

Yeovil College University Centre

Summary of 2025-26 to 2028-29 Access and Participation Plan

What is an Access and Participation Plan?

An Access and Participation Plan sets out how a higher education provider (such as a university or university centre) will improve equality of opportunity. This ensures that people from groups that are currently underrepresented in university-level study can access, succeed in, and progress from higher education. You can find the full Access and Participation Plan for Yeovil College University Centre (YCUC) in the [‘Policies and Reports’](#) section of our website.

Key Points

See pages 2-6 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

Our plan explains our ambition that anyone with potential and desire to study can access, succeed in, and progress from higher education at YCUC. As a small University Centre, we are proud of how we serve our local community and support people from underrepresented groups to achieve degree-level qualifications.

However, we aim to do more. Our Plan also explains the focussed work we are doing in areas where there are gaps in access or outcomes for certain groups of students. The three areas where we are working to close gaps are:

1. Increase the proportion of young people from our local community in South Somerset who go on to study Higher Education.
2. Increase the proportion of students at YCUC with a declared Social, Emotional or Mental Health (SEMH) need who achieve high grades.
3. Increase the proportion of students who come to YCUC with a vocational or contextual entry profile who achieve high grades. (This might include, for example, students who have studied a BTEC or Access to HE Diploma, rather than A Levels.)

Fees we Charge

See page 28 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

The maximum fees that we charge for our courses are published in the [‘Policies and Reports’](#) section of our website under ‘YCUC Fee Lists’. Once a student starts a course with us, we guarantee that their fee will stay the same until they finish that course. However, fees for new starters may increase each year, in line with inflation. For example, for students starting in 2024-25, the maximum fee for a full-time learner was £7,986, and for a part-time learner was £5,324.

Financial Help Available

See pages 14-15, 20 & 28 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

We offer financial support to students from underrepresented groups to help students to access higher education and continue studying until their course is completed. Funding is available each academic year, if a student meets the eligibility criteria. The support includes:

- A Bursary payment of £350 for students with a household income under £25,000.
- A Cost of Living Fund payment of £350 for students with a household income under £45,000.
- Up to £350 to support with the cost of a diagnostic assessment for a specific learning difficulty. This funding is available to students with a household income under £45,000 who cannot access Disabled Students' Allowances due to a lack of formal diagnosis.

Eligible students need to apply for funding, which is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis each academic year. More information on our HE Bursary Policy, including how to apply, can be found in the ['Policies and Reports'](#) section of our website.

Information for Students

See page 28 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

Information about fees and financial support is published in the ['Policies and Reports'](#) section of our website. We have produced help-guides on Funding your Studies and offer webinars to explain funding and financial support to those considering degree-level study. Current students can also access information about financial support through the YCUC Student Help Zone on 'Moodle' (our student portal). We send regular emails which remind current students of the support available.

What We Are Aiming to Achieve

See pages 6 & 36-41 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

We aim to enable anyone with the potential and desire to study to access higher education at YCUC and be successful. Based on assessment of our performance, we are focussing in particular on closing gaps across three specific areas, outlined below.

1. **Increase the proportion of young people from South Somerset progressing on to study higher education (whether at YCUC, or somewhere else).** We will measure our impact in this area using various local and national data.
2. **Reduce the high grades achievement gap for YCUC learners with a Social, Emotional or Mental Health (SEMH) need to 10% by 2030-31.** As part of this, we aim for 50% of YCUC students with a SEMH need to be engaging with appropriate learning support by 2028-29.
3. **Reduce the high grades achievement gap for YCUC learners with vocational or contextual entry profile to 10% by 2030-31.** As part of this, we aim that 100% of relevant students can engage with resources and support to develop their academic skills by 2027-28.

What We Are Doing to Achieve Our Aims

See pages 7-24 & 36-41 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

Our Plan includes much more detailed information about the specific work we plan to undertake. Below is a summary of the interventions we will deliver to achieve our three key aims.

To increase the proportion of young people from South Somerset who progress into higher education, we will work with schools, colleges, students, parents, and carers. We will deliver workshops, webinars, and information campaigns to support young people to make positive and well-informed decisions about university-level study.

To improve outcomes for YCUC students with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, we will provide a robust student wellbeing service. We will provide support to students to apply for the learning support they need, and financial assistance for this process where appropriate. We will also continue to train staff on how to support students with SEMH needs.

To improve outcomes for YCUC students with vocational and contextual entry profiles, we will implement a suite of interventions to improve academic skills. We will also provide access to financial support for learners whose household income is below certain thresholds.

How Students Can Get Involved

See pages 24-28 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Students from all areas of YCUC have had the opportunity to get involved and provide feedback on our Access and Participation Plan. Our Student Governor, Student Representatives, and Student Voice Officers have contributed to the development of our plan and will be involved in monitoring its impact. If any YCUC students wish to find out more about this work, or get involved in evaluation, they can contact the University Centre via universitycentre@yeovil.ac.uk.

Evaluation – How We Will Measure What We Have Achieved

See pages 12, 17, 22 & 26-28 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

We will evaluate the impact of our work in various ways, using internal, local, and national data.

For all targets, we will use ‘intermediate measures’ to evaluate the impact of our work on an ongoing basis, as well as measuring long-term outcomes. Over the lifecycle of this plan, the data gathered will be monitored at a strategic level by different groups of staff and students at YCUC. Day-to-day, data will be scrutinised by staff who are directly contributing to the work in the Plan to ensure the best outcomes for our students.

As a small provider, our data is not significant enough to be published. However, we plan to share our findings with regional education providers to help influence decisions in our local area.

Contact Details for Further Information

If you want to know more, or have questions about anything in this document, contact our team via universitycentre@yeovil.ac.uk. Our Access and Participation Plan work is led by Sian Pering.