

## **The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA): Summary of 2020-21 to 2024-25 access and participation plan**

### **What is an access and participation plan?**

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity. This supports underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

You can see the full access and participation plan for LIPA at <https://lipa.ac.uk/more-about-us/access-and-participation-plan>

### **Key points**

*See pages 1 to 12 of the full plan*

LIPA is a small, specialist provider for learners who perform and make performance possible.

The focus of our access and participation plan is on improving outcomes for specific groups of students. Data shows that, compared to their peers at LIPA, we have gaps in access for certain groups of students. These are students:

- from areas where not many people traditionally go on to higher education
- from black and ethnically diverse backgrounds
- who enter higher education aged 21 or over (mature students)

From our analysis of data, there do not appear to be significant gaps in outcomes for enrolled students from underrepresented groups compared to their peers (such as completion of studies, degree award and progression into employment). We will keep this under review. If we find evidence of gaps, we will alert the Office for Students about the need to make variations to our plan.

### **Fees we charge**

At LIPA, the annual fee charged for full-time students is £9,250. We reserve the right to apply inflationary increases to this fee level (using the RPI-X) if permitted.

### **Financial help available**

*See pages 16, 19 & 20 of the full plan*

We offer financial support to students from underrepresented groups. This helps students access higher education and continue studying until their course is completed. The support includes:

- An annual bursary of £560 for the duration of the course if the student's household income is below £25,000
- An annual care leavers' bursary of £1,000 for students who have been in local authority care for a period of six months or more prior to their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and who are under 25 years at the time they start undergraduate study
- A hardship fund to support students who experience financial hardship during their time at LIPA (administered by Liverpool John Moores University)

From 2023 entry onwards, there will be no audition fees for any of our courses. We also offer travel grants for students to attend our auditions/interviews when they live in postcode areas where participation in higher education is traditionally low. More information about the fees we charge and the financial help that we offer can be found at: <https://lipa.ac.uk/applying/finance/student-finance-and-bursaries>

**Information for students***See page 22 of the full plan*

Prospective students receive information on fees and financial support at our open days and through our website. Offer holders also receive information on fees and funding in April and as part of their pre-enrolment information in August.

Current students receive information about fees and the financial support available through our student intranet and through direct communications in April and August. For the most up-to-date information, see [our website](#).

**What we are aiming to achieve***See pages 10 to 15 of the full plan*

Our main aim is to encourage and support more students from a range of diverse and underrepresented groups to access higher education and careers in the creative and performing arts. Based on assessment of our performance, we have identified the following areas on which to focus our work:

- Supporting access to higher education – we provide a range of free practical engagement opportunities in creative and performing arts subjects for learners from underrepresented backgrounds. These include information about the realities and benefits of studying on one of our courses and careers within the performing arts.
- Supporting attainment-raising for pre-16 learners via skills development activities within our subject areas and preparation activities for audition/interviews within our school/college partners. This includes with LIPA Primary and High School, which we have previously set up.
- Reducing barriers to applying and attending auditions/interviews for students from areas where higher education participation is low and care experienced learners via a range of initiatives.

We also want to create an environment where students at LIPA can fulfil their full potential and achieve successful outcomes. Our primary purpose here is to provide the appropriate support for learners to complete their degree courses and progress into sustained careers within the arts and entertainment economy.

**What we are doing to achieve our aims***See pages 15 to 20 of the full plan*

To support access to higher education, we will:

- Offer a range of targeted activities at LIPA to enthuse participants around performing arts-based disciplines, develop skills, raise awareness of career options and provide experiences to draw upon which they might not have previously received (such as mock auditions). These activities include our Year 10/11 programme and Get Set residential summer school (Year 12).
- Deliver targeted outreach work to schools/colleges, including tailored programmes with up to 9 local partner pre-16 schools and up to 10 Further Education colleges. These activities have two aims: to raise awareness of progression routes and to support skills development and raise attainment.
- Continue to maintain a strong partnership and support learners at LIPA Primary and High School and LIPA Sixth Form College. These providers will be able to access further engagement activities through our Widening Participation team and Higher Education subject departments. We recognise that we are in a unique position to work with youngsters who study through these providers, and we try to instil a consistent ethos towards the creative arts and project-based learning across the wider learning group.

- Remove audition fees for all applicants and offer travel grants and targeted pre-audition advice for applicants from areas where participation in higher education is low or who have had experience in local authority care. This aims to reduce barriers to attending these selection events.
- Work on building strategic partnerships with local, regional, and national organisations who we believe can help us reach and encourage more diverse learners to consider study with us. For example, we plan to pilot regional audition/interview workshops hosted at appropriate arts organisations.

To support current students, we will:

- Continue to offer a range of student support initiatives, including an in-house open-referral student support service, to support students while studying with us and allow them to access tailored support.
- Ensure that all our courses have a focus on employer/industry engagement and on ensuring students from underrepresented backgrounds are able to take up widely available opportunities to develop personal, social and professional skills.
- Offer financial support, including bursaries and hardship funding for eligible students, and practical support for students applying to Student Finance England.

#### **How students can get involved**

*See page 20 of the full plan*

We meet termly with our Student Officers to gather student input into the design, implementation and monitoring of our access and participation plan. LIPA students and graduates help create skills building workshops and deliver a lot of our outreach and in reach activities. We run regular training events for them. Students can also comment on our plan or discuss working with the Widening Participation team via [wp@lipa.ac.uk](mailto:wp@lipa.ac.uk)

*See pages 21 to 22 of the full plan*

#### **Evaluation: how we will measure what we have achieved**

Our programmes of activity are informed by the best available evidence about what works for students. Our most cost and resource intensive activities receive the highest level of review. We will collect data and feedback to evaluate:

- our outreach programme design
- the impact of the programme of activity we are doing to achieve our aims
- monitoring of demographics of those taking part in key programmes to ensure we are reaching those with most need
- the impact on achieving our overall aim of improved access and an inclusive environment.

We report progress against our access and participation targets to a series of internal committees and provide high level reports to our Council. If there are wider concerns about our progress, these will be advanced through our committee structure. Where appropriate, we will adjust our interventions in the best interests of our students. We will also look into using external experts to review and support our evaluation processes.

#### **Contact for further information**

You can contact our Access & Schools/Colleges Liaison Manager, Ben Leventhall, via [wp@lipa.ac.uk](mailto:wp@lipa.ac.uk) for further information.