

Access and Widening Participation Statement 2024-25

Current Context

Recruitment and Admissions

1. Oxford International is committed to the development of a study environment that includes and supports all students and staff, where all are able to participate equally and where every individual has the opportunity and is encouraged to fulfil their potential and which further encourages and enables staff to promote and support student achievement.
2. In regard to its past and current intakes of international students, Oxford International has in recruiting students provided clear, accurate and unambiguous information through its marketing materials in print and on-line, which has aimed at enabling prospective students to make well-informed decisions about their future studies.
3. Oxford International further operates according to the guidelines provided by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to ensure maximum compliance with UK consumer protection laws, including the Consumer Rights Act 2015 (CRA), the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPTR) and the Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 (CCRs).
4. Great care is taken in providing inclusive images and testimonials from current and former students to show how the company's colleges and schools welcome students irrespective of gender and ethnicity. The involvement of students in the recruitment process is enhanced further by the use of chat rooms which link prospective with present students and the use of student ambassadors who act as a support and resource to applicants throughout the application process. In this way students can learn from their peers about life and study in the UK in general and in Oxford International's centres in particular.
5. In terms of the admission of prospective students, they are assessed in accordance with published entry criteria and given offers to study in Oxford International's centres based on the evidence of their previous studies. In the application process all students are judged equally regardless of gender, age or ethnicity. Older students are encouraged through the recognition of wider life experience, for example, work-based experience.
6. Students who have declared disabilities, protected characteristics or learning differences are considered with this background information in mind. Specialist advice is sought on the practicalities and support required for such students to complete their studies with Oxford International successfully. In the embedded colleges the advice of the partner university's Disability and Advice Service is taken and a Personal Learning Programme drawn up to cater for the needs and requirements of the individual student. This approach also ensures that the student will be in a position to transfer to the partner university at the completion of their studies with Oxford International.
7. Where prospective students fall short of the English requirement set for commencement of degree studies, provision is made for them to attend either a six or twelve-week pre-sessional English programme to bring them up to the required level overall and in all four language skills. Support for English and academic study skills continues through the Oxford International programmes.
8. Oxford International has an appreciation of student needs and appropriate financial fee arrangements are agreed to enhance access opportunities through provision of bursary schemes in certain scenarios. Although students can be supported in this way through their

Oxford International programme, this can only see them as far as transfer to the partner university, where further help would be required and might not be available.

9. Admissions data is collated by Oxford International to allow the process to be checked for fairness and inclusivity. In the embedded colleges a check is kept annually on the gender balance within individual colleges. This information is reported through the various Steering or Management Boards to the OIEG Board of Governors and is further used to inform the activities of the marketing and recruitment teams.

Challenges during study and role of student feedback

10. International students are provided with comprehensive pre-arrival information and a personal contact to whom they can turn for information and advice.
11. It is appreciated that, once enrolled, students may face a variety of challenges including difficulty in adjusting to living in a different environment, coping with culture shock and understanding the processes and demands of the UK higher education system.
12. A comprehensive induction week is provided upon start of term, with support from members of the dedicated professional services team. Student feedback is sought on this vital introduction to the UK and its education system and used to improve processes in the future.
13. The continuing English language and skills area within the curriculum for each Oxford international programme provides the teaching staff with multiple opportunities to reinforce messages around the need for good and acceptable academic practice in studies.
14. Further student surveys allow students to comment on the individual modules and whole programme studied and the totality of their experience in Oxford International's centres, this last via an Exit Survey. The importance of the student voice is stressed further in the form of Student Staff Liaison Committees in each OI centre, where student representatives are able to raise matters of concern to the student body and into which responses of the centre's management team are fed. The opinions of students provide a critical aspect of quality assurance and the findings are an essential part of the annual review of OI and its programmes and procedures with a view to continuing reflection and improvement.
15. These feedback opportunities assist Oxford International in identifying aspects of the course, which may present difficulties to some parts of the student body, and ways to overcome such difficulties are discussed with students.

Supporting student success

16. In all its centres OIEG offers support to meet the needs of students and ensure more diverse access and participation;
 - a. Pastoral care and support
 - i. OIEG has dedicated professional services teams in its centres to provide advice and guidance and, in the case of embedded colleges, signpost students to the multiple resources available in partner universities.
 - ii. OIEG has an enhanced level of supervision and care for those students who aged under 18 through its Safeguarding Policy.
 - b. Smaller classes
 - i. With class sizes no more than 20 and frequently much smaller, tutors can provide the best possible support to international students acclimatising to

UK academia. In this context, the needs of individual students can be more readily identified and catered for.

- c. Tutor system
 - i. Students receive a wide range of support from personal tutors; this includes both academic support and support on pastoral matters.
- d. University Support in the case of embedded colleges
 - i. OIEG students studying in embedded colleges on university campuses are fully-enrolled students of the host university and have access to that university's wide range of counselling and support services, including learning resources and guidance on academic issues.

Student achievement and continuation

17. Students who are at risk of non-continuation can be identified at an early stage and made aware of their situation promptly. Personal study plans/options are then agreed with senior managers of the centre to provide them with the best possible chance to of required levels their programme successfully and move on to the later stages of their degree studies. For students who fall short of required levels to progress are offered alternative study options.
18. OIEG is committed to inclusive learning and teaching and, in the case of validated programmes at the London Centre and in the embedded colleges uses established quality assurance principles in reviewing the content, delivery and assessment of modules and programmes.
19. Students are requested to notify the OIEG Admissions team of any protected characteristics during the application process and they are encouraged to inform their academic and personal tutors of any specific needs which may arise during their programme of study. OIEG, in concert with partner universities, has systems in place in its embedded colleges for a number of measures to be implemented in supporting students, including:
 - a. Individual reasonable adjustments
 - b. Diagnostic assessment for Specific Learning Differences
 - c. Advice on equipment and access
 - d. Liaison with academic and other university staff and external agencies
 - e. Referral to university counselling services.
20. Successful completion of OIEG's programme and progression to the next level of study is a key indicator of the company's effectiveness in supporting students' aims and aspirations. In the case of all programmes OIEG has the services of external examiners who provide an independent voice in judging the effectiveness of the assessment process and the comparability of standards in the OIEG centres with the wider sector. Student outcomes are plotted carefully and an analysis of these features prominently in an internal review of OIEG programmes and processes.

Future Strategy

1. The position as far as Access and Widening Participation in OIEG's current and future embedded colleges is likely to remain as above. The focus will continue to be on the recruitment, admission and preparing of international students who will require evidence of access to substantial funds to meet UKVI requirements for a Student Visa.
2. Recruitment will continue to seek prospective students from around the world without distinction as far as gender, age, ethnicity, disability and learning differences are

concerned. Admissions processes will continue to seek to accommodate as wide a range of students as possible and the delivery in the colleges will similarly accommodate and celebrate the achievements of a wide range of students.

3. Financial support for international students through bursaries will still be provided, however this is unlikely to be matched by the partner universities to cover further years of study.
4. With an increasing number of domestic students in other OIEG centres the following initiatives will be taken: (i) Collation of data on applicants to record admissions statistics in terms of those admitted from disadvantaged groups, ethnic minorities and specific groups such as the children of military families; (ii) Use of such data to inform OIEG's future approaches to achieving a higher level of recruitment from under-represented groups; (iii) Drawing on experience in the international market to encourage applications from students with disabilities or particular learning differences.
5. Drawing on the lengthy experience of OIEG in international education to identify the needs of individual students, provide support in drawing up Personal Learning Plan and evaluate its success in improving student outcomes.
6. Allocation of a percentage of fee income to support outreach activities to minority and disadvantaged groups and to establish a scholarship/bursary fund to provide financial support for students for the whole of their Oxford International programme or for those who encounter difficulties during their studies and whose continuation with OI is at risk.
7. Assessment annually of the progress of the OIEG strategy on Access and Participation and recommendation of the strategy's refinement and development to the Board of Governors.