Using this access and participation plan template

Providers registered with the Office for Students should use this template to complete their access and participation plan.

It should be used with:

* [Regulatory notice 1: Access and participation plan guidance](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-notice-1-access-and-participation-plan-guidance/)
* [Regulatory advice 6: How to prepare an access and participation plan – effective practice advice](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-advice-6-how-to-prepare-your-access-and-participation-plan-effective-practice-advice/)

Please use the structure – the titles and subtitles – in this template to create your plan. If you use an alternative template, or your plan is more than 30 pages (excluding annexes), it may take longer to process your plan.

We have included prompts in light blue boxes. Please remove all prompts and delete this front page before submitting your plan.

You are free to apply your corporate branding, colours and typography, so long as you retain the structure of titles and subtitles in the template.

Please make sure that your document complies with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1](https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/). Published PDFs should, for example, include structured headings using the document styles, alternative text where appropriate, and a title in the document properties.

# [Insert name of provider] Access and participation plan 2026-27 to 2029-30

## Introduction and strategic aim

This section should include contextual information that will help the OfS, students and other readers to understand your context, size, and mission. It should also describe overarching strategic aim with respect to equality of opportunity.

## Risks to equality of opportunity

This section should summarise the key risks to equality of opportunity that your plan will address and how you have identified these risks. Where you have identified an indication of risk that you are addressing in the plan we expect you to explain why you think it is occurring.

For example, ‘Risk 2.1: There are lower proportions of students eligible for free school meals in Poppleton University, particularly in the following subject areas, and intersecting with the following demographic criteria. Evidence suggests this is a function of insufficient prior knowledge, limited access to good information and guidance and internal application procedures.’

## Objectives

Each risk to equality of opportunity that the plan addresses should have at least one corresponding measurable objective. Objectives should be timebound and measurable.

For example, ‘Objective 3.1: Poppleton University will increase the number of students eligible for free school meals attending the university to 30% of our intake by 2030 through working in partnership with schools to address insufficient prior knowledge and attainment and improving the quality of transition from their prior learning environment.’

## Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Each objective should have an intervention strategy. This should refer to the risks to equality of opportunity identified through the assessment of performance that it is designed to address. It should also include 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 needed to deliver it.

It should include information about how you intend to evaluate it for efficacy. Information about why you believe the intervention strategy will work (e.g. the evidence base) can be included in Annex B of the plan. We suggest using the following template for each intervention strategy, as this can provide a high level summary of your underpinning theory of change. Some may need multiple pages.

### Intervention strategy 1: [Name of strategy]

#### Objectives and targets

This section identifies the principal objective that the intervention strategy will contribute towards. If the intervention strategy is likely to contribute to other objectives, these can also be noted here. Please note target reference numbers that relate to those set out in the Fees, Investments and Targets document (FIT).

#### Risks to equality of opportunity

This section identifies the primary risks to equality of opportunity that the intervention strategy will address.

#### Related objectives and targets

List other relevant objectives and targets or reference these if listed elsewhere in the plan.

#### Related risks to equality of opportunity

List other relevant risks to equality of opportunity or reference if listed elsewhere in the plan.

The following table is an example of how you may wish to set out the details of your intervention strategy. Multiple activities are likely to be necessary per intervention strategy, and each activity should be detailed in a separate row in the table.

| Activity | Description | Inputs | Outcomes | Cross intervention strategy? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A short descriptive name | A high-level description of each activity that will contribute towards reaching the objective of the intervention strategy, including:   * target student groups * numbers of participants/schools (if applicable) * if this is a new or already existing activity * if this is collaborative. | An estimate of the resources (human and financial) that will be needed to deliver the activity over the four years of the plan. Where resources are shared across departments or intervention strategies, make an estimate of the proportion that will go into this activity. | A high-level overview of the expected outcomes of the activity. These can be used to track progress and understand the impact of each activity on the overall intervention strategy objective. | Indicate if the activity will contribute to other intervention strategies. |
|  |  |  |  |  |

#### Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

#### Summary of evidence base and rationale

High-level overview of the evidence base used for this intervention strategy, and signpost to full explanation in Annex B if necessary.

#### Evaluation

This section should provide a summary of the way in which the intervention strategy will be evaluated. It should detail which activities will be evaluated and the expected level of each evaluation. It should also state whether the intervention strategy as a whole will be evaluated.

The following table shows how you may wish to set out detailed evaluation activity that relates to activities in your individual intervention strategies.

| **Activity** | **Outcomes** | **Method(s) of evaluation** | **Summary of publication plan** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Short name of activity | Short description of outcomes | Type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. empirical (Type 2). | When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take. |
|  |  |  |  |

More detailed information on evaluation can also be provided in the ‘evaluation of the plan’ section or at Annex B.

## Whole provider approach

This section should detail how you are taking a whole provider approach to addressing the risks to equality of opportunity and how you have paid due regard to your obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Where relevant, you can include an explanation about how the access and participation strategies align with your other strategies to achieve published equality objectives.

## Student consultation

This section should detail how you have consulted students on the plan before its submission for approval, what steps you took as a result, and how students have been and will be involved in the planning, monitoring, evaluation and delivery of access and participation work.

## Evaluation of the plan

This section should describe your strategy for strengthening your evaluation activity overall.

## Provision of information to students

This section must describe how prospective students will be provided with clear and accessible information about the fees they will be charged for the duration of their course.  
  
It must also set out how a provider will inform students about any financial support to which they are entitled; the eligibility criteria and the level of financial support students will be offered in each year of study. In summary, you should include the following criteria in your plan as links to current webpages will **not** be considered sufficient for these purposes:

* the eligibility criteria
* the amount that students will be offered (as a figure)
* how often they will be offered this in each year of their studies (one-off, quarterly, annually etc.).

You only need to include details of the financial support for those student groups who you have identified as being as risk of not experiencing equality of opportunity, to address the specific barriers known to exist for these student groups.

## Annex A: Further information and analysis relating to the identification and prioritisation of key risks to equality of opportunity

This section sets out the risks to equality of opportunity that you have identified in your assessment of performance. You should explain how you identified those risks and spell out any indications of risk you have identified that the plan does not address.

For the latter, include any mitigating actions where appropriate. Include only those elements from your assessment of performance and consideration of the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) that directly relate to identified risks. It is not necessary to include in the plan all the analysis you have undertaken.

You may use charts and graphs to make the assessment of performance more presentable.

Depending on its size and context, a provider may identify a greater number of indications of risk than it would have the capacity to address through its access and participation plan. In such a case, a provider should present a clear rationale for the number and nature of the indications of risk it has chosen to focus on in its plan in this section.

## Annex B: Further information that sets out the rationale, assumptions and evidence base for each intervention strategy that is included in the access and participation plan

This section should set out further information about the evidence used to underpin each intervention strategy, and any rationale and assumptions related to the underpinning theory of change for each intervention strategy.

## Annex C: Targets, investment and fees

The OfS will append the information from the fees, investment and targets document when an access and participation plan is published.