

Access and Participation Plan Summary

ACM

Summary of 2024-25 to 2027-28 access and participation plan

What is an access and participation plan?

Our Access and Participation Plan (APP) sets out how ACM will ensure that we provide and promote equality of opportunity for all students, and particularly for underrepresented groups, as determined by the Office for Students. It covers the improvements we intend to make, and the activity we will deliver, to support access and enrolment, successful outcomes in study, and good graduate destinations.

You can see the full access and participation plan for ACM at <https://www.acm.ac.uk/app-2024-28>

Key points

ACM is a small, specialist higher education provider, with campuses in London, Guildford, and Birmingham. We deliver degrees across creative industries programmes in music performance, sound engineering, games development, and business. ACM supports collaboration between students on industry linked projects. Students are taught by an academic team, many of whom are also practising professionals. The ACM group owns and operates Metropolis Studios in London which is the largest recording facility in Europe. Our students experience Metropolis Studios as a professional learning environment, where they are exposed to state-of-the-art equipment and recording software, and work with award-winning music industry professionals. ACM has recently introduced a new degree and masters framework entitled Creative Industries Futures which encourages students from all backgrounds to undertake programmes of study that will enable them to expand and develop their personal and professional skills.

Our mission is to provide multiple pathways into higher education and our industry and encourage participation of learners from diverse backgrounds. We are a multicultural, inclusive community which supports creativity, development and exchange of knowledge, and equips students with professionally relevant skills and experience. We focus on learning by doing, and inclusivity is at the core of our student experience and community. More than 75% of ACM students fall into one of the Office for Students (OfS) underrepresented student target groups.

In our Access and Participation Plan, we focus on two specific groups of students. These are students from Black, Asian, and other Ethnic Minorities backgrounds, and students from socio-economically deprived areas.

See page 1 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Fees we charge

The maximum fees we charge at ACM for UK Undergraduate students is £9,250.

See our [website](#) for further details.

See page 29 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Financial help available

ACM offers two types of [bursaries](#):

Widening Participation Bursary: £1,000 one-off payment awarded to eligible students in their first year of study. This is based on household income below £25,000 and paid in three instalments.

Student Equipment Bursary: £250 awarded as a one-off payment at the end of Term 1. This is based on household income between £25,000 and £40,000.

No application is required for our Widening Participation Bursary and Equipment Bursary, and they are awarded automatically. We will contact eligible students once we have received confirmation from the Student Loans Company as to eligibility. All bursaries will be subject to Terms and Conditions which will be published on our [website](#). Students will only be considered for one bursary.

See also pages 29 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Information for students

The information is provided to our prospective and current students via ACM website, but we also provide information about our courses, fees, financial support, and other aspects of studying at ACM or through online and in-person recruitment and outreach events, email, SMS, and telephone. We also provide applicant advice and guidance to simplify our application process, and along with our auditions and admissions, make it more accessible.

See page 29 of the access and participation plan for more information.

What we are aiming to achieve

Our Plan focuses on supporting access for disadvantaged students, as well as supporting our students to succeed in their studies at ACM. While we support all students, our analysis of our data (Annex 1 of our Plan) showed that we need to focus on students with certain characteristics or from certain backgrounds, who are more at risk of not achieving their potential. We have noted that this may be due to students not having had prior access to appropriate support and development opportunities. In our Plan we have detailed support mechanisms, as well as targets over 4 years, that are focused on improving outcomes for these students.

Key risk areas in our Plan:

- Learners from the most deprived socio-economic backgrounds (measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation Quintile 1 – IMDQ1) are less likely to enrol at ACM.
- Learners from the most deprived socio-economic background (IMDQ1), and learners from Black backgrounds are less likely to achieve a First or 2:1 Degree outcome at ACM.

Targets in our Plan:

Aim	Baseline data	2024-25 milestone	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone
To increase the proportion of students from IMD Q1 areas at ACM.	12.7%	14%	15%	17%	19%
To reduce the attainment gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students.	17.3 percentage points (pp)	16.5 pp	15.5 pp	14 pp	12 pp
To reduce the attainment gap between Black students and their white peers.	19.3	17.3 pp	15 pp	12.5 pp	9.5 pp

See pages 2-3 of the access and participation plan for more information.

What we are doing to address keys risks to equality of opportunity

We have two main “intervention strategies” in our Plan, which describe the activities we will deliver to achieve our targets. The activities we have chosen are the ones we believe will have a positive impact on our student outcomes and experience, and will address the risks to equality of

opportunity we identified at ACM. We have used a range of evidence and research to reach these conclusions (Annex B of the Plan). Broadly, our 2 “intervention strategies” include:

1. Development and continued improvement of our curriculum, teaching, and assessment practices, with regard to inclusive practice.
2. Personal tutoring.
3. Improved opportunities for students to develop key skills and knowledge, including getting recognition for these through certification and ‘credentials’.
4. Improved use of data and monitoring to help ACM understand ongoing performance.
5. Student financial support packages.

Intervention Strategy for Access – Aim: Increase access for students from the most deprived areas (IMDQ1): We will work in partnership with schools, music hubs and local communities, as part of a community of practice to deliver a holistic project which focuses on improving creative, academic, and professional skills and knowledge, as well as supporting aspirations prior to entering HE. As a provider committed to a learning-by-doing approach, we will support attainment raising through relevant skills acquisition, embedding aspects of studying for a degree, as well as activities typical for a creative industry environment.

Intervention Strategy for Success – Aim: Reduce attainment gaps for learners from the most deprived socio-economic backgrounds and Black students. We will focus on provision of effective and personalised support and experiences, through curriculum inclusivity practices and personal tutoring. We will also provide opportunities to build skills and knowledge, as well as ensure financial support is available. At the institution level, enhanced analytics will enable us to proactively identify and reach out to target students who may be at risk, rather than rely on self-selection for support.

See pages 4- 23 of the access and participation plan for more information for our objectives and intervention strategies.

How students can get involved

ACM offers opportunities to students to share feedback and get involved in access and participation plan via focus groups, student surveys, and APP outreach projects. Students' feedback is analysed by an evaluator external to ACM to ensure impartiality. Additionally, ACM's HDAP is a member of the Student Voice Committee and Student Council, where HDAP provides regular updates on Access and Participation work, and stays alert to students' concerns linked to equality of opportunities, sense of belonging, cultural ignorance, and quality of student support which may be voiced in the meeting. The student voice committee and student council consist of student representatives from different campuses and programmes.

Moreover, ACM has recently developed a Student President role to represent student voice and experience within the organisation and to actively engage in ACM's widening participation planning and strategy. The Student President role is also created to facilitate the creation of ACM student societies and Student Union.

See page 25 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved

ACM will systematically measure the impact of all the projects and activities we carry out, to better inform our strategies and make sense of what works and what doesn't. Our evaluation strategy includes:

- Embedding evaluation in the design, implementation, and review of activity,
- Self - reflection to inform strategic decisions and identify areas for improvement.
- Ensuring staff receive evaluation training and support
- Ensuring staff receive training required to deliver activity/ project.

- Using our SEER membership to ensure our evaluation is based on latest sector research and designed to expose strengths and weakness of our APP strategies.
- Participating in collaborative projects to share and exchange knowledge and good practice.
- Publishing and sharing our finding, both internally and externally.

See pages 25-29 of the access and participation plan for more information.

Contact details for further information

Please contact [name, email address, contact number] for more information.

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