

## De Montfort University's 2020-21 to 2024-25 Access and Participation: Summary

### What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education. You can view our full access and participation plan at: [access-participation-plan-2020-2025 \(dmu.ac.uk\)](https://www.dmu.ac.uk/access-participation-plan-2020-2025)

### Key points (see pages 1 – 8 of the full plan)

Our access and participation plan supports **all** of our students to meet their potential, whatever their background or circumstance. However, by analysing our student data there are some specific areas that we need to address. The rest of the summary document describes the aims of our access and participation plan and activity being undertaken to address these areas specifically and support all our students to succeed.

- Male students from neighbourhoods where not many people go into higher education are less likely to come to DMU than female students from these same neighbourhoods:
- Students with mixed ethnicity backgrounds are less likely to continue their studies than white students:
- Mature students are less likely to continue with their studies than young students:
- The following groups of students are less likely to achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above:
  - Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students;
  - Students from neighbourhoods where not many people go into higher education;
  - Students with a known disability;
  - Mature students.
- The following groups of students are less likely to progress into high skilled employment or further study when they complete their course:
  - Black students;
  - Mixed ethnicity students;
  - Male students from neighbourhoods where not many people go into higher education.

### What we are aiming to achieve (see pages 8 – 10 of the full plan)

Our access and participation plan aims to deliver better outcomes for

- **Access** for disadvantaged male students;
- Students to **continue with their studies** when at the University;
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic students, students from neighbourhoods where higher education participation is less common, disabled students and mature students have equal opportunity to achieve 1<sup>st</sup> and 2:1 **degree awards**;
- **Progression into employment or further study** for Black, and mixed ethnicity students, and for male students from neighbourhoods where participation in higher education is less common.

### What we are doing to achieve our aims (see pages 10 - 17 of the full plan)

#### Access to higher education

We work with more than 60 primary and secondary schools with children up to the age of 16, as part of our growing commitment to our [Widening Participation in Schools](#) programme. The activities that we run are designed to enhance learning and offer new opportunities that schools may not be able to provide. This is particularly useful for children who may need encouragement to realise their potential.

Alongside higher education providers in Leicester City, Leicestershire and Rutland our Pathways activity engages with schools and colleges to offer a number of activities and interventions in their local areas. Pupils who take part in Pathways events develop new skills, explore future careers and more. The [Pathways](#) website also hosts a range of resources from virtual tours to student blogs.

The University is also working with IntoUniversity and the University of Leicester to set up INTO Leicester. IntoUniversity's model is to work from centres in the most disadvantaged communities, partnering with schools, families and universities for long-term engagement - helping whole communities to become less marginalised, bridging the educational divide and enabling social mobility. Our business case is being developed during summer 2022, with funding primarily delivered through joint fundraising with the University of Leicester.

We also deliver: [DMU Aspire](#), which gives year 12 students a complete university experience in a week of engaging activities. This includes a mix of online experiences and face-to-face campus-based learning.

Through these activities young people are able to develop skills and learning, and understand the requirements of university life. Students are better able to prepare themselves, potentially improve attainment outcomes and make better choices when making decisions about educational choices.

### *Diversifying our provision*

For 2022-23 we will be revamping our curriculum by introducing Education 2030, block-mode learning in a standard 30-credit module. We have chosen block-mode for our students as evidence shows improved outcomes for all students and particular ones for widening participation students. Our new curriculum focusses on the integration of employability, sustainability and entrepreneurial activity into each module. Assessments for each Block have been reenvisioned to be more varied, authentic and inclusive.

We deliver tailored employability support for all students and run central events that are open to all through [DMU Works](#). All students have access to work in partnership with academic programmes to develop employability content within the curriculum, in addition to delivering co-curricular opportunities throughout the year. Face-to-face support for students is accompanied by an extensive suite of digital resources and tools, such as interview simulation software.

### *Student support*

Of vital importance is our students' health and wellbeing. This is particularly the case for students who arrive at University with additional needs or who may not be fully prepared for university study. Our university-wide approach to wellbeing is called Healthy DMU, one objective of which is to reduce health related inequalities. We run a range of Healthy DMU Masterclasses which encourage skills-based approaches to succeeding in education.

We are committed to looking at ways to remove barriers to enable students and staff to fully participate in the opportunities we provide. We encourage students and applicants to inform us about a disability, medical condition or learning difference as early as possible, so that relevant support can be arranged while they study with us.

### **How students can get involved** *(see page 17 of the full plan)*

Students are our drivers of change and student representation is a key element in the development of our access and participation plan, as well as are core to the successful outcomes of other strategic initiatives. The student voice within our faculties is coordinated by our Associate Professors Student Experience, a role established in the University in the last five years. Through this structure students have access to regular drop-in sessions where they can discuss any issues or feedback they may have.

Associate Professors Student Experience are a key link between the University, students and De Montfort Students' Union (DSU) and play an active role in supporting the recruitment of student representatives across our subject disciplines to enhance the student voice as well as to be a key Faculty contact in enhancing the student experience such as through Faculty Student Experience Working Groups.

Student representatives are integral to the governance and operation of university committees and relevant working groups. In recognition of the importance of the student voice, student updates are the first substantive agenda item on core university committees such as University Learning and Teaching Committee (ULTC) and Academic Board and the DSU Executive (Academic) is deputy Chair of ULTC.

### **Fees we charge**

The maximum annual fees we charge for UK Undergraduates are:

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

You can see a full list of fees for DMU courses at: <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/study/fees-funding/index.aspx>

## **Financial help available** (see page 17 of the full plan)

We offer financial support to students from underrepresented groups. This helps students access higher education and continue studying until their course is completed. The support includes:

- The **Access to Higher Education Scholarship**, available if students are accepted onto a course with an Access to HE qualification (where it is an entry requirement for the course).
- The **Care Leavers' Bursary**, available to eligible students who come to DMU directly from care.
- The **Estranged Students' Bursary**, available to eligible students who are estranged from their family and have no other source of income.
- The **Stephen Lawrence Professional Scholarship**, which enables DMU students from disadvantaged backgrounds to benefit from a fee reduction and an annual cash bursary across law, journalism and architecture programme.
- The **Unite Foundation Scholarship** is jointly offered by DMU and the Unite Foundation. The Scholarships are designed to support and promote access to HE for students coming to university from Local Authority care and those who are estranged from their parents.
- **Article 26 Scholarships** which are for students unable to access funds from the Student Loans Company and are charged international student fees (for example, students seeking asylum in the UK).
- The **Stoneygate Trust Scholarship** is dedicated to providing DMU students from a low income or disadvantaged background with monetary awards that will assist them in obtaining at least a grade of 2:1 in their degree programme.

You can find further information about our scholarships and bursaries at: [Scholarships and bursaries \(dmu.ac.uk\)](https://www.dmu.ac.uk/scholarships-and-bursaries)

## **Information for students** (see page 20 of the full plan)

Information is available to current and prospective students on our support packages, tuition fee policies and payment arrangements through our website, fee and support information to applicants, open day guides and pre-enrolment materials. We ensure that the production of alternative materials supports those with different access requirements.

Our Student Gateway, located at the heart of the campus, provides advice and guidance service that covers, finance, disability, mental health and counselling, and careers. The model has been adopted partly in recognition of the additional barriers which students with no family history of studying at HE level may face.

## **How we will measure what we have achieved** (see pages 17 - 20 of the full plan)

We understand the importance of monitoring and evaluating our activities so that we are able to recognise good practice and fund future activities accordingly. We have implemented a performance management service called the **Matrix of Metrics**. MoM presents performance management information to a range of users, and helps the university make sense of the University's strengths and weaknesses.

In 2021-22 we established programme self-assessment reporting and programme quality improvement planning to provide a framework for academic teams to reflect on and scrutinise the overall health of our academic programme at programme boards.

In the latest review of programme self-assessment reporting across all Faculties, programme teams reflected on positive and innovative ways in which programme teams put in place support for students during the pandemic when teaching was primarily delivered remotely and the support that has been put in place for the return to on-campus teaching.

## **Contact details for further information**

You can contact [susan.orr@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:susan.orr@dmu.ac.uk) for further information.