire identified as having poor attainment in key subjects such as English and Maths.

### **Sense of belonging**

The University recognises that a student's sense of belonging holds great importance, particularly for WP students and in turn has a significant impact on students' engagement with transitioning to university from school. Although the Student Recruitment and Outreach team is responsible predominantly for applications, rather than point of enrolment, the team supports e-Mentoring (currently to selected West-Midlands WP 10 schools) programmes and offer holder e-mentoring open to all WP students. A sense of belonging is supported by providing visiting students with access to current university students from a range of backgrounds including providing Student Life Talks on Pre-16 & Post-16 Aspiration Days and HE Prep days and student life Q&As on visit days to campus.

### **Summer Residentials**

Summer residentials have proven that they provide students with an enhanced sense of belonging and we believe that recruiting and instilling greater responsibility on our student ambassadors working at the Summer Residentials provides further opportunity for a natural and open knowledge sharing and enhances peer to peer interactions. Students are predominantly awarded spaces based on how many WP criteria they meet and the standard of their application form. In 2023 100% of students attending the Year 10 Summer Residential met WP criteria.

### **Influence of Parents/Guardians & Supporters**

The Student Recruitment and Outreach Team recognises that the influence of student supporters, parents / guardians/ careers has a significant impact on a student's journey to HE. (<https://www.cfey.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Partners-in-Progression.-Engaging-parents-in-university-access.pdf>) .The team has created and shared resources specifically for student supporters to access via <https://www.glos.ac.uk/outreach/supporting-young-people-into-he/>. The creation of a parents' guide, in collaboration with GROWS, is also accessible by request. The team attends parents' events, including information evenings and parents/carers are invited to attend an information session on the final day of the Year 10 Summer Residential. This is designed as a knowledge exchange and there are opportunities for Q&A as well as discreet support. This is intended to continue throughout the lifecycle of the plan and further integration with the newly created parents mailing list via the University's CRM system will contribute to this work, helping students to self-elect their parents to receive information, guidance, support, and updates as their application to the university progresses.



## Intervention Strategy Risk 2 & 3

<b>Risks to equality of opportunity</b>	<p>Risk 2: Students from all minority ethnicities are less likely than white students to continue with their studies or to obtain a good first degree. This risk is particularly high where there are indicators of socio-economic disadvantage, for example where minority ethnic students are from households in deprived areas or areas under-represented in higher education, or the students have been eligible for receipt of free school meals.</p> <p>Risk 3: Students from deprived local areas or who have been in receipt of free school meals are less likely than other students to complete an award.</p>
<b>Equality of Opportunity Risk Register</b>	<p>This intervention strategy will address:</p> <p>Risk 6: Insufficient academic support</p> <p>Risk 7: Insufficient personal support</p> <p>Risk 8: Mental health</p> <p>Risk 10: Cost pressures</p>
<b>Objectives 2 &amp; 3</b>	<p>2.1- Improve completion rates of students from a minority ethnic background</p> <p>2.2- Reduce the awarding gap for our students from a minority ethnic background.</p> <p>3.1 - Improve completion rates of students from IMD Quintile 1 and 2.</p> <p>3.2- Reduce the awarding gap for our students in IMD Quintile 1 and 2.</p>

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention
2.1 Implement new approach to better enable students to engage with the University's support services	Staffing IT Estates developments	<p>The University will launch a new 3-tiered approach in 2024/25 to better enable students to get support across a wide range of issues.</p> <p>This will include:</p> <p>a) Nova, a new 'Digital Assistant' which will use AI technology to help students ask questions and seek support on a wide range of issues, and receive either instant responses, or a referral to a specialist colleague or team.</p> <p>b) New physical Student Centres, which will host multi-skilled advisers to help students with issues related to their academic progress, and/or their personal wellbeing.</p>	2 & 3



		c) the 3rd tier is made up of a range of specialist teams where students can seek support for more complex issues (e.g. mental health support; money advice; advocacy related to local agencies such as NHS, police etc) It is hoped that the new approach will reduce waiting times for students, and enable a culture where students can raise concerns, receive speedy responses, and act on the advice so that they are able to make progress quickly.	
2.2 Develop a stronger sense of belonging for the whole student community	Staffing	<p>Students can often feel disconnected from their peers or struggle to 'find their place' when at university. Such concerns are often exacerbated by their need to undertake part-time work to help them cope with the cost-of-living crisis within the UK, which in turn can minimise their opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activity. The University will work on seeking to better understand its cohort in order to then help establish groups / activities / services that they then will feel more able to engage with and make stronger connections.</p> <p>This will be led by the Student Experience Directorate, in partnership with the University's Students' Union across the duration of the plan.</p>	2 & 3
2.3 Curriculum Transformation Project	Staffing	The University will have equity and inclusive education as a theme underpinning its work through the Curriculum Transformation Project.	2 & 3
2.4 Academic School based interventions and action planning	Staffing	The University will support Schools to identify Awarding Gap priority areas. This will inform targeted action planning at School level and within course groups.	2 & 3
2.5 Develop further the use of data to inform and target intervention work	Staffing	<p>The University will review practice within quality processes and examination boards to ensure that Awarding Gap data is considered at appropriate opportunities for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Course Annual Course Enhancement and Monitoring</li> </ul>	2 & 3



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Course Assessment Scrutiny Panel</li> <li>- Exam progression and Award Board</li> <li>- External Examiner Report</li> </ul>	
2.6 Personal tutoring	Staffing	Ensure a focus on identifying students at risk of low attainment. Personal tutors across the institution will be supported to identify tutees at an early stage who are at risk of low attainment and seek to put in place supportive measures to help students achieve what they are capable of. Working across student support services, these interventions can make a significant difference to the continuation and attainment of targeted groups.	1,3,4
2.7 Regular education and information sharing with the student community of finance-related concerns and available support.	Staffing	The Student Experience Directorate will deliver campaigns focused on personal finance and presented to the student community, focused on a range of key issues including budgeting, banking, getting the most out of your money, seeking support in periods of hardship, and managing issues related to Student Finance.	

### Detail of intervention strategy

The University will progress several initiatives aimed at closing awarding gaps, which include:

- Developing the use of data, targets and key performance indicators and integrating them into our Quality Monitoring and Enhancement structure.
- Create evaluation plans for the intervention strategies pertaining to targeted student groups.
- Disseminating awarding gap data to key individuals.
- Fostering
- Through the Curriculum Transformation Project deeply embed Inclusive Education as core to our Curricula
- Providing opportunities for students to share experiences and co-produce solutions through the Students as Partners scheme.

We also recognise the importance of delivering a strong and supportive welcome to all students – and particularly to those from under-represented groups – so that a strong ‘sense of belonging’ is developed.

It is clear however that beyond the necessary warm welcome, for some students concerns over their own financial situation is a real barrier for being able to find their place and then thrive at university.



We will seek to ensure that pre-arrival messaging, and then through the welcome and induction period, that there is an emphasis on support available to students who face significant and complex issues due to finances and the continuing cost-of-living crisis.

There has been much work undertaken by the University in partnership with its Students' Union focused on supporting students who face financial struggles in recent years, and this will be continued. Actions taken are likely to include:

- on-going support for students in supplying free 'tea & toast' on campus during term time;
- Enhanced support for the SU's 'Community Cupboard' project – which offers free food and toiletries to students on-site.
- simplifying the processes involved in helping students to both get in touch with the University's support services, as noted in 2.1 above, which in turn will enable students to get advice and guidance faster, and if appropriate be able to get quicker access to actual financial support.

The Curriculum Transformation Programme will include all UoG programmes and is an important of our response to this risk. The activity will be founded upon principles of equity and inclusive education with Equality Impact Assessment as an integral aspect of the project. The University will design our curriculum structures, delivery models, content and assessment to be fit for purpose for the diversity of our future students and the ways in which they may engage with Higher Education. Amongst other things, this programme will consider:

### **Delivery models**

Whether the University follows traditional weekly deliver or adopts e.g. block delivery and in what way can impact upon student's access to education, retention and progression within their programme. Consideration of how best to enable the University and course sense of belonging through inclusive course design is key.

### **Approaches to teaching**

Module size and student effort (study hours) will be standardised within programmes, to ensure transparency and greater consistency of the student experience in and across programmes.

### **Learning and assessment**

Volume, distribution and value of assessment: at the programme level, there will be a strategy for assessment and feedback that will be shared with students. At the module level, there will be parity of student workload and standard assessment load between modules of the same credit weighting. These changes will ensure assessment feedback shape learning and provide regular, timely opportunities for feedback and reflection, and that workload is proportionate and distributed effectively to support learning and wellbeing of students. Schools will be encouraged to increase the use of authentic assessment which has application beyond the classroom and should appeal to students' varied interests, backgrounds and needs. Formative assessment is also being encouraged; this form of assessment will scaffold skills and knowledge, increasing opportunities for students to reach their learning goals.



## Intervention Strategy Risk 4

<b>Risks to equality of opportunity</b>	Risk 4: Students with cognitive or learning difficulties are less likely to obtain a good degree classification than students without any declared disabilities.
<b>Equality of Opportunity Risk Register</b>	This intervention strategy will address: Risk 6: Insufficient academic support Risk 7: Insufficient personal support Risk 8: Mental health Risk 10: Cost pressures
<b>Objective 4</b>	Reduce the awarding gap for our students with cognitive or learning difficulties.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Inputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Cross intervention</b>
4.1 Implement new approach to better enable students to engage with the University's support services	Staffing IT	As detailed above, 2.1.	2 & 3
4.2 Develop a stronger sense of belonging for the whole student community	Staffing	As detailed above, 2.2.	2 & 3
4.3 Recruit a specialist 'Study Skills Adviser' for students with disabilities and learning difficulties.	Staffing	The University is not a registered DSA supplier of non-medical support for students; but there is recognition that some students face delays in accessing local DSA study skills tutors (either due to assessment delays, or service pressures). The University will seek to appoint its own Study Skills Adviser as part of the Disability Service in order to support students who are struggling to engage with DSA support. This should ensure that students are not held back in their academic progress due to factors caused by external providers.	3



4.4 Prioritise sufficient staffing resource for the Disability Advice Team within the Student Wellbeing Department.	Staffing	Students have on occasion expressed concerns about the time it takes to get an appointment to meet with their named Disability Adviser. Additional resource has been added to this team for the 2024/25 academic year. This will lead to more availability of appointments, and as a consequence more opportunities for advisers to be able to advocate for students with Course Leaders.	3
4.5 Put in place an improved process for students with disabilities and learning difficulties related to their diagnosed conditions. This will enhance the way in which their associated 'reasonable adjustments' are more speedily put in place at the commencement of their course, as well as being more simply understood and implemented by academic colleagues when teaching them on various modules across their course programmes.	Staffing IT	A) Provide higher levels of reassurance for this student group that the reasonable adjustments will be implemented in a more seamless and less frustrating way B) It is likely that this will then enhance the support culture when students change modules and when their work is assessed c) It is hoped that this intervention will better support disabled students, who in turn may feel more able to focus on their studies, and then achieve better outcomes.	3
4.6 Curriculum Transformation Project	Staffing	As detailed above, 2.3.	2 & 3
4.7 Academic School based interventions and action planning	Staffing	The University will support Schools to identify priority areas to support students with cognitive or learning. This will inform targeted action planning at School and subject and Course groups.	2 & 3
4.8 Develop further the use of data to inform and target intervention work	Staffing	As detailed above, 2.5.	2 & 3
4.9 Personal tutoring	Staffing	As detailed above, 2.6.	2 & 3

#### Detail of intervention strategy





The proportion of students self-disclosing to the University that they have either a disability or learning difficulty, or with a form of mental health concern is growing rapidly, with almost 40% of our students sharing such information through the Disability Services either prior to enrolling on a programme, or at some point through their student career. Recognising disability as a form of diversity, the University is proud of its ability to attract these students. In light of this growth, the actions outlined in the table above have been planned to better support the students directly, as well as improving their experience at UoG generally.

The proposed implementation of new processes related to establishing 'reasonable adjustments' for students with disabilities is intended to enhance the student experience, by ensuring that advisory staff and tutors have a simpler method to view the agreed plans to better enable students to be successful with their studies and have less distractions each time that they commence modules or face assessments.

The new process should enable a sense of consistency for students from their course tutors and assist them to be better able to knowledgeably work with the agreed plans for those students within their module groups.

It is expected that the new approach to Student Support will positively assist students with disabilities to interact with advisory/specialist staff to get support for a wide range of their needs, and so they may have less need to interact as regularly with members of the Disability Services Team.

The University will be changing its approach to how students with mental health concerns interact with specialist services. The Mental Health Advisory team will be relocated to work within the Student Wellbeing Service, as opposed to being part of the Disability Services Team. It is hoped that this shift will ensure that students who need support will be better able to engage with advisers, whilst hopefully ensuring that the Disability Services team will then be able to have more capacity to support the clients of its service.

The University was one of the inaugural members of the Student Minds University Mental Health Charter programme, and continues to be an active member, with a real commitment to having in place a 'whole university approach' towards an awareness of support for issues related to mental health.

Additionally, there is a recognition that for some students who are struggling with their mental health, that giving them ready access to physical activity can make a significant difference to their overall wellbeing. As such, the University will establish a form of social prescribing with a key link developed between the Wellbeing Service, and the Sport & Active Life Service. The ambition being that colleagues can refer students to specialists who will develop physical activity programmes in a supportive and accessible way for students to be able to participate in, and the hope is that this will enhance their sense of wellbeing both through engaging in the physical activity, and also finding connections with a wider range of peers, which in turn fosters belonging.

## **Whole provider approach**

As noted earlier, in 2021/22 the University developed its first Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy, 'Belonging' which forms part of the suite of strategies to achieve our Strategic Plan. To further embed



equity, diversity, and inclusion across all facets of the University, 'Belonging' was embed as a thematic ambition within the Strategic Plan.

One of the principal aims of 'Belonging' is to undertake and embed robust Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's) across all policies, practices, projects, and decision-making: An EIA is an evidenced-based approach designed to help organisations ensure that their policies, practices, and decision-making are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation. EIA's are undertaken at the start of a policy review or introduction of an intervention and are an integral part of all evaluations. This enables the identification of any unintended adverse impacts and opportunities to advance further equality of opportunity for specific student groups.

The University has started using intersectionality as a lens to analyse data to investigate and understand inequality within and between groups, extending characteristics beyond those of the nine 'Protected Characteristics'. Applying an intersectional lens is helping us to understand how different students' experiences at all stages of the lifecycle are shaped where multiple forms of oppression or disadvantage interact.

In developing the 'Belonging' Strategy, feedback was sought from stakeholders across the University community, which has ensured that priorities within 'Belonging' are aligned with the priorities and interventions within our Access and Participation Plan.

We are committed to enabling and ensuring fair access and participation, and to ensure a comprehensive approach the University has an Access and Participation Committee with student and staff representation. This group has overall strategic ownership of the University's Access and Participation Plan.

Through the work of this Committee in general, and the development of this plan in particular, we have paid due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and our obligation to advance equality of opportunity. As part of our strategic and institutional approach to equity and inclusion we collect, analyse and publish student data, broken down by protected characteristics, on an annual basis. This information is explored at the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, used to inform the strategic priorities in 'Belonging' our new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (approved in 2022), and shared with the Access and Participation Committee. Intentionally, there is considerable overlap in the membership of these two committees to ensure there is a common agenda. This qualitative data is complemented by the collation of qualitative data including student focus groups, reciprocal mentoring partners and student representatives, enabling us to evidence that we are eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who don't.

## **Student Consultation**

Throughout the structures of the University, student voice is captured in a variety of forum alongside the partnership work with University of Gloucestershire Students' Union. As part of the process of producing this Access and Participation Plan the CEO of the SU has been a part of the drafting group, ensuring that the views of students were brought into the document.



Beyond the Access and Participation Plan, UoGSU representatives play an active role at all levels of University committees including key decision-making bodies such as University Council. Within these spaces representatives are invited to provide reports and bring forward student issues for discussion and action. Students are invited to contribute to UoGSU priorities through online tools called Change It and Voice It which capture ideas on how the University can make improvements to the student experience. Routinely, reports and issues from these tools are brought to the attention of the University to action.

Within the structures of the SU there are roles dedicated to representing the views of students with protected characteristics such as the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Network Lead and the Students with Disabilities Network Lead. Alongside these roles there are paid students who work to ensure that all students representatives at Course level have their voices heard – these Student Voice Assistants cut across a wide range of students and ensure that the Full Time Officers within UoGSU are ‘in touch’ with student interests.

Within the 2024-27 UoGSU strategy is a commitment to better understand students across the University through the introduction of 3 student experience reports per year. The SU intends to ensure that at least one of these reports is focussed on the lived experiences of underrepresented students within the UoG community and will be actively collaborating with the University to ensure actions from these documents are captured in the appropriate spaces.

Another element of the updated SU strategic plan is a call for student representation as a standard practice in all University decision making spaces, with the rationale behind exception being published for students to understand.

## **Evaluation of the plan**

### **Introduction**

We recognise that evaluation is an ongoing process to understand how our activity is being delivered, what impact it is having, and how it is being influenced by internal or external factors.

Having recently participated in the TASO 2022 project on [summer schools](#), the university will closely align itself to the TASO guidance on evaluation where that is appropriate for the intervention being evaluated. In general, the university will adopt an impact-driven evaluation approach with the aim that all activity in the plan has some element of impact evaluation, enabling us to review whether a scheme should be maintained, continued, or modified for improvement.

We have adopted a ‘Theory of change’ approach across our activity, allowing us to identify the issues we are trying to address, establishing the outcomes we want to achieve and the activities that we will deliver. This will be supported by utilisation of TASO’s Theory of Change (TOC) templates where appropriate. Each major project and overarching targeted activity will give careful consideration to the effectiveness of each intervention and how the outcomes will be measurable, monitored, and time bound. The impact of interventions will be evaluated by utilising appropriate frameworks, including the Office for Students standards of evidence, TASO guidelines, the University’s monitoring, evaluation and reporting strategy and the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, alongside an annual review of the Access and Participation Plan data performance milestones using the OFS data dashboard.



## **Evaluating Impact**

Our objective is to evaluate the impact of our activities using both process and outcome evaluation methods. The objectives of each intervention will be proportionate, evidence-based and clearly communicated through a logical theory of change. We will continuously evaluate to ensure we reach our target audiences with effective interventions.

We will analyse quantitative outcomes, measuring baseline and relative changes, using naturally occurring datasets (e.g. existing surveys) to ascertain which factors are associated with producing desired outcomes. Analyses will take into account data variance (such as student characteristics, frequency of interactions/contact hours, prior attainment, and type of intervention) whenever feasible. We will utilise counterfactuals and comparative groups of students with similar backgrounds, where appropriate.

Limitations associated with evaluation techniques, such as self-reported data, will be acknowledged and communicated. We will aim to triangulate results from multiple perspectives to increase self-reported data reliability, objectivity, accuracy and validity. Qualitative analyses (e.g. focus groups) will be employed when relevant to deepen our understanding of delivering impactful interventions.

Evaluation of key activities will be continuous throughout the lifespan of the plan, it is also intended that robust pre and post evaluation reports will continue to be created for larger projects such as Mentoring and Summer Residentials. These reports will then continue to be used to inform future continuation and amendments to the programmes and the evaluation findings and recommendation reports will be publicly available, published on the university's website [here](#).

## **Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan**

Through its Access and Participation Committee, the University will take responsibility for the evaluation and monitoring of the plan. This is a university-wide committee that normally meets four times a year to analyse, measure impact and track progress against the outlined objectives. The Committee is chaired by the Chief Operating Officer and Pro Vice-Chancellor for Student Experience and includes members drawn from relevant professional departments as well as academic staff from our Schools and representatives of the Students' Union. The Committee reports directly to the University Executive Committee.

This Plan has had consultation and input from the University's Council (our governing body) and the Access and Participation Committee provides an annual report to Council on progress with matters related to access and participation. This includes monitoring progress against targets. The Council is also kept fully informed about characteristics of the student body, and Council Members are engaged in the development of any new University strategies. Regular updates have been provided to Council on the requirements of the Regulatory Framework, including access and participation.

The University is implementing robust analysis and reporting to support decision making and measure impact of the activities undertaken. To benchmark the University effectively will be utilising different means of assessing success. These measures include:



- HEAT data tracking annual reports
- Internal surveys of our enquirers, applicants and offer holders
- Survey outcomes – such as the NSS
- Progression outcomes – Graduate Outcomes and LEO
- OfS data sources and statistical analyses when made available

## **Investment**

The University will commit over 10% of higher fee income to access activities which deliver our commitment to equality of opportunity to access higher education and to develop, deliver and assess the impact of new interventions which will support the objectives of this Plan. This maintains the level of investment on pre-16 and post-16 outreach which we have made throughout the period of our previous access and participation plan.

We will continue to provide financial support, primarily through our Financial Assistance Fund bursary scheme, to students who are suffering financial hardship, and will closely evaluate the impact of this scheme to ensure that it supports our intervention strategies to improve the continuation, completion and attainment for students from deprived local areas. We expect to invest approximately £0.5m per year in financial support throughout the period covered by this Plan.

Our investment in our intervention strategies to support student success and attainment takes into account our whole provider approach to delivering equality of opportunity to all our students. Over two thirds of our undergraduate students have at least one characteristic which could indicate a risk to equality of opportunity and our investment to support student success and attainment includes direct and staff costs to deliver equality of opportunity for all students through the interventions we are putting in place to meet the objectives of this Plan, as well as investment in evaluating the impact of these interventions to address the risks and meet the targets we have identified.

## **Provision of information to Students**

### **Fees**

The University will charge the maximum fee of £9,250 in 2024/25 for all our undergraduate courses.

The University provides comprehensive information for students on multiple platforms and throughout the student lifecycle. This includes:

- Information on fees and financial support published on our website – [glos.ac.uk](https://glos.ac.uk). This information is clearly accessible to students, e.g. via menu navigation or the search bar. This is further supported by an annual consultation with student representatives to monitor and assess any additional costs associated with the study of their course.
- Printed collateral with our offer packs sent out to students once they have received their offer letters.
- Presentations and information sessions at outreach activities, open days and applicant days.
- Induction information prior to arrival at the University, both in print and on-line.



## Financial Support

The University offers financial support to eligible students. These schemes are kept under constant review and may change from time to time as they are amended to reflect our developing understanding of their impact and efficacy. The schemes currently on offer are as follows.

Scheme	Eligibility criteria	Application process	Award level
Welcome to Gloucestershire Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Studied level 3 qualifications at a partner school or college with a WP profile.</li><li>- Completed level 3 qualifications no more than one year prior to joining the University.</li><li>- A new entrant to the University.</li></ul>	Awarded upon enrolment.	£1,000 in entry year.
Care Leavers Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Been in the care of a local authority in the UK for a period of 3 months or more between the age of 14 and school-leaving age (18 years)</li><li>- A new entrant to the university.</li><li>- Must be aged under 25 at their point of entry.</li></ul>	Contact the university as part of the application process	A 50% tuition fee waiver for each year of full-time study and a bursary of £4,000 (paid over three years) towards general living or accommodation costs. An additional £1,000 paid in the third year to students demonstrating academic excellence in level 5 assessments.
Financial Assistance Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Enrolled on a degree or postgraduate qualification at the University of Gloucestershire.</li><li>- Able to evidence financial hardship, assessed via a calculation of annual household income and expenditure.</li></ul>	Application form and document uploads accessible when students have completed enrolment and begun their course.	<p>Award amounts cannot be estimated until a completed application is submitted.</p> <p>Awards normally range from £50 to a maximum of £3,500 per year. Most awards are in the range of £500 to £1,500 per year.</p>

## Advice and Guidance

Confidential advice and guidance are offered on all aspects of student finance and funding processes. This includes advice on organising budgets and checking entitlement for bursaries, loans and hardship funds. 1:1 sessions are available for all students and talks and information desks are available at Open and Offer Holder Days as well as being a feature of our induction programme.



## **Annex A: Further information and analysis relating to the identification and prioritisation of key risks to equality of opportunity.**

The University of Gloucestershire's assessment of performance considered all statistically-significant gaps in the OfS Access and Participation Dashboard, with a primary focus on the aggregated two-year and four-year indicators. As a comparatively small University, we assessed that these aggregated indicators were a more reliable indication of risk to equality of opportunity than the individual split year indicators.

This assessment identified all significant gaps which could indicate a risk to equality of opportunity for student groups at any student lifecycle stage. Intersections of student groups/characteristics were considered where sufficient data were available, but small population sizes limited the statistical significance of some intersectional data.

Our assessment of indications of risk made only infrequent comparison to other providers or to the sector, instead assessing varying levels of performance and success for different student groups at the University. Access rates were compared to recent UK census data for eighteen years olds in England and the Southwest region.

### **Student demographics on full-time undergraduate programmes at UoG**

The majority of students at the University are female. This has been the case for some time, but over the past few years the proportion of entrants who are female has continued to grow, with 59.5% of entrants, female in the last two years (2020/21 – 2021/22).

Approximately 8% of young, UK-domiciled entrants to full-time undergraduate programmes at the University over the past four years (2017/18 – 2021/22) were from minority ethnic groups (excluding white minorities)<sup>1</sup>. This is considerably lower than the average for the sector over this period but is slightly higher than the overall ethnic diversity of the Southwest region (6.9% other than white) and for Gloucestershire (6.9% other than white)<sup>2</sup>. The University has made, and continues to make, efforts to recruit more students from minority ethnic groups through outreach and access initiatives put in place during the University's previous Access and Participation Plan. There is evidence in the most recent data to indicate that this is starting to have some impact.

Approximately 30% of entrants to full-time undergraduate degrees are mature (21 and over). This proportion has increased significantly over the past five years, largely because of the growth of the University's nursing and allied health provision, from 20.3% in 2016/17 to 29.6% in 2021/22.

Students with disabilities are very strongly represented at the University and the University has a long history of attracting and supporting a high proportion of students with disabilities. The proportion of entrants who have declared a disability increased over the past five years, driven primarily by a rise in the proportion of entrants who have declared a mental health condition. Approximately 9% of our entrants over the past two years (2020/21 – 2021/22) declared a cognitive or learning difficulty and 10% declared a mental health condition.

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<sup>1</sup> 1.3% black; 2.9% Asian; 3.4% mixed; 0.5% other

<sup>2</sup> 2021 census, UK population by ethnicity

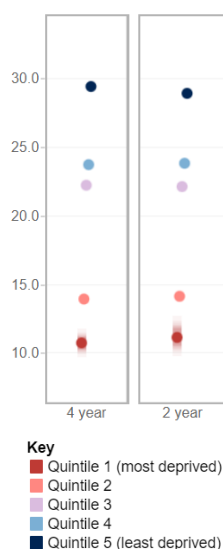


The most deprived local areas, as measured by EIMD 2019, are substantially less represented at the University than other, less deprived areas. This gap is long-term, persistent and large, with approximately 10% of entrants from the most deprived quintile of local postcodes (EIMD quintile 1) over the four years to 2021/22. Local areas of traditionally low representation in HE, as measured by POLAR4, are also under-represented at the University, also less so than deprived areas.

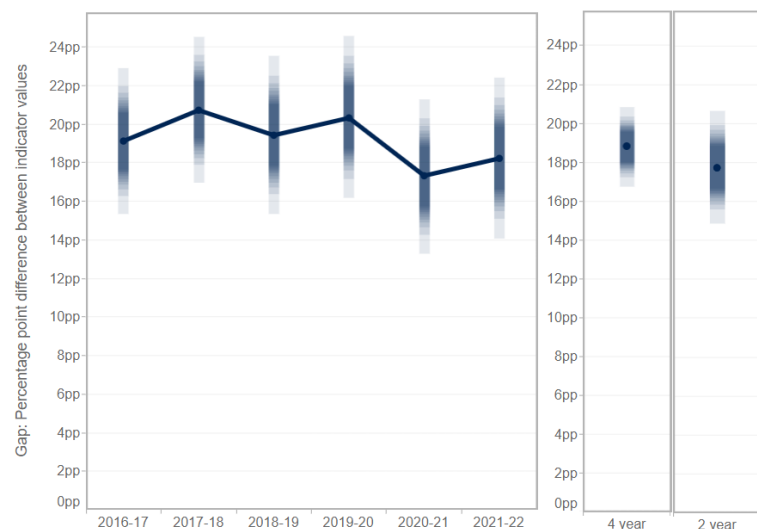
### Indications of Risk: Access to Higher Education

Students from the most disadvantaged quintile of local postcodes in England, as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD Q1), are consistently under-represented at UoG, while students from the least deprived quintile of local postcodes (Q5) are over-represented. Over the four years to 2021/22, there was an 18.8 percentage point gap between the proportions of entrants to full-time undergraduate programmes living in the most deprived (Q1) and least deprived (Q5) quintiles. There is some evidence that this gap has begun to fall slightly, with the aggregate of the two years to 2021/22 showing a 17.7pp gap and the longer-term longitudinal data indicating that there is a slight downward trend over the past six years. However, a significant and persistent gap in access continues to exist between these two quintiles for all undergraduate provision at the University. There is also a statistically significant gap in access between the two most deprived quintiles (Q1-2) and less deprived quintiles (Q3-5).

**Proportion of FT UG entrants (%) by IMD quintile**



**Percentage point difference between proportion of FT UG entrants from IMD Q1 and IMD Q5**



Comparable gaps exist for apprenticeships (17.8pp gap between Q5 and Q1 entrant proportions over the past four years) and for part-time undergraduates (13.5pp gap between Q5 and Q1 entrant proportions over the past four years).

The University's application data show that these gaps can be tracked back to a broadly comparable gap in application rates, which indicates that this is less impacted by offer-making practices or differing rates in successful conversion of applicants to entrants than it is by the University's ability to attract applications from students from these local areas. This indicates that the University needs to make further efforts, through targeted interventions, to address the following sector-wide risks identified in the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register:

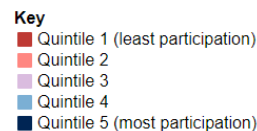




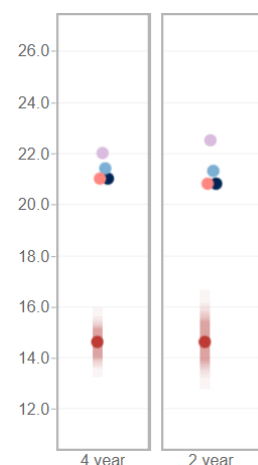
- Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to be accepted onto higher education courses that match their expectations and ambitions.
- Students may not have equal opportunity to receive the information and guidance that will enable them to develop ambition and expectations, or to make informed choice about their higher education options.
- Students may not feel able to apply to higher education, or certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified.

We have assessed that this is the most significant indication of risk to equality of opportunity arising from the University's access data in the Access and Participation Plan dashboard and UoG local data sources.

The quintile of local areas with the lowest rates of young participation in higher education (POLAR4 Q1) is also under-represented at the University. The gaps here are still significant for this quintile, when compared to all other quintiles, but our analysis suggests that deprivation, and the effects of that deprivation on the likelihood of young people to make informed choices about their higher education options, develop the necessary skills to be accepted onto study at the University, or apply to study despite being qualified, is a greater indication of risk to equality of opportunity at UoG than POLAR4. Because of the elements of correlation between these two measures, addressing the gap in access for students from deprived local areas will also help to close the gap in access for young students from local areas with low rates of participation in higher education.



**Proportion of FT UG entrants (%) by IMD quintile**



We have not identified the participation rates for students from minority ethnic groups as a significant indication of risk of equality of opportunity. Although the data from other providers indicate that students from minority ethnic groups are under-represented at the University when compared to the UK sector, the ethnic diversity at the University is representative of our county and the Southwest region. There is a strong correlation between ethnicity and deprivation for students at the University, with students from minority ethnic groups over twice as likely as white students to be from the two most deprived quintiles (IMD 2019). Our focus on addressing the gap in access for students from the most deprived local postcodes will also improve access for students from minority ethnic groups.

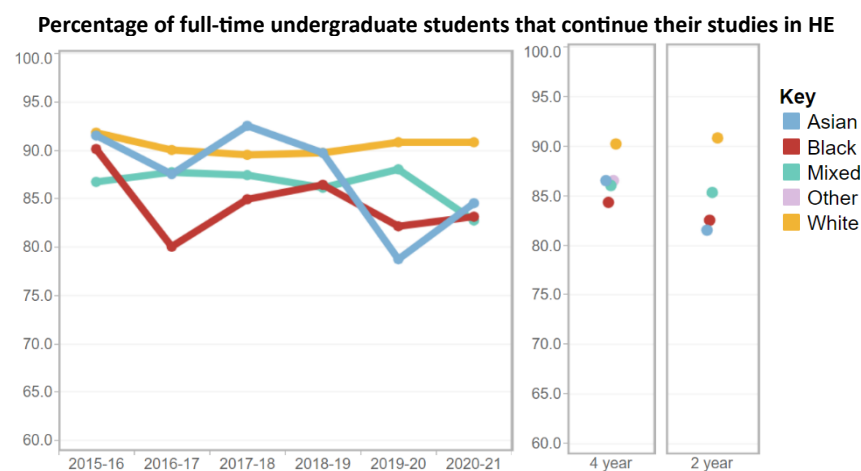
### Indications of Risk: continuation and completion

The University's assessment, having considered all available data, is that the students who are most at risk of failing to continue a full-time undergraduate programme at UoG are those from minority ethnic groups (excluding white minorities) who are also living in areas of relatively high deprivation (IMD Q1-2). Over the past four years, the continuation rate for this group of students has been 6.9 percentage points below the continuation rate for white students from less deprived areas (IMD Q3-5). Both ethnicity and deprivation have an impact on the rates of continuation, but intersectional data show



that in the two entry years most affected by the covid19 pandemic (2019/20 and 2020/21 entry) ethnicity has had a greater impact on continuation at UoG than deprivation.

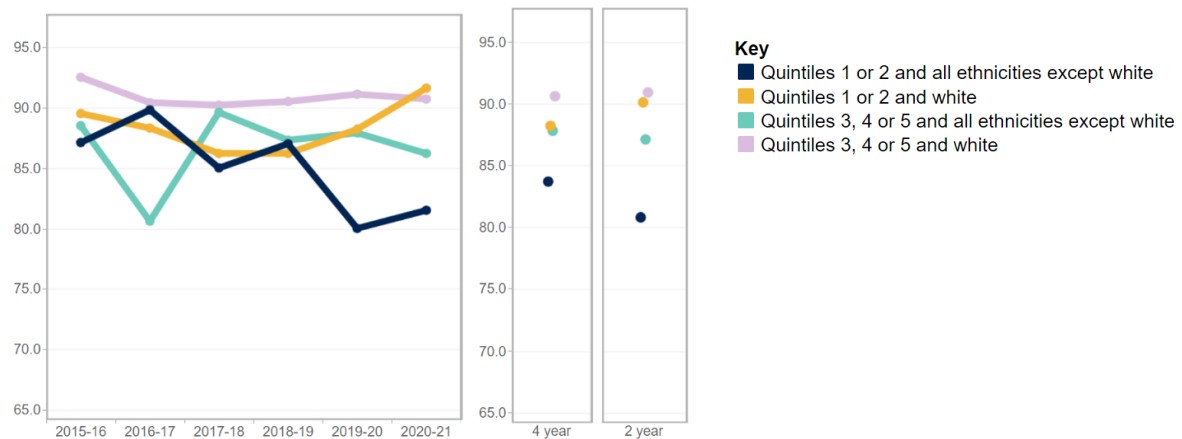
The gap in continuation rates is most persistent for black students, with an aggregate continuation gap of 5.9 percentage points for the four entry years up to and including 2020/21. This gap widened for the two cohorts most affected by the covid pandemic, to an aggregate gap of 8.3 percentage points for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 entry cohorts. Continuation rates for Asian students were broadly comparable to those of white students for entry years up to 2018/19 but were heavily impacted by the covid19 pandemic, with an aggregate gap of 9.3 percentage points for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 entry cohorts. Our assessment, taking into account internal data on student attendance and continuation for more recent cohorts, is that there is a more significant long-term risk to equality of opportunity in the continuation rates of black students. We are addressing that with a specific target in this plan, although our objective and intervention strategy is to close the gaps in continuation for all students from minority ethnic groups.



Intersections of deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) and ethnicity data indicate that continuation rates for students from minority ethnic groups who live in deprived local areas (IMD quintile 1-2) are persistently lower than the continuation rates for white students from less deprived areas (IMD quintile 3-5), and that this gap widened substantially for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 entry cohorts affected by the covid19 pandemic, to a 10.1 percentage points gap for the two entry cohorts in 2019/20 and 2020/21. The gap in continuation rates between white students and minority ethnic students from less deprived areas (IMD quintiles 3-5) is substantially smaller, less statistically significant, and did not materially increase for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 entry cohorts.

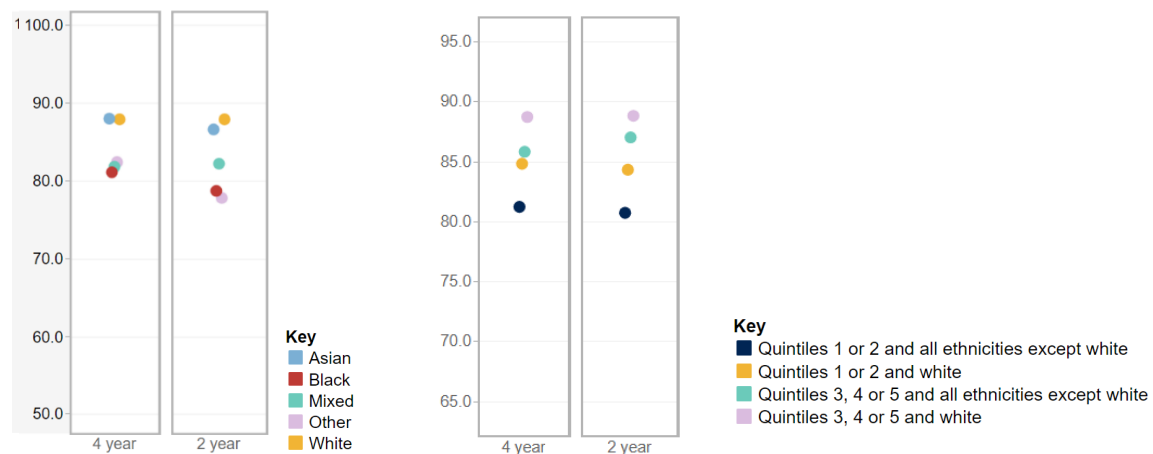


**Percentage of full-time undergraduate students that continue their studies in HE**

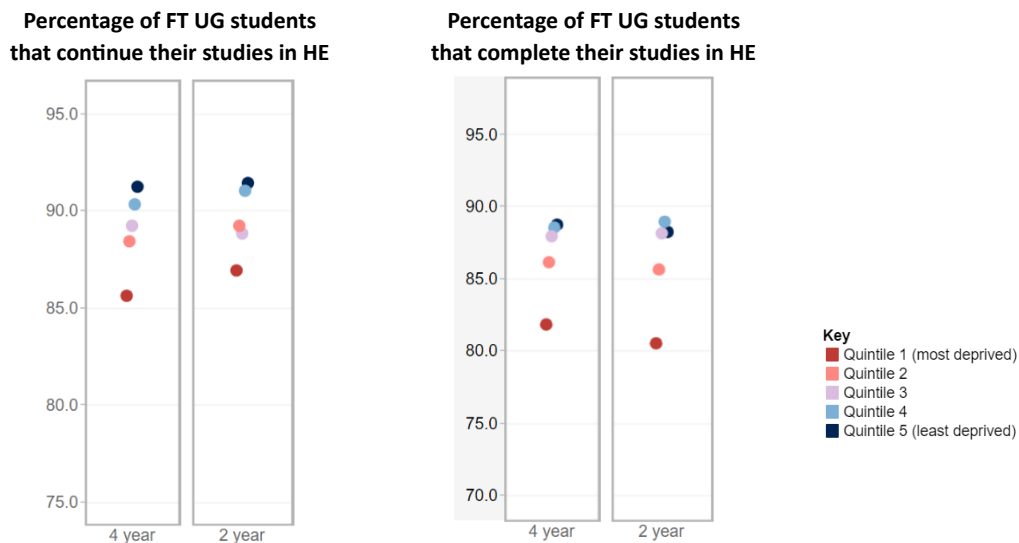


Black students and students of mixed ethnicities who join UoG are also less likely to complete an award in higher education than white and Asian students who join UoG. These gaps fluctuate yearly but the aggregate data show that a persistent gap exists for these ethnic groups. Intersectional data show that again, both ethnicity and deprivation (IMD Q1-2) have a material impact on the proportion of students who complete an award in higher education and that the students from minority ethnic groups who live in deprived local areas are most at risk of leaving higher education without obtaining an award.

**Percentage of full-time undergraduate students that complete their studies in HE**



In isolation, deprivation has a persistent and long-term effect on both continuation and completion rates at UoG, most materially for students from the most deprived quintile of local areas (IMD quintile 1) and for students who have been eligible for free school meals.



We have also considered the continuation and completion gaps between young and mature entrants but have determined that these gaps are less significant indications of risk to equality of opportunity than those relating to ethnicity and deprivation. Mature entrants much more likely to be from minority ethnic groups than younger entrants, and our assessment is that ethnicity is a more material indication of risk than age.

The University's assessment is that the most significant indication of risks to equality of opportunity are the low continuation and completion rates for students from minority ethnic groups who live in deprived local areas (IMD quintile 1-2), most particularly black students within that group. Our intervention strategies to support student success are designed to address this specific indication of risk but also to address the broader issues with continuation rates for both students from all minority ethnic groups and students from the most deprived quintile of local postcodes.

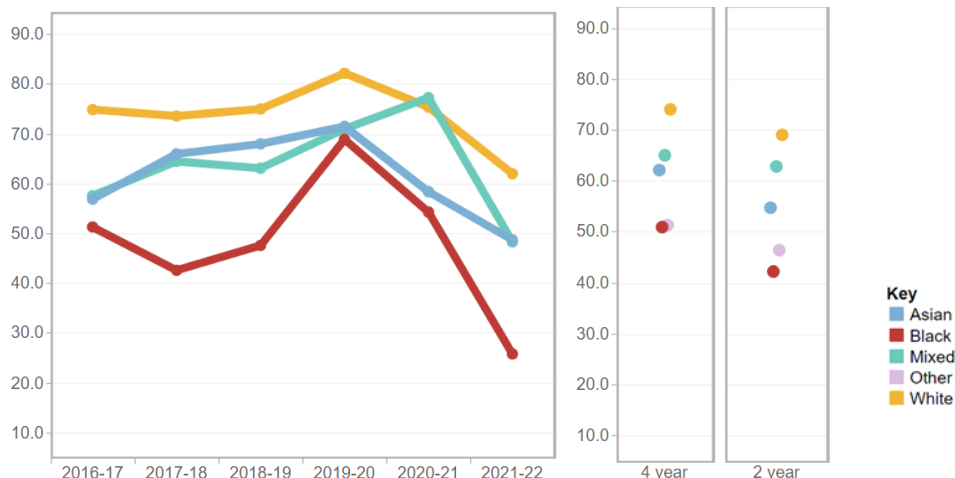
#### Indications of risk: attainment of first or upper-second class First Degrees

First degree attainment at UoG has been affected by two main factors in recent years. Firstly, the University's no detriment policy, put in place during the covid19 pandemic, had a significant impact on first degree outcomes in the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years. Secondly, the University's academic regulations were amended to address concerns about grade inflation, with this first starting to materially affect degree classification outcomes in the 2021/22 academic year. Recent good degree attainment data should be considered with this context.

Students from all minority ethnic groups continue to be less likely than white students to obtain a good first degree. Black and mixed ethnicity students are least likely to obtain a good first degree, but students from all minoritised ethnic backgrounds are less likely to obtain a good first degree than white students. These gaps narrowed for degree completions in the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years, largely due to the no-detriment adjustments put in place by the University for those years, but widened substantially in the 2021/22 academic year.



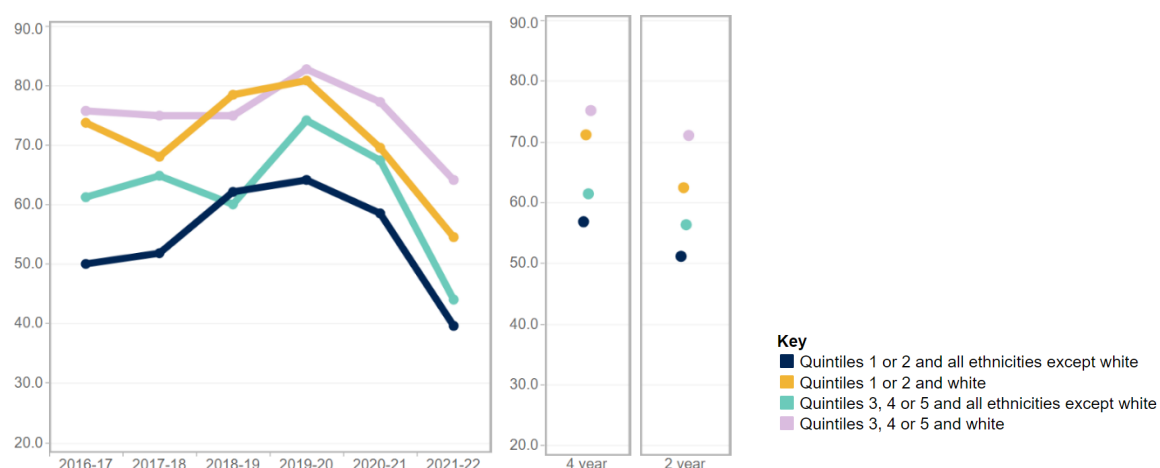
Percentage of full-time students that achieve first or upper-second class degrees



This gap in good degree attainment is again compounded for students from minority ethnic groups who live in deprived areas (IMD quintiles 1-2) or in areas of low representation in HE (POLAR4 Q1-2), for whom gaps in attainment are particularly significant. Black students from deprived local areas have the most significant attainment gaps when compared to all other student groups.

Significantly, the intersectional data indicate that ethnicity has a greater impact on good degree attainment than deprivation, although there are indications of risk to equality of opportunity associated with both. Good degree attainment for students who have been eligible for free school meals continues to be lower than for other students, which supports our assessment that our intervention strategies around degree attainment should focus on both ethnicity and deprivation.

Percentage of full-time students that achieve first or upper-second class degrees

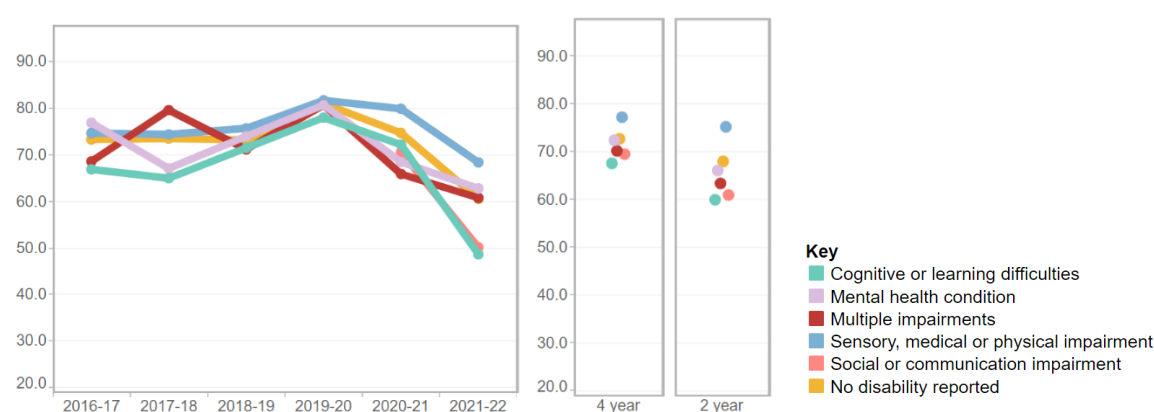


Female students are more likely to attain a good first degree than male students, with intersectional data indicating that female students from less deprived areas (IMD quintiles 3-5) are much more likely to attain a good first degree than all other student groups. Male students from deprived local areas (IMD quintiles 1-2) are not significantly less likely to obtain a good first degree than either male students from less deprived areas or female students from deprived areas. We have not, therefore, assessed there to be significant indications of risk associated with gender or intersections of gender and deprivation.



Students with a declared disability are slightly less likely overall to attain a good first degree at the University than those with no declared disability, but this varies substantially depending on the type of disability. The most recent data suggest that there is an emerging gap in good degree attainment for students with cognitive or learning difficulties and those with social or communication impairments, compared to students with no declared disability. Approximately 10% of our recent entrants have declared a cognitive or learning difficulty and we have identified this as a risk which we intend to address in our intervention strategies.

**Percentage of full-time students that achieve first or upper-second class degrees**



### Indications of risk: progression into highly skilled employment or further study

We have considered the available data and have not identified any significant, persistent gaps in progression into highly skilled employment or further study which require an intervention strategy. While gaps do exist, we have assessed that the risks behind these indicators are less significant than those associated with risks to equality of opportunity in access to the University, successful completion of an award or good degree attainment.

In the two most recent years of data (award completions in 2019/20 and 2020/21), gaps in progression between white students and students from minority ethnic groups have closed compared to years prior to 2019/20. Asian students have been less likely than other students to progress to a positive outcome but these data are based on a relatively small population (approximately 40 students per year) and a relatively low response rate (approximately 65%) to the Graduate Outcomes survey.

Intersections of ethnicity and deprivation (IMD quintiles 1-2) data indicate that deprivation is slightly more likely than ethnicity to correlate to positive outcomes. This is not consistent across all years of data, however, with students from the most deprived quintile of local areas (IMD quintile 1) just as successful as students from the least deprived quintiles of local areas (IMD quintiles 3-5) in obtaining a positive outcome in the most recent year of Graduate Outcomes data (2020/21 graduates).

Intersections of sex and deprivation also show that, in the most recent year of data, male students from deprived local areas (IMD quintile 1-2) are not materially less likely to obtain a positive outcome than either female or male students from less deprived areas (IMD quintiles 3-5).

The University continues to closely monitor the progression data for all under-represented and disadvantaged groups as part of its commitment to improve progression rates for all students into graduate level employment or further study.

# Fees, investments and targets

## 2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: University of Gloucestershire

Provider UKPRN: 10007145

### Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

\*course type not listed

#### Inflation statement:

Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations we will increase fees each year using CPIH

Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	9250
Foundation degree		N/A	9250
Foundation year/Year 0		N/A	9250
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE		N/A	9250
Postgraduate ITT		N/A	9250
Accelerated degree		N/A	11100
Sandwich year		N/A	1500
Turing Scheme and overseas study years		N/A	1385
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2025-26

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	David Game College Ltd	10015688	9250
First degree	Yeovil College	10007696	7500
Foundation degree	Gower College Swansea	10030408	7500
Foundation degree	New College Swindon	10004579	7500
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	Gower College Swansea	10030408	7500
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	6930
Foundation degree		N/A	6930
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT		N/A	6930
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2025-26

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	David Game College Ltd	10015688	6930
First degree	Yeovil College	10007696	4745
Foundation degree	New College Swindon	10004579	3625
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

# Fees, investments and targets

## 2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: University of Gloucestershire

Provider UKPRN: 10007145

### Investment summary

A provider is expected to submit information about its forecasted investment to achieve the objectives of its access and participation plan in respect of the following areas: access, financial support and research and evaluation. Note that this does not necessarily represent the total amount spent by a provider in these areas. Table 6b provides a summary of the forecasted investment, across the four academic years covered by the plan, and Table 6d gives a more detailed breakdown.

#### Notes about the data:

The figures below are not comparable to previous access and participation plans or access agreements as data published in previous years does not reflect latest provider projections on student numbers.

Yellow shading indicates data that was calculated rather than input directly by the provider.

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

"Total access investment funded from HFI" refers to income from charging fees above the basic fee limit.

"Total access investment from other funding (as specified)" refers to other funding, including OfS funding (but excluding Uni Connect), other public funding and funding from other sources such as philanthropic giving and private sector sources and/or partners.

**Table 6b - Investment summary**

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£1,723,000	£1,767,000	£1,813,000	£1,861,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£507,000	£507,000	£507,000	£507,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£70,000	£72,000	£74,000	£76,000

**Table 6d - Investment estimates**

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£493,000	£505,000	£519,000	£532,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£1,143,000	£1,173,000	£1,203,000	£1,235,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£87,000	£89,000	£91,000	£94,000
Access activity investment	<b>Total access investment (£)</b>	<b>£1,723,000</b>	<b>£1,767,000</b>	<b>£1,813,000</b>	<b>£1,861,000</b>
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment (as % of HFI)</i>	11.1%	11.7%	12.0%	12.3%
Access activity investment	<b>Total access investment funded from HFI (£)</b>	<b>£1,074,000</b>	<b>£1,101,000</b>	<b>£1,130,000</b>	<b>£1,159,000</b>
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)</i>	<b>£649,000</b>	<b>£666,000</b>	<b>£683,000</b>	<b>£702,000</b>
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£253,000	£253,000	£253,000	£253,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£134,000	£134,000	£134,000	£134,000
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£120,000	£120,000	£120,000	£120,000
Financial support investment	<b>Total financial support investment (£)</b>	<b>£507,000</b>	<b>£507,000</b>	<b>£507,000</b>	<b>£507,000</b>
Financial support investment	<i>Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)</i>	3.3%	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£70,000	£72,000	£74,000	£76,000
Research and evaluation investment	<i>Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)</i>	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%



# Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: University of Gloucestershire

Provider UKPRN: 10007145

## Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim [500 characters maximum]	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
To close the two-year aggregate gap between the proportion of entrants to full-time undergraduate programmes at the University living in IMD quintile 1 and IMD quintile 5	PTA_1	Access	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1	IMD quintile 5	We intend to use the two-year aggregate indicator for full-time undergraduates, which gives a better indication of sustained progress in closing this gap than data from just one intake year. The baseline years for this two-year aggregation are 2020/21 and 2021/22.	No	The access and participation dashboard	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	17.7	16.5	15.0	13.0	11.0
	PTA_2														
	PTA_3														
	PTA_4														
	PTA_5														
	PTA_6														
	PTA_7														
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Close the two-year aggregate gap between the proportions of black and white students who successfully complete an award on a full-time undergraduate programme.	PTS_1	Completion	Ethnicity	Black	White	We intend to use the two-year aggregate indicator for full-time undergraduates, which gives a better indication of sustained progress in closing this gap than data from just one intake year. The baseline years for this two-year aggregation are 2020/21 and 2021/22.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage points	9.2	8.5	7.5	6.5	5.0
Close the two-year aggregate gap in the proportions of students from IMD quintile 1 and IMD quintiles 2-5 who successfully complete an award on a full-time undergraduate programme.	PTS_2	Completion	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1	All other quintiles	We intend to use the two-year aggregate indicator for full-time undergraduates, which gives a better indication of sustained progress in closing this gap than data from just one intake year. The baseline years for this two-year aggregation are 2020/21 and 2021/22.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage points	7.5	7.0	6.5	5.5	4.5
Close the two-year aggregate gap between the proportions of minority ethnic (excluding white minorities) students from IMD quintiles 1-2 and white students from IMD quintiles 3-5 who successfully complete an award on a full-time undergraduate programme.	PTS_3	Completion	Intersection of characteristics	Other (please specify in description)	Other (please specify in description)	Intersection of IMD and Ethnicity. Target group = IMD Q1-2 ABMO. Comparator group = IMD Q3-5 White. We intend to use the two-year aggregate indicator for full-time undergraduates, which gives a better indication of sustained progress in closing this gap than data from just one intake year. The baseline years for this two-year aggregation are 2020/21 and 2021/22.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage points	9.2	9.0	8.5	7.5	6.5
Close the two-year aggregate gap in the proportions of black and white students who obtain good first degrees on full-time courses.	PTS_4	Attainment	Ethnicity	Black	White	We intend to use the two-year aggregate indicator for full-time undergraduates, which gives a better indication of sustained progress in closing this gap than data from just one intake year. The baseline years for this two-year aggregation are 2020/21 and 2021/22.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage points	26.8	24.0	22.0	18.0	12.00

[illegible]