

University of Kent

Summary of 2024-25 to 2027-28 Access and Participation Plan

What is an Access and Participation Plan?

An Access and Participation Plan sets out what the University will do to promote equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups, as determined by the Office for Students.

You can see the full Access and Participation Plan for the University of Kent at [University of Kent Access and Participation Plan](#).

Key points

- We are committed to supporting young people from underrepresented groups to attain good grades and progress to university. We will do this by working in partnership with schools in the local area that have Key Stage 4 results below the national average. We are also committed to working with care-experienced students, in partnership with other local universities and other partners, to ensure equality of opportunity for all students.
- Our involvement as lead sponsor for the University of Kent Academies Trust (UKAT) enables us to understand the needs and challenges faced by schools and multi-academy trusts. We continue to develop our role as lead sponsor and support the trust at all levels.
- We are working with local 16–19 education providers and industry partners to make sure the education opportunities available meet the needs of local (and national) communities and employers. For example, we are increasing the provision of level 4 and level 5 courses, degree apprenticeships and short courses aligned to local, regional and national employers' needs.
- We offer a wide range of integrated foundation courses. These build the core skills required for specialist degree-level study and provide alternative routes into higher education for students who may not meet the standard requirements for entry.
- Our mission is to provide students at the University of Kent with a university experience that is inclusive, supportive and enables them to excel. We focus particularly on students from disadvantaged backgrounds who may find it more difficult to access all the opportunities available to them.
- To support us to achieve our goals, we are launching the Kent Ambition Scholars Programme from the academic year 2024-25. All students who receive the Kent Financial Support Package (details below) will be invited to join the Kent Ambition Scholars Programme and will receive targeted support throughout their time at Kent.

See pages 1-4 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

Fees we charge

At the University of Kent, the maximum fees charged are:

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

The University of Kent will seek to increase fees subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations. We intend to increase fees each year using the RPIX + 3%

A [full list of our fees](#) can be found on our website.

Financial help available

We offer [financial support](#) to students from underrepresented groups. This helps students to access higher education and succeed in their studies. The support available includes:

- the [Kent Financial Support Package \(KFSP\)](#) – a bursary of £1,000 per year at each stage of their studies for full-time students with a household income of £30,000 or below, and who meet other eligibility criteria

- [funding and wider support](#) for care leavers, young independent students, estranged students, homeless students and student carers
- a [hardship fund](#) for all students in financial hardship.

See pages 42-43 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

Information for students

Prospective students receive information on fees and financial support at in-person and online events, such as our open days and applicant days, and by email. Current students receive information about fees and the financial support available through our internal communication campaigns and emails.

For the most up-to-date information, see our website: [Fees and Funding](#)

See pages 42-43 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

What we are aiming to achieve

Our overall aim is to support students to access higher education, to thrive and fulfil their academic potential, and to become successful graduates. Based on our assessment of performance, we have identified the following areas on which to focus our work:

- Objective 1: We will work to increase the number of students from areas of low participation in higher education who progress to higher education in general, and the University of Kent in particular, using IMD Q1 and TUNDRA Q1 as proxies, by 4pp by 2027/28.
- Objective 2: We will work to increase the number of students who have been under local authority care who progress to higher education in general, and the University of Kent in particular by 38% by 2027/28.
- Objectives 3, 4 and 5: We will increase the number of Kent students who successfully complete their course. Based on our assessment of performance, we will focus on students who live in areas of high deprivation, mature students and disabled students, including neurodivergent students. The University is committed to reaching a 2pp gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 first degree students, a 4.5pp between Mature and Young students and a 0.5pp between students who declare a disability and those with no declared disability, for students starting their degree in 2027/28.
- Objective 6: We will work to eliminate the gap in attainment that currently exists between White students and students of all other ethnic groups at Ken by 2031.
- Objective 7: We will increase the number of students at risk of economic disadvantage who achieve a 'good degree' at Kent. The University is committed to reaching a 5pp gap in 'good degree' attainment between IMD Q1 and Q5 students by 2031.
- Objective 8: We will increase the number of Kent students at risk of economic disadvantage who progress to a graduate job or further to over 75% by 2031.

See pages 10-11 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information and our targets.

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

To address key risks to equality of opportunity, we will do the following:

- Roll out a new programme of literacy, numeracy and wider curriculum support, alongside sustained progression to HE activities for students in Key Stages 3 and 4. See Intervention Strategy 1 in support of Objective 1.
- Continue to develop our intensive 'Ambition to Succeed' programme which supports Level 3 students in Kent and Medway to explore their options and apply for higher education. See Intervention Strategy 2 in support of Objective 1.
- Provide targeted support from Year 7 through to their Level 3 qualifications for students who are or have been in local authority care. See Intervention Strategy 3, in support of Objective 2.

- Implement the Kent Ambition Scholars Programme. See Intervention Strategy 4, in support of Objectives 3-8.
- Provide enhanced support to all students as they move from school to the University, with targeted provision for students who may be at risk of dropping out before completing their course. See Intervention Strategies 4 and 5, in support of Objectives 3-4.
- Provide a comprehensive programme of support for disabled students, neurodivergent students and those requiring mental health support. See Intervention Strategy 6, in support of Objective 5.
- Diversify our curriculum, provide training opportunities for staff and offer coaching support to students from ethnically diverse backgrounds. See Intervention Strategy 7, in support of Objective 6.
- Provide academic peer mentoring and other academic support activity. See Intervention Strategy 8, in support of Objective 7.
- Support students at risk of economic disadvantage to plan their career development via the 'Empower' scheme. See Intervention Strategy 9, in support of Objective 8.

See pages 12-34 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

How students can get involved

Students can apply to become [Student Ambassadors](#) at the University of Kent to support co-creation of outreach activities. They can also apply to become [Student Success](#) interns, to support with work designed to enhance students' success.

Students can also apply to be part of the [Widening Participation Student Advisory Panel](#) which forms part of the Kent APP Governance structure.

The University works closely with [Kent Union](#) to ensure that students are represented, and sabbatical officers are part of all governance structures at Kent.

See pages 35-36 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

Our programmes of activity are informed by the best available evidence about what works for students. We will collect data and feedback to evaluate:

- our programme design
- the impact of the programme of activity, and the impact on achieving our overall objectives.

The Access and Participation Research and Evaluation Group and Plan Operational Group will monitor and report on these processes to the WP Student Advisory Panel (WPSAP) and the APP Steering Group. The Steering Group will oversee implementation to ensure progress against yearly milestones in our plan. The WPSAP will hold us accountable, and ensure we are meeting the commitments made to prospective and current students through this plan. We will monitor impact on our target groups, to ensure we are addressing our aims. We will publish evidence on our website on an ongoing basis.

See pages 38-42 for details of our overarching Evaluation Strategy, and pages 53-68 (Annex B) of the Access and Participation Plan for detailed information on evaluation per intervention strategy.

Contact details for further information

Please contact Clare Allison at outreach@kent.ac.uk for more information.