

Annex I: Plan summary template

Boston College

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

What is an access and participation plan?

An access and participation sets out provisions that will be meaningful and effective in promoting equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups, as determined by the Office for Students.

You can see the full access and participation plan for **Boston College** at [Access-and-Participation-Plan-2026-27-to-2029-30.pdf](#).

Key points

Boston College's mission is to "inspire lifelong learning, growing people to be their brilliant best, energising our communities and brightening all our futures." The College's BRIGHTEN values, Bravery, Respect, Inspiration, Growth, Hope, Truth, Energy, and Nurture, underpin all activities.

Boston College offers a range of Higher Education (HE) qualifications: HNDs, HNCs, HTQs, Foundation Degrees, and top-up degrees, in partnership with Pearson and the University of Derby. The College is focussed on accessibility, inclusion, and progression, especially for underrepresented and disadvantaged groups and provides a personalized learning environment with small class sizes, strong academic and pastoral support, and close employer links.

Key Risks to Equality of Opportunity:

- Low enrolment from care-experienced, service, and Gypsy/Roma/Traveller communities.
- Lower rates of 21+ student enrolment and male student participation.
- Insufficient awareness and support for Disabled Student Allowance (DSA).
- Gaps in data tracking for students eligible for free school meals.
- Poor local understanding of the HE offer and lower continuation/completion rates for certain groups.
- Attainment gaps between qualification types and demographic groups.
- Limited progression to Level 6 and highly skilled employment, especially for male students.

See pages 1-6 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Fees we charge

Fees are clearly published on the Boston College website as well as being listed on UCAS and are updated on an annual basis. Access the information here <https://www.boston.ac.uk/about-us/policies-procedures>.

See page 32 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Financial help available

Boston College also offers a Financial Support Scheme for Higher Education Students which is available via the website. Students are also informed about the scheme during their induction and via the College's VLE. The Financial Support Scheme includes a Higher Education bursary, fee waivers and hardship fund.

21 Bursaries of £500 are offered, per full-time student (pro-rata for part-time students). Awards will be based on all the below eligibility criteria being met:

- Students on undergraduate HE Provision (enrolment)

- Household income £25,000 or under
- Student's fee is neither paid nor part paid through a sponsorship arrangement
- Student is not NHS funded
- Student is not undertaking a postgraduate initial teacher training course leading to Qualified Teacher Status.

If there are more applications than bursaries available, priority will be given to applicants who meet Boston College eligibility criteria which include one or more of the following:

1. Individual income below £20,319 per annum
2. Mature student with dependent children
3. Student undertaking part time study and not eligible for maintenance grants.
4. First in family to undertake a higher education award.
5. Identified as 'leaving care' as per Children Act 2004

More detailed information is available here <https://www.boston.ac.uk/about-us/policies-procedures>, available in our digital Higher Education Student handbook and via individual communication.

See pages 27-28 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Information for students

We are committed to ensuring information regarding fees and financial support accessible to all students. This information is published on the Boston College website (boston.ac.uk), available in our digital Higher Education Student handbook and via individual communication.

See page 32 of the access and participation plan for more information.

What we are aiming to achieve

Our Objectives for the Access and Participation plan are (by 2030)

- Increase participation from underrepresented groups (e.g., care-experienced, 21+, SEND, male students).
- Improve continuation and completion rates for students from deprived backgrounds and younger students.
- Close attainment gaps between qualification types and between male and female students.
- Enhance progression to Level 6 and highly skilled employment, with targeted support for male students

See pages 3-5 of the access and participation plan for more information.

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

We have designed a series of Intervention Strategies that include:

- Dedicated outreach and pre-entry guidance for target groups.
- Development of flexible study models (part-time, hybrid, online).
- Targeted awareness campaigns for DSA and improved internal support.
- Enhanced marketing and engagement to clarify the HE offer.
- Academic and pastoral support interventions, mentoring, and investment in student-led initiatives.
- Improved data tracking and equitable access to achievement coaches.
- Mapping clear progression routes and providing comprehensive careers guidance.
- Ongoing evaluation and dissemination of outcomes to inform future practice.

See pages 5-26 of the access and participation plan for more information.

How students can get involved

Students are, and will continue to be, integral to the delivery of access and participation work. For example, through their involvement as student ambassadors in outreach activities and their participation in student-led initiatives and societies that contribute to a stronger HE culture (their lived experiences and peer-to-peer insights are invaluable in reaching and supporting diverse student groups).

See pages 30-31 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

Boston College will engage in ongoing monitoring and evaluation of our intervention strategies, continuously reflecting on and responding to findings to improve and develop our practices. This will include:

- **Systematic Performance Monitoring:** The College will refine its tracking document into a detailed performance dashboard, featuring specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and quantitative targets for each intervention. This will allow for precise measurement of progress and highlight areas needing attention, supporting the strategic focus on productivity and digital innovation.
- **Integrated Data Analysis:** Evaluation will go beyond basic data review to include trend analysis of demographic data (enrolment, continuation, attainment, progression), impact attribution to distinguish causality, and integration of qualitative insights from student surveys and focus groups. This comprehensive approach ensures a deeper understanding of both outcomes and underlying causes.
- **Adaptive Planning and Responsiveness:** The evaluation process is designed to be adaptive. If progress deviates from targets or new risks emerge, the HE QAC, in consultation with the HE Group, will review and adjust intervention strategies as needed. This agile approach ensures that resources are allocated effectively, and interventions remain evidence-based and responsive to student needs.
- **Cross-College Engagement and Dissemination:** Evaluation findings will be shared widely across academic departments and support services, fostering shared ownership of access and participation outcomes. Regular updates will be communicated at HE Group and HE QAC meetings, with comprehensive reports presented to the Standards Committee and the Corporation (Governors) for robust oversight and accountability

See pages 31-32 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Contact details for further information

Please contact Tom Hughes, Assistant Principal: Quality, Performance and Standards, tom.hughes@boston.ac.uk, 01205 365701 (ext. 3303) for more information.