

WIDENING PARTICIPATION NEWSLETTER

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INTRODUCTION

The BHASVIC Widening Participation (WP) team would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the first widening participation newsletter of this academic year, which provides you with the details of some of the exciting opportunities available to students in our WP cohort.

We have summarised the main activities currently being offered by our local universities and organisations whilst also informing you of other nationwide opportunities that may be appropriate. Most events are **free of charge**, but where there is a cost implication, it will be highlighted. It is important to check the eligibility criteria for each activity as this will vary from scheme to scheme and by organisation.

Please be aware that some of the closing dates of the events are fast approaching, so don't delay, read today!



WHAT IS WIDENING PARTICIPATION?

The aim of Widening Participation (WP) is to offer additional information and support to students from groups who are **currently under-represented in higher education** in the UK, including first in the immediate family to consider university, targeted postcodes, young carers and a variety of other factors.

Our WP programme is intended to support these students to make informed choices about their options when they leave college, including investigating the possibility of moving on to university. This could be something they wish to consider in the future, if not right now.

Being part of our WP cohort and registering for any scheme does not place any obligation on a student to go on to university.

We work closely with our local partners – the universities of Brighton and Sussex, UCA and Into University, with each university's WP scheme having their own (usually similar) eligibility criteria. This enables us to offer a programme that is designed to help WP students explore their future options, make informed choices and develop their full potential. We also provide details of upcoming opportunities from other nationwide providers and organisations who are offering taster days, as well as careers information and support.

We have identified eligible students so we can signpost them to various support services. If a student is eligible for the Into University programme, then they will be sent a link to complete. This scheme has a smaller cohort than the universities and eligible students will be given the opportunity to register.

Students – for more information about about contextual offers, scholarships and bursaries, take a look at the Sharepoint page.

[MORE INFORMATION ON THE BHASVIC WEBSITE](#)



OUR PARTNER UNIVERSITIES & ORGANISATIONS



University of Brighton

Outreach Brighton

The University of Brighton offers a range of events and talks for college and sixth form students, parents and carers. They provide opportunities to students from backgrounds under-represented in higher education to support their progression to university.

What does the widening participation programme include?

They offer events and activities including:

- taster lectures, workshops and campus tours
- summer schools
- one-to-one support with writing personal statements
- help in preparing for interviews
- advice and seminars on applications, entry requirements and finance
- advice on the wide range of university courses
- updates on upcoming events and visits
- A chance to apply for financial support with **Brighton Boost**

These activities aim to provide impartial information, advice and guidance to students making decisions about higher education.

They will contact BHASVIC students to invite them to participate if they wish to do so, and benefit from the activities and support on offer.

Year 13 students who require support or feedback for their **draft** personal statements can book an online slot at a convenient time. (Please see page 15)

Uniconnect fund to support travel costs to University of Brighton – Students can apply for funding for travel to events and trips that support awareness and understanding of education options. You can apply for travel funding for yourself and a parent, carer or guardian.

To be eligible to apply, you need to be eligible for free school meals, now or in the past.

Please use **this form** to apply. If you are not sure if you are eligible, contact SLN Uni Connect to find out.

EVENTS



OUR PARTNER UNIVERSITIES & ORGANSATIONS



Inspires Programme

Want to understand your options and experience university life? Be part of the University of **Sussex's Inspires Programme 2025-26**. The programme is completely free and includes a series of visits to the University of Sussex campus; as well as focused session on student life, choosing the right course, academic subject tasters, 1:1 career advice and university application support. You will be allocated to a subject strand based on your expressed interest. Those who complete the programme will be given priority access to apply to the Sussex Inspires Summer School. You can pick one of three strands (Arts & Humanities, Social Sciences and STEM) to take part in their 'Study and See' sessions; 3 x 45 minute tasters of university lectures. This is in addition to welcome days, careers fairs, and summer schools.

Deadline to apply is Sunday 23rd November.

Contextual Offer

As a registered student on the University of Sussex Inspires Programme you will be eligible for a contextual offer if you go on to apply to study at the University of Sussex. This usually means a reduction in entry requirements of 1-2 grades, but some exceptions apply.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

[EVENTS](#)



OUR PARTNER UNIVERSITIES & ORGANSATIONS

Into University



Like the universities, Into University offer support for students thinking about going into higher education through years 12 and 13. In the past, they have run many events and opportunities, including support for those students wishing to apply for Oxbridge. See below for more details.



Big City Bright Future is an annual three-week paid work experience programme created especially to help school leavers who aspire to work within competitive industries. This year **IntoUniversity** is partnering with 20 globally-recognised firms to run the programme.

The programme offers internships in the fields of Asset Management, Investment Banking, Law, Technology, Consultancy, and more. This programme is not just for students who know they want to work in these fields. They welcome all students who are motivated, would like to develop their transferable skills, and are willing to try their best and work hard.

Year 13 **IntoUniversity** students are encouraged to sign up for their Prep Sessions to learn more about the programme before applications open in December 2025.

Apply by 10th January 2026.



Into University: Explore Oxbridge

Explore Oxbridge supports students to develop skills, explore their academic interests, prepare their university applications, and learn more about the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford.

It is currently delivered through a mixture of in-person and virtual delivery, as well as incorporating day trips and residential trips. While most of the programme is delivered through group workshops and webinars, students who are currently in their final year at school are offered personalised one-to-one support with their applications.

Any IntoUniversity student who wishes to take part in Explore Oxbridge is welcome, including older students who would be eligible for the Cambridge Foundation Year.

CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES



**University for the
Creative Arts**

Embrace your inner creative and develop your passion into a successful career with **UCA**. Discover their specialist creative degrees taught in Canterbury, Epsom, and Farnham. Vibrant campuses. Get industry ready.

UCA provide talks and workshops – Introduction to UCA, Creative careers, portfolio workshops, UCAS personal statement sessions and campus visits can be arranged. More information will follow throughout the year.



The **Next Step Bristol** programme is a fantastic opportunity for students from Asian or Black backgrounds to experience the University through a series of virtual events. The expression of interest form for Next Step Bristol 2026-27 (students entering Year 13 in September 2026) is now open and on their website.

Please apply ASAP as they expect a high volume of applications.

UK Programmes

The Sutton Trust UK Programme helps young people to access leading universities and careers, including; apprenticeships; law; consulting; engineering; medicine.

In partnership with universities and employers, they run engaging programmes that give students practical advice and leave you feeling inspired and more confident about your future. Their programmes are completely free to attend. All costs – including travel, accommodation, food and activities – are paid for by the Trust and our partners.

The Sutton Trust Apprenticeships Programme involves peer networking/social events to boost confidence and connection and insight days, run by leading employers. Additionally, they provide support in your apprenticeship applications, including 1:1 mentor support, apprenticeship skill sessions and work placements/experience.

This programme is designed to increase your knowledge of your chosen sector, improve your applications and CVs and provide opportunities to increase your employability. **Apply now.**

The Sutton Trust Pathways Programme helps young people to access the more competitive careers pathways, such as law; banking and finance; engineering; medicine; veterinary medicine.

From work experience to employability skill sessions to ongoing university and apprenticeship application support, you'll get the opportunity to build your CV and immerse yourself in the possibilities of your future career.

Imperial (medicine), Queen Mary (law) and LSE (law and finance) are your 'local' options that connect with the Pathways Programmes.

US Fulbright Programme

The Sutton Trust Fulbright US Programme is a once in a lifetime opportunity to explore what studying in the US is like. It will give you a taste of what it's like being an international student in the US and help you see if it could be the right fit for you.

It's a fully-funded programme so they will cover all costs, including travel, residential events, accommodation and food.

Chronologically by Application Deadline



Apply in November

The **Lancaster Access (and Access to Medicine)** course offers the following:

- Extra consideration and a lower offer on application to Lancaster
- Access to a dedicated online portal and resources
- Opportunity to participate in a variety of exclusive events and subject activities
- Dedicated contact with Lancaster staff and student ambassadors
- Priority access to their **Success Programme**.

Apply by 9th November 2025.



Access to Queen Mary supports the entrance of students under-represented at Russell Group universities to study at Queen Mary.

Through an 18-month programme of activities, they aim to help students become more prepared for and successful in higher education. Students who successfully complete the programme will not only have benefited from tailored academic and pastoral support but also from consideration for a contextual offer to Queen Mary. This is based on being within a commutable distance from their Mile End Campus.

Applications are encouraged from London, Greater London, Kent, Medway, Essex, and other commutable areas. Before applying, please carefully read the full eligibility criteria and ensure you understand the expectations of the programme, including the time commitment required.

Apply by 14th November 2025.



A note for Doctors/Medics...

Lancaster Medics: 09/11

Leeds Dentists: 26/11



Apply in November

Brookes Engage is a free subject-based programme designed to support you in making decisions about your next steps after school or college through the following activities.

This includes onsite campus conference days, online content, mentoring from current students and a summer school experience.

Successful completion of the programme will give you access to a contextual offer to study at Oxford Brookes; this is usually around two grades lower, but can vary per course.

Apply by 5pm 13th November 2025.



Next Step York is an opportunity to independently study ahead of University; you can pick a range of virtual and in person modules suited to your interests to gain 100 credits, before progressing to the second year of the programme.

By successfully completing the programme, you are guaranteed an interview or offer, and it could lower your entry requirements by up to three grades lower than standard.

Apply by 9am 21st November 2025.



Black Access to York is a student-led initiative, 'For Black Students, By Black Students'. It aims to support black students and amplify their voice and experience in a currently underrepresented student body.

By successfully completing the programme, you are guaranteed an interview or offer, and it could lower your entry requirements by up to three grades lower than standard.

Apply by 9am 21st November 2025.

Apply in December



The Aspiring Professionals Programme (APP) is designed to **open up professions** for those with the ability to join them in the future, but without the means or networks to get there.

This is done through the following pillars:

- Mentoring by a professional via email
- Tailored skills sessions and career workshops
- University application support and guidance
- Internships with top employers

Based on location, you could be eligible for 'APP Reach', their virtual pathway, or be offered residential work experience in London in one of the following industries: Banking & Finance, Business, Digital, Law, Media & Comms, Politics, and Medicine.



**University of
Nottingham**

Ambition is a free, two-year online scheme for all Year 12 students.

The activities support progression and application to a university of your choice. Examples of past activities:

- Subject taster sessions with university academics
- Q&A's with current students
- Information on how to choose your course and university, student finance and
- accommodation
- Advice and guidance on university selection processes

Apply by 7th December 2025.

Apply in January



UNIQ is the University of Oxford's access programme for UK state school students in their first year of further education (Year 12/A1).

UNIQ is a completely free programme, aiming to help support you to consider your educational options, decide if Oxford is right for you, and to make successful applications to Oxford.

UNIQ offers both an in-person residential and an online support programme, running from April to November. It features a mixture of activities, including evening webinars and online workshops designed to help you in your journey to university, from application support, to supercurricular activities, to information on student life, clubs and societies, financial support, and more.

They prioritise places for students with good grades from backgrounds that are under-represented at Oxford and other universities. Every year more students from diverse backgrounds get offered places at Oxford with help from UNIQ.

Apply via their website in late January.



The Reading Scholars programme aims to give Year 12 students a real taste of life as a university undergraduate, and provides practical support as participants begin their higher education application process. Featuring input from leading academics and current undergraduate mentors, the programme will challenge participants academically and enhance current studies.

Like most provisions, you have a guaranteed conditional offer and invite to interview, in addition to a two grade drop in terms of grade boundaries. **If Reading is your first choice, you could obtain a £1000 bursary for your first year of study.**

Apply by 20th January 2026.

Apply in January



Through the **Newcastle University PARTNERS Programme** you could:

- Receive a lower contextual offer to Newcastle University.
- Attend the PARTNERS Academic Summer School.
- Develop skills necessary to be a successful student.
- Meet other students and increase your confidence.
- Receive support through the application process, on results day and after entering the university.

Apply via UCAS by 21st January 2026.



Access to Leeds is a contextual admissions programme for UK undergraduate applicants. It offers additional consideration for applicants based on personal circumstances, including:

- the chance to study an undergraduate degree with entry requirements up to two grades lower than our standard offer. For example if the standard entry requirement for your course is AAA at A-level, the Access to Leeds offer could be ABB.
- a study module, support and events to help prepare you for university
- on-course support through the **Plus Programme**
- additional consideration if you apply for a means-tested scholarship.

Apply by 4th February 2026.



A2 (Y13) Opportunities

The University of Oxford's Astrophoria Foundation Year is a one-year fully-funded foundation programme for UK state school students with significant academic potential, who have experienced severe personal disadvantage and/or disrupted education which has resulted in them being unable to apply directly for an Oxford undergraduate degree programme.

It enables motivated students to reach their academic potential through a supportive and challenging academic course aimed at developing their skills, self-belief and academic confidence.

Apply via UCAS by 14th January 2026.



Into University: Explore Oxbridge

Explore Oxbridge supports students to develop skills, explore their academic interests, prepare their university applications, and learn more about the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford.

It is currently delivered through a mixture of in-person and virtual delivery, as well as incorporating day trips and residential trips. While most of the programme is delivered through group workshops and webinars, students who are currently in their final year at school are offered personalised one-to-one support with their applications.



**Northumbria
University
NEWCASTLE**

Destination Northumbria is a transition programme, supporting WP offer holders to enter University confidently. This includes the following provision:

- Peer support from current students
 - Social events to get a taste of student life
 - Connect with other Destination Northumbria students
 - On campus events to familiarise yourself with NU and Newcastle
 - Series of webinars/podcasts providing information and guidance
 - Guaranteed interview for paid rep roles
 - Incentives for those who complete the course* Financial awards available upon successful completion, to support your first year at Uni
- They also give contextual offers and up to 8 tariff points to WP students.

This begins in February 2026.

Other Opportunities



University of London Taster Courses are free short courses at 13 participating universities in and around London. They are designed for school students, usually in year 12, to get an insight into studying a particular subject or subject area at university. Sign up for emails so additions to the website go straight to your inbox.



UCL have a variety of different provisions; **UCL Expand, UCL Experience & UCL Medical Sciences Taster Days.**

All of the events and activities are designed to give students a greater insight into UCL's degree programmes and student life. UCL also seek to raise the aspirations of students from groups who are under-represented at university.



STAART at University of Greenwich is an inclusive initiative, started in 2007 in partnership with Aimhigher. They provide impartial information and guidance to post-16 future and current disabled students and continue to develop to meet the requirements of disabled students, including those with neurodivergence or mental health challenges.

You can access their support through transition days, events, social media and their bulletins, which are run by current beneficiaries of the programme.

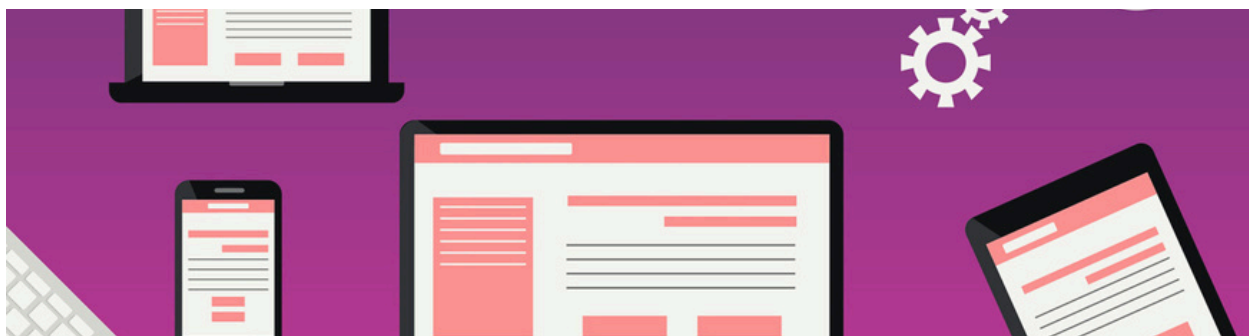


Unite Foundation provides scholarships and support to care leavers and those estranged from their parents. Its aim is to ensure they can have a home at university that is rent-free, with accommodation and bills covered for up to 3 years of study. This is including the entirety of the Christmas and Summer holidays, and can be extended to the year after graduation to help them plan their next career move. The Unite Foundation team can help you settle in, keep in touch and offer opportunities for employment and enjoyment.



PwC, a networking firm for the 'Big Four' in finance, offer **Virtual Classroom programmes** to help you gain specialised experience. Focused on a particular topic within the industry, the Virtual Classroom sessions run as a series of events, giving you insight into who PwC are, and opportunities such as their **Flying Start and School and College Leaver joiners.**

They also have a wide range of other resources, such as their Employability Hub, a collection of YouTube videos and their Back to Schools recordings to access at a time that suits you.



PERSONAL STATEMENT HUBS



University of Brighton

The University of Brighton is delighted to be able to offer one-to-one personal statement support for students of our partner colleges.

Please note you will need to be able to access Microsoft Teams to be able to attend the meeting. This can be accessed through a browser or by downloading the Microsoft Teams app.

[BOOK HERE](#)

Ready to show your chosen university why you're the perfect candidate for the course? We've got you covered.



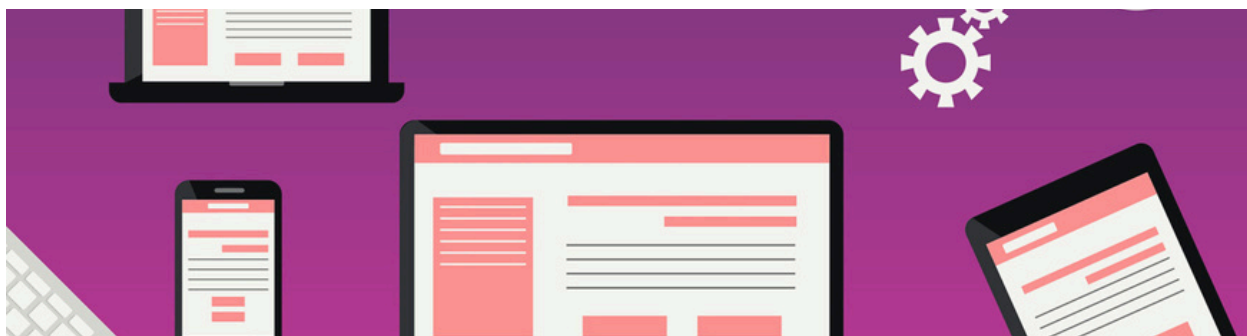
**UNIVERSITY OF
PORTSMOUTH**

Your UCAS personal statement is uniquely yours. It's the story you tell when you apply to uni. But writing it can be tricky. There are things it needs to include and common mistakes to avoid.

Watch videos, get top tips and download our help sheets – that's what our personal statement hub is for. It's for you to write your story, so you can show your strengths, ideas and passion to your chosen universities.

You'll also be able send us your draft, so you can get feedback and feel confident about what you've written.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)



USEFUL WEBSITES



If you are considering doing an apprenticeship, school leaver programme or sponsored degree, you will also need to start thinking about which industry you'd like to work in. In the UK, there are apprenticeships available in all kinds of industries, from accounting and digital media to construction, engineering and IT. You are spoilt for choice. That's why it's important to start finding out about all of the different industries you can enter.

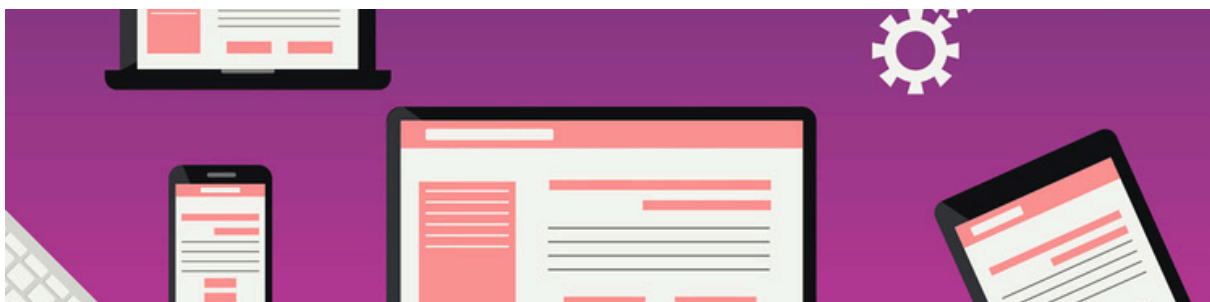
MORE INFORMATION

Access Accountancy is a movement for change across the accountancy profession. Accountancy firms, organisations and professional bodies in the sector have committed to delivering real change by welcoming talented and ambitious young people to the profession from all backgrounds.

They recognise that **work experience placements** are a great opportunity to learn more about the accountancy profession. A number of employers have signed up and committed to offering work experience placements where you'll get to explore what the day-to-day life of an accountant is like, while also gaining new skills and enjoying new experiences.



MORE INFORMATION



Amazing Apprenticeships

As a parent or carer, you want to be able to guide and advise your child towards the best opportunity for them. So, where do you start?

There are many options available including apprenticeships, T Levels and HTQs.

Being open-minded about the range of opportunities, and equipping yourself with knowledge and information is the best way to build your confidence, and ultimately to support your child to make the best decision for them.

Through this Parent Zone, we aim to help you to explore those options.



NMITE (University for Engineers) explains the WP eligibility really well, and gives an example of bursaries and scholarships that can be accessed.

While these may not be available with every university you study with, it is worth considering what could be on offer to you.