

Access and Student Success Strategy 2025-30



“Access and Student Success is built into the fabric of what we stand for at the University of Leeds. It’s one of the core strands of the institution’s Student Education Strategy. We are committed to ensuring that our student community experience a University of Leeds education which is accessible, inclusive and transformative for all, including PhD students/ postgraduate researchers.

The last five years have seen significant progress against the success measures outlined in our current Access and Student Success Strategy (2020 - 2025) and in terms of embedding an access and student success ethos into the university’s culture. However, we must continue to improve and enhance the experience of our student communities, particularly in view of the challenges facing the sector and to respond to changing student needs.

We will do this, and support commitments set out in the institutional White Paper including delivery of institutional KPIs and a focus on the way in which we deliver services. Harnessing our institutional values of Collaboration, Compassion, Inclusivity and Integrity, the new strategy reflects our aspiration to enable every student to thrive and succeed, regardless of background”.

Professor Shearer West

Vice-Chancellor and President

The Vice-Chancellor and President is responsible for the leadership, management and financial stewardship of the University and is accountable to its Council.



**Vision statement for
Access and Student Success 2025-2030**

**The University of Leeds –
where *all* students can
thrive and succeed.**



Vision:

The University of Leeds – where all students can thrive and succeed.



Objectives

1. Develop lifelong learning provision to enable access and skills development at all stages of the educational journey
2. Strengthen existing programmes to enable access and retain diverse communities of students
3. Build strong and supportive relationships to enhance belonging, improve outcomes and equip students for success at university and beyond
4. Proactive engagement and support for academic success

Enablers

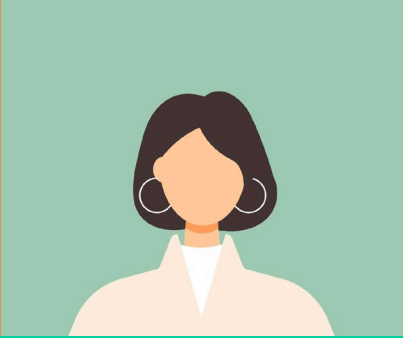
1. Build an anti-discrimination and global inclusion approach
2. Listen to our students and build a culture of evaluation and research to drive approach
3. Enhance ways of working for staff and students using digital technologies
4. Consistent operationalisation of strategy through governance, efficient and sustainable operations and staff development



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These ‘lived experience’ personas illustrate some of the diverse and intersectional experiences of students at Leeds that shape the Access and Student Success strategy





**Sally is a
first year
UG mature
student and
a parent to
2 children.**

Belonging

Sally worries about not fitting in with younger classmates and fears that her life experiences set her apart. She's concerned about being judged for taking an unconventional educational path.

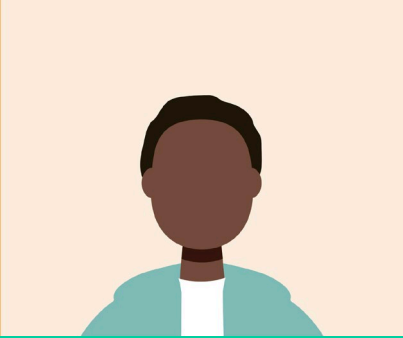
Support

Sally often worries about the lack of support in balancing academic demands with childcare, and getting back into studying after time off. She fears missing out on resources or connections that younger, more flexible students can access.

Participation

Sally struggles with imposter syndrome and worries her age will make her less adaptable to the academic environment.

She sometimes feels hesitant to participate fully, fearing she lacks recent academic experience.



**Mohammed
is a finalist
UG first-
generation
student and
part-time
worker.**

Belonging

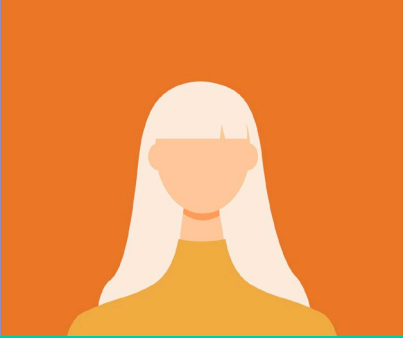
Mohammed fears feeling isolated due to his financial constraints. He worries that his lecturers and classmates don't understand his responsibilities and often feels like an outsider.

Support

As a first-generation student, Mohammed feels he lacks guidance on how to succeed in a university setting. He wishes the university would be clearer and more proactive with guidance on how to succeed at Leeds. He doesn't know what he doesn't know.

Participation

Mohammed fears his job may conflict with studies and that limited availability could undervalue his input, affecting his confidence in class and networking.



**Grace is
a PGT
international
student and a
part of the
LGBTQ+
community.**

Belonging

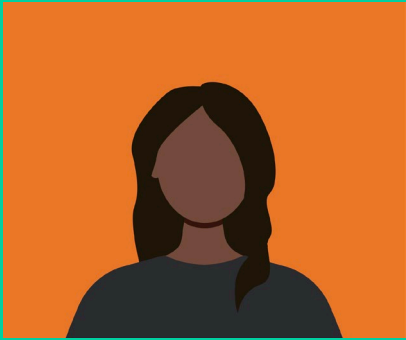
Grace worries about fitting in due to cultural differences and their LGBTQ+ identity identity. They fear they will not find an accepting community at Leeds and therefore will have a very isolated student experience.

Support

Grace is concerned about understanding the UK academic system and expectations. They face financial pressures due to limited work options, especially if visa restrictions affect their ability to earn income.

Participation

Grace worries that cultural barriers may hinder their engagement in campus activities or advocacy. They sometimes feels hesitant to speak up, uncertain if their perspectives will be understood or valued in this new setting.



**Flora is a
PGR black
student with
a disability.**

Belonging

Flora worries about facing bias and struggling to find like-minded people, which makes her university experience feel isolating. This concern affects her comfort and confidence in social settings.

Support

Flora fears that the university may lack support or understanding of the dual challenges she faces. She often hesitates to ask for support as she fears being seen as “difficult” or needing “additional” support.

Participation

Flora is apprehensive about actively participating, as she worries that her disability might lead others to question her abilities or commitment. She also fears encountering racial biases that may diminish her confidence.

Our ambition for 2030

In 2030, every Leeds student will be able to say...

**“I feel supported
and welcomed”**

**“I can succeed
and thrive”**

**“We connect with
our community”**



Which will impact every stage of the student journey:

Student Journey ↓		"I feel supported and welcomed"	"I can succeed and thrive"	"We connect with our community"
	Pre-entry / arrival	We will be an exemplar of lifelong learning attracting talented and diverse students.	Sustained engagement will ensure that prospective students understand the benefit of education at the University of Leeds, prior lived experience is not a barrier and they are prepared for transition to Leeds.	Our commitment to civic responsibility enhances the social, economic and cultural life of communities.
	University experience (academic / co-curricular)	Leeds fosters a vibrant, inclusive community that celebrates students from diverse backgrounds.	Our delivery of the student experience ensures that students can transition between years of study successfully fulfilling their definition of success.	Our personalised approach to advising enhances engagement alongside academic development, wellbeing and progression.
	Progression (employability / alumni)	Students understand how we will support them in preparing for next steps pre-application and throughout their time at Leeds.	Our students are able to prepare for their futures by programmes and wraparound support activities which embed employability and help students build a plan for their next steps	Our students and alumni access opportunities to enhance employability meeting their needs and circumstances



Find out more about how we're driving Access and Student Success at the University of Leeds.

- [Click here](#) to explore examples of our activities and approaches.
- **Contact us for more information:** studentsuccess@leeds.ac.uk