

Falmouth University: Summary of 2020-25 Access and Participation Plan

What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education. You can see the full access and participation plan for Falmouth University at [Falmouth University APP 2020-2025.pdf](#)

The focus of our access and participation plan is on improving outcomes for specific groups of students. Data shows that, compared to their peers at Falmouth University, outcomes are lower for certain groups of students.

- Students are less likely to apply to HE if they come from a deprived neighbourhood or from a neighbourhood where not many people usually go on to higher education.
- Students from these areas are also less likely to continue their studies or to achieve a degree of 2:1 or above.
- The same groups of students are less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study.
- Mature students (over 21) are less likely to continue their studies than their younger peers.
- Students with a disability are less likely to achieve a degree of 2:1 or above compared to non-disabled students.
- Ethnic minority students are less likely to apply to higher education and are less likely to achieve a degree of 2:1 or above.

Fees we charge

Full Time (on campus) - £9250	Full Time Accelerated (on campus)- £11,100
Part Time (online) - £6935	Full Time Accelerated (online) - £10,400

Financial help available

We offer financial support to students from underrepresented groups. This helps students access higher education and continue studying until their course is completed. The support includes:-

- The Falmouth Bursary- an annual bursary of up to £500 for the duration of the course if the student's household income is below £25,000.
- The Pendennis Bursary- an annual bursary of £1000 for care leavers, to help with the cost of additional accommodation/deposits during their studies.
- The Hardship Fund- to support students who experience financial hardship
- Dependants Bursary- bursary support of £250 for eligible students assessed as having children and/or adult dependants.
- A DSA Diagnostic Assessment- when a diagnostic assessment is needed to apply for disability allowance, this is paid for by the university (to a maximum amount of £350).
- Travel Bursary- for students from low-income households to attend our open days and interviews

See Undergraduate Funding [Falmouth University APP 2020-2025.pdf](#) for more information

Information for students

- **Prospective students** receive information on fees and financial support at in-person events, such as our open days, and by email communications.
- We regularly update our information for **care leavers** with the Care Leavers Covenant and on the Propel website.
- **Current students** receive information about fees and the financial support available through our student portal, internal communications, campaigns and emails.

What we are aiming to achieve

Our overall aim is to support students to access higher education, to feel supported whilst studying, to help them to achieve their degree, and to help them to aim for their career goal. We also want to create an environment where students at Falmouth University can achieve their full potential.

In our Access and Participation Plan, we have set ourselves 9 objectives known as 'Strategic Measures', and numerical targets. Our main aim is to decrease the difference in good outcomes / enrolment (ie, "gap") between the most and least disadvantaged students who fall within underrepresented groups.

- Students from **low participation neighbourhoods (Polar 4)**- By 2024-25, we will have
 - a) Decreased the enrolment gap to 10.9%
 - b) Decreased the continuation gap to 1.5%
 - c) Decreased the attainment gap (achieving a 2:1 or above) to 3.8%
 - d) Decreased the progression gap (graduate level employment, set up their own business, or gone onto further study) to 4%
- Students from **deprived neighbourhoods (IMD areas)**- By 2045-25, we will have
 - a) Decreased the enrolment gap to 9.4%
 - b) Decreased the continuation gap to 3%
 - c) Decreased the attainment gap (achieving a 2:1 or above) to 8.6%
 - d) Decreased the progression gap (graduate level employment, set up their own business, or gone onto further study) to 4.5%
- **Ethnic minority students**- By 2024-25, we will have
 - a) Increased the number of ethnic minority applicants who **enrol** at Falmouth to 12.8%.
 - b) Decreased the gap between ethnic minority students and white students who **achieve a degree** of 2:1 or above to 3%.
- **Mature students**- By 2024-25, we will have decreased the gap between mature students and students aged under 21 **continuing** their studies to 3%.
- **Disabled students**- By 2024-25, we will have **removed** the gap between students with a disability and non-disabled students achieving a degree award of 2:1 or above.
- We also aim to increase applications from Care Leavers. We have developed additional support to care leavers and are now signatories in the Care Leavers Covenant.

See main APP [Falmouth University APP 2020-2025.pdf](#) - pages 7-11 for more detail

What we are doing to achieve our aims

The activities and initiatives that we have developed to meet our aims and targets include:-

- **Supporting attainment at school and access to HE** – we are working with schools and colleges across the country on different projects, to raise pupil attainment and expectations to study for a higher education qualification.
- **Diversifying our provision** –we have added different pathways during 2022 including an increase in Foundation Year programmes; every undergraduate degree programme involving a sandwich placement; and an increase in the number of online undergraduate courses.
- **A more inclusive application process and transition from further education to higher education**- we offer ‘contextual admissions’, considering applicants’ wider skills and experience. We also offer regional interviews, financial support for open days and interviews
- **To further develop quality teaching and learning-**, the curriculum and assessment processes now include new modules to support students and staff wellbeing.
- **A ‘Mock Interview’ programme** has been developed and delivered across the country to underrepresented learners, to help raise confidence levels and reduce interview anxiety.
- **A centralised evaluation database** is currently being developed, to store all student/staff/teacher feedback surveys in, helping us to improve our future practices.
- **To continue working with external partners** such as Uni Connect hubs and the local County Council, on improving access to higher education.
- **To continue providing work experience opportunities** for students from underrepresented groups through the Micro-Internships programme and Turing.
- The **financial support packages** that we offer have been reviewed following student consultation to make the process more accessible to all.

See main APP [Falmouth University APP 2020-2025.pdf](#) - pages 11-29 for more detail

How students can get involved

We worked with the Students’ Union to help design of our Access and Participation Plan. Students are represented on our APP activity planning group. Students provide feedback on our plan through their representatives. Students form a ‘Wellbeing Panel’ who meet once a term to discuss different key topics, helping the university to support the students through their studies.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

Our programmes of activity are based on evidence of what works for students. We will collect data and feedback to evaluate:

- our programme design
- the impact of the programme of activity we are delivering to achieve our aims
- the impact on achieving our overall aim of improved access and an inclusive environment.

An evaluation strategy, framework and survey tools have been developed to be used throughout the student journey, from pre-entry to progression. To add to this internal evaluation process, we also work with an external company called SEER (Specialist Evidence, Research & Evaluation) who will continue to conduct research evaluation projects for the University. There is also an annual evaluation report provided to us by Brightside who run a mentoring project for Falmouth.

See main APP [Falmouth University APP 2020-2025.pdf](#) - pages 29-32 for more detail

Contact details for further information

Helen Norman (Head of Student Access & Success)- helen.norman@falmouth.ac.uk