

Futureworks Training Limited t/a “Futureworks”

Summary of 2020-21 to 2024-25 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. This supports underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education. Futureworks’ full access and participation plan can be found on our website along with our tuition fee summary: <https://futureworks.ac.uk/access-and-participation/>

Key points (see pages 8 and 9 of the full plan)

The focus of our access and participation plan is on improving access to higher education for specific groups of people. We want to enable all students to successfully complete their degree courses.

Data shows that:

- ❖ students are less likely to study a degree at Futureworks if they are Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic (BAME).
- ❖ Students with experience of the care system and from neighbourhoods where not many people go on to higher education are also less likely to study for a degree.
- ❖ these same groups of students are less likely to finish their degree.
- ❖ students who come from low-income households are less likely to achieve a degree award of 2:1 or above.

Overall employability rates for Futureworks students are strong, however there is still work to do to make sure this continues.

Fees we charge

Tuition fees for Futureworks degree courses are £9,250 per year. You can find out more about Futureworks’ tuition fees on our website, here: <https://futureworks.ac.uk/how-to-apply/degree-course/tuition-fees-degree/>

Financial help available (see pages 16 to 18 of the full plan)

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:

- ❖ A **hardship fund** to support underrepresented students who experience financial difficulties during their time at Futureworks.
- ❖ An **entrance bursary** to help underrepresented students with any costs incurred at the start of their degree course.
- ❖ A **sundries bursary** to provide a financial contribution towards the cost of a specific item or service. For example, a deposit for student accommodation, or to top-up money provided by the Disabled Students’ Allowance to get a better laptop.
- ❖ An **open day and interview travel subsidy** to provide financial support to students who may have difficulty attending an open day or interview.
- ❖ A **scholarship programme** for outstanding students from underrepresented groups, where Futureworks covers the full tuition fee costs of the three year degree for the student.

Information for students (see pages 23 to 24 of the full plan)

Prospective students receive information on fees and financial support at our open days, at UCAS fairs, from our prospectus, by email, and through our website: <https://futureworks.ac.uk/student-life/student-services/financial-support/>

Current students receive information on fees and financial support through our student portal, from our Student Services team and through emails and on-campus awareness campaigns.

What we are aiming to achieve (see pages 8 to 10 of the full plan)

Our overall aim is to support students to access higher education. We want to create an environment where students can achieve their full potential.

Based on assessment of our performance, we have identified the following areas on which to focus our work:

Working with schools and colleges to improve access to higher education for students from underrepresented groups. In particular, by 2025 we aim to increase the number of new students:

- ❖ from low-income households by 5 percentage points.
- ❖ who identify as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic by 16 percentage points.
- ❖ who have experience of the care system from 1 per year to 10 per year.

Increasing the proportion of students who **continue into the next year of their course** (the “continuation rate”). Specifically, we aim to improve the continuation of students:

- ❖ from low-income households by 10 percentage points by 2025.
- ❖ students aged over 21 years (“Mature students”) by 6 percentage points by 2023.
- ❖ from the most deprived areas by 22 percentage points by 2025.
- ❖ who identify as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic by 13 percentage points by 2025.

Increasing the proportion of students who **achieve a 2:1 degree or better** (attainment of a “good degree”). Specifically, by 2025 we aim to increase attainment in:

- ❖ students from the most deprived areas by 11 percentage points.

Increasing the proportion of students who **progress into highly skilled employment**. In particular, by 2025 we aim to increase the proportion of students who progress into highly skilled employment or further study who identify as:

- ❖ disabled and/or who have a specific learning difficulty by 5 percentage points.
- ❖ Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic by 15 percentage points.

It is our aim to close these progression gaps entirely over a 10-year period.

What we are doing to achieve our aims (see pages 10 to 19 of the full plan)

We have identified a number of activities to support the achievement of our aims and targets:

To improve **access** to higher education, we will:

- ❖ Work with key influencers, including parents, teachers, leaving care teams, careers advisers and community groups.
- ❖ Develop a programme of activities and experiences to engaged with individuals from underrepresented groups on an ongoing basis.
- ❖ Engage with schools and colleges to provide support and resources aimed at raising attainment at Key Stages 4/5.

- ❖ Consider ways of offering alternative and more flexible entry pathways into higher education to take account of inbuilt disadvantage.
- ❖ Provide additional support through pre-admission communications and events prior to induction.

We will take a targeted approach to **learning and teaching**, by:

- ❖ Reviewing our curriculum to ensure inclusivity for new and returning students.
- ❖ Updating our learning, teaching and student support practices to ensure they meet the needs of students from underrepresented groups.
- ❖ Improving our resources for supporting students from underrepresented groups.

Offering **financial support** to new and returning students, such as:

- ❖ Providing funding in the form of travel bursaries and hardship funds to eligible students.
- ❖ Offering full tuition-fee waivers to eligible applicants with outstanding ability.

Working **in collaboration with partners** to improve the experience of new and returning students from underrepresented groups, by:

- ❖ Developing our school and college outreach programme, particularly in schools with high proportions of students with lower household incomes.
- ❖ Partnering with other higher education providers and universities to offer support, information, advice and guidance to students of all backgrounds.

Supporting students to **progress into highly skilled employment** by:

- ❖ Building strong relationships with industry employers and supporting students seeking work after graduation.
- ❖ Helping students to develop their personal, professional and social skills.

How students can get involved (see pages 19 to 20 of the full plan)

We worked with our student partners in the design of our access and participation plan. Students are represented in our access and participation meetings and there are opportunities to take part through our widening participation ambassador programme. To become involved in this work, or to find out more, you can contact us at widening.participation@futureworks.ac.uk for further information.

Evaluation and measurement (see pages 20 to 23 of the full plan)

Our programmes of activity are informed by the best available evidence about what works for students. We collect data and feedback to evaluate:

- ❖ Our programme design, and the impact of activities we are doing to achieve our aims.
- ❖ The actions outlined above, including our access measures, learning and teaching activities, the financial support we provide. We will also evaluate our collaborative partnerships and the work we do to improve student progression into employment.
- ❖ The impact on achieving our overall aim of improving access and degree completion.

We will publish evidence from our evaluations on our website by January 2024 - <https://futureworks.ac.uk/access-and-participation/>

Contact details for further information

You can contact Lorraine Ballintine at widening.participation@futureworks.ac.uk for further information.