

The Northern School of Art – Summary of Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

What is an access and participation plan?

An access and participation plan sets out how a higher education provider will improve equality of opportunity. This supports underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

You can see the full access and participation plan for the Northern School of Art at:

<https://northernart.ac.uk/access-and-participation-plan/>

Key Points

The Access and Participation Plan has been developed by the Academic Board and its relevant sub-committees, with specific strategic responsibility for equality and diversity, student support, student experience, wellbeing, inclusion, student engagement, academic support, and learning and teaching to ensure that there is alignment between the Access and Participation Plan and the School's Academic Strategy.

The focus of our access and participation plan is on improving outcomes for specific groups of students. Internal data shows that, compared to their peers at The Northern School of Art, outcomes are lower for certain groups of students.

- The following groups of students are less likely to achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above:
 - Students from low income areas and/or deprived areas.
 - Students from ethnic minority backgrounds
 - Students with a known disability
- The Northern School of Art recognises that there is a gap in progression for disabled students to higher employment or further study at a higher level
- The Northern School of Art is unable to make an assessment on gaps in progression to highly skilled employment or further student at a higher level for students from an ethnic minority, as the actual number of students who enrolled was very low.
- Whilst our data shows positive progress in many areas, we acknowledge we still have further to go.

Fees We Charge

For those commencing their studies in September 2022 at The Northern School of Art, the fee charged for all undergraduate programmes is £9250. Further information on fees is available here:

<https://northernart.ac.uk/fees/>

Financial Assistance

We offer financial support to students from underrepresented groups, as defined by the Office for Students. This helps students access higher education and continue their studies through to completion. Students will be eligible for a maximum of £1,000 financial support in any academic year. The support available includes:

Please contact Adam Walker, HE Quality Manager, for further information:
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- **Maintenance Grant** - Students in receipt of the maximum maintenance loan will be eligible for a grant for the duration of their studies, the first year's payment will be £500, followed by payments at the second and third year of £300. This is to provide additional support to students from low- income backgrounds.
- **Tees Valley Progression Award** - Young students, under the age of 21 years from the Tees Valley who live in areas with low participation in higher education POLAR4 (Q1) will be eligible for a one-off award of £500 in their first year of study.
- **Care Leavers Bursary** - Students who are care leavers will be eligible for a bursary of £500p.a. for the duration of their programme. This is to provide additional support to students who may lack support structures.
- **Mature Students Award** - Students aged 21 years or over who have not previously undertaken a higher education programme of study will be eligible for a one-off award of £500 in their first year of study. This is to provide initial support to students re-entering education.

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.
- Current students receive information about fees and the financial support available to them through the student portal, internal communications campaigns and emails.
- For the current information, see here: <https://northernart.ac.uk/fees/>

What we are aiming to achieve

The Northern School of Art aims to support students in accessing higher education, and subsequently provide an inclusive curriculum where all students are supported to access, participate and achieve.

Having reviewed our performance, we have identified the following areas on which to focus our work:

- By 2024-2025, we will close the gap in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) for students from low participation neighbourhoods by 9.00pp.
- By 2024-2025, we will close the gap in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) for students from low socio-economic backgrounds by 9.00pp.
- By 2024-2025, we will reduce the non-continuation gap for mature students (the proportion of students not continuing to the next year of their course) by 5.00pp.

By 2024-2025, we will reduce the percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between students who have disclosed that they have a disability and students with no known disability by 10.00pp.

What we are doing to achieve our aims

As a higher education provider, we have identified key areas of activity in order to support progress towards achieving our aims and targets:

- Building and developing a network with schools throughout the region in order to actively engage with potential students and school educational advisors

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- Develop and further progress the Academic Strategy, which aims for an inclusive curriculum where all students are supported to access, participate and achieve, alongside developing employability and progression practice.
- The School's Student Engagement Strategy, outlines the School's approach towards training and development, student involvement in decision-making processes, student feedback, providing a student-centred environment which encourages active participation in learning and the development of the Students' Union.
- Continually review and develop the curriculum to encourage creative thinking, curiosity and creative learning opportunities and approaches.
- The School will ensure inclusivity and diversity is underpinned by pedagogic research.

How students can get involved

We have worked with the Student's Union to gather student input into the design of our access and participation plans. Students are represented on numerous committees and working groups, such as Academic Board and Academic Strategy Implementation Group and Programme Boards, where the access and participation plan is discussed. Students contact their student representatives in order to provide feedback: <https://northernart.ac.uk/study-with-us/hartlepool-campus/supporting-you/students-union/>

Evaluation

Our activity is informed by the best available evidence about what works for our students. We will collect data and feedback in order to evaluate:

- Curriculum development and design
- Progress towards the five actions outlined above
- Progress towards achieving our objectives highlighted in our Academic Strategy, such as:
 - An inclusive curriculum where all students are supported to access, participate and achieve.
 - Reviewed and developed our curriculum offer to ensure personal development is at the centre of every students learning experience.
 - Reviewed and developed our Further Education provision to provide a broad foundation in the creative industries

The Academic Board will oversee implementation of actions to ensure ongoing progress against yearly milestones in our access and participation plan, through the Annual Report.

We will monitor impact on our target groups, to ensure we are addressing our aims. Where appropriate, we will adjust our interventions in the best interests of our students.

We will publish evidence from our evaluations on our website in 2024-25.

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