Arts University Bournemouth
Access and participation plan 2024-25 to 2027-28

Introduction and strategic aim

Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) is a leading specialist arts institution with an international reputation, having achieved TEF Gold in 2017, and holding RIBA Accreditation, OFSTED Outstanding (2023) and with impressive graduate employability, AUB provides all-through provision in the creative, cultural and performing arts from Saturday Art School, offering weekend courses for 7 to18 year-olds, up through to further education, undergraduate and postgraduate study.

AUB has c.4,000 FTE students, not including part time learners attending non-credit bearing short courses, and prides itself on providing a supportive and creative environment which places students and their work at the center of its community.

AUB is putting significant resource into developing its civic role, with new investments in town centre facilities to support the cultural life of the region, enable local growth and regeneration and extend our work with communities who typically don't have access to higher education. AUB Strategy 2030 sets out our ambition to 'create opportunity for our students, alumni and staff through a passionate belief in collaboration, creativity and innovative practices.'

This ambition will be delivered through our Progression Plan devising '…sustainable models of collaboration with local, regional schools, colleges and communities …shaping our Access, Participation programme towards supportive rapport and co-designed pathways.' And through our Partnership Plan 'to work with industry, professions, and communities to create formal alliances with businesses, schools, and colleges. We will play a leading part in regional economic and societal regeneration." As it is being developed, the plan will embed the principles articulated in the Civic and University Framework.

In 2021 AUB invested in developing a new Access and Participation team with a refreshed approach who are implementing impactful evidence-based interventions in key areas. The team is within the External Engagement directorate with good links to Innovation and Knowledge Exchange, Short Courses, Foundation, Employability and cultural assets such as the Gallery. They also work closely with the Schools Outreach team.

The primary source of data for the assessment of performance, and the subsequent establishment of strategic measures and targets, is the OfS access and participation data dashboard. This is supplemented by UCAS application data, and internal monitoring data on performance.

Whilst continuation and attainment for students at the institution is generally good, AUB has significant work to do to in several areas. These include improving access, especially for students from ethnic minority backgrounds, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds and low participation neighborhoods, raising completion rates for care experienced or estranged students, addressing the institutional awarding gap for students from ethnic minority backgrounds, and supporting progression for students from underrepresented backgrounds into professional and managerial roles.

For some indicators of disadvantage, the undergraduate student population size is currently too small to bear being the focus of an Intervention Strategy. Here AUB is effecting change through a whole-provider approach, to increase population sizes and improve experience and outcomes for these students. These approaches are developed by and monitored through the Access and Participation Steering and Working Groups which include representatives from across the institution. There is significant crossover in membership between these groups and the Curriculum Innovation Group who are currently developing the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework ensuring the risks identified in the APP are considered in this process.

Aligned with our strategic commitment to connectedness and collaboration, we are a convenor of the Access and Participation Plan Special Interest Group within the Forum for Access and Continuing Education (FACE) network. The Group provides a space for institutional leads for widening participation to share findings, best practice and approaches to supporting students from underrepresented groups. Over the course of this Plan, the Group will be working collaboratively to provide peer support, professionalisation opportunities and advocacy for widening participation across the country.

1.0 Risks to equality of opportunity

1.1 Assessment

Following an Assessment of Performance conducted by the institution (Annex A), this section highlights the key local risks to equality of educational opportunity identified within the review. Alongside those highlighted within the assessment, this section pays due regard to sector wide risks to equality of opportunity as cited in the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register[1] (EORR).

As a result of the assessment process, six key institutional risks have been identified using a mix of data from the OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard, UCAS application data, and data held at an institutional level. Alongside the key risks, which will form the basis of objectives to inform targeted strategic activity, risks were also identified relating to the number of mature students studying at AUB, the cost of living, mental health, and the gap in awarding of first or upper class second degrees between White and Black students at the institution.

Whilst they are not detailed in the passage below, the institution has a strategic commitment to mitigating these risks, with further information on activity taking place across the institution provided in section 4.

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[1] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/equality-of-opportunity-risk-register/

1.2 Key risks

1.2.1 Access

Risk 1*: GCSE attainment of boys who are eligible for free school meals.*

Department for Education data[2] from 2018/19 evidence that across Dorset, 17% of boys who are eligible for free school meals attain a grade 9-5 in GCSE Maths and English. This is accompanied by low rates of HE progression[3] for boys who receive free school meals, with just 14% of White and 17% of White and Black Caribbean students progressing to university in 2021/22.

Risk 2: There are lower proportions of students who study at AUB from areas which are least socio-economically advantaged.

Analysis of institutional enrolment data over the four years until 2021/22 evidenced a gap in access of 26.9% between students residing in the most and least socio-economically advantaged areas. It also showed a low proportion of students attending the institution (10.5%) who were eligible for free school meals.

Risk 3: There are lower proportions of students who live in neighbourhoods of low HE participation at AUB.

For students residing in areas of low HE participation, again data evidenced a low proportion progressing to study at the institution. Whilst the gap is smaller than that experienced when compared to the sector average, nevertheless the institutional gap between students TUNDRA Quintiles 1 and 5 postcode areas is still 13.5%.

Risk 4: There are lower proportions of students from ethnic minority backgrounds at AUB.

Compared to the sector average, students from ethnic minority backgrounds are underrepresented at the institution, with enrolments across the four-year period averaging 2.4% of the total undergraduate student population for Black students and 3.2% for Asian students.

1.2.2 On Course

Risk 5: There are gaps in continuation, completion and attainment for students who are care experienced and/or estranged.

Internal data from the Assessment of Performance (Annex A) evidenced that AUB attracts a proportion of students who are care experienced and/or estranged which is higher than the national average. It also evidenced that the cohort were less likely to remain at the University for the full duration of their studies, or achieve an upper second class degree than the wider student population.

1.2.3 Progression

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[2]
https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiYzlmMWZhODEtOTg5MC00N2JmLWFlOTktMGUxYTI4MGQwYTU4IiwidCI6IjQ4NzU0MjI3LTkyMjctNDBhOC04MzI0LTdkNDhiNTg0YmY4YyJ9
[3] https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/widening-participation-in-higher-education/2020-21#releaseHeadlines-charts

Risk 6: There are barriers to progression into professional and managerial employment for students from a range of backgrounds who experience underrepresentation in the creative industries.

The Assessment of Performance demonstrated that whilst there were not substantial gaps in progression to professional or managerial employment, further study or other positive outcomes for most groups at the University, national data evidence a stark inequality in employment within the cultural and creative industries[4] for groups who experience underrepresentation in HE. With comparatively low numbers of students from lower socioeconomic and ethnic minority backgrounds attending the University, it is important that those who do are supported on to fulfilling and rewarding work in the creative industries.

2.0 Objectives

Following the identification of six key risks to equality of opportunity at the institution across the student lifecycle, this section details six strategic objectives set to mitigate their impact on students who may experience underrepresentation at the University. Following their creation, the objectives form the rationale for the four strategic interventions detailed in section 3.

Lifecycle stage	Objective	Associated Risk
Access	**Objective 1** Increase the GCSE attainment of boys in Dorset, who are eligible for free school meals, working with educational partners to close gap in GCSE attainment for the group.	*Risk 1: GCSE attainment of boys who are eligible for free school meals.* *Risk 2: There are lower proportions of students who experience socio-economic inequality at AUB.*
Access	**Objective 2** Increase the proportion of enrolments to AUB for students who are Eligible for Free School Meals to 20% of the overall student population by 2027/28.	*Risk 2: There are lower proportions of students who experience socio-economic inequality at AUB*
Access	**Objective 3** Increase the proportion of students studying at AUB from students residing in IMD Quintile 1&2 postcode areas by 2027/28.	*Risk 2: There are lower proportions of students who experience socio-economic inequality at AUB*
Access	**Objective 4** Increase the proportion of students studying at AUB from students residing in TUNDRA Quintile 1&2 postcode areas by 2027/28.	*Risk 3: There are lower proportions of students who live in neighbourhoods of low HE participation at AUB*
Access	**Objective 5**	*Risk 4: There are lower*

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[4] Brook, O., O'Brien, D. and Taylor, M., 2020. Culture is bad for you. In *Culture is bad for you*. Manchester University Press.

	Increase the proportion of enrolments to AUB by students from ethnic minority backgrounds to 18% of the overall student population by 2027/28.	*proportions of students from ethnic minority backgrounds at AUB.*
On course	**Objective 6** Increase rates of continuation and degree attainment for students who are care experienced and/or estranged by 2027/28.	*Risk 5: There are gaps in continuation, completion and attainment for students who are care experienced and/or estranged*
Progression	**Objective 7** Increase the progression of students who are care experienced, estranged, or reside in IMD Quintile 1 postcode areas into professional or managerial graduate employment by 2027/28.	*Risk 6: There are barriers in progression to professional and managerial employment for students who are from groups which are underrepresented in the creative industries.*

3.0 Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

This section outlines the intervention strategies that the University will deploy to meet the objectives for detailed above. Each Intervention Strategy includes reference to the risks to equality of opportunity that it will address, alongside the intended evaluative approach taken to assess its efficacy. It also includes information on the activities that will contribute towards meeting the overall objective, as well as details about the financial and human resources that will be required in support of its delivery.

Alongside the detail provided below, Annex B includes further information pertaining to the evidence base and rationale for the selection of each of the interventions adopted.

3.1 Intervention design activity

Following the identification of key institutional risks to equality of opportunity and the subsequent formation of strategic objectives, a cross-institutional group was established to co-design the Intervention Strategies detailed in this section. The group consisted of staff members from the University's Access and Participation, Student Services, Admissions and Equality Diversity and Inclusion teams. Drawing on expertise from across AUB, the group identified a range of options for strategic action that could be taken to meet the newly created objectives.

Subsequent to the selection of the Intervention Strategies below, an external specialist evaluator was invited to the University, supporting the group to develop ideas and formalise

them using the TASO Theory of Change[5] (ToC) toolkit. Prior to the training, key members of staff identified as 'intervention leads' were tasked with conducting desk-based research, assessing the strength of evidence to support the development of each strategy for intervention, alongside judging the feasibility of the initiative as a means by which to achieve the identified objective.

After the development of an associated ToCs for each intervention, they were brought back to the group. At this time the associated short, medium, and long-term objectives of the Intervention Strategies were stress tested and strengthened. Alongside the formation of key objectives, the group agreed an evaluative approach which used appropriate methodological instruments to assess the impact of interventions, and agreed realistic, stretching numerical targets associated with each Intervention Strategy for inclusion in the Access and Participation Plan.

Intervention Strategy 1

Objectives and targets:

Increase the GCSE attainment of boys in Dorset, who are eligible for free school meals.

Risks to Equality of Opportunity:

Knowledge and skills, Information and guidance, Perception of Higher Education, Application Success Rates, Mental Health

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Activities	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
X6 Creative workshops focussing on metacognition skills	X6 AUB academic staff to lead workshops X1 Senior Access Officer to lead and co-ordinate activity and administration	Students gain metacognitive skills to support their learning, students use metacognitive skills to attain good GCSE skills, students progress to a suitable Level 3 qualification which enables progression to HE, increased applications and success rates to AUB	IS_2, IS_4
Celebration event and Exhibition	X1 Senior Access Officer to lead and co-ordinate activity and administration Community venue	Increased sense of belonging in education, increased parent/carer engagement in education	IS_2, IS_4

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[5] https://taso.org.uk/evidence/our-approach-to-evaluation/

CPD workshops for teachers, senior leadership, and education professionals working with male students 12-16 years old	Dorset Boys Impact Hub X1 Senior Access Officer to lead and co-ordinate activity and administration	Increased knowledge in barriers for young men in education, increased skills to support positive outcomes for young men in education, increased applications and success rates to AUB from young men in Dorset	
Conference for teachers, senior leadership, and education professionals	Dorset Boys Impact Hub X1 Senior Access Officer to lead and co-ordinate activity and administration	Increased knowledge of how to support positive outcomes for young men in education, increased collaborative approaches in supporting young men to positively succeed in education, increased applications and success rates to AUB from young men in Dorset	

Evidence base and rationale:

Recent TASO research has outlined the link between metacognition and attainment at GCSE (TASO, 2022). This is supported by EEF studies exploring metacognitive skills and attainment at both primary and secondary school level (EEF,2021). To support the efficacy of metacognitive strategies to raise student attainment, this Strategic Intervention assumes such an approach to be an robust vehicle by which to develop activity in this area.

Evidence from Pinkett and Roberts (2019) also asserts that mental health, peer pressure, relationships, mental health, and socio-economic inequality are also contributory elements to the gap in GCSE attainment for boys in receipt of Free School Meals.

Being a Boy is an established access programme at AUB and evaluation has evidenced positive impact for participants[6].

For a summary, please see Annex B.

Evaluation:

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https://webdocs.aub.ac.uk/Being%20a%20Boy%20Impact%20Report%202022.pdf?_ga=2.12256948.1681137182.1684742907-838712098.1630395662&_gac=1.27840846.1684414737.Cj0KCQjwmZejBhC_ARIsAGhCgncHbhi1weuH74BrvbfVnItgpOtKqXhKIzkE2T3SUm7t-5MoIYvhcW8aArZKEALw_wcB

We intend to evaluate each activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 2 standards to assess its impact against the stated aims. Subsequently, we will also examine the extent to which each activity contributed towards meeting the overall objective of supporting boy's GCSE attainment across the region.

For further information, please see Annex B.

Published materials:

We will publish annual evaluation reports that align with the outcome timelines. Publications will include:
- Internal evaluation reports and presentations to internal AUB working groups
- Publicly available evaluation report in the form of a project blog made available via the AUB website

Opportunities for sector wide dissemination will be explored during the lifetime of this project. Possible knowledge sharing may include, but not limited to, NEON working groups, Widening Participation conferences.

Intervention Strategy 2

Objectives and targets:

1. Increase the number of applications and enrolment to AUB for students who may have experienced socio-economic inequality including those who are care experienced and/or estranged from their family
2. Increase the number of applications and enrolments to AUB from students who reside in IMD or TUNDRA Quintile 1&2 postcode areas
3. Increase the number of applications and enrolments at AUB from under-represented ethnic groups

Risks to Equality of Opportunity:

Knowledge and skills, Information and guidance, Perception of Higher Education, Application Success Rates

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Activities	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
4-day Summer School	All Access AUB programme Senior Access and Participation Officer to oversee project delivery (0.4 FTE) Access and Participation Administrator to assist with facilitation of the project (0.2 FTE)	Increased sense of belonging in HE, Increased knowledge of creative course options, increased skills in relative creative subject area	IS_1, IS_3, IS_4

	AUB Academic Staff to deliver workshop content during Summer School		
Online 1-1 Portfolio Session	All Access AUB programme Senior Access and Participation Officer to oversee project delivery (0.4 FTE) Access and Participation Administrator to assist with facilitation of the project (0.2 FTE) AUB Academic Staff to deliver 1-1 sessions	Increased sense of belonging, increased applications to AUB, increased successful application to AUB	IS_1, IS_3, IS_4
Celebration event and Exhibition	All Access AUB programme Senior Access and Participation Officer to oversee project delivery (0.4 FTE) Access and Participation Administrator to assist with facilitation of the project (0.2 FTE)	Increased sense of belonging in HE, increased parent/carer knowledge of benefits HE and a creative degree	
One-day Transition to HE event	All Access AUB programme Senior Access and Participation Officer to oversee project delivery (0.4 FTE) Access and Participation Administrator to assist with facilitation of the project (0.2 FTE)	Increased conversions to AUB courses, Students enrol on their degree course, Students feel they have the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their degree	IS_1, IS_3, IS_4

Tailored communication through the applicant journey	Care Experienced Programme Progression Officer to oversee project delivery (0.8 FTE) Marketing and Communications support	Increased application conversion rates, students feel supported to progress into HE, students feel a sense of belonging	IS_3
Named contact for support and advice	Care Experienced Programme Progression Officer to oversee project delivery (0.8 FTE)	Increased application conversion rates, students feel supported to progress into HE, students feel a sense of belonging	IS_3
Reduced offer for students from underrepresented groups	Care Experienced Programme Admissions staff Progression Officer to oversee project delivery (0.8 FTE) Senior Access and Participation Officer (0.4 FTE)	Increased application conversion rates	IS_3

Evidence base and rationale:

Through mobilising Hodkinson and Sparkes[7] Theory of Career Decision Making, alongside Ball, Reay and David's work on choice-making[8] with regards to HE participation as a conceptual basis, the All Access AUB programme provides the constituent components necessary for studying a creative university degree to feature strongly within participants' horizons for action.
The All Access AUB programme takes a multi-intervention approach which TASO and wider published evaluation literature suggests has a positive impact upon student progression to higher education[9][10][11].

For a full summary, please see Annex B.

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[7] Hodkinson, P. and Sparkes, A.C., 1997. Careership: a sociological theory of career decision making. British journal of sociology of education, 18(1), pp.29-44.
[8] Ball, S.J., Reay, D. and David, M., 2002. 'Ethnic Choosing': Minority ethnic students, social class and higher education choice. Race ethnicity and education, 5(4), pp.333-357.
[9] https://s33320.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020.pdf
[10] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/fifth-independent-review-of-impact-evaluation-evidence-submitted-by-uni-connect-partnerships/
[11] Burgess, A.P., Horton, M.S. and Moores, E., 2021. Optimising the impact of a multi-intervention outreach programme on progression to higher education: recommendations for future practice and research. Heliyon, 7(7), p.e07518.

Evaluation:

Using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, we intend to evaluate each activity within an overarching progression framework and associated ToC. In doing so we will generate OfS Type 2 evaluation data, informing the assessment of its impact against the stated aims. Subsequently, we will examine the intervention at a holistic level, discerning the extent to which each activity contributed towards meeting the overall objective of diversifying access to the institution.

For further information, please see Annex B.

Published materials:

We will publish annual evaluation reports that align with the outcome timelines. Publications will include:
- Internal evaluation reports and presentations to internal AUB working groups
- Publicly available evaluation report in the form of a project blog made available via the AUB website

Opportunities for sector wide dissemination will be explored during the lifetime of this project. Possible knowledge sharing may include, but not limited to, NEON working groups, Widening Participation conferences.

Intervention Strategy 3

Objectives and targets:

Increase continuation and attainment for students who are care experienced and/or estranged

Risks to Equality of Opportunity:

Insufficient Academic Support, Insufficient Personal Support, Mental Health, Cost Pressures

Activities	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
Tailored transitional and pre-enrolment support	Progression Officer to oversee project delivery (0.8 FTE) Senior Access and Participation Officer to provide strategic oversight (0.3 FTE)	Increased sense of belonging, increased familiarity with the university and support services available, increased continuation rates	IS_2
Termly 1-1 academic and personal support sessions	Progression Officer to oversee project delivery (0.8 FTE) Senior Access and	Increased continuation rates, increase in attainment, increase in self-reported levels	IS_2

	Participation Officer to provide strategic oversight (0.3 FTE)	of wellbeing	
Networking opportunities with students who share similar lived experiences	Progression Officer to oversee project delivery (0.8 FTE)

Senior Access and Participation Officer to provide strategic oversight (0.3 FTE) | Increased sense of belonging, increase in continuation rates | IS_2 |
| £2000 Care Leaver and Stand Alone Bursary | Budget capacity for bursary | Decrease in students reporting cost pressures, decrease in students applying for the Hardship fund, increase in self-reported levels of wellbeing | |
| Secured university accommodation for length of study | Administrative support via accommodation team | Increase in continuation rates, decrease in students reporting cost pressures, increase in self-reported levels of wellbeing | |

Evidence base and rationale:

Care experienced individuals historically experience low levels of access, continuation, attainment, and progression rates evidenced by OfS data and wider research literature.

Harrison[12] suggests that there should be more support provided through dedicated staff with specific expertise in supporting care leavers, rather than simply a 'staff contact' with multiple roles, who can help the student to navigate complex processes, advocate on their behalf and provide low-level emotional support.

For a full summary, please see Annex B.

Evaluation:

Using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, we intend to evaluate each activity within an overarching progression framework which spans the student lifecycle. In doing so we will generate OfS Type 2 evaluation data, informing the assessment of its impact against the stated aims at each stage of on-course progression. Subsequently, we will examine the intervention at a holistic level, discerning the extent to which each activity contributed towards

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[12] Harrison, N., 2017. Moving on up. National Network for the Education of Care Leavers: Winchester.

meeting the overall objective of supporting continuation, completion and progression for students who are care experienced or estranged.

For further information, please see Annex B.

Published materials:

We will publish annual evaluation reports that align with the outcome timelines.
Publications will include:
- Internal evaluation reports and presentations to internal AUB working groups
- Publicly available evaluation report in the form of a project blog made available via the AUB website

Opportunities for sector wide dissemination will be explored during the lifetime of this project. Possible knowledge sharing may include, but not limited to, NEON working groups, Widening Participation conferences.

Intervention Strategy 4

Objectives and targets:

Increase graduate outcomes for students from IMD Quintile 1&2, students who have been eligible for Free School Meals, Black students and students who are care experienced and/or estranged.

Risks to Equality of Opportunity:

Insufficient Personal Support, Progression from Higher Education

Activities	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
6 month mentoring project with creative industry mentors	Employability Manager (0.2 FTE) Grade 3 Staff member to work 0.3 FTE AUB Futures team to provide administration of the project	Increase in students' sense of belonging in creative industries careers, increase in students progressing to graduate employment, increase in students' confidence in decision making relating to post-degree options	IS_2, IS_3

Evidence base and rationale:

Research conducted by Lyden[13], exploring the impact of career mentoring found that students can "gain career development benefits from mentoring.... mentees are achieving comparable career

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[13] Lyden, T., 2021. Career Mentoring in Higher Education: Exploring Mentoring and Employability Gains Across Different Social

development gains to their non-low SES peers, as all social groups, on average, seem to have the potential to develop tangible aspects of employability, giving them more potential for (increased) social mobility".

For a full summary, please see Annex B.

Evaluation:

Using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies we will generate OfS Type 2 evaluation data to informing the assessment of each activity's performance against the stated aims linked to student progression. Subsequently, we will examine the intervention at a holistic level, discerning the extent to which each activity contributed towards meeting the overall objective of supporting continuation, completion and progression for students who are care experienced or estranged.

For further information, please see Annex B.

Published materials:

We will publish annual evaluation reports that align with the outcome timelines.
Publications will include:
- Internal evaluation reports and presentations to internal AUB working groups
- Publicly available evaluation report in the form of a project blog made available via the AUB website

Opportunities for sector wide dissemination will be explored during the lifetime of this project. Possible knowledge sharing may include, but not limited to, NEON working groups, Widening Participation conferences.

4.0 Whole provider approach

This section details how AUB operates cross-institutionally in its approach to fair access and participation, addressing the locally and nationally identified risks to equality of opportunity. Implemented in 2022, the Access and Participation Steering Group (APSG) and Access and Participation Working Group (APWG) are the institution's primary mechanism of oversight for the AUB's Access and Participation Plan. Bringing together staff from across the institution, the groups are attended by a range of university stakeholders including staff and student representatives. Feeding into the Vice Chancellor's Executive, the APSG is chaired by the University's Director of Civic and Cultural Engagement and focuses on key strategic decisions related to the implementation and oversight of the University's Access and Participation Plan. Alongside the primary mechanisms of institutional oversight, work to support fair access and participation is embedded across the provider's committee structures including the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Curriculum Innovation Group, and Academic Board.

The text below details how, through work taking place with internal and external stakeholders across AUB, the institution evidences a whole provider approach to fair access and participation, aligning with its strategic vision as a civic institution.

Groups (Doctoral dissertation, University of Reading).

4.1 Equality Diversity and Inclusion

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is a core commitment of AUB's Strategy 2030. The People Plan aligned with the strategy sets out a commitment to 'creating an inclusive workplace, embracing innovative practices drive equality and embrace diversity to add value to the university and the employee'. As such, the University strives to support a sense of belonging and a culture of inclusion throughout all areas of institutional practice.

AUB values and celebrates the diversity of its staff and students. The institution is committed to providing an environment for work and learning which is free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation, where all members of our university community are treated with dignity and respect. Examples of the commitment are evidenced within the institution's EDI Action Plan, and cross-institutional AUB policies such as the Student Code of Conduct[14], Student Charter[15] and Equality at Work Policy.

Reporting into the institution's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, AUB's cross functional EDI team include staff from multiple departments, working collaboratively across academic, governance and HR teams to develop policies, processes, learning and initiatives which are inclusive, accessible, and provide equal opportunities for students and staff on campus.

As members of the AUB community, staff are expected[16] to treat each other fairly and respectfully regardless of the characteristics which may define their identity, such as age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or pregnancy and maternity status. The University strives to create a working and learning environment founded on dignity, respect, and equity where unfair discrimination is treated with the utmost seriousness. At AUB, the University benefits from the diverse experiences of its staff and students and promotes inclusivity for all.

4.2 Closing the degree awarding gap for students from ethnic minority backgrounds

As a university, we recognise the persistent differential degree awarding outcomes for UK domiciled students from ethnic minority backgrounds at the institution. As evidenced in the Assessment of Performance (Annex A), the institution has significant gaps in access for students from ethnic minority backgrounds. As detailed in the assessment of risk and development of objectives, this gap constitutes the primary strategic focus of access work in the immediate future. However, there is also a sizeable awarding gap in degree outcomes for those students who are currently studying at the institution. Whilst, as a comparatively small, specialist provider the University does not have the resource to devise and deliver Intervention Strategies to address both stages in the student lifecycle simultaneously, AUB is committed to taking cross-institutional action to eliminate gaps in awarding through the mechanisms detailed below.

As part of a newly established initiative for inclusive curriculum development, in September 2021 the University created the new position of Academic Advisor for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Ongoing work in the area directly engages with the challenge of closing awarding

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[14] https://webdocs.aub.ac.uk/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf
[15] https://aub.ac.uk/student-charter?gad=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw67ajBhAVEiwA2g_jEOcZjzlUGOJZANTIKGrf68GTHmNfrDiJNc7i2HOV5uZPMIZzPHGVZxoCctUQAvD_BwE
[16] https://webdocs.aub.ac.uk/Code%20of%20Conduct%20Policy.pdf

gaps for students from ethnic minority backgrounds. An example of such activity includes the setting up of a participatory research forum with undergraduate students from ethnic minorities, facilitating the co-design of a productive model for ongoing student involvement in curriculum development work. Alongside this, in September 2022 a new cross-institutional initiative was launched for academic staff to receive training on challenges relating to equality, diversity and inclusion in learning and teaching from Advance HE. The staff development sessions are ongoing, including in-person courses on campus, and webinars for staff who may be working remotely. To date these have focused on developing a greater depth of institutional understanding pertaining to the challenges that face students from ethnic minorities in terms of belonging during their time as students.

To supplement this, and embed the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion into curriculum design, the University is currently undertaking the development of a new Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework (LTAF). Rolling out over the next two years, the AUB LTAF will place inclusive practice in mechanisms of pedagogic design, delivery, and assessment at its heart across the taught portfolio. In addition, in 2023 the University joined a pioneer cohort of small and specialist Higher Education Providers piloting an adapted version of AdvanceHE's Race Equality Charter. Following the completion of the LTAF project, in 2025 the University will review progress to date. If warranted, AUB will request to vary the current Access and Participation Plan, including an Intervention Strategy with a specific focus on closing the degree awarding gap.

4.3 Mature students

An Executive Director for Academic Innovation has recently been appointed to explore future curriculum development opportunities for AUB. A curriculum development plan was launched in February 2023, this includes the intention to attract a broader range of audiences and acknowledge a range of learner types not traditionally marketed to by the university.

There is also an intention to design and launch several online short courses during 2024/25, to provide access for those that are in full time employment or have life commitments that prevent them from making a more significant commitment to study. Micro-credentials are also under investigation, along with exploring the potential of launching courses on an online or campus based modular basis. This acknowledges the Lifelong Loan entitlement for tuition fees that is on the horizon (2025 intended launch), although will also provide excellent opportunities for more mature learners outside of that scheme to engage with flexible modes of study. From 2025 the University will begin to offer online undergraduate provision, with the BA (Hons) Creative Writing degree launching in September.

Alongside the plans for credit bearing provision detailed above, AUB also offers a suite of over 50 short courses in creative subjects. Taking place during evenings and at the weekends on AUB campus, the courses attract a high level of engagement from students aged over 18, and cater to all abilities.

4.4 Cost of living

Since pressures related to the cost of living have intensified, the institution have developed a holistic package of support in partnership between the Students' Union, Student Services, Faith & Reflection, Access & Participation, and International teams who, working in direct

daily contact supporting students, have first-hand understanding of students' circumstances and issues. Close monitoring of student hardship applications provided detailed insight into student needs. Anecdotal feedback was supported by targeted national surveys, including data from the OfS and Office for National Statistics.

Following initial consultation, a Cost of Living Working Group was established, bringing together staff from across the university community, creating a coordinated approach to the support. Identifying three main areas of need, a business case was presented to the Vice Chancellor's group for funding. Subsequently, the following cross-institutional initiatives were introduced:

Finance & budgeting

• Student budgeting advice drop-ins
• An uplift in University hardship funding
• A dedicated Cost of Living Hardship Fund
• A Cost of Living Survival Guide produced by the Student Wellbeing team
• Publication of online materials offering information advice and guidance
• A 50% reduction in student printing price

Food & necessities

• The Sharing Shed, an on-campus foodbank was introduced
• Weekly free breakfasts for staff and students
• A daily reduced price menu option in the University refectory
• Free soup on Mondays
• The University registered with the Local Authority as centre for issuing foodbank vouchers.
• Free Period Products for staff and students

To evaluate the impact of the above stated interventions, a number of mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation were employed including weekly engagement reports, focus groups, polls and surveys on social media and in person, a digital notepad on the AUBSU website, and anecdotal feedback from student engagement and interaction.

Feedback received through these mechanisms has shown that the initiatives have been well received and are informing improvements on current provision. For example, lowering the bar for eligibility to access student hardship funding, variation to stock in the institutional foodbank, and extending the period of time in which free breakfasts will be available.

The impact of the Cost of Living crisis will continue to be monitored across the institution through the established Working Group, responding in an agile manner to meet student need in the coming months and years.

4.5 Mental health

In light of the increasing number of students at the institution declaring mental health conditions highlighted in the Assessment of Performance (Annex A), and an unprecedented rise in demand for university support services nationally, the University has committed to the Student Minds University Mental Health Charter[17], adopting a whole university approach to promoting and supporting positive mental wellbeing. Building on institutional values of collaborative, connected, innovative and passionate, the Charter was co-created by staff, students and AUBSU, incorporating the views of those with lived experience of mental ill

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[17] https://aub.ac.uk/mental-health-charter

health, and setting out AUB's commitment to making the institution a positive and inclusive environment.

An important part of this work is threading the student voice into all aspects of the charter work. Recruitment of Student Mental Health Champions have been integral to the accomplishment of this objective. The Champions have all completed Mental Health First Aid training and received a subsequent qualification. These students are now involved in working groups with a range of stakeholders, taking a key role in consulting with wider university departments including the Senior Leadership team, introducing innovative ideas to improve the culture of the AUB community.

Themes included within the Charter are mapped against the four domains and enabling themes of the Universities UK Mentally Healthy Universities model[18]. These include Learn, Live, Support, Work. Each Mental Health Champion have taken one of these themes to focus on. The goal is to continue to train and recruit subgroups of Mental Health Champions to promote and maintain the student voice, where possible involving them in key strategic meetings and planning in the context of the AUB student experience.

To augment the cross-institutional work taking place through the mental health charter this year the institution has collaborated with external partner organisations including Bournemouth University, Dorset Mental Health Forum and the NHS to open The Retreat[19]. Open daily from 2pm until 9pm, The University Retreat offers a welcoming, informal, safe space where students can discuss problems or take some time out. The University Retreat is staffed by support workers, volunteers and peer specialists – people with the own lived experiences of mental health issues.

4.6 Contextual admissions

Following the publication of strong evidence to support the case for contextual admission practices by Higher Education Providers[20], the University introduced a new contextual admissions element of its Admissions Policy in the 2023 admissions cycle. AUB aimed to implement a structural mechanism which would improve opportunities for applicants who met the eligibility criteria to gain a place on their chosen course of study. For 2024 the policy will include the following eligibility criteria:

Applicants are eligible if:	They are identified by:
TUNDRA Quintiles 1 & 2	Postcode information listed on application form
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Quintile 1 & 2	Postcode information listed on application form
Care Leavers	Self declaration on application form
Participation in eligible Access and Participation activities at the University	Self declaration directly to admissions team or identification by A&P team

The policy focuses on three particular aspects of contextual admissions: flagging eligible applicants, offering a guaranteed portfolio review/interview to eligible applicants, and contextual offer-making to eligible applicants. Where a contextual offer was made, these applicants would be made an offer equivalent to two grades below the University's

[18] https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/what-we-do/policy-and-research/publications/stepchange-mentally-healthy-universities#:~:text=Stepchange%3A%20mentally%20healthy%20universities%20is,all%20students%20and%20all%20staff.
[19] https://aub.ac.uk/support/university-retreat
[20] Boliver, V., Gorard, S. and Siddiqui, N., 2021. Using contextual data to widen access to higher education. *Perspectives: policy and practice in higher education*, *25*(1), pp.7-13.

advertised standard offer. More information surrounding contextual offer making can be found in our Admissions Policy[21].

The effectiveness of this new policy and associated procedures is being closely monitored. The institution has increased both the number of, and level of detail of, its reports which enhances our ability to monitor effectiveness of interventions. This will also enable us to identify which parts of the application journey any new interventions could produce the most meaningful impacts for. We are currently limited by one cycle of data, but at the time of writing, applicants who have received a contextual offer have accepted our offer at the same rate as the rest of AUB's undergraduate applicant cohort.

4.7 Uni Connect

AUB is an active participant in the collaborative award-winning Southern Universities Network (SUN) which comprises five other universities in the region (Dorset, Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight). The University hosts and supports SUN staff members to deliver the Uni Connect programme.

With oversight from representatives of AUB, the SUN delivers pre-16 and post-16 outreach activity where economies of scale and added value are leveraged through a collaborative approach. Strategic outreach collaboration is a key priority of the SUN's work, ensuring that students from underrepresented backgrounds have access to the information, advice and guidance they need to make informed choices about their futures. The SUN's wide range of activities encompasses classroom-based sessions, university-hosted events such as the 'Festivals of Industries'; accredited teacher CPD programmes designed to support HE progression of underrepresented groups, and the well-established SUN FE programme within the colleges, promoting cohesive engagement between college and Higher Education Providers.

Specific goals and success criteria include increasing: progression levels and applications from students domiciled in target areas; the attainment of learners; the successful progression of Young Carers, Estranged Students, Care-Experienced Students, and Students from Military Families; and the number of young males participating in higher education from targeted wards.

Throughout 2023-25 academic years, the SUN and AUB will work together to deliver a range of attainment-raising interventions focusing on cross-partnership work with local authorities, third-party providers, and the Careers Enterprise Company to improve attainment for under-represented learners in HE.

4.8 Student Outreach Ambassadors

The Outreach Ambassador scheme provides relatable role models for prospective AUB students from underrepresented groups. Outreach Ambassadors work directly with the Access and Participation Team, assisting with events such as workshops, school visits, open days, informal mentoring opportunities, residential summer schools and media production for the department. As well as a paid work opportunity, the Outreach Ambassador scheme also provides students with meaningful training and development opportunities, including but not limited to: safeguarding; mental health first aid training; youth work training and disability training. Bespoke career coaching sessions are also provided, alongside the option to have

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[21] https://webdocs.aub.ac.uk/Admissions%20Policy.pdf?_ga=2.98269023.1397421689.1684247620-838712098.1630395662&_gac=1.213994213.1684247620.CjwKCAjw04yjBhApEiwAJcvNoTo1W1KZ4YboDNFbFtwGpwKd5e7YioA7pThlBAusFSS8JQlVBpNc5xoCZqIQAvD_BwE

a one-to-one review of their work and professional development twice a year with the Progression Officer, who is responsible for the recruitment and management of Outreach Ambassadors. Such training and development opportunities allow students to gain valuable skills and experience which will have a positive impact on their graduate outcomes.

AUB currently employs 11 Outreach Ambassadors for academic year 2023/24 and aims to increase this figure year on year. The recruitment of Outreach Ambassadors in May of each year allows for those in their first year of degree study to settle into university life and provides a second point in the year when they can apply to work for the university in this capacity, with the first being the opportunity to apply to work as a general Student Ambassador for all school, recruitment and marketing activity. Students can be employed as an Outreach Ambassador only, or both an Outreach Ambassador and a Student Ambassador. The role of the Outreach Ambassador is more specialised than a Student Ambassador, as a greater level of relatability and empathy is required to work with the young people who are supported by the Access and Participation team. The Student Ambassador scheme is run and overseen by the Student Recruitment and Marketing team.

The employment of students as Outreach Ambassadors further increases the capacity of AUB to support work aligned to its civic strategy, strengthening relationships with schools, colleges, community, third sector and local authority partners.

4.9 Saturday Art School

Alongside its portfolio of undergraduate, postgraduate and foundation programmes the University also provides a range of short course study opportunities for individuals from the wider community who may be interested in developing their creative practice. One of the University's flagship programmes, Saturday Art School, has been established to allow budding makers, designers and artists aged 10-15 to explore creativity outside regular school art classes. Lasting approximately 8 weeks, young people are provided with an opportunity to engage in a range of creative disciplines, supporting the development of knowledge and skills aligned with progression to creative higher education. As part of its institutional commitment to equality of opportunity in access to creative education, the University provides 60 fully funded places on a range of courses free of charge for young people who may experience barriers to engagement due to experiences of inequality. Further information about the funded places can be found on the University's website[22]

4.10 Working with schools and colleges

Working to complement the plan's objectives related to greater ethnic and socioeconomic diversity across AUBs student population, the Student Recruitment Team, and in particular the Schools and Colleges Team that sits within it, functions cross-departmentally alongside the Access and Participation Team. This ensures that strategy is co-designed and implemented in alignment with Access and Participation objectives.

This collaborative team structure underpins the approach to identifying educational partner institutions. Over 50% of the schools and colleges who receive the highest level of outreach support are schools targeted for Access and Participation activity. In 2021-22, AUB conducted 442 hours of outreach activity across 107 schools. During this period, it engaged with over 1,500 students in Key Stages 3 and 4, across 41 individual events.

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[22] https://aub.ac.uk/schools-hub/widening-access-to-aub/sas-funded-places

Some examples of Student Recruitment projects that target students from under-represented groups include:

Wonder What – an online careers guidance platform, specifically for the creative industries. Whilst most careers websites rely on users knowing the job title to unlock key information, Wonder What enables users to explore potential creative careers by selecting images and video that appeal to them. The AI then presents back a range of careers based on those choices, which are contextualised with labour market and key Gatsby benchmark information. This engaging and accessible search method aims to de-mystify career pathways in the creative sector, which is often underrepresented in schools and college careers guidance.

 I Can't Draw – a collaborative project co-funded by the Southern Universities Network and AUB Marketing, *I Can't Draw* features a series of workshops which aim to break down the stereotypes young people may have about what 'drawing' means, encouraging them to tap into their innate artistic abilities. Targeted primarily at Years 7 and 8, the aim is to increase take-up of creative arts subjects into GCSE and beyond.

Guided campus visits and Summer Show tours – AUB Schools Team welcome hundreds of school groups each year for guided visits of our campus, including talks from our outreach team and from Course Leaders. Throughout June, these visits involve tours of our Summer Shows, inspiring younger students with the output from our final year students across all our courses.

Creative Futures Teachers and Advisers CPD Conference – AUB's annual free conference for teachers and advisers acts as a bridge between Secondary/FE institutions and the creative industries, empowering educators with current knowledge of the shape of the creative sector, to best equip their students for future success.

4.11 AUB Futures, Careers and Enterprise

Working to augment and support the roll out of Intervention Strategy 4, the AUB Futures, Careers and Enterprise team provide impartial advice and guidance to all students and graduates for up to 3 years post-graduation. All students have access to AUB Futures Hub with jobs & opportunities, events and careers resources. Once students have graduated they are also invited to register with the alumni platform and service, AUB&.

The service runs a yearly schedule of collaborative Industry and alumni events with opportunities for students to find out about career options, recruitment practices, and to meet recruiters. Alongside 1:1 career coaching, students may also attend small group career coaching to help them explore their career ideas in a safe and supportive space. Throughout the year, students can attend sessions to develop their confidence in proactive engagement with graduate employers in Industry, alongside accessing support with CVs, portfolios, interviews and personal branding.
For those interested in freelancing and starting a business, enterprise skills sessions are delivered by a specialist business consultant. As part of the Graduate Futures Framework, employability sessions to support students in developing graduate skills and attributes are aligned to, and embedded within, the curriculum. Outside of the curriculum, the team facilitate multi-disciplinary live projects and Micro Internships, providing further opportunity for students to develop attributes linked with post-graduation employment, and engage with industry professionals.

4.12 Working with community stakeholders

AUB is committed to being a university for the community, working in partnership and collaborating to provide opportunities for young people and their supporters from underrepresented backgrounds through a wide range of networks. Since 2021 the Access and Participation Team have established partnerships with numerous community, educational and third sector stakeholders.

As a Co-Lead of the Service Children's Progression Alliance (SCiP) South Hub, AUB works in partnership across the region to level the playing field of educational opportunity for young people from armed forces backgrounds, alongside improving understanding of these young people's experiences by contributing to new research and CPD for staff across the education sector.

In July 2021 AUB signed the Stand Alone Pledge[23], a nationwide commitment made by universities to recognise and support students who may experience additional challenges due to estrangement from familial networks. Alongside it's support for independent students, the University undertakes significant partnership activity with young people who are care experienced. In April 2023, AUB collaborated with local universities to host its first Family Fun Day for care experienced young people and their foster families, with the support of both the Dorset and BCP Virtual Schools. AUB is committed to hosting similar events in the future to support these members of the community, welcoming all ages onto campus with attendees ranging from age 6 months old to 70+. More bespoke projects have also taken place with Dorset Virtual School, taking a strengths-based approach to exploring the experiences young people in care across multiple events.

As a member of the local community, AUB actively invites the public to engage with the institution, hosting a wide range of free activities including exhibitions, public lectures, public access to its Art Gallery[24], Museum of Design in Plastics[25], and creative events. AUB strives to take this a step further bridging the gap between university to the community in alignment with its strategic commitment to civic engagement. As such, it regularly hosts publicly accessible events in the local community at venues such as AUB's Palace Court Theatre.

As well as a targeted approach providing opportunities for young people and their supporters to engage with AUB both on campus and in the wider community. Activities have included familiarisation visits to AUB, subject taster workshops, Family Fun Days, bespoke activities and sharing of wider opportunities.

Alongside cross-institutional activity, the Access and Participation team works to support young people aged 11 – 25 who are in Alternative Educational Provision. Activity is planned on a case-by-case basis to meet the needs of the young people visiting AUB, with key themes of the visit focusing on using creative practice to build confidence and self-esteem.

Engaging and embedding youth voice is crucial to developing meaningful activities with young people and the community. The University have partnered with Dorset Council's Youth Voice and BCP Participation Team on a series of events, including consultation on workshops for the Access and Participation Teams delivery, to champion the voice of young people within the region.

[23] https://aub.ac.uk/latest/aub-signs-stand-alone-pledge?gad=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw67ajBhAVEiwA2g_jEK6gDnM7MNI3PPj_hu5gIiWuk8wcnd7gZQgvU628jeB2twREgr-I1RoC-HcQAvD_BwE
[24] https://aub.ac.uk/campus/thegallery?gad=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwjryjBhD0ARIsAMLvnF-_iDCHscYAMpgt_FysxP1Uo5s8L9CqoWrAAwYE53p2yKLtyVuEPuUaAoUvEALw_wcB
[25] https://aub.ac.uk/latest/aubs-museum-design-plastics-features-guardian

Alongside this, the institution is also a member of the Bournemouth Cultural Hub[26], a collaborative organisation of regional stakeholders, delivering a workable programme of cultural education for children and young people.

5.0 Student consultation

The Access and Participation Plan has been developed iteratively through consultation across the University, including formalised structures such as the Vice Chancellors Group, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Access and Participation Working Group and Access and Participation Steering Group. Student representatives have been in present in a number of these meetings as the groups were provided with the institutional Assessment of Performance (Annex A) and asked to identify the strategic objectives to take forward into the new Access and Participation Plan. Those consulted were in strong support of strategic interventions to address the risks identified with regard to access and supporting graduate outcomes in creative industries.

The University routinely gathers feedback from students who have benefited from its on-course support mechanisms, including from students who are care experienced and estranged, and those in receipt of financial support. This feedback has helped to inform the development of the new package of financial support for students detailed in Section 7. It constitutes an important mechanism to maintain, continually improve, and adapt support in alignment with changing needs associated with pressures in relation to COVID-19, and more recently, the cost of living and poor mental health.

The Students' Union has established networks for students who may experience underrepresentation at the institution such as Minoritized Ethnicities, Mature Students and Disabilities and Wellbeing Committee. A consultative forum ran in collaboration with the Students' Union, provided an opportunity to discuss how communication through these channels can be strengthened, providing more regular insight for student representatives against the Plan's targets and objectives. It also provided space and time to reflect on new possibilities for strengthening student-staff partnership work to support students form underrepresented groups across the duration of the new Access and Participation Plan. As such, alongside established existing mechanisms, the institutional Access and Participation will report annually to the Students' Union Executive Committee, support in the delivery of course rep training, and explore collaborative approaches to the establishment of a student/staff social mobility network.

On a more informal level, in 2022 the University recruited its first cohort of Student Outreach Ambassadors. Employed by the Access and Participation team, Student Outreach Ambassadors support the delivery of the team's activity, acting as relatable role models to young people who may experience marginalisation in education. Due to the nature of the role many such ambassadors are from underrepresented groups themselves, and regularly liaise with AUB staff informally, alongside contributing to focus groups run by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team, and those aligned with the co-creation of the institutional Mental Health Charter.

In addition to the structures highlighted above, the Access and Participation Steering Group, which oversees the development of the Access and Participation Plan and the associated workplan, and which will monitor the implementation, evaluation and progress, includes student representatives. The Access and Participation Manager ensures that the

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[26] https://waveartseducation.org.uk/about/

Students' Union sabbatical officers are kept aware of activities and seeks advice from them on a regular basis. There is also student representation on Academic Board, the senior academic committee which confirms the Plan and an annual report to the Board of Governors.

6.0 Evaluation of the plan

6.1 Strategic context for evaluation

The Access and Participation team is responsible for the design and implementation of activity. It works in cross-institutional collaboration as part of the AUB Open Campus Directorate, in collaboration with the Equality Diversity and Inclusion team, Student Recruitment team and Admissions team, consulting with the Access and Participation Steering Group, Access and Participation Working Group, and other relevant stakeholder groups as appropriate. Since the establishment of a new Access and Participation team in 2021, the University has been actively developing a strong evaluative culture.
The institution notes and shares the challenges faced by many relatively small, specialist providers. Such challenges are consistent with findings of Harrison and Waller (2017)[27] whereby the scale and strength of evaluation practice within institutions tends to be positively correlated with the scale of activity, its resources, data availability and staff skills. In particular, conducting evaluation while working with small sample sizes poses a challenge in relation to quantitative evaluative methods. However, an auditing process of the team's activity, alongside its monitoring and evaluation practices in 2021, resulted in the development of a strategic mechanism to maximise efficiency. Subsequently, institutional resources are more effectively utilized, ensuring that the most appropriate methodologies are strategically selected and used to monitor and evaluate activity at programme level.

As a specialist provider of creative arts and design, we acknowledge that our academic staff do not include the specialist researchers in the social sciences who may be employed by more generalist Higher Education Providers. This places greater responsibility on the Access and Participation team to ensure that evaluative expertise is mobilised in the design of new interventions. The appointment of a Senior Research and Evaluation Officer holding a PhD in a related topic provided much needed expertise to the monitoring and evaluation of projects and activities across access and the student lifecycle. The role's expertise is mobilised in both a hands-on capacity, conducting research, and in the design and implementation of evaluative methods. The Senior Research and Evaluation Officer also performs a consultative role across multiple departments in the institution, contributing to the development of an evidence-led culture, embedding evaluation as a part of program design and delivery across numerous projects.

6.2 Programme design

Drawing on Hodkinson and Sparkes'[28] theory of career decision-making, alongside the work of Ball, Reay and David[29], the Access and Participation team take a strengths-based

[27] Harrison, N. and Waller, R., 2017. Success and impact in widening participation policy: what works and how do we know?. *Higher Education Policy*, *30*, pp.141-160.
[28] Hodkinson, P. and Sparkes, A.C., 1997. Careership: a sociological theory of career decision making. *British journal of sociology of education*, *18*(1), pp.29-44.

conceptual approach to the design, delivery, and evaluation of activity. One which celebrates the richness and diversity of young people's experiences, alongside recognising the structural barriers and marginalisation they may encounter due to experience of intersecting inequalities.

In the last eighteen months a number of pilots for new access and participation initiatives have taken place in alignment with the strategic objectives of the institution, building evaluation into the conception and design of the programs from the outset. Rather than framing evaluation as an additional consideration, for new projects such as *All Access AUB* and *Being a Boy*, it has played a central role in decision making surrounding how and why new activities were designed. As such, mechanisms to assess the impact of interventions through agreed standards of evidence will drive reflective practice[30], informing continuous improvement in outcomes.

By September 2024, robust evaluation plans will be in operation to support the assessment of impact across the suite of new institutional Strategic Interventions described in Section 3.0. Evaluation plans for each intervention will include a well-developed and overarching ToC, overlaid with a comprehensive progression framework, publication timeline and dissemination plan. Evaluation plans will set out short, medium and long-term outcomes, together with the aims and objectives of each intervention. Plans will also describe the methodological mechanisms by which the efficacy of interventions in meeting their objectives will be assessed. These tools will embed robust evaluation across the portfolio of Strategic Interventions, facilitating continual assessment of impact and contribution to the growing body of knowledge across the HE sector.

6.3 Evaluation design

Evaluation plans created by the institution are appropriately aligned for the type of activity and stage of development. Practice has been strengthened by using developmental tools provided by the OfS to ensure an evidence-based approach. Mapping historical activity has enabled the University to identify areas of good practice in the selection of appropriate types of evaluation and available evidence using both narrative and empirical evaluative methodologies. Further, it has enabled the employment of robust qualitative research methods and adherence to rigorous academic processes, such as obtaining ethical approval, with the view to submitting findings to high quality, peer-reviewed journals.

An example which demonstrates the newly established approach to evaluative design is the inception and pilot of a new multi-intervention post-16 access initiative at AUB – All Access AUB (AAAUB) in 2022. This flagship scheme includes multiple interventions with a single cohort of learners at different touch points throughout their time studying BTEC/A Levels. The initiative includes four separate interventions: a residential summer school undertaken in the summer of year 12; an exhibition of created work in December hosted by our internationally recognised gallery; one-to-one portfolio support tutorials with AUB staff; and a day-long transition event at Easter in year 13. Now forming one of AUB's key institutional Intervention Strategies to address risks related to access to the institution, a progression framework and ToC has been devised, deploying a variety of measures to evaluate each component which feeds into the overarching progression framework. Evaluation methods include content analysis of summer school journals, semi-structured in-depth interviews and interactive pre and post activity surveys. Alongside this scheme are the new suite of strategic initiatives in cited in the plan, providing students with unique opportunities to explore the creative arts. All new activity will be embedded within an outcomes-led

[29] Ball, S.J., Reay, D. and David, M., 2002. 'Ethnic Choosing': Minority ethnic students, social class and higher education choice. *Race ethnicity and education*, 5(4), pp.333-357.
[30] Dennison, P., 2010. Reflective practice: The enduring influence of Kolb's experiential learning theory. Compass: The Journal of Learning and Teaching at the University of Greenwich, 9(1), pp.23-28.

approach, allowing for the effective design and implementation of appropriate evaluative tools. By September 2024, the University will have comprehensive evaluation plans in place, underpinning the Strategic Interventions detailed in Section 3.0.

6.4 Evaluation implementation

Historically, challenges pertaining to resourcing have limited the extent to which significant data collection, tracking, monitoring, qualitative and quantitative data analysis, and evaluation have been implemented institutionally. However, since the recruitment of a Senior Research and Evaluation Officer in 2021, capacity in this area has increased. As noted by Harrison and Waller (ibid.), the sector contends with macro-challenges, both epistemologically and logistically, in the design, implementation and delivery of robust evaluative activity. Despite these challenges faced, it is an area where the University has made substantive progress in recent years.

Moving beyond historic practice which incorporated basic mechanisms of targeting, monitoring and measurements of outcomes in alignment with progress against regulatory targets and milestones, a more strategic approach is now taken to the deployment of evaluative resource. Whilst cross-institutional monitoring takes place to inform the targeting and deployment of resource as outlined in the institutional Assessment of Performance (Annex A), at program level the intensity of evaluative activity required is negotiated using the matrix illustrated below.

Intensity	Score
Low	1
Medium	2
High	3

Intensity Metric	What Low Intensity Looks like	What Medium Intensity Looks Like	What High Intensity Looks Like
Participant to deliverer ratio	25+ to 1 or 2 deliverers	15 - 24 students Students to 1 or 2 Deliverers	1-14 Students to 1 or 2 Deliverers
Repeated Delivery?	One off activity	Repeated contact over 2 - 3 days	Repeated contact over every day in a week+ or every week for a number of weeks
Participant production/ interaction element	No production or limited interaction as a part of the activity	Participants have interaction	Participants produce something meaningful as part of the activity.
Duration	Contact for less than 3 hours	N/A	More than 3 hours contact
Activity Content	General HE topics	Art & Design HE Specific	Subject Specific Content
Campus or Off Campus Activity	Online/ in school	In school/ in the community	On Campus
Score:	1	2	3

Through utilization of the matrix, the strength to which program-level evaluation across the University's suite of activity is deployed in outreach work, is balanced against the intensity of intervention and resourcing required for delivery. For a one-off activity designated 'low intensity', taking place off campus with a high number of students and for a limited time, basic monitoring will take place. For interventions which may be sustained and progressive, repeated over a number of weeks and involving significant levels of resourcing, a high intensity of evaluation will take place. Typically, this would include the formulation of an evaluation plan, linked to outcomes indicated within a progression framework and a ToC. At this stage, the most appropriate methodological approach would be selected to capture and assess the interventions impact against stated aims.

Findings from a benchmarking exercise conducted using the OfS evaluation self-assessment tool suggest that, overall, institutional practice to implement evaluation is good. However, there were some areas for development which will be strengthened over the duration of the

new Plan. These include the tracking of recipient activity over time, maximising opportunities to work with cross-sector stakeholders, and formalising the implementation of evaluative risk analysis.

6.5 Learning from evidence to shape improvement

When benchmarking institutional practice in 'learning from evidence to shape improvement in evaluation' against the criterion listed in the OfS evaluation self-assessment tool, overall findings point toward several areas of good practice.
In the interpretation of results, evaluation regularly acknowledges the limitations of choices made in the design and methodological approach taken to evaluative practice. It regularly triangulates findings sources and uses the body of wider scholarly literature to engage in discussions surrounding effectiveness where it exists.

Through the University's Access and Participation Working Group, Steering Group, and the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee, there are numerous bodies through which published evaluation is shared and disseminated internally. Scrutiny at such committees and groups provides an opportunity for critical conversations surrounding the impact of interventions and increased institutional knowledge pertaining to how and why they may be effective.

Amongst those involved in the delivery of Access and Participation activity, there is a shared understanding that evaluation is conducted to shape continuous improvement. Reflective practice underpins the development of programs and is built into the timeline for the publication of post-intervention impact reports, such as that from a 2022/23 pilot of the *All Access AUB* scheme[31].

6.6 Publication and dissemination of evaluation

With regards to the dissemination and publication of evaluative findings, since 2022, impact reports from initiatives are published and made publicly available on the University website[32]. In 2022/23 the institution has also contributed regularly to Higher Education debate on a national platform, with blogs featuring in online publications such as WonkHE[33]

Moreover, due to the increased resourcing in the Access and Participation team since late 2021, the institution has pivoted its gaze outward, positioning itself to contribute to learning and development in evaluative activity taking place across the sector. The Senior Research and Evaluation officer has joined the local Uni Connect (Southern Universities Network) monitoring and evaluation working group. Alongside the sharing of best practice, facilitating more cross institutional collaborations, and providing a space for peer-to-peer critique and feedback of methods and practice, the group also provides the opportunity to explore independent peer review of evaluative activity taking place.

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[31] https://webdocs.aub.ac.uk/AUB_All%20Access_Report.pdf?_ga=2.65681262.1397421689.1684247620-838712098.1630395662&_gac=1.217836132.1684247620.CjwKCAjw04yjBhApEiwAJcvNoTo1W1KZ4YboDNFbFtwGpwKd5e7YioA7pThlBAusFSS8JQlVBpNc5xoCZqIQAvD_BwE
[32] https://aub.ac.uk/schools-hub/widening-access-to-aub#tab-3532205-how-we-make-a-difference
[33] https://wonkhe.com/blogs/how-to-deliver-on-working-class-boys-and-progression-to-he/

In 2022/23 the University presented findings linked to programme evaluation at the Forum for Access and Continuing Education 2022 Conference, the Guild HE WP network, the Inside Government Widening Participation 2022 Conference, and the QAA Quality Insights Conference. Alongside this, in January 2023, the University's pilot 'Being a Boy' initiative won *Best Collaborative Outreach Project* and *Best Recruitment and Widening Participation Project* at the Higher Education Liaison Officers' Association annual awards. On a more local level, findings have been disseminated at numerous CPD events for teachers and advisers, including externally organised events for senior school leaders in Dorset and Manchester. In addition to this, the University has secured ethical approval for scholarly research to take place alongside its evaluative activity, most recently presenting findings at the 2023 British Sociological Association Conference in April.

Outcome	Method	Expected Publication Timeline	Expected Publication Mode
Short Term Outcomes Participants feel motivated, valued, and empowered to engage with education	**Mixed methodological including pre/post event and longitudinal participant surveys, alongside qualitative methods including analysis of creative 'third objects' created by participants, observations, and semi structured interviews with participants and stakeholders.**	**January 2024**	**Impact report and accompanying blog on AUB website** **Workshop presentation at HE sector conference**
Participants can articulate an appreciation of their abilities and potential beyond academic success		**June 2024**	**Dissemination at HE sector network events locally and nationally** **Dissemination at CPD events for teachers and advisors**
Participants parent's recognise the participant's contribution and celebrate their success		**September 2024**	**Papers delivered at relevant academic conference**
Participants' metacognitive skills have increased		**December 2024**	**Publication accepted for peer-reviewed journal article**
Medium Term Outcomes Participants can explain how good attainment will support their education and career choices			
Participants can summarise their personal barriers to making future education choices			
Participants can describe how they have used metacognition skills in their learning			
Participants are confident to make informed decisions about their future			
Participants have achieved good Key Stage 4 outcomes and progress to a Level 3 course			

Exemplar Evaluation Plan – Being a Boy

7.0 Provision of information

We publish our Access and Participation Plan on our website, but we also describe the package of measures in detail on dedicated pages on our website related to funding, at https://aub.ac.uk/fees/undergraduate.

The provisions of this Access and Participation Plan apply to all full-time students who are domiciled in England. The eligibility criterion for most of our offer is based on household income information provided by Student Finance England, and eligibility is verified annually. Students in receipt of a full maintenance loan, with a residual household income of £25,000 or below, qualify for the discretionary support detailed below. In addition, care leavers, estranged students, young adult carers and students with a disability separately qualify for other elements of support, which may be in addition to the provisions based on household income.

Following a review of student financial support in 2023, a new package of enhanced, targeted financial support will be implemented from September 2024. Addressing issues related to complexity, accessibility and alignment with strategic objectives, the new package supports and complements institution-wide initiatives, providing financial assistance earlier in the student lifecycle and supporting with student progression to graduate employment.

The package available to each student will depend on their precise circumstances. While the exact amounts may vary year on year, for example to respond to rises in inflation, the package remains the same. We have provided a summary of the offer below.

Support with travel to Offer Holder Days

An annual fund available for applicants to the University to receive a one-off award of up to £50 for travel costs for applicants to attend Offer Holder Days and university induction/transition events

Support with accommodation costs

Level 4 students living in university student accommodation will receive a rent reduction of £1000.

Support with travel costs

Undergraduate students in Level 5 and Level 6 will receive a £200.00 payment to assist with travel costs associated with their studies.

Support for students who are care experienced or estranged

A bursary of £2,000 per annum. This is not means-tested and is in addition to any other bursaries and benefits to which a student may be entitled.

Support for students who are young adult carers

A bursary of £2,000 per annum. This is not means-tested and is in addition to any other bursaries and benefits to which a student may be entitled.

Support for Disabled students

For students who are required to make a £200 contribution towards a laptop previously provided through DSA, the University will pay this £200. In addition, we provide support for

the cost of Educational Psychologist reports where these are required. This is in addition to any other bursaries or benefits to which a student may be entitled.

Support with opportunities linked to graduate employment

An annual fund will be made available for students to receive a one-off award of up to £300 for:

• Travel and accommodation costs for interviews, internships, and other opportunities
• Attendance fees for courses, conferences, or residential training events
• Smart clothing
• Application costs for further study
• Specialist equipment (not including laptops, computers, or books)
• Some costs associated with the course
• Other expenses related to engagement with opportunities in the creative industries

Receipt of any support is subject to the Arts University Bournemouth successfully confirming enrolment and attendance. Providing the student remains enrolled, this benefit will be paid across the academic year. If a student ceases to be in full-time study during the year (either through withdrawal, or because they take a break from their studies), the award will be suspended from the final date of study.

We have a dedicated webpage which sets out the terms and conditions of our offer, as required by the Competition and Markets Authority, and this page also includes a link to the fees and financial support measures. Following enrolment, we write to all new students who meet our criteria for additional support to confirm their entitlement; and we follow this up if they do not claim within the first month. Continuing students are reminded annually of the additional support to which they are entitled.

Students will receive confirmation of their entitlements once their details have been confirmed by Student Finance England.

Annex A
Assessment of Performance

To assess institutional performance against identified risks in the OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register[34] (EoRR), an analysis of student lifecycle data taken primarily from the OfS Access and Participation dashboard data[35] has been conducted.

Aggregated dashboard data across 4 years were used to provide an average indicator of performance across the period, summarising differences between the most and least disadvantaged groups. The selected metrics below mirror those used in the OfS data dashboard. The national 4-year average is used as a benchmark for specific AUB data. The risks identified within the EoRR were mapped to the dashboard data at each stage of the student lifecycle, assessing severity of risk based on the gap between groups who are most and least disadvantaged.

The data included in tables from the OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard indicates all groups for which there was a gap of 5% or more between those who are the most and least represented within the institution. From total of 35, 19 groups with a gap of 5% or higher were identified at various stages across the student lifecycle from enrolment to progression. It is these 19 groups where risk have been deemed highest, which have been included within the Assessment of Performance documentation.

Where AUB data has been too small to include in the dashboard (e.g. ethnicity - black) a gap of 999% has been used to reflect the small data sample.

To complement and add further understanding to institutional admissions pre-enrolment, this dataset has been combined with OfS student characteristics data[36], UCAS application data[37], and information held by the institution to facilitate a more holistic understanding of the institutional performance.

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[34] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/equality-of-opportunity-risk-register/

[35] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/

[36] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/student-characteristics-data/population-data-dashboard/

[37] https://www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis/undergraduate-statistics-and-reports/ucas-undergraduate-sector-level-end-cycle-data-resources-2022/2022-entry-ucas-undergraduate-reports-sex-area-background-and-ethnic-group

1.   Access

Facilitating equitable access to AUB remains one of the institution's most significant challenges. Drawing on data from UCAS and the OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard, this section examines gaps in applications, offer-making, and enrolments at the institution by geographic measures of Higher Education participation, socio-economic background and ethnicity for the period 2018-2021.

Applications

Using UCAS application data, the below tables detail the proportion of applications made to the University across the four-year period.

	2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Number	**% of Total**	**Number**	**% of Total**	**Number**	**% of Total**	**Number**	**% of Total**
POLAR 4 Q 1&2	**1358**	**28%**	**1420**	**26.6%**	**1512**	**27.4%**	**1693**	**27.1%**
POLAR 4 Q5	**1575**	**32%**	**1762**	**33%**	**1775**	**32.2%**	**1996**	**32%**
Total	**4893**		**5326**		**5501**		**6228**	

UCAS Application Data: % Made by POLAR 4 Quintile

Over the period detailed, data shows a substantial gap in applications received from those residing in areas of low Higher Education participation when compared with those from the highest. After combining the total number of applications from students in POLAR Quintiles 1&2, the data evidence consistent gaps in application rates of 4-7% when compared to the total applications received from applicants from POLAR Quintile. Whilst over the period the total number of applications received from students in POLAR Quintiles 1&2 has increased by over 300, the percentage gap remains consistent.

	2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Number	**% of Total**	**Number**	**% of Total**	**Number**	**% of Total**	**Number**	**% of Total**
IMD Q 1&2	**1073**	**21%**	**1200**	**22.5%**	**1294**	**23.5%**	**1480**	**23.7%**
IMD Q5	**1485**	**30.3%**	**1607**	**30.1%**	**1627**	**29.5%**	**1729**	**27.7%**
Total	**4893**		**5326**		**5501**		**6228**	

UCAS Application Data: % Made by IMD Quintile

When examining applications by geographic indicators of socio-economic inequality, again there is a significant gap between applicants from IMD Quintile 5, when compared with applicants from Quintiles 1&2 combined. However, over the period indicated, applications

from students from IMD Quintiles 1&2 have increased by 407, and the gap has narrowed from 9.3% in 2018, to 4% in 2021.

	2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
White	4195	85.7	4545	85.3	4615	83.8	5162	82.8
Asian	193	3.9	215	4.0	224	4.0	302	4.8
Black	149	3.0	156	2.9	158	2.8	212	3.4
Mixed	261	5.3	297	5.5	394	7.1	397	6.3
Total	4893		5326		5501		6228	

UCAS Application Data: % Made by Ethnic Group

Application data from the four-year period also evidences a gradual uplift in applications made by students from ethnic minorities with 308 more applications made to the institution in 2021 than in 2018. In 2018, 603 applications were made by students from ethnic minorities, which accounted for 12.2% of total applications, growing to 911 (14.5%) in 2021.

Offers

Drawing again from UCAS application data, the tables below detail the percentage of offers made by the institution grouping applicants by geographic measures of Higher Education participation, socio-economic background and ethnicity for the period 2018-2021.

	2018	2019	2020	2021
POLAR 4 Q1	50	44	42	60
POLAR4 Q2	52	53	46	60
POLAR4 Q5	61	56	57	68
%Gap Q1-Q5	11	12	15	8

UCAS Data: % Offers Made by POLAR 4 Quintile

The four-year data evidences that, by the area-based POLAR4 measure of Higher Education participation, there are gaps in offer-making between applicants from the highest and lowest Quintiles. Across the period there has been a consistent gap of between 8-15% in the likelihood of students from low participation areas being made an offer to study at the institution.

	2018	2019	2020	2021
IMD Q1	43	43	37	55
IMD Q2	53	48	47	61
IMD Q5	62	56	57	67
%Gap Q1-Q5	19	13	20	12

UCAS Data: % Offers Made by IMD Quintile

Using the regional IMD measure of socio-economic inequality, the data demonstrates another significant gap in institutional offer making. In 2018 the gap between Quintiles 1 and 5 was 19%, whilst in 2021 it was 12%. This would suggest that although the gap is closing, there is still a gap in offers being made between the most and least economically advantaged applicants.

	2018	2019	2020	2021
White	56	53	53	64
Asian	56	53	50	66
Black	47	46	40	55
Mixed	61	42	47	62
% Gap between White and Black applicants	9	7	13	9

UCAS Data: % Offers Made by Ethnic Group

Whilst the data on ethnicity and offer-making at the institution is mixed, it evidences a persistent percentage gap in offers made between White and Black students. Whilst, as evidenced elsewhere in the document, the number of applications from Black students is comparatively small (n=212), offers made were 9% lower than for White students in 2021. However, for students from other ethnic groups, on the whole gaps in offer rates are small, and broadly comparable to those of White students.

Enrolment

The OfS dashboard data suggests that enrolments to AUB for students from TUNDRA Quintile 1 (12.5%) postcode areas are slowly improving, slightly outperforming national gaps in access. It also evidences that gaps in access for young people in ABCs Quintile 1, outperform the national benchmark by 3.1%.

Access and Participation dashboard item	Average access gap in AUB data 4yr %	Average national access gap in data 4yr %	Difference AUB to national access gap %
Age	79	46	**33**
IMD 2019	26.9	-1.6	**28.5**
Ethnicity - gap between White and Black students	84	60.8	**23.2**
FSM Eligibility	79	60.8	**18.2**
ABCs	23.3	26.4	**-3.1**
TUNDRA Q1	13.5	18.4	**-4.9**
Disability	49.6	66.55	**-16.95**

OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard

However, this is not the case for other indicators. Data demonstrates a gap in enrolment of 79% between students who were eligible for Free School Meals (10.5%) and those who were not (89.5%) at the institution.

IMD data also evidences a significant gap in enrolment between students from postcodes in Quintile 1 (6.6%), and Quintile 5 (33.5%) at AUB. When compared to national averages across the sector, there is evidence of AUB facing significant a challenge with a gap of 18.2% for enrolments by students who were eligible for Free School Meals, and 28.5% for students living in IMD Quintile 1 postcode areas.

The analysis suggests that whilst AUB is slightly exceeding national benchmarking data in some indicators, there is a large disparity in access for students who may be face greatest socio-economic disadvantage.

Reported Disability

Aggregated data from the last 4 years suggests that, on average, the proportion of students enrolling at AUB with a declared disability was 25.2%. When compared to a national average of 16.7% for the same period, it is clear that AUB attracts a high proportion of enrolments by students with a reported disability than many other institutions in the sector, with a positive gap of 17.95%. Internal data suggests that during the period from 2019/20 to 2021/22 the total number of students with reported disabilities across all programmes of study rose from 811 to 1054. Notably, disclosures of conditions related to mental health rose from 230 in 2019/20 to 327 in 2021/22.

Academic Year	Mental Health % of total	Learning Difficulty % of total	Autistic Disorder % of total	**Total**
2019/20	28.4%	41%	5.4%	811
2020/21	29.9%	41%	6.2%	902
2021/22	31%	42.1%	6.6%	1054
2022/23	32%	38.4%	6.9%	1141

Internal data: reported student disability 2019/20-2021/22

Ethnicity

Data from the OfS dashboard suggests that there are significant gaps in access between White students and those from other ethnic backgrounds. The dashboard provides evidence that across the last 4 years, an average of 2.4% of the AUB student population were Black, and 3.2% were Asian. When compared to national benchmarking data which evidences an average population sizes in universities of 7.4% for Black students and 16.9% for Asian students, this presents a significant disparity. However, OfS student characteristics data[38] evidence that for design, creative and performing arts subjects the average student population size nationally is lower than the benchmark cited above averages of 5% for students from the Black and Asian ethnic groups.

It is also worthy of note that the University is located in a geographic region which is less ethnically diverse than the nation as a whole. Data from the 2021 census[39] highlights that across the locality 3.4% of the population identified their ethnicity as Asian, and 1.1% as Black.

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[38] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/student-characteristics-data/population-data-dashboard/
[39] https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E06000058/

Whilst the University attracts a high proportion of students from the local region, it has an established national and international profile. As such, whilst a lack of ethnic diversity within the local geographic region and smaller numbers of Black and Asian students studying creative subjects in Higher Education nationally are significant challenges, the institution recognises the importance of its role as an engine for greater diversity of socio-economic background, gender and ethnicity in the cultural and creative industries.

Mature Students

Since the closure of its part-time routes on undergraduate degree programmes in 2014, the University has attracted comparatively small numbers of mature students. Mature entrants have remained constant at around 10% over a four-year period, compared to a national proportion of around 28%. Although the university does not offer courses in those disciplines which tend to have higher proportions of mature students (such as professions allied to medicine), there are plans for new online BA programmes which may hold appeal for mature learners than currently offered provision. The University also offers a range of short courses which take place across evenings and weekends which, although not credit-bearing, provide creative educational opportunities for adult learners across the region.

Care Experienced and Estranged Students

Whilst data is not available on the OfS dashboard, data from the National Network[40] for the Education of Care Leavers suggests that 14% of care experienced students will progress to Higher Education, compared with 45% of the wider population.

AUB's numbers of enrolled care experienced students has remained steady over the past 3 years and compares favourably to other institutions nationally. This may in part be due to care experienced students being over-represented in social science and creative arts, as asserted by Harrison, Baker and Stevenson in their recent academic research[41].

Academic Year	Number of care experienced students	Percentage of student population
2020/21	42	1.5
2021/22	48	1.6
2022/23	46	1.4

Internal data

Since becoming a signatory of the Stand Alone pledge in 2021, the institution has also seen an increase in students reporting estrangement, with 20 identified students in 2021/22 and 22 in 2022/23.

2.   Attainment

With regard to gaps in the awarding of first or upper class second degrees, the institutional performance is positive for several groups who may be more likely to experience unequal educational outcomes in a number of areas. Data evidence small awarding gaps for mature students (2.6%), students with reported disabilities (1.6%), and students from areas of low Higher Education participation (1.4%). However, when compared to performance nationally the institution has smaller gaps for mature students (-7.6%) and students from low

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[40] https://www.nnecl.org/resources/32-data
[41] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-020-00660-w

participation areas (-4.4%), than the national average. For students with reported disabilities the institutional performance is on a par with the wider sector (0.6).

Access and Participation dashboard item	Average awarding gap in AUB data 4yr %	Average national awarding gap in data 4yr %	Difference AUB to national awarding gap
Ethnicity - gap between White and Black students	33.5	20.2	13.3
FSM Eligibility	10.4	11.5	-1.1
IMD 2019	10	16.9	-6.9
ABCS	999	999	999

OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard

Ethnicity

For the institution, some of the most significant disparities related to degree awarding outcomes are found in the gap between White students and students of colour. Whilst 4 year data evidences an awarding gap of just over 15% for Asian students, the most significant is between White and Black students, with a differential of over 33%. When compared to national benchmarking data, this constitutes a 13% difference to the sector wide gap of 20%.

Although, given the low numbers of Black and Asian students studying at the institution, statistical uncertainty is high, substantial gaps in outcomes are evident.

Socio-Economic Background

Similar to the challenges around access to the institution, and area which the 4-year data suggests the awarding gaps are more significant, are for students who are less socio-economically advantaged. For students who have been eligible for Free School Meals and those from IMD Quintile 1 postcode areas, the awarding gap is just over 10%. However, data from the last two years indicated a significant improvement in the attainment of students who were eligible for Free School Meals, with the cohort outperforming those who were not by 1.2%. Data from the last two years also evidences a slight closing of the gap for students from IMD Quintile 1 postcode areas to 9.5%.

Care Experienced Students

Alongside those gaps in awarding evidenced through the data available on the dashboard, institutionally held data demonstrates an awarding gap for students who are care experienced. Although statistical uncertainty is high given the comparatively small number of students, aggregated data from the last 4 years evidence that 50.6% of care experienced students achieved a first or upper second class degree, constituting a 22% gap in awarding outcome to the wider student population.

3.   Continuation

Evidence from the data dashboard demonstrates that for student continuation, the institution compares favourably to the wider sector. Whilst 4-year data evidence small gaps, they are less than 5% across all indicators apart from ABCs. For students in ABCs Quintile 1, data evidence a gap in continuation of 5%, however this constitutes a positive gap of 8.7% when compared to data which cites the national gap at 13.7%.

Access and Participation dashboard item	Average continuation gap in AUB data 4yr %	Average national continuation gap in data 4yr %	Difference AUB to national continuation gap
ABCs	5	13.7	-8.7
Ethnicity - gap between White and Black students	999	999	999

OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard

Although there is no 4-year data on continuation for Black students available through the OfS dashboard due to small cohort sizes, ethnicity data evidence a gap in continuation of less than 5% between White students and students of other ethnic backgrounds. This figure is reflected in institutionally held data relating to student retention, which cites a rate of progression from Level 4 of study to Level 5 at 91.7% for students from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Care Experienced Students

Although numbers are very small, and as such should be treated with caution, institutional data evidence that in the academic year 2021/22 20.0% of care experienced students withdrew from their course, constituting a continuation rate of 80%. This compares to 3.8% of the wider student population, a gap of 16.2%.

4. Completion

In several areas, the University compares favourably to the wider sector in rates of completion for groups who may be underrepresented in Higher Education. The gap in rates of completion for Black students compared to White students is 2%, compared with 7.5% across the wider sector. For Asian students and students of mixed heritage, the gap is less than 5%. Gaps in completion are also low for students from areas of low HE participation (1.8%), students who were eligible for Free School Meals (2.1%), and students with a reported disability (0.8%).

Access and Participation dashboard item	Average gap in AUB completion data 4yr %	Average national completion gap in data 4yr %	Difference AUB to national completion gap
Age	5.8	9.7	**-3.9**
IMD 2019	5.6	10.4	**-4.8**
ABCs	11.6	23	**-11.4**

OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard

Gaps are highest in completion at the institution for mature students (5.8%), students from IMD Quintile 1 postcodes (5.6%), and students in ABCs Quintile 1 (11.6%). However, when compared to gaps nationally, the University performs strongly in comparison to the wider sector with completion rates in excess of 90% for most groups.

5. Progression

Whilst progression into professional or managerial employment, further study or other positive outcomes for most groups at the University falls between 60-65%, there are no significant disparities in progression across groups which experience

underrepresentation in Higher Education. Two of the largest gaps in progression are experienced by students who were eligible for Free School Meals (6.9%) and students from areas of low Higher Education participation (5.2%). Theses gaps are broadly reflective of those across the sector, with small discrepancies either way from the sector average.

Access and Participation dashboard item	Average gap in AUB data 4yr %	Average national gap in data 4yr %	Difference AUB to national gap
FSM Eligibility	6.9	6.5	0.4
TUNDRA Q1	5.2	6.5	-1.3
Ethnicity - gap between White and Black students	999	999	999

OfS Access and Participation Data Dashboard

Whilst progression data is not available to understand a potential gap between Black and White students, progression to professional employment or further study for Asian students is 74.2%, 13.9% higher than for White students, whilst for students of mixed heritage the gap between white students is 0.1%.

6. Summary and Recommendations

Access

One of AUB's most significant challenges as an institution is around access. Whilst enrolments from students who live in low participation neighbourhoods has slowly improved, there other significant gaps. The institution performs well below sector average in attracting students who may experience significant socio-economic inequality. This is evidenced at multiple stages of the student journey from application to enrolment. Whilst there are gaps in rates of offer making across underrepresented groups, the most substantial disparity is evidenced in the applications received to the institution by groups who may experience additional barriers in progression to creative Higher Education.

Whilst risks related to inequalities such as availability of arts-related subjects in GCSE curriculums, GCSE attainment, and perceptions of opportunities for employment in the creative industries all contribute toward the gap, it is one that the institution should seek to mitigate through its commitments in the Access and Participation Plan.

The proportion of mature students studying at the University is also low. Whilst a sharp decline in mature student numbers, and the closure of part time courses at the university offer explanation for this, there may nevertheless be opportunities to increase numbers of mature students through provision of new online undergraduate courses and strategic activity to cater for beneficiaries of the Lifelong Learning Entitlement.

Similarly, students from ethnic minority backgrounds, experience significant underrepresentation at the University. Whilst the lack of ethnic diversity within the region is

certainly a contributing factor, the University nevertheless should seek to further diversify its student intake through the strategic activity detailed in the plan.

Due to limitations in resource as a smaller, specialist institution, the University could provide a strategic intervention which supports multiple underrepresented groups to successfully apply to the institution. Where cohort sizes are small it may be beneficial to explore how outcomes across groups align and establish strategic interventions focussing on outcome success indicators rather than individual interventions for each underrepresented group.

Continuation, Completion and Attainment

Whilst the University performs well in this area across many of the indicators, the degree awarding gaps between White and ethnic minority student groups are higher than those reported across the sector more widely. The plan should detail the steps being taken across the institution to address this.

The assessment of performance detailed the comparatively high number of students attending the institution identifying as care experienced or estranged. It also highlighted significant gaps in the progression of care experienced students in comparison to the University's wider cohort. As such, the plan should detail what steps are taken by the institution to provide additional support for the group across the student lifecycle.

The assessment highlighted a significant proportion of students studying at the institution with a reported disability. Alongside this, it evidenced a significant increase in students with reported mental health conditions. As such, the plan should evidence strategic work taking place across the institution to provide additional support as part of the new Access and Participation Plan.

Progression

Whilst there were not significant gaps in progression to professional or managerial employment, further study or other positive outcomes for most groups at the University, evidence shows a stark inequality in employment within the cultural and creative industries[42]. With comparatively low numbers of students from lower socioeconomic and ethnic minority backgrounds attending the University, it is important that those who do are supported on to fulfilling and rewarding work in the creative industries. As such, it is recommended that the new plan to deploy strategic mechanisms in support of students from underrepresented backgrounds future career and employability.

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[42] Brook, O., O'Brien, D. and Taylor, M., 2020. Culture is bad for you. In *Culture is bad for you.* Manchester University Press.

Annex B
Evidence base and rationale for intervention strategies (further detail)

Intervention Strategy 1: Supporting GCSE attainment and educational progression for males from underrepresented groups

Evidence base and rationale

Recent TASO research[43] has outlined the link between metacognition and attainment at GCSE. This is supported by EEF[44] studies exploring metacognitive skills and attainment at both primary and secondary school level. To support the efficacy of metacognitive strategies to raise student attainment, this Strategic Intervention assumes such an approach to be a robust vehicle by which to develop activity in this area.

Evidence from Pinkett and Roberts[45] also asserts that mental health, peer pressure, relationships, mental health, and socio-economic inequality are also contributory elements to the gap in GCSE attainment for boys in receipt of Free School Meals.

With regard to the role of educational professionals who work with young men, research suggests (Heyder and Kessels, 2015[46]; Myhill and Jones, 2006[47]; Jones and Myhill, 2004[48]) that gendered perceptions and assumptions play significant role in pedagogic practice. As such, in parallel to activity facing young people, the Strategic Intervention will conduct activity focused on the development of professional practice.

Being a Boy is a newly established access programme at AUB and early evaluation[49] has evidenced its positive impact for participants. In its pilot year, the project received national recognition for its innovative approach. This Strategic Intervention builds on that foundation, deploying more robust evaluative practices, and expanding the model to engage a larger cohort of young men in a broader suite of creative activity.

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[43] https://taso.org.uk/news-item/taso-launches-report-on-attainment-raising/
[44] https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/metacognition
[45] Pinkett, M. and Roberts, M., 2019. *Boys Don't Try? Rethinking Masculinity in Schools*. Routledge.
[46] Heyder, A. and Kessels, U., 2015. Do teachers equate male and masculine with lower academic engagement? How students' gender enactment triggers gender stereotypes at school. *Social Psychology of Education*, *18*, pp.467-485.
[47] Myhill, D. and Jones, S., 2006. 'She doesn't shout at no girls': pupils' perceptions of gender equity in the classroom. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *36*(1), pp.99-113.
[48] Jones*, S. and Myhill, D., 2004. 'Troublesome boys' and 'compliant girls': Gender identity and perceptions of achievement and underachievement. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *25*(5), pp.547-561.
[49] https://webdocs.aub.ac.uk/Being%20a%20Boy%20Impact%20Report%202022.pdf

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
70 male students each academic year to take part in a series of six workshops annually, mobilising the University's suite of creative subject specialisms as mechanisms for to facilitate reflection on masculinity and identity within their unique educational and social contexts. A celebratory exhibition event, showcasing the work produced by the young participants. Published research and programme-level evaluation at key points across the duration of the programme until 2028/29	**Short-term outcomes:** • Participants feel motivated, valued, and empowered to engage with education. • Participants demonstrate increased self-determination, resilience, and independence. • Participants can articulate an appreciation of their abilities and potential beyond academic success. • Participants parents recognise the participant's contribution and celebrate their success. • Participants' metacognitive skills have increased. **Medium-term outcomes:** • Participants can explain how good attainment will support their education and career choices. • Participants can summarise their personal barriers to making future education choices. • Participants can describe how they have used metacognition skills in	• Pre and post activity survey data - an outcome star to track metacognitive skill development. • Qualitative analysis of creative artefacts produced through the workshop series. • Semi structured interviews with project participants • Focus groups with key stakeholders including teachers and representatives from third sector and community organisations.	• Internal evaluation reports and presentations to internal AUB working groups. • Publicly available evaluation in the form an impact report accessed via the AUB website. • Opportunities for sector wide dissemination will be explored during the lifetime of this project. Possible knowledge sharing may include, but not limited to, NEON working groups, Widening Participation practitioner conferences, research conferences. • Peer reviewed academic publications

their learning.
- Participants are confident to make informed decisions about their future.
- Participants have achieved good Key Stage 4 outcomes and progress to a Level 3 course.

Long-term outcomes:
- Participants apply and are offered a place on a degree/Level 4 course.
- Participants successfully continue and complete their degree/Level 4 course.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Dorset Boys Impact Hub. A partnership of schools and education providers, offering of 5-10 days training and development opportunities to school and education professionals	**Short term outcomes** - Members have an increased knowledge of challenges faced by young men from under-represented groups in progressing to further and higher education. - Members are motivated to explore ways to support boys in education attainment and progression their local context.	- Activity survey data. - Semi structured interviews with hub participants - Focus groups with key stakeholders including teachers and representatives from third sector and community organisations.	- Internal evaluation reports and presentations to internal AUB working groups. - Publicly available evaluation in the form an impact report accessed via the AUB website. - Opportunities for sector wide dissemination will be explored during the lifetime of this project. Possible knowledge sharing may include, but not limited to, NEON working groups, Widening Participation practitioner conferences, research conferences

Medium term outcomes

- Members articulate a deeper understanding of why boys, and men, may be reluctant to show certain feelings and emotions or actively seek support.
- Members show increased awareness of how traditional notions of men and masculinity can negatively impact societal, community and family attitudes to education and learning.
- Members feel empowered to use evidence in piloting new and innovative activities.
- Members are aware and can critically reflect on the influence of bias in their classroom practice.

Long term outcomes

- Better understand the implications of stereotypical assumptions surrounding masculinity and educational engagement inside and outside of the classroom
- Members begin to pilot activity to support boy's

	educational attainment and progression within their local contexts. • Members devise activity informed by a greater evidence base when targeting and piloting interventions. • Teachers and advisors feel connected to, and supported by a regionalised community of practice working to address the educational disparities locally.		

Intervention Strategy 2: Supporting access into creative HE for students from underrepresented groups

Evidence base and rationale

Through mobilising Hodkinson and Sparkes[50] *Horizons for Action,* a theory of career decision-making, alongside Ball, Reay and David's[51] work on choice-making with regards to HE participation as a conceptual basis, the All Access AUB programme provides the constituent components necessary for studying a creative university degree to feature strongly within participants' horizons for action. The All Access AUB programme takes a multi-intervention approach as, in recent research published by the OfS, the Uni Connect Annual Report[52], findings were presented that suggest:

> *multiple engagement with learners – which is achieved through the programme's targeted and sustained approach – has a positive impact on the most disadvantaged pupils, including on their confidence in making decisions about their course of study. (2021)*

When reviewing the efficacy of approaches to outreach activity it found that those which had the most positive short, medium, and long term outcomes for learners involved multiple interactions over a sustained period.

This is supported by TASO's[53] evidence toolkit which outlines that IAG activities, summer schools and pre-entry coaching has a positive impact on students progressing to higher education.

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[50] Hodkinson, P. and Sparkes, A.C., 1997. Careership: a sociological theory of career decision making. *British journal of sociology of education*, *18*(1), pp.29-44.
[51] Ball, S.J., Reay, D. and David, M., 2002. 'Ethnic Choosing': Minority ethnic students, social class and higher education choice. *Race ethnicity and education*, *5*(4), pp.333-357.
[52] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/213bb753-863f-45d7-814c-4d2df8e71565/uni-connect-annual-report-final-for-web.pdf
[53] https://taso.org.uk/evidence/toolkit/

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
A four-day summer residential, including academic and pastoral activities. 2X 30-minute One-to-One online portfolio support sessions facilitating the curation of a portfolio ready for application to creative HE. Exhibition of participants work and participation in the exclusive Private View of the exhibition. A one-day Transition to HE event.	**Short term outcomes** • Students feel HE is for them. • Students have an increased knowledge of making successful applications to creative degree courses. • Students have developed skills in creative practice. • Students are confident in making decisions about their education choices. **Medium term outcomes** • Increased applications to AUB courses from under-represented groups • Increased offer rates to students from under-represented groups who have engaged in this activity. **Long term outcomes** • Increased conversions to AUB courses • Students enrol on their degree course. • Students feel part of a community. • Students feel they have	• Pre and post evaluation • Qualitative analysis of reflective journals completed during residential phase. • Semi structured interviews with participants and their parents/carers • Quantitative analysis of data on AUB applications and enrolments.	• Internal evaluation reports and presentations to internal AUB working groups. • Publicly available evaluation in the form an impact report accessed via the AUB website. • Opportunities for sector wide dissemination will be explored during the lifetime of this project. Possible knowledge sharing may include, but not limited to, NEON working groups, Widening Participation practitioner conferences, research conferences.

	the skills and knowledge to continue and attain a good degree outcome		

Intervention Strategy 3: Supporting students who are care experienced and estranged across the student life cycle

Evidence base and rationale

Care experienced individuals are one of the most marginalised groups in society (Barn, 2010). As recognised in the EoRR, published by the OfS, there is currently, and historically, low levels of access, continuation, attainment, and progression rates among care experienced and estranged students, as well as disparities in degree outcomes for students from these underrepresented groups.

With appropriate additional support, care experienced, and estranged students can and should achieve at the same level of their peers in terms of access, continuation, and outcomes at HE. Research conducted by Harrison[54] reports that care leavers were just as likely as other students to achieve a first or upper second-class degree once entry qualifications and their demographic profile were considered. The same report suggests that there should be more support provided through dedicated staff with specific expertise in supporting care leavers, rather than simply a 'staff contact' with multiple roles, who can help the student to navigate complex processes, advocate on their behalf and provide low-level emotional support. The report also recommends the development of social and networking opportunities for care experienced students. The support provided for care experienced and estranged students at AUB will include the above recommendations.

AUB has taken a student life cycle approach when supporting care experienced and estranged students and this is supported by Stevenson et al.[55] which recommends that higher education institutions develop 'student lifecycle' approaches to support, highlights the importance of providing regular information and guidance on careers, as well as making care experienced and estranged students aware of academic support services within the HEI via the named contact in the institution. Career related opportunities such as internships and workshops should be advertised to care-experienced and estranged students directly, via a named contact[56].

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[54] Harrison, N., 2017. Moving on up. *National Network for the Education of Care Leavers: Winchester.*

[55] Stevenson, J., Baker, Z., Harrison, N., Bland, B., Jones-Devitt, S., Donnelly, A., Pickering, N. and Austen, L., 2020. Positive impact? What factors affect access, retention and graduate outcomes for university students with a background of care or family estrangement?.

[56] Baker, Z., 2022. The Care-Experienced Graduates' Decision-Making, Choices and Destinations Project: Phase one report.

Evaluation

Whilst as, a brand-new initiative for September 2024, a full evaluation plan has not yet been completed, please find an indicative example below.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Access • Tailored communication through the applicant journey • Named single point of contact for support. • Opportunity to attend additional events tailored to support access to AUB.	• Care experienced students feel supported in their transition to higher education. • Increased conversion from offer to conditional offer for care experienced students • Care experienced students enrol on their course	• AUB enrolment data • Post-enrolment surveys	• Annual impact report disseminated to internal and external stakeholders. • Publication of evaluation on AUB website • Presentations at sector conferences • Blog posts
Continuation and attainment • Termly 1-1 support sessions with the Progression Officer for pastoral, attainment, and progression planning • Organisation and facilitation of networking opportunities with students who share similar lived experiences. • Provide students with opportunities to access a range of enrichment opportunities, including part time work through AUB's Outreach Ambassador Scheme	• Report increased feelings of inclusivity and feeling valued at AUB. • Have an increased knowledge and awareness of the support they are entitled to at AUB and an increased confidence in accessing this support. • Increased continuation rates for care experienced students • Have fully engaged with HE life at AUB and the opportunities presented to them. • Achieve comparable degree outcomes to non-care experienced students • Feel an overall sense of satisfaction and accomplishment at the end of	• Regular 'pulse surveys' with students in receipt of support. • Focus groups. • Quantitative analysis institutionally held data on data on continuation. and attainment	

	their undergraduate journey.		
Progression • Promote engagement with employment and enrichment opportunities, and professional networks; prepare for Level 6 academic expectations and graduate opportunities; reflect on development of soft skills and identify opportunities for further development. • Encourage engagement with AUB& (AUB's alumni programme) and the AUB Futures team; discuss plans for life after AUB, e.g., housing and career pathways; provide a list of sources of information for post-graduation support. • Encourage engagement with established contacts and external agencies in the creative industries. • Assist with planning and preparing financially for moving out of student accommodation/living in a new area.	• Care experienced students have a secure plan for post-graduation, such as a graduate job or further study. • Increase in care experienced students in graduate level employment. • Care experienced students report career satisfaction. • Increased diversity in Creative Industries workforce.	• Regular 'pulse surveys' with students in receipt of support • Survey 1 year post-graduation to ascertain level of graduate employment	

Intervention Strategy 4: Supporting progression to graduate employment for students from underrepresented backgrounds

Evidence base and rationale

According to the Social Mobility Commission, there is currently a "class Crisis" within the Creative Industries [57]

- 52% are from high socio-economic backgrounds (SEB), with 27% from working class backgrounds (compared to 37% high SEB and 39% low SEB in the wider workforce)

- 29% attended an independent school (versus 7% of the wider workforce)

- 4% attended Oxford or Cambridge university

Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often do not have access to the same opportunities to build "social capital" or have access to the same family and social networks that their peers from professional backgrounds have.

Other underrepresented groups include graduates of colour and ethnic minorities as well as, LGBTQ+ and disabled graduates. In a recent survey, of the Arts Council Workforce 2020/21 – the lack of representation of these groups in the creative industries is clear with 14% black, Asian and Ethnically diverse, 10% LGBTQ+ and 7% disabled creatives in Industry, with far fewer represented in management and leadership roles.

Pinoncely and Washington-Ihieme[58] highlight problems faced by many people from underrepresented backgrounds in their report on social mobility in the creative industries. According to their research, the key challenges for students and graduates from underrepresented backgrounds include the prevalence of unpaid internships, lack of preparation and understanding about the unstructured career paths within the Industry, and the importance of knowing 'the right people' to get a foot in the door.

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[57] https://socialmobilityworks.org/news/tackling-the-classcrisis-in-the-creative-industries-how-creative-industries-employers-can-promote-socio-economic-diversity-and-inclusion/

[58] Pinoncely, Victoria & Washington-Ihieme, M (2019), SKILLS, WORK & GOOD BUSINESS
Culture Club: Social mobility in the creative and cultural industries 28 February 2019 Available online [https://www.centreforlondon.org/publication/culture-club/]

AUB data outlines gaps between students from TUNDRA quintiles 1&2, FSM eligible students and Black students and their peers with regards to graduate employment destinations. This institution's specific gap is replicated within the Creative Industries where diversity remains a persistent challenge[59].

Research conducted by Lyden[60], exploring the impact of career mentoring found that students can "gain career development benefits from mentoring.... mentees are achieving comparable career development gains to their non-low SES peers, as all social groups, on average, seem to have the potential to develop tangible aspects of employability, giving them more potential for (increased) social mobility" (321).

Evaluation

Whilst as, a brand-new initiative for September 2024, a full evaluation plan has not yet been completed, please find an indicative example below.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
An annual 6-month mentoring project with current AUB students from underrepresented backgrounds, matching them with mentors working as professionals in the creative industries.	All outcomes are linked to the Graduate Capital Model[61]. Specifically, identity and social capital. **Short term outcomes** • Students can confidently describe their career identity and direction. • Students can identify skills, knowledge and experience which will support their career choices in the creative industries. • Students feel they make informed decisions about their career choices. **Medium term outcomes** • Students have built a network of career contacts within the creative industries linked to their interests	• Pre, mid and post mentoring survey & outcome star linked to the graduate capital model for use as intermediary indicators. • Focus groups with professional mentors. • Focus groups with participants	• Annual impact report disseminated to internal and external stakeholders. • Publication of evaluation on AUB website. • Presentations at sector conferences. • Blog posts.

[59] Brook, O., O'Brien, D. and Taylor, M., 2020. Culture is bad for you. In *Culture is bad for you*. Manchester University Press.
[60] Lyden, T., 2021. *Career Mentoring in Higher Education: Exploring Mentoring and Employability Gains Across Different Social Groups* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Reading).
[61] Tomlinson, M., 2017. Forms of graduate capital and their relationship to graduate employability. *Education+ Training*.

	Students can confidently talk to people they do not know using skills they have developed from the mentoring scheme. • Students can recognise and capitalise on opportunities that arise. **Long term outcomes** • Students from underrepresented backgrounds are in graduate level employment 15 months after graduation.		

Fees, investments and targets
2024-25 to 2027-28

Provider name: Arts University Bournemouth, the

Provider UKPRN: 10000385

Summary of 2024-25 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

We intend to raise our fees each year in line with the maximum fee. However, this will not apply to continuing students, for whom the fee will be held at their entry level for the duration of the course of study. Students who intermit, or who otherwise take a break from their studies, will be charged the fee applicable to the cohort which they join.

Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2024-25 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	n/a	N/A	9250
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2024-25

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	Bournemouth and Poole College, The	10000820	9250
Foundation degree	Bournemouth and Poole College, The	10000820	7250
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2024-25 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2024-25

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Fees, investments and targets
2024-25 to 2027-28

Provider name: Arts University Bournemouth, the

Provider UKPRN: 10000385

Investment summary

A provider is expected to submit information about its forecasted investment to achieve the objectives of its access and participation plan in respect of the following areas: access, financial support and research and evaluation. Note that this does not necessarily represent the total amount spent by a provider in these areas. Table 6b provides a summary of the forecasted investment, across the four academic years covered by the plan, and Table 6d gives a more detailed breakdown.

Notes about the data:

The figures below are not comparable to previous access and participation plans or access agreements as data published in previous years does not reflect latest provider projections on student numbers.

Yellow shading indicates data that was calculated rather than input directly by the provider.

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

"Total access investment funded from HFI" refers to income from charging fees above the basic fee limit.

"Total access investment from other funding (as specified)" refers to other funding, including OfS funding (but excluding Uni Connect), other public funding and funding from other sources such as philanthropic giving and private sector sources and/or partners.

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£1,124,000	£1,173,000	£1,212,000	£1,236,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£600,000	£621,000	£639,000	£650,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£322,000	£335,000	£345,000	£351,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£722,000	£746,000	£763,000	£780,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£80,000	£92,000	£104,000	£105,000
Access activity investment	**Total access investment (£)**	**£1,124,000**	**£1,173,000**	**£1,212,000**	**£1,236,000**
Access activity investment	*Total access investment (as % of HFI)*	10.0%	10.0%	10.1%	10.1%
Access activity investment	*Total access investment funded from HFI (£)*	£1,124,000	£1,173,000	£1,212,000	£1,236,000
Access activity investment	*Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)*	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£558,000	£579,000	£597,000	£608,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£42,000	£42,000	£42,000	£42,000
Financial support investment	**Total financial support investment (£)**	**£600,000**	**£621,000**	**£639,000**	**£650,000**
Financial support investment	*Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)*	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000
Research and evaluation investment	*Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)*	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%

Fees, investments and targets
2024-25 to 2027-28

Provider name: Arts University Bournemouth, the

Provider UKPRN: 10000385

Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim [500 characters maximum]	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2024-25 milestone	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone
Increase the proportion of students studying at AUB who reside in IMD Quintile 1 postcode areas by 2027/28.	PTA_1	Access	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1	N/A		No	The access and participation dataset	2021-22	Percentage	6.1%	9.0%	11.0%	13.0%	15.0%
Increase the proportion of students studying at AUB who reside in IMD Quintile 2 postcode areas by 2027/28.	PTA_2	Access	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 2	N/A		No	The access and participation dataset	2021-22	Percentage	15.7%	16.5%	17.5%	19.0%	20.0%
Increase the proportion of students studying at AUB who reside in TUNDRA Quintile 1 postcode areas by 2027/28.	PTA_3	Access	Tracking Underrepresentation by Area (TUNDRA)	TUNDRA quintile 1	N/A		No	The access and participation dataset	2021-22	Percentage	12.7%	14.0%	16.0%	18.0%	20.0%
Increase the proportion of students studying at AUB who reside in TUNDRA Quintile 2 postcode areas by 2027/28.	PTA_4	Access	Tracking Underrepresentation by Area (TUNDRA)	TUNDRA quintile 2	N/A		No	The access and participation dataset	2021-22	Percentage	17.5%	18.0%	18.5%	19.5%	20.0%
Increase the proportion of enrolments to AUB for students who are Eligible for Free School Meals to 20% of the overall student population by 2027/28.	PTA_5	Access	Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)	Eligible			No	The access and participation dataset	2021-22	Percentage	11.3%	14.0%	16.0%	18.0%	20.0%
Increase the proportion of enrolments to AUB by Black students to 9% of the overall student population by 2027/28.	PTA_6	Access	Ethnicity	Black			No	The access and participation dataset	2021-22	Percentage	2.8%	4.0%	6.4%	7.6%	9.0%
Increase the proportion of enrolments to AUB by Asian students to 7% of the overall student population by 2027/28.	PTA_7	Access	Ethnicity	Asian			No	The access and participation dataset	2021-22	Percentage	3.0%	3.8%	4.7%	6.0%	7.0%
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2024-25 milestone	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone
Increase rates of students who are care experienced and/or estranged continuing their studies at AUB by 2027/28.	PTS_1	Continuation	Other	Other (please specify in description)	N/A	Target group for intervention are students who are care experienced and/or estranged. Progress will be measured against continuation for the overall AUB undergraduate student population. Progress against target will be measured using data held internally using the student record system, SITS.	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	2021-22	Percentage	80.0%	85.0%	89.0%	93.0%	96.0%
Increase proportion of students who are care experienced and/or estranged achieving a first or upper-second class degree by 2027/28	PTS_2	Attainment	Other	Other (please specify in description)	N/A	Target group for intervention are students who are care experienced and/or estranged. Progress will be measured against attainment AUB undergraduate student population. Progress against target will be measured using data held internally using the student record system, SITS. Baseline is set using aggregated data from the academic years 2018/19-2021/22.	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage	50.6%	58.0%	64.0%	69.0%	72%

Increase the proportion of Black students achieveing a first or upper-second degree by 2027/28	PTS_3	Attainment	Ethnicity	Black	White		No	The access and participation dataset	2020-21	Percentage	54.2%	58.0%	65.0%	72.0%	76.0%
	PTS_4														
	PTS_5														
	PTS_6														
	PTS_7														
	PTS_8														
	PTS_9														
	PTS_10														
	PTS_11														
	PTS_12														

Table 5e: Progression targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2024-25 milestone	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone
Increase the proportion of students from IMD Quintile 1 progressing to professional and managerial graduate employment	PTP_1	Progression	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1	N/A		No	The access and participation dataset	2020-21	Percentage	46.6%	49.0%	53.0%	56.0%	60.0%
	PTP_2														
	PTP_3														
	PTP_4														
	PTP_5														
	PTP_6														
	PTP_7														
	PTP_8														
	PTP_9														
	PTP_10														
	PTP_11														
	PTP_12														

2025-26 fee information

Provider name: Arts University Bournemouth, the

Provider UKPRN: 10000385

Summary of 2025-26 course fees for new entrants

*Course type not listed by the provider as available to new entrants in 2025-26. This means that any such course delivered to new entrants in 2025-26 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

Inflation statement

Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations we will increase fees each year using RPI-X

Table 1a - Full-time course fee levels for 2025-26 new entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	n/a	N/A	£9,535
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (classroom based)	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (non-classroom based)	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 1b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2025-26 new entrants

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	Bournemouth and Poole College, The	10000820	£9,535
Foundation degree	Bournemouth and Poole College, The	10000820	£7,750
Foundation year/Year 0 (classroom based)	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (non-classroom based)	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 1c - Part-time course fee levels for 2025-26 new entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (classroom based)	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (non-classroom based)	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 1d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2025-26 new entrants

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (classroom based)	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0 (non-classroom based)	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*