

Loughborough College Access and Participation Plan Summary 2025–2029

Our commitment

At Loughborough College, we believe everyone with the ambition to succeed in higher education should have the opportunity to do so, regardless of background. Our Access and Participation Plan (APP) identifies and dismantles barriers to student success from 2025–26 through 2028–29.

While our access rates compare favourably with the wider sector, we are actively addressing specific gaps in student continuation rates. We proudly support a diverse student body, particularly those traditionally underrepresented in higher education, including:

- Learners from areas of high socio-economic deprivation or low HE participation.
- Students from ethnically diverse backgrounds.
- Mature students and learners with disabilities.
- Students progressing from vocational pathways (such as BTECs and Access to HE programmes).

What we want to achieve

We are committed to closing performance gaps by 2026–27 for specific student groups facing obstacles to completing their studies.

Target Student Group	Current Continuation Gap	2026–27 Target Gap
1. Ethnically diverse students (vs. White peers)	28.3 percentage points	14.0 percentage points
2. Students previously eligible for Free School Meals	9.2 percentage points	5.2 percentage points
3. Students from areas of high deprivation (IMD Quintile 1)	25.6 percentage points	12.0 percentage points
4. Students from areas with low HE participation (TUNDRA Quintile 1)	10.2 percentage points	5.1 percentage points

What we will do

To ensure our students feel supported, connected, and empowered to succeed, we are investing heavily in six key areas:

Academic support

- **Targeted Tutoring:** Providing dedicated academic tutors, study skills workshops, and bespoke 1:1 guidance in research and academic writing.
- **Embedded Development:** Integrating core academic skills directly into course curricula.
- **Early Intervention:** Monitoring attendance and engagement to proactively identify and support students at risk.

Personal wellbeing and mental health support

- **Enhanced Staffing:** Increasing welfare personnel to deliver dedicated, accessible wellbeing support.
- **Clinical and Practical Resources:** Providing mental health resources, professional counselling, and guidance on housing, finances, and anxiety.
- **Life Skills:** Delivering workshops focused on resilience and independent living.

Building a sense of belonging

- **Peer Mentoring:** Launching a peer-to-peer mentoring scheme.
- **Student Representation:** Creating a Student Advisory Panel specifically for underrepresented groups to influence college decision-making.
- **Inspiration and Celebration:** Developing alumni role-model campaigns and celebrating student achievements.

Information, advice and guidance

- **Dedicated Admissions:** Appointing a specialist Higher Education Admissions Officer.
- **Digital Hubs:** Creating online guidance resources for transitioning step-by-step into college life.
- **Outreach and Flexibility:** Running HE taster activities and enhancing support for blended learners.

Flexible study opportunities

We are expanding flexible pathways to help students balance education with work and family commitments, including:

- Blended learning provisions.
- Shorter higher education qualifications, such as HNCs and Certificates of Higher Education.

Financial support

To alleviate financial pressures that disrupt learning, eligible students can access:

- **Bursaries:** Low Income Bursary (£500/year), Care Leaver Bursary (£1,000/year), alongside dedicated Food and Travel bursaries.
- **Hardship and Hardware:** The Access to Learning Fund, laptop loan schemes, and accommodation starter packs.
- **Employment:** On-campus, part-time work opportunities.

Financial support package	Eligibility criteria	Amount available	When paid
Low income bursary	Available to all students with a residual household income <£25,000 and who have been assessed as eligible for the full SFE student loans package.	£500 for each year of study	Two instalments of £250 ea.
Food Bursary	Available to all students previously eligible for Free School Meals.	Up to £4.50 per day whilst on campus	Daily/weekly as appropriate for days timetabled on campus
Care Leavers Bursary	a Care Leaver is defined as a young person who is UK domiciled and has been in care for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14. A student is defined as a young person if they are under 21 at the start of their course.	£1000pa. for each year of study	Two instalments of £500 ea.
Access to Learning Fund	Available to any student who is UK domiciled and in receipt of the maximum statutory funding and is able to demonstrate financial hardship.	Awarded on a case by case basis dependant on need	When required
Travel Bursary	Available to any student who is UK domiciled and in receipt of the maximum statutory funding and is able to demonstrate financial hardship.	Up to £50 pa.	Upon application
Raising Aspirations Scholarship	Available to all students who have completed a Level three course at Loughborough College in the year immediately previous to enrolling on a level 4 or higher programme.	1. A Laptop or iPad	1. During semester 1 of year 1
		2. A cash amount for each year of study, based upon UCAS tariff points on entry. 168 pts and above £500pa 112-167 £375 80 - 111 £250pa DISE £250pa	2. During semester 1
		3. This cash amount is repeated at the end of the year if a student has passed all assessments at first attempt	3. End of year following Exam board

How students have helped shape the plan

Students are co-authors of this strategy. Through Student Representative meetings, Learner Voice forums, surveys, focus groups, and positions on the Board of Governors, students challenged us to widen financial assistance. We listened, and their feedback directly shaped these provisions. Students will remain central to monitoring and evaluating our progress throughout the life of this plan.

How we will measure success

We will rigorously evaluate our progress every year by:

- Tracking institutional student data against our headline continuation targets.
- Assessing the real-world impact of all major support initiatives.
- Publishing transparent progress reports annually on our website and sharing best practices with the wider higher education sector.

Further information

The full **Access and Participation Plan 2025–2029** is available on the **Loughborough College website** [CLICK HERE](#)

If you would like information about financial support, student wellbeing services, admissions guidance or any aspect of the plan, please contact the Higher Education team at Loughborough College undergradadmissions@loucoll.ac.uk