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Access and Participation Statement 2026-27

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Related GBS policies

- GBS Strategic Plan
- GBS Equality and Diversity Policy
- GBS Admissions Policy

External Reference Points

1. Leeds Trinity University Access and Participation Plan.
2. University of Suffolk Access and Participation Plan.
3. Bath Spa University Access and Participation Plan.
4. Oxford Brookes University Access and Participation Plan.
5. Canterbury Christ Church University Access and Participation Plan
6. BTEC Higher Nationals Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment (2026-2027)
7. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA): UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2024)
8. Equality Act 2010: Equality Act 2010 (legislation.gov.uk)
9. Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA): https://www.hesa.ac.uk/

Global Banking School Access and Participation Statement 2026-27

1. Purpose

1.1. To provide an access and participation statement that supports Global Banking School (GBS) strategic aim, as detailed in GBS Strategic Plan 2024-27 together with our Equality and Diversity Policy, of widening access to higher education and supporting students to progress and achieve at their chosen programme of study.

1.2. To ensure that GBS Access and Participation Statement meets the requirements of Office for Students (OfS) Regulatory Framework Condition A2 and Higher Education and Research Act (HERA) 2017 for approval of access and participation statements.

2. Background

2.1. The Office for Students (OfS) requires, as a part of its initial and on-going conditions for registration, that all higher education providers produce either an Access and Participation Statement or an Access and Participation Plan. Since GBS is registered with the OfS for the approved category for fee charges up to the basic fee amount, an Access and Participation Statement is appropriate.

2.2. For the 2025-26 academic year, students of GBS are enrolled as students of an appropriate programme awarding institution (Bath Spa University, Canterbury Christ Church University, Leeds Trinity University, Oxford Brookes University, University of Suffolk and Pearson)[1]. As such, GBS is subject to each awarding institution's approach to access and participation, as detailed in their respective Access and Participation Plans, as well as GBS's own Access and Participation Statement. Following successful registration with the OfS, GBS has published its Access and Participation Statement on its website and reviews the Statement on an annual basis.

3. General Statement

3.1. GBS is committed to recruiting and supporting students from under-represented groups to facilitate them to meet their education needs and career aspirations.

[1] *The information provided in this list is accurate as of the date of this statement's publication.*

3.2. At present, GBS runs a range of higher education programmes; from Higher National Diplomas and undergraduate Honours degrees with an integrated foundation year, to postgraduate taught Masters degree programmes. GBS runs higher education programmes of study in partnership with other higher education providers through sub-contractual arrangements. Our partners currently include Bath Spa University, Canterbury Christ Church University, Leeds Trinity University, Oxford Brookes University and the University of Suffolk. GBS is also a Pearson-approved centre and runs the Pearson BTEC HND in Business, BTEC HND in Health and Social Care Practice, BTEC HND in Digital Technologies for England (Cyber Security) and BTEC HND in Construction Management for England (Construction Design and Build Technician).

3.3. GBS recruits and admits students from around its main geographical locations in London, Birmingham, Leeds, and Manchester. We provide access to HE to students living in areas of relatively low higher education participation, low household income, and socio-economic status. Many of our students are mature (over 25 years of age), are from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, speak English as an additional language, and have been away from education for significant periods of time.

3.4. We will continue to recruit students around our geographical locations and expect to maintain the profile of the students we currently have but expanded our portfolio of taught programmes during 2025/26. These new programmes expand the range of study options available to prospective students and provide additional further study options for our existing HND and first-degree graduates, helping GBS to fulfil its higher education mission.

3.5. Through a fair and transparent admissions process GBS admits students who wish to undertake a programme of study offered by GBS and who are able to demonstrate that they meet the requisite entry requirements, through either formal qualifications or recognised life and work experiences, or through recognition of prior certificated learning at Level 4/5 in the UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

4. GBS Strategic Goals 2024-27

4.1. GBS Strategic Plan 2024-2027 has identified three strategic goals as follows:

- Student Outcomes that lead to well paid jobs
- Growth that serves our communities
- Provide the highest quality provision.

4.2. Widening participation and access to higher education studies is of fundamental importance to helping achieve GBS's strategic goals.

4.3. GBS takes an inclusive approach to recruiting and supporting individuals and groups of individuals with protected characteristics (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

5. Access and Participation Objectives

(A) Areas seeking to address

5.1. The areas of access and participation GBS seeks to address are informed by the following principles:

- To provide an opportunity for those who have been out of education for a significant period and wish to return to study.
- To provide an opportunity for those who may not in the past have had the confidence to undertake studies at higher education level.
- To enhance everyone's personal confidence through success and achievement, underpinned by a supportive learning environment.
- To provide a welcoming and secure environment in which equality of opportunity, diversity of backgrounds, and rich experiences are valued.
- To help everyone identify and realize their career aspirations through diverse means of employment and/or further study.

5.2. GBS's main focus is to recruit and admit students from a wide range of backgrounds where engagement with higher education is or has been underrepresented. Our campus locations in London, Birmingham, Leeds, and Manchester, together with our recruitment from the local geographical areas, enable GBS to achieve its stated aims for widening access and participation in higher education. We welcome prospective students who do not hold formal qualification requirements who are able to demonstrate that they can benefit from higher education, are committed to study, and can evidence relevant life and work experiences together with determination and motivation to study.

(B) Ambition and Strategy

5.3. GBS aims to recruit and admit individuals to higher education from a wide range of different under-represented groups. These include the following groups, many of which are intersectional:

- People who are socio-economically under-privileged
- People from neighbourhoods underserved by higher education

- People minoritised on the basis of race and ethnicity and underrepresented in HE
- Mature learners.
- People with caring responsibilities and/or other commitments that may restrict their access to HE

5.4. Our student profile over the years demonstrates that we have been highly successful in meeting our widening participation aims. GBS is committed to maintaining its success at access and participation and welcomes all individuals from under-represented groups in higher education.

5.5. We will approach recruitment and selection for admission to higher education through contacts with and advertising in local communities. Furthermore, many of our students come to us through recommendations from our past and current students. Community based referrals have been and will continue to be a vital aspect of our strategic approach to reach out to the highly diverse and distinct communities that more conventional and traditional institutions of higher education find difficulty in contacting.

5.6. GBS monitors and provides student data through Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and Jisc[2] and other returns required by external bodies.

(C) Activities and Support for Students

5.7. GBS provides support and encouragement to individuals enquiring about higher education study from first point of contact through to being a student at GBS. Our approach is to invite prospective students for informal discussion before going through a more formal application and interview process. Some applicants lack initial confidence in their abilities, and we aim to assure them that if they have the required formal qualifications, which may have been obtained some years ago, or relevant life and work experiences, we will support them in their studies. When invited into GBS for informal discussion, prospective students are offered the opportunity to meet existing students to ask them about their experiences.

5.8. Upon commencement of their studies at GBS, student support is offered through a full induction and needs assessment process with the opportunity to meet the staff at GBS, including their Student Success Tutor, teaching, and professional services staff. We provide academic, welfare and pastoral support.

[2] HESA is now part of Jisc. Jisc is now the data controller of personal data previously controlled by HESA.

5.9. At first-degree level, GBS offers four-year programmes, with an integrated foundation year. The foundation year is specifically designed to support students into higher education, with a focus on (i) developing the key skills needed for successful study in HE, (ii) refreshing and embedding the foundational knowledge of their chosen field of study, and (iii) supporting students to develop the soft skills needed for graduate-level employment. Early modules are supported by experienced study skills lecturers, alongside subject-specialist lecturers.

5.10. The foundation year of each programme is led by an Associate Dean whose job is to ensure that students have a support transition into UK HE. GBS also supports foundation year students through targeted study skills support offered through learning and careers needs analyses in the first weeks of the programme.

5.11. Throughout the programmes of study, specialist Cohort Leaders at each level of study are responsible for coordinating students' academic support throughout their studies. Study Skills Lecturers, Student Success Tutors and Librarians provide one to one academic support throughout their studies, Retention Officers and the Student Wellbeing Team provide pastoral support, and the Graduate Employment and Entrepreneurship Team supports students towards their graduate outcomes.

5.12. Curriculum, learning materials, assessment and classroom teaching is designed at each level to build on the previous level, with a particular focus on valuing students' lived experience, on offering accessibility and developing the academic and professional skills our particular cohort requires, and on building students' confidence over time.

5.13. Employability skills are developed throughout the programmes: GBS is embedding its graduate attributes programme across all faculties and facilitated by the Graduate Employment and Entrepreneurship Team, students have the option to undertake additional employability badges at each level of study.

6. Monitoring, review and approval

6.1. GBS Access and Participation Statement is considered by Academic Board which is attended by external independent board members and senior academic staff.

6.2. The Statement is reviewed on an annual basis and may be amended by GBS at any time. Any amendments and revisions will be approved by Academic Board and the

approved revised document made available on GBS's website and its Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

6.3. The Access and Participation statement will be monitored on an annual basis by Academic Board.

7. Data Protection and Confidentiality

7.1. GBS 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. GBS 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).

8. Alternative Format

8.1. This document can be provided in alternative formats (including large print, audio and electronic) upon request. For further information, or to make a request, please contact the Academic Standards and Quality Office at asqo@globalbanking.ac.uk.