



2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by Oxford Brookes University against targets, objectives and written commitments set out in its 2019-20 access and participation plan. This document is a summary of information submitted by the provider to the OfS. This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

1. Ambition and strategy

Oxford Brookes University's ambition and strategy as detailed in the 2019-20 access and participation plan:

Our ambition is for Oxford Brookes University to be a fully inclusive institution that reflects society at large, and provides a breadth of opportunities, an excellent student experience and successful outcomes for all our students irrespective of their background.

We understand that achieving sustained progress will only be possible through making significant changes to the institutional culture, and to the governance structures through which we assure Access and Participation. We will change the culture of the institution to one which actively seeks to recruit a more diverse student and staff body, which celebrates and supports diversity, and which has inclusive practice as a priority in all operational and policy decisions.

For our broader outreach work we are focusing on state schools, despite them not being a specific access agreement target, because our analysis suggests that if we can have an impact on this benchmark, it will contribute to increases in students from low participation neighbourhoods, BAME students, and mature students. We will continue to undertake highly targeted work to support applications from students from more specific underrepresented groups, including care leavers, students (especially male students) from low socio-economic groups, and students progressing from vocational level three courses.

In student success and progression, we have a targeted focus on closing the degree awarding gap, especially for BAME students. This work is being undertaken in part through programme-specific interventions, and in part through more general awareness raising, and curriculum development. It is aligned to our work towards the Race Equality Charter Mark, with an integrated action plan covering both staff and students. In addition, we have a university-wide focus on increasing the number of students progressing to highly skilled employment or further study, which involves some targeted interventions, in addition to a large amount of inclusive work.

Oxford Brookes is actively seeking to increase diversity amongst its students, academic and senior staff, and we have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy which sits alongside widening participation activity. We are particularly focusing on improving the representation of BAME staff and students at all levels of the institution, and are using the framework of the Race Equality Charter to move this work forward. We are pleased to have been awarded bronze Athena Swan accreditation for our work to support gender equality amongst our staff and students.

--

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by Oxford Brookes University of progress against the targets approved in its 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-20 access and participation plans. Full information can be found in **Table 8a – statistical targets and milestones** and **Table 8b – Other milestones and targets** of Oxford Brookes University's 2019-20 [access and participation plan](#).

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in [Annex B](#).

Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	Stage 1: Access - Disabled Applicants	2015-16	12.1%	12.0%	12.5%	Percentage	2019-20	16	Expected progress
T16a_02 (Access)	Stage 1: Access - Mature Applicants	2015-16	19.2%	20.5%	21.0%	Percentage	2019-20	14.2	No progress
T16a_03 (Access)	Stage 1: Access - BME Applicants	2014-15	22.4%	23.5%	24.0%	Percentage	2019-20	20.4	No progress
T16a_04 (Access)	Stage 1: Access - Applicants from POLAR3 Quintiles 1 & 2	2014-15	19.6%	21.0%	22.0%	Percentage	2019-20	20.7	Limited progress
T16a_05 (Access)	Stage 2: Participation - Disabled Entrants	2015-16	15.1%	16.0%	16.0%	Percentage	2019-20	22.3	Expected progress
T16a_06 (Access)	Entrants from low socio-economic backgrounds	2014-15	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_07 (Access)	Stage 2: Participation - Mature Entrants	2015-16	30.3%	30.0%	30.0%	Percentage	2019-20	20	No progress
T16a_08 (Access)	Stage 2: Participation - BME Entrants	2015-16	16.9%	20.0%	21.0%	Percentage	2019-20	19.5	Limited progress
T16a_09 (Access)	Entrants from low income families	2014-15	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_10 (Access)	Entrants whose parent/guardian has no HE background	2014-15	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_11 (Access)	Stage 2: Participation - Entrants from POLAR 3 Quintiles 1 & 2	2015-16	17.4%	19.5%	20.0%	Percentage	2019-20	18	Limited progress
T16a_12 (Student success)	Stage 3: Progression - First Year Retention rates of Disabled Students	2014-15	92.9%	93.0%	93.0%	Percentage	2018-19	91	No progress

T16a_13 (Student success)	Retention of students from low socio-economic backgrounds	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_14 (Student success)	Stage 3: Progression - First Year Retention rates of Mature Students	2014-15	88.8%	91%	92%	Percentage	2018-19	89	No progress
T16a_15 (Student success)	Stage 3: Progression - First Year Retention rates of BME Students	2014-15	92.4%	92.0%	93.0%	Percentage	2018-19	89	No progress
T16a_16 (Student success)	Retention of students from low income families	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_17 (Student success)	Retention of students whose parent/guardian has no HE background	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_18 (Student success)	Stage 3: Progression - First Year Retention Rates of students from POLAR3 Quintiles 1 & 2	2014-15	89.5%	93.0%	93.0%	Percentage	2018-19	93	Expected progress
T16a_19 (Student success)	Projected Completion of disabled students	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_20 (Student success)	Projected Completion of students from low socio-economic backgrounds	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_21 (Student success)	Projected Completion of mature	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_22 (Student success)	Projected Completion of BME students	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_23 (Student success)	Projected Completion of students from low-income families	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_24 (Student success)	Projected Completion of students whose parent/guardian has no HE background	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_25 (Student success)	Projected Completion of young students from POLAR 3 quintiles 1 & 2	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_26 (Student success)	Stage 4: Attainment - Disabled Students achieving a good degree	2014-15	77.1%	75.0%	76.0%	Percentage	2019-20	84.1	Expected progress

T16a_27 (Student success)	Good completion of students from low-socio economic backgrounds	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_28 (Student success)	Stage 4: Attainment - Mature Students achieving a good degree	2014-15	73.8%	73.0%	74.0%	Percentage	2019-20	87.4	Expected progress
T16a_29 (Student success)	Stage 4: Attainment - BME Students achieving a good degree	2014-15	70.4%	63.0%	64.0%	Percentage	2019-20	75.8	Expected progress
T16a_30 (Student success)	Good completion of students from low income families	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_31 (Student success)	Good completion of students whose parent/guardian has no HE background	2013-14	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_32 (Student success)	Stage 4: Attainment - Students from POLAR3 Quintiles 1 & 2 achieving a good degree	2014-15	81.0%	72.0%	72.0%	Percentage	2019-20	86.8	Expected progress
T16a_33 (Progression)	Stage 5: Graduate Prospects - Disabled graduates in work and/or further study	2013-14	85%	87.0%	88.0%	Percentage	2016-17	91.8	Expected progress
T16a_34 (Progression)	Graduate destination of students from low socio-economic backgrounds	2012-13	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_35 (Progression)	Stage 5: Graduate Prospects - Mature graduates in work and/or further study	2013-14	90.1%	90.0%	90.0%	Percentage	2016-17	95.9	Expected progress
T16a_36 (Progression)	Stage 5: Graduate Prospects - BME graduates in work and/or further study	2013-14	84.1%	86.0%	87.0%	Percentage	2016-17	93.1	Expected progress
T16a_37 (Progression)	Graduate destination of students from low income families	2012-13	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_38 (Progression)	Graduate destination of students whose parent/guardian has no HE background	2012-13	0	0	0	Other	2019-20	0	Expected progress
T16a_39 (Progression)	Stage 5: Graduate Prospects - Graduates from POLAR3 Quintiles 1 & 2 in work and/or further study	2013-14	88.8%	90.0%	90.0%	Percentage	2016-17	95.3	Expected progress
T16a_40 (Other/Multiple stages)	Increase percentage of NNCO Study Higher Target Schools that the consortium works with	2015-16	63.0%	77.0%	80.0%	Percentage	2019-20	0	Expected progress

Other milestones and targets

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16b_01 (Access)	Increase the percentage of participants on the Brookes Engage programme with at least two measures of disadvantage	2015-16	90.0%	91.0%	92.0%	Percentage	2019-20	40	No progress
T16b_02 (Access)	Percentage of NCOP key target schools engaged in activities	2016-17	0	79.0%	83.0%	Percentage	2019-20	94	Expected progress
T16b_03 (Access)	Percentage of students participating attainment raising programme who achieve 5A*-C (or equivalent) including English and Maths	2016-17	41%	42%	43%	Percentage	2019-20	0	No progress

3. Investment commitments

3.1. Access and participation investment for the last audited year

Please note that some differences in predicted vs actual spend may be due to reporting differences between academic and financial years.

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£1,335,000.00	£965,000.00	-28%
Financial Support	£6,311,234.00	£5,659,000.00	-10%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected Oxford Brookes University has made the following commitments to increase the rate of progress against their targets.

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16a_02	See row 25
T16a_03	See row 26
T16a_04	See row 27
T16a_07	We continue to closely monitor the application and entrant rates of mature students at Oxford Brookes as well as the trend within the sector. During 2020 we undertook focus groups and individual snapshot interviews with mature students enrolled at Oxford Brookes to gain their insights on how we can better shape our support for prospective mature students. In particular, this highlighted the importance of social connections with other mature students to build a sense of community. We will use the outcomes of this evaluation to continue to shape our work in this area.

T16a_08	<p>We are seeing stronger growth in enrolment of Asian students, but the growth in enrolments of Black students is below where we would like it to be and we will continue to evaluate our work in this area to drive improvement. We intend to undertake further work on our underpinning theory of change regarding Black and Asian students to Oxford Brookes, with the intention of designing targeted interventions to specifically support students from ethnic backgrounds that continue to be particularly underrepresented at Oxford Brookes.</p>
T16a_11	<p>Building on recent evaluation of our bursary, we are developing new approaches to the promotion of our financial support to increase awareness pre-application and enrolment.</p> <p>We have recently launched a national sustained outreach programme which will prioritise participants from areas of low participation in HE, as well as other indicators of under-representation in higher education. This is one of the strategic measures set out in our APP 2020-25.</p>
T16a_12	We will continue to monitor this metric as part of our 2020/21 - 2024/25 plan and take action should significant gaps become apparent
T16a_14	We will continue to monitor this metric as part of our 2020/21 - 2024/25 plan and take action should significant gaps become apparent
T16a_15	We will continue to monitor this metric as part of our 2020/21 - 2024/25 plan and take action should significant gaps become apparent
T16b_01	In response to feedback from the OfS on the targets within our 19-20 plan, we submitted a refined set of outcomes based targets. We have not continued to use this target as a KPI for Brookes Engage. Instead, we have aligned the KPIs and targeting for Brookes Engage with the Access gaps identified in our self-assessment of performance.
T16b_03	We will continue to evaluate the impact of our approach, and we are using a range of measures to do this including student surveys, snapshot discussions, and embedded interactive evaluations. We will use the results of this evaluation as well as feedback from our partner schools and colleges to continue to improve our work to support students in achieving their potential at KS4 and above.

5. Confirmation

Oxford Brookes University confirms that:

Student engagement	
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?	
Yes	
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?	
Yes	
Verification and sign off	
Oxford Brookes University has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.	
Yes	
Accountable officer sign off	
Name	Professor Alistair Fitt
Position	Vice Chancellor/Accountable Officer

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

Oxford Brookes University's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16a_02
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
In response to feedback from the OfS on the targets within our 19-20 plan, we submitted a refined set of outcomes based targets which more closely align to our gaps in access and participation. We have removed the distinction between applicants and entrants. Please see responses in row 25 which apply to our commitments to increase both applicants and entrants.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
See row 25

Target reference number: T16a_03
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
In response to feedback from the OfS on the targets within our 19-20 plan, we submitted a refined set of outcomes based targets which more closely align to our gaps in access and participation. We have removed the distinction between applicants and entrants. Please see responses in row 26 which apply to our commitments to increase both applicants and entrants.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
See row 26

Target reference number: T16a_04
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
In response to feedback from the OfS on the targets within our 19-20 plan, we submitted a refined set of outcomes based targets which more closely align to our gaps in access and participation. We have removed the distinction between applicants and entrants. Please see responses in row 27 which apply to our commitments to increase both applicants and entrants.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
See row 27

Target reference number: T16a_07

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
<p>Yes. We continue to work with our FE College partners to deliver a range of foundation degrees, bachelors degrees and higher and degree apprenticeships which typically support mature students to enter higher education. In 2019-20, 47% of our students studying with our partner colleges were mature. However, recruitment to these courses has proven increasingly challenging and we have seen an overall decline in the numbers of students studying college-based HE. Our Nursing Associate Apprenticeship continues to provide a route into a healthcare profession for large numbers of mature students; 89.5% of our Nursing Associates are mature. We have continued to deliver dedicated outreach work for mature students, including support for AccesstoHE students at our local colleges. We have expanded our online transition mentoring to include mature students.</p>
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
<p>Yes. We undertook a review of the Brookes Bridges programme that we had delivered for a number of years. Evaluation of the outcomes showed that while it had a positive impact on the individuals who took part in the programme, it was not closely enough aligned to supporting progression into Oxford Brookes. Participants typically needed to undertake lower levels of study before being able to progress into higher education. We continue to work in partnership with the Probation Service (although this has been postponed during Covid) to work with service users who are looking to progress to higher education. However, we have refocussed much of our resource to more targeted work to support adults in our local/regional area who are looking to return to study. During 2019-20 we delivered a series of Return to Study Events as well as a pre-enrolment transition event specifically for mature students. We have proactively increased the number of mature student ambassadors we employ to ensure that our work in this area can be supported by relevant peers.</p>

Target reference number: T16a_08
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
<p>Yes. We have developed and implemented a revised partnership model of working with schools and colleges, targeting those institutions with high proportions of BAME students where we believe that Oxford Brookes is a realistic proposition for students (based on our understanding of where students from the school typically apply, and the distance from Oxford Brookes). This has broadened the geography of our schools and college outreach to ensure that we engage with learners that are not highly represented within our local area or region.</p> <p>We also base the targeting of our sustained outreach participants on these target schools and colleges. In 2019-20, where we collected detailed demographic information (n=1953), 50% of participants in our outreach activities identified as Black or Asian. Please note, that our ability to collect detailed participant information was affected from March 2020 onwards, due to our move to virtual delivery.</p> <p>We moved delivery of our sustained and intensive outreach to virtual delivery and were able to continue to deliver against our intended objectives.</p>

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

In response to feedback from the OfS on the targets within our 19-20 plan, we submitted a refined set of outcomes based targets. Our self-assessment showed that there is particular underrepresentation among Asian and Black students compared to the sector, and we have refined this focus within the work we are doing on Access.

We have worked with external agencies to undertake market research to understand the perceptions of Oxford Brookes among prospective students who are underrepresented at Oxford Brookes, including Black and Asian students. This has informed our underpinning theory of change for Black and Asian students and the design and provision of information through key recruitment activities, as well as the development of a more inclusive approach to our campaigns.

We have proactively increased the diversity of our student ambassadors to ensure that they represent the diversity of students we seek to attract.

We are continuing to develop our approach to considering the impact on the diversity of our student body when making changes to our course portfolio.

Target reference number: T16a_11

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Yes. As detailed above, we have developed and implemented a revised partnership model of working with schools and colleges, targeting those institutions with high proportions of students from POLAR Q1&2 where we believe that Oxford Brookes is a realistic proposition for students (based on our understanding of where students from the school typically apply, and the distance from Oxford Brookes). This has broadened the geography of our schools and college outreach to ensure that we engage with learners that are not highly represented within our local area or region.

We continue to act as lead institution for the Study Higher UniConnect Partnership. While the nature of our work for Study Higher is impartial, we continue to play an active role in the project and consider this to be a key part of raising awareness of local HE progression routes for students from areas of low participation in Higher Education.

We have seen lower levels of engagement in virtual outreach from students living in areas of low participation in HE and have included more information about this in the monitoring return document.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

To support engagement in remote delivery of our sustained and intensive outreach projects we have worked flexibly to respond to barriers experienced by individual participants. This includes posting our printed resources and providing wifi dongles to support access.

A new approach to contextual admissions was implemented for applicants for Sept 2020 entry. Students from areas of low participation in HE who also attend a lower performing school are eligible for a reduced offer. Approximately 7.5% of UG Home

applications were given a contextual flag, and this increased to 9.5% of UG Home offers. Further evaluation is underway to determine the impact of the scheme.

For 2020 entry, we have relaunched the Oxford Brookes bursary to include an enhanced package for low income students from areas of low participation in HE. This is based on internal evidence that showed that these students were disproportionately represented within applicants to our financial aid scheme. Initial evaluation of the scheme indicates that it has a positive impact on recipients in line with the intended objectives set out in our APP 2020-25, but that awareness pre-enrolment remains low.

Target reference number: T16a_12
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
No specific actions were identified in 2019-20 APP in respect of this student population since monitoring did not identify any statistically significant gaps in retention.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
We will continue to monitor closely for any arising gaps.

Target reference number: T16a_14
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
No specific actions were identified in 2019-20 APP in respect of this student population since monitoring did not identify any statistically significant gaps in retention.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
For 2020 entry, we have relaunched the Oxford Brookes bursary to include an enhanced package for mature students. This is based on internal evidence that showed that mature students were disproportionately represented within applicants to our financial aid scheme. We hope that by increasing the financial support to mature students throughout their course, we will reduce the likelihood that they will be forced to withdraw and will feel a greater sense of belonging at Brookes.

Target reference number: T16a_15
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
No specific actions were identified in 2019-20 APP in respect of this student population since monitoring did not identify any statistically significant gaps in retention.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
We will continue to monitor closely for any arising gaps.

Target reference number: T16b_01
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes. We have continued to deliver the Brookes Engage programme for sixth form and college students in Oxfordshire. Participants continue to be from state schools and meet at least one individual indicator of disadvantage.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
In response to feedback from the OfS on the targets within our 19-20 plan, we submitted a refined set of outcomes based targets. We have not continued to use this target as a KPI for Brookes Engage, acknowledging that students may meet only one indicator of disadvantage but that this may be linked to significant levels of underrepresentation. Instead, we have aligned the KPIs and targeting for Brookes Engage with the Access gaps identified in our self-assessment of performance.

Target reference number: T16b_03
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
Yes. We have continued to deliver a range of subject focussed outreach and study skills with schools designed to increase attainment.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
In response to feedback from the OfS on the targets within our 19-20 plan, we submitted a refined set of outcomes based targets. We have not continued to monitor this milestone. In part this is due to difficulties in being able to reliably track KS4 performance without sector level data sharing (see Commentary). We also found that it was not possible to directly attribute increases in attainment to the specific activities we had delivered. We have therefore evolved this element of our outreach work to focus on increasing capacity for academic learning. This is delivered as part of a sustained and progressive programme of activity with schools and colleges, as well as through our sustained access projects.

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

Oxford Brookes University's commentary on any of the targets listed in [Section 2](#).

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	
T16a_02	
T16a_03	
T16a_04	
T16a_05	
T16a_06	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_07	
T16a_08	
T16a_09	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_10	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_11	
T16a_12	
T16a_13	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_14	
T16a_15	
T16a_16	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_17	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_18	
T16a_19	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_20	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_21	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_22	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_23	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_24	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_25	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_26	

T16a_27	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_28	
T16a_29	
T16a_30	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_31	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_32	
T16a_33	
T16a_34	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_35	
T16a_36	
T16a_37	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_38	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16a_39	
T16a_40	This target was discontinued when we submitted our 2019-20 APP
T16b_01	
T16b_02	
T16b_03	We are not able to track the attainment of our outreach participants at KS4 for the milestones in this report due to an interruption in data sharing between HEAT and DfE.