Executive Summary: Self-Assessment and Action Plan

December 2018

Further information regarding our priority areas and action plan can be found in the Summary of Self-Assessment and Action Plan, which complements our full Action and Participation Plan 2019-20.

OXFORD
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UNIVERSITY

Summary of priority areas

Underrepresented group	Access	Success - Continuation	Success - Attainment	Progression
Students of particular ethnicities	Priority	Continue to learn and improve	Priority	Priority
Students from areas of low higher education participation, low household income and/or low socioeconomic status backgrounds	Priority	Monitor and review	Continue to learn and improve	Monitor and review
Mature students	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Continue to learn and improve
Disabled students	Continue to learn and improve	Continue to learn and improve	Continue to learn and improve	Monitor and review
Intersectional groups	Multiple Equality Measure[1] Groups 1&2 / White IMD[2] Q1&Q2	N/A	Mature Asian and Mature Black	White IMD Q1&Q2
Care leavers	Monitor and review			

Summary of action plan

Objective 1: Institution-level cultural change

Action
The Vice-Chancellor's Group (VCG) to act as champions for inclusivity and lead culture change, with regular reporting on progress monitored through the Access and Participation Group (APG), and built into the VCG forward plan.
The creation of a Pro-Vice Chancellor remit for leading on Access and Participation.
The inclusion of university-level KPIs on recruitment, attainment and progression.

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[1] www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis/ucas-undergraduate-releases/ucas-undergraduate-analysis-reports/equality-and-entry-rates-data-explorers
[2] Index of Multiple Deprivation

Objective 2: Improved governance

Action
Revision of the terms of reference of the Access and Participation Group (APG) to include more senior staff, include student representation, and report directly to VCG.
Creation of an operational Widening Participation Forum, reporting to APG to replace the Widening Participation Advisory Group, and bring in a wider range of staff and student views.
Biannual reporting to the university governors, via VCG, on progress against this action plan and targets.

Objective 3: Increased understanding of inclusive practice across the institution

Action
Commission an external consultant to undertake further research with students, staff and the wider sector, make recommendations on the attainment gap in particular, and support embedded cultural change across the institution.
Deliver university-wide unconscious bias training for staff and raise awareness of unconscious bias through the use of data and conversations at teaching and learning planning days.
Creation of new academic roles of Outreach Champions and academic and professional services roles of Equality Champions.

Objective 4: Improved evaluation of Access and Participation interventions

Action
Develop an evaluation plan for initiatives across the full student lifecycle, based on a theory of change, and aligned to reporting and planning cycles.
Draw upon expertise across the university's academic and professional services community to develop robust evaluation mechanisms through establishing an evaluation advisory group to ensure interventions are timely and appropriate.

Objective 5: Ensuring the institution is attractive to a diverse range of students

Action
Undertake a broad piece of research to understand the reasons why a diverse range of students are not currently applying to Oxford Brookes.
As a part of the demand assessment exercise, to undertake market research to understand the attractiveness of new programmes to Black and Asian, and students from

Polar Q1&Q2 and IMD Q1&Q2. To ensure inclusivity features as an important consideration in new programme development and enhancement.
Embed Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) into the annual student recruitment target setting processes.
Explore ways to address the perceived issue of living costs.
Expand higher and degree apprenticeship provision to offer work-based routes into higher education.

Objective 6: Reaching, and encouraging applications from a wider group of students

Action
Implement the new UK Recruitment Strategy, which has diversifying the student intake as a core component, and evaluate the impact annually.
Ensure representation from a diverse range of students and staff at open days and other recruitment events, and conduct research to further understand the information needs of less traditional HE students.
Implement new schools and colleges targeting which focuses on institutions with a relatively high proportion of Black and Asian students, and/or students from IMD and Polar Q1&2 who we believe will be interested in, and benefit from, an Oxford Brookes education.
Ensure that our recruitment and marketing activity actively promotes Oxford Brookes' wide range of educational offerings and entry routes.

Objective 7: Ensuring a fair admissions process

Action
Updating the Guaranteed Offer scheme to include targeted schools and colleges.
Undertake Equality Impact Assessment on contextual admissions and offer-making policies.

Objective 8: Ensure a smooth transition to starting university

Action
Expand existing mentoring/buddy programmes to include more students from target groups, in order to encourage a sense of belonging prior to starting university.
During freshers' week, offer an introduction to Oxford and its local resources which might be relevant to students from particular ethnic groups. In conjunction with the Students' Union, offer (non-drinking, non-hall based) opportunities for students to meet a more diverse group of friends.
Consider the development of an online pre-arrival transitions module to support students from all backgrounds with the move to university.

Objective 9: Conduct further research on the specific causes of attainment gaps at Oxford Brookes

Action
As referenced in objective 3 above, undertake further commissioned research into the specific causes of the attainment gap in different subject areas, and ways to close it.
Deliver an initial, pilot intervention working with a number of programmes where the attainment gap is particularly large.

Objective 10: Embed inclusive curriculum design and monitoring into university processes

Action
Conduct research that will allow us to measure the 'value added' for each of our students, with a view to incorporating this into the University's KPI set.
Enhance the programme design process so that academic staff consider inclusive content, assessment mechanisms and delivery models at the design stage, embedding it into the curriculum following the ethos of Universal Design for Learning.[3]
Put a greater focus on addressing the outcomes of equality impact assessment on all new student-focused policies, including on the Academic Framework Review (the AFR is being informed by modelling of likely student outcomes for underrepresented groups).
As part of Annual and Periodic Quality Reviews, ensure programme teams have access to data on the backgrounds of their students so that they can target interventions appropriately

Objective 11: Increase institution-wide understanding of, and support for, a diverse range of students

Action
Create an Inclusive Curriculum Framework and benchmarking tool, to be used for creating new curriculum, validation panels and subject reviews (in line with the recommendations of the BME transition experiences report).
Provide specific guidance and training to academic advisors, ensure records are kept of academic advisor meetings, and follow up on non-attendance.
Create a new section within Academic & Student Affairs, with a remit for supporting and advocating on behalf of students with the full range of protected characteristics.
Develop closing the BME attainment gap development programme for academic staff
Develop an "English for Academic Purposes" course within healthcare for all students who have English as a second language.

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[3] CAST (2018). Universal Design for Learning Guidelines version 2.2. Retrieved from
http://udlguidelines.cast.org

Lead academic engagement with the actions attached to this objective through ongoing communication and engagement.

Objective 12: Support and incentivise students to participate in learning experiences known to have a positive impact on outcomes

Action
Create a student engagement dashboard for staff and students; develop learner analytics work into a one-stop online shop for students to monitor their own performance and sign up for opportunities to enhance their learning and student experience.
Build on the findings from the consultancy project to design positive interventions to encourage students' engagement in learning.
Develop wider use of Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) mentoring schemes addressing range of broader study and learning issues and ensuring that schemes have students from a diverse range of backgrounds as PAL leaders/role models for all students.

Objective 13: Support Black and Asian students to progress to highly skilled employment

Action
Undertake early career intention surveys as part of registration for all students, and proactively follow up with students who have less clear career plans.
Work with the Oxford Hub to create leadership development programmes with targeted students.