

Access & Participation Statement

2024-25

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Responsible	Executive Principal
Approved by & date:	Academic Board [Dec 2023]
Linked policies and documents	1. Oxford Business College Vision 2030 2. Admission Policy for Home Students 3. Equality & Diversity Policy
External reference points	1. Buckinghamshire New University: Access & Participation Plan 2. Ravensbourne University London: Access & Participation Plan 3. The University of West London: Access & Participation Plan 4. New College Durham: Access & Participation Plan 5. NCG: Access & Participation Plan 6. Equality Act 2010: Equality Act 2010 (legislation.gov.uk) 7. Regulatory advice 7: Advice on preparing your 2019-20 access and participation statement - Office for Students 8. Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA): https://www.hesa.ac.uk/OfS
Audience:	Prospective and current students, University partners, employers, and other stakeholders.

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1 Mission

1.1 The Oxford Business College (OBC) mission is to catalyse the transformation of our key stakeholders into visionary global professionals, equipping them with innovative sustainable practices, nurturing cutting-edge insights, skills, & unwavering self-assurance, empowering them to excel & create a lasting, positive impact in our ever-evolving world. Our vision is one of empowerment and opportunity. We understand the unique challenges faced by those from diverse and underrepresented communities. Our commitment is to provide the guidance and support necessary to help each student not only overcome these challenges but also to surpass their own expectations. We encourage our students to embrace this journey with us as a new beginning, where every step forward is a stride towards achieving their full potential. The key message to students therefore is:

“It’s not where you come from, but where you choose to go”.

2 Purpose

2.1 To develop an access and participation statement that aligns with OBC's strategic vision, as outlined in our 'Vision 2030' strategy and our Equality and Diversity Policy. This aims to broaden access to higher education and support students in their academic journey and personal growth within their chosen programmes.

2.2 To ensure that OBC's Access and Participation Statement adheres to the Office for Students (OfS) Regulatory Framework Condition A2 and the Higher Education and Research Act (HERA) 2017, thus fulfilling the requirements for access and participation statement approval.

3 Background & Context

3.1 The Office for Students (OfS) mandates that all higher education providers, as part of their initial and continuing registration conditions, create either an Access and Participation Statement or Plan. Given that OBC is applying for registration under the OfS's approved category for fee levels up to the basic amount, producing an Access and Participation Statement is deemed appropriate.

3.2 For the 2024-2025 academic year, OBC, will ensure that its Access and Participation Statement aligns with the policies of its partner universities (Buckinghamshire New University, Ravensbourne University London, New College Durham, NCG and The University of West London). This approach reflects our pledge to uphold the principles of access and

participation across our network, maintaining consistency and dedication to inclusivity in higher education.

3.3 OBC is dedicated to aiding students from non-traditional backgrounds in accessing higher education. This commitment is focused on supporting their academic progress and fostering career aspirations, ensuring every student has the opportunity to realise their potential.

3.4 Currently, OBC provides Full Time programmes in Business Management, Business Studies, Tourism & Events Management, and Health & Social Care

3.5 These programmes are offered in collaboration with partner universities: Buckinghamshire New University, Ravensbourne University London, New College Durham, and the University of West London. All our partners align with the goal of widening participation and access to the underrepresented group that we serve.

3.6 OBC operates in Oxford, Croydon, West London, Slough, and Nottingham, focusing on recruiting students from these areas, particularly those from lower higher education participation areas (52%, Polar Quintiles 1 & 2¹), lower income, and diverse socio-economic backgrounds. The majority of our students are mature (87%), coming from varied ethnic backgrounds and often returning to education after a significant break. OBC maintains its commitment to this student profile while also aiming to attract younger students with traditional Level 3 qualifications. Admission is conducted through a fair, transparent process, considering formal qualifications, life and work experiences, or prior learning within the UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

4 Strategic Priorities

4.1 OBC Vision 2030 statement identifies three strategic priorities;

- Opportunities in Higher Education
- Academic Standards and Student Experience
- Our People, Communities and Culture

4.2 OBC's Vision 2030 embodies a commitment to widening access and participation in higher education. This vision actively promotes inclusivity and diversity, aligning with strategic priorities to ensure equitable opportunities and nurture a vibrant, diverse academic community.

¹ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/young-participation-by-area/>

5 Access & Participation Objectives

5.1 OBC's approach to access and participation is guided by several key principles:

- Providing opportunities for individuals returning to education after a significant break.
- Encouraging those who previously lacked the confidence to pursue higher education.
- Boosting personal confidence through academic success in a supportive environment.
- Creating a welcoming, secure space that values equality, diversity, and rich experiences.
- Assisting individuals in realising their career ambitions, whether through employment or further study.

5.2 OBC prioritises recruiting and admitting students from diverse backgrounds, particularly those underrepresented in higher education. Leveraging our campus locations in Oxford, Croydon, West London, Slough, and Nottingham, we aim to widen access and participation in higher education. We welcome applicants without traditional qualifications, valuing those who can demonstrate higher education readiness, commitment to study, and relevant life and work experiences, showcasing motivation and determination for academic pursuits.

6 Ambition

6.1 OBC is committed to enrolling students from various underrepresented groups in higher education, focusing on:

- Individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds or areas with low higher education participation.
- Those from low-income families.
- Ethnic minorities from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Mature learners, recognising the value of their life experiences in the educational setting.

6.2 OBC employs a recruitment and admissions strategy that prioritises local community engagement and word-of-mouth referrals from our current and former students. This

approach enables us to effectively reach and connect with diverse and often underserved communities, which may be overlooked by more traditional higher education institutions.

7 Activities and support

- 7.1 OBC enhances the student experience through healthy employer engagement, business simulation and the newly formed International Business Incubator and Innovation Centre (IBIC). This, coupled with a focus on employability skills and a supportive learning environment, aligns with our Equality and Diversity Policy, ensuring inclusive practices.
- 7.2 At OBC, personalised support is a cornerstone of our educational provision. We offer tailored learning plans based on initial skills assessments, student-centred teaching, and additional academic support clinics and workshops, fostering individual student growth and academic progress.
- 7.3 OBC provides comprehensive student welfare services, including free English support sessions, access to a qualified counsellor, and an open-door policy for immediate staff assistance. Our social programme and activities outside academia promote a balanced, inclusive, and supportive community, aligning with our commitment to student well-being and success.
- 7.4 OBC monitors and provides student data through its Higher Education Partners and other returns required by external bodies.

8 Monitoring & Review

- 8.1 OBC's Access and Participation Statement undergoes annual review and potential amendment by the Academic Board, which includes the Student President and senior academic staff. This ensures that the document remains current and effective in guiding the College's access and participation initiatives. The reviewed and approved statement, along with any amendments, is made accessible on the College's website for transparency and community engagement. Additionally, the Academic Board conducts an annual monitoring to assess the effectiveness and impact of the Access and Participation initiatives.

9 Data protection

- 9.1 OBC is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office as a Data Controller.

Details of the School's registration are published on the [Information Commissioners website](#). OBC as a Data Controller shall implement appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure that processing of personal information is performed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

10 Accessibility

- 10.1 This document can be provided in alternative formats upon request. For further information, or to make a request, please contact enquiries@obc.ac.uk.