

# The London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE)

## Summary of 2020-21 to 2024-25 access and participation plan

### What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers, including universities such as LSE, will improve equality of opportunity for UK undergraduate students from groups that are currently [underrepresented](#) in higher education. This includes helping students to access, succeed in and progress from higher education into graduate employment or further study. Further information is available in [LSE's Access and Participation Plan](#).

### Context

The focus of our plan is on improving access and outcomes for specific groups of students based on historic LSE data that shows:

- Students are more likely to enrol at LSE from areas where participation in higher education is already high (high participation neighbourhoods) or if they are from a higher-income household. *However, the most recent data (published in 2022) shows LSE is making good progress to close the gaps between students from the high and low participation neighbourhoods.*
- Students are less likely to progress from their first year of study into their second year of study if they are from a lower-income household and/or have a known mental health difficulty.
- Students from some ethnic minority groups are less likely to achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above. *However, the most recent data (published in 2022) shows that these gaps have significantly reduced.*
- The most recent data that asks graduates what they are doing 15 months after completing their studies shows that students with a known disability are less likely to be in a highly skilled graduate role or continuing their studies when compared with students with no known disability.

By assessing this data, we can see that whilst there has been much improvement in the representation and success of certain underrepresented groups, there is still work to be done. We will continue to monitor outcomes for all students and based on our progress and prioritise work to make improvements for specific groups of students.

### What we are aiming to achieve

Our Access and Participation Plan aims to support the delivery of the [LSE2030 strategy](#), ensuring equal opportunities for all and contributing to positive social change. We aim to:

- Increase the proportion of students entering LSE from the following target groups:
  - Students from lower income households and neighbourhoods with low participation in higher education for young people
  - Disabled students
  - [Care experienced students](#)
  - Students from ethnic minorities under-represented at LSE, specifically Black African/Caribbean students, Bangladeshi students and Pakistani students.
- Increase the continuation rates (the proportion of students continuing from the first year of their degree into their second year) of students from the following target groups:
  - Students from lower income households
  - Students with a declared mental health disability
- Reduce the gap between the proportion of White students and Black African and Caribbean students achieving a 1<sup>st</sup> class or 2:1 degree, and the proportion of White students and Asian students achieving a 1<sup>st</sup> class or 2:1 degree
- We will continue to monitor graduate outcomes for all groups listed above and offer tailored careers support for:
  - Students with a known disability
  - [Care experienced students](#)
  - Students who have attended one of LSE's intensive widening participation programmes.

See pages 2-14 of the full plan

See pages 17-18 of the full plan which includes the targets we have set.

## What we are doing to achieve our aims

Below are some examples of programmes of activity to work towards achieving our aims and targets:

- 1. Strategic school partnerships and work to raise attainment of pre-16 pupils:** during 2022/23 we will decide how best to work with schools and colleges in future, with a particular focus on attainment-raising activities for pre-16 pupils, building on our current Mathematics tutoring programme and new School Governor scheme.
- 2. Widening access activities:** we have a range of [events and programmes](#) that offer post-16 students a taste of what it is like to study at LSE and offer support through the application process which we regularly review, develop and improve.
- 3. Flexible pathways into and through higher education:** we will review our entry requirements to remove barriers for students who are not taking A-levels and will increase contact with Further Education Colleges where possible. During 2022/23, we will begin to explore options to make our Undergraduate offer more flexible in the longer term.
- 4. Contextual admissions and offers:** in our admissions process we use data and information provided on [UCAS application forms](#) to assess students' achievement and potential whilst recognising the challenges an applicant may have faced in their educational or individual circumstances. In some case, applicants are eligible for [contextual offers](#) which can be up to two grades lower than our standard entry requirements.
- 5. Financial support:** we offer generous financial support to eligible students so that they can fully benefit from the full LSE student experience. During 2022/23, we will review our current financial support package, taking into account feedback from students.
- 6. Educate for Global Impact:** we are improving teaching and learning and the student experience through the Educate for Global Impact pillar of the [LSE2030 strategy](#). We are delivering 15 new programmes to achieve this, one of which is focused on inclusive education. This will build on and develop existing activities in areas such as academic mentoring, anti-racism and digital accessibility.
- 7. Student Support:** we are continuing to enhance our on-course support for students through developments to our Student Services Centre, including the launch of our [Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework](#). To support student transition, [LSE Life](#), our centre for academic, personal and professional development, has introduced an [e-learning module](#) to help new first-year students prepare for study at LSE, as well as a Student Academic Mentor scheme.
- 8. LSE Careers:** we are delivering tailored support for specific student groups. This includes a mentoring scheme for disabled students, supported by LSE alumni. We have also developed the [LSE Micro Internship scheme](#), specifically for identified students who have not had the opportunity to gain much work experience before joining LSE.

See pages 19-27 and appendix 3 of the full plan.

## How students can get involved

Students are involved in the planning, delivery and monitoring of our APP. One example of this is through student representation on our APP Steering Group, a committee responsible for ensuring LSE meets the commitments in its plan. Students can also get involved in the APP through our [LSE Student Education Panel](#) and our [student ambassador scheme](#).

## Evaluation: how we will measure what we have achieved

Our approach to evaluating our Access and Participation Plan is based on LSE's Education Evaluation Framework. We evaluate our activities using a range of methods to ensure we know they work and are beneficial for students. It also allows us to continue to improve them in future. We are committed to sharing the findings of our evaluation so that others can learn from these.

See appendix 3 of the full plan.

## Fees we charge

At LSE, we currently charge the following annual fees for UK undergraduate students:

- £9,250 for full-time Home students
- £1,385 for full-time overseas study years

- £1,850 for full-time work placement years

You can see a full list of fees for courses at the LSE on the [fees and funding information](#) on our website.

### Financial help available

We offer financial support to students to help them access higher education and continue studying until their degree is completed. Full details of the support and eligibility criteria are available on our [website](#).

See pages 28-30 of the full plan.

The support includes:

- A [travel fund](#) for open days and offer holder days, open to pupils who attend a UK state school /college, live more than 50 miles away from LSE's campus and meet certain criteria.
- An annual [LSE Bursary](#) of up to £4,000 for the duration of their degree for students from household incomes of less than £42,875 a year. Bursary amounts depend on a student's household income (as assessed by [Student Finance](#)).
- [LSE Accommodation Bursaries](#) for students from low-income households to help towards the cost of halls of residence. The amount given depends on the number of students who are awarded the bursary, with students from low-household incomes awarded larger amounts.
- [LSE Discretionary Bursaries](#) are available to students with exceptional financial need. They are intended as a top up to the standard LSE Bursary or can be awarded if a student's household income means they are not eligible for the LSE Bursary.
- LSE also awards a number of [Undergraduate scholarships](#). As the number, value, eligibility criteria and type of scholarships vary each year, full details of available scholarships are listed on our website. All scholarships are awarded based on financial circumstances in the first instance, and secondly take into account academic performance.
- [Access to Education Scholarships](#) which provide support towards tuition fees and living costs for students whose immigration status is classed as: an asylum seeker, a refugee, a person with humanitarian protection or a person who is resident in the UK and has been granted Discretionary/Limited Leave to Remain in the UK.
- Current students can apply for funding from the [LSE Access Fund](#) if they are facing unexpected financial difficulties and the [Digital Support Fund](#) if they are unable to access funds to purchase equipment necessary for their studies.

### Information for students

We offer up-to-date information for prospective applicants and current students on our undergraduate fees and financial support in the following ways:

- In person: we include information at events we run on campus, like [Open Days](#) and [Offer-Holder Days](#)
- Digital: there is information online for [prospective applicants](#) and [current students](#), including downloadable guides and information is included on our [UCAS course information webpage](#);
- Virtual events: information is included in our online events such as our [LSE Discovery sessions](#) and [Study at LSE Webinars](#)
- Printed materials: we have a range of printed materials such as the LSE undergraduate guide, financial support brochure and offer-holder booklet.

For up-to-date information, see our webpages for [prospective students](#) and [current students](#).

### Contact details for further information

Please email [widening.participation@lse.ac.uk](mailto:widening.participation@lse.ac.uk) for further information.