

Reverend Canon Professor Peter Neil
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20 September 2019

Dear Reverend Canon Professor Neil

General ongoing condition A1: Access and participation plan

In accordance with Section 29 of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA), the Office for Students (OfS) can confirm that your submitted access and participation plan has been approved as set out in the approval letter attached as Annex A from the Director for Fair Access and Participation.

The following annexes to this letter contain important information about the approval process, including the requirement for a registered provider to publish its approved access and participation plans:

Annex A: Letter from the Director for Fair Access and Participation

Annex B: Notice setting out issues that the OfS wishes to draw to your attention, including any actions you are required to take in relation to your ongoing registration with the OfS

Annex C: Approved Access and Participation Plan

The OfS will write to you in due course with general information about our arrangements for monitoring access and participation plans for 2020-21 and beyond. This will expand on the monitoring information contained in Regulatory Notice 1¹ which sets out the requirement for all providers to publish and submit to the OfS an annual access and participation impact report. We anticipate that we will require impact reports to be submitted annually in the January following the end of the relevant academic year.

¹ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/0bcce522-df4b-4517-a4fd-101c2468444a/regulatory-notice-1-access-and-participation-plan-guidance.pdf>

These monitoring arrangements will be in addition to the OfS's routine monitoring of the delivery of your previous access agreements and your approved 2019-20 access and participation plan.

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact the Monitoring and Intervention team at regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jack Smith', is positioned on a light grey rectangular background.

Jack Smith
Monitoring and Intervention Manager

Annex A

To: The governing body, Bishop Grosseteste University

Date: 20 September 2019

Decision to approve an access and participation plan

I am writing to confirm that I have approved Bishop Grosseteste University's access and participation plan. In accordance with section 29 of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA), and our published guidance², this approval is for a period of one year. However, this approval will automatically roll over in each subsequent year for a total period of **five years** unless I expressly notify you in writing that a new plan needs to be submitted for approval.

In reaching this decision, I have had regard to those matters in regulations 2 and 3 of the Higher Education (Access and Participation Plans) (England) Regulations 2018 (the "Regulations").

Accordingly, unless I notify you otherwise, Bishop Grosseteste University will not need to submit a new access and participation plan for approval until 2024. It is important to note that approval of your plan on this basis is conditional on you taking all reasonable steps to deliver the targets and measures in your plan, your compliance with any related monitoring requirements the OfS imposes on you, and any enhanced monitoring requirements or specific condition(s) of ongoing registration that have been imposed.

Requirement to publish this plan

Attached to this letter is your approved access and participation plan. Please publish this plan on your website and send the url to: regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk no later than 5pm on Thursday 3 October 2019.

Please note that you should not remove or change the existing link to your approved 2019-20 access and participation plan, as this plan remains in force and the link will therefore continue to be published on the OfS's Register.

Background and decision making framework

In accordance with section 29 of HERA, the OfS may, if it thinks fit, approve an access and participation plan. An access and participation plan is a plan that complies with sections 30 to 32 of HERA. Section 30 of HERA allows a limit to be set on the duration of an access and participation plan. This limit is prescribed in the Regulations and is currently set at a maximum of five years.

² *Regulatory notice 1: Access and participation plan guidance* - https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/0bcce522-df4b-4517-a4fd-101c2468444a/regulatory-notice-1_access-and-participation-plan-guidance.pdf. Please see in particular paragraph 52.

The OfS published Regulatory Notice 1: Access and participation plan guidance, on 28 February 2019 and this set out our approach to regulating access and participation, including the duration of our approval of plans.

Reasons for a five year approval

I have assessed your plan and I am satisfied that it meets the requirements of the published guidance relating to access and participation plans.

The OfS is satisfied that its general monitoring requirements for condition A1 and any additional specific requirements placed on you as set out in Annex B are sufficient to mitigate the risk of a future breach of condition A1.

Review of decision to approve your access and participation plan

Any decision of the OfS to approve a plan is in the first instance a provisional decision for the purposes of the Regulations. The governing body of a provider affected by a provisional decision may apply for a review of that decision in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations.

A provisional decision becomes final if the governing body either informs the OfS that it accepts the provisional decision or does not apply for a review of the provisional decision within 28 days beginning from the date of the provisional decision.

If you do not accept this provisional approval decision and wish to apply for a review, you must notify AandP.REVIEW@education.gov.uk within 28 days of the date on this letter. You must not publish your access and participation plan until the independent review process is complete.

The ability of a provider to apply for such a review relates only to my decision to approve your plan. It does not apply to decisions by the OfS to impose requirements to mitigate any increased risk of a future breach of ongoing condition A1.

Yours sincerely



Chris Millward
Director for Fair Access and Participation

Annex B – Notice setting out issues that the OfS wishes to draw to your attention

1. In your approved 2020-21 to 2024-15 access and participation plan, the OfS notes the following commitments:
 - i) Review and refresh the inclusive environment of the provider to welcome, support and enable all students to achieve positive outcomes and reduce continuation and attainment gaps particularly for BAME students, mature students, disabled students and students from IMD Q1.
 - ii) Develop graduate attributes and employability skills within all undergraduate programmes to provide graduates with the confidence to develop their careers or further study post-graduation to address gaps in progression for Mature students, Disabled students and students from IMD Q1 compared to IMD Q5
2. You are expected to include an update on your progress in implementing these commitments in your annual impact reports for the 2020-21 to 2024-25 access and participation plans, the first of which will be due by 31st January 2022.
3. The first annual impact report should also include an update on the progress you have made in developing your evaluation strategy.