

Access & Participation Statement 2021/22

1. Introduction

London Film Academy (LFA) is an internationally recognised film school, offering more than just an education in film. The film industry informs our course content and delivery as much as we seek to influence the film industry. This provides our students with real world industry experience in a collaborative, friendly, safe, and inclusive learning environment, supporting them to become world-class filmmakers.

A key aim of LFA is to increase diversity amongst those who work in the film industry by encouraging access and participation of under-represented groups. Widening access to film education for students from these groups, and supporting them through their studies, delivers significant benefits including social mobility, student wellbeing and success.

In this statement we cover:

1. LFA's current student body, by likelihood to enter higher education, gender, ethnicity, age, and disability, identifying any under-represented group.
2. Current activities to widen access and supporting completion, success, and progression.
3. Our support and activities for students and supporting policies.
4. LFA's ambitions and strategy in widening access and participation to under-represented groups.

2. LFA's current student body

At LFA we nurture a diverse, inclusive, and professional academic community that respects the individual, enabling them to strive for success, and contribute positively and sustainably to the local, national, and international world of filmmaking. Students can be confident that they have joined an institution that is serious about education, delivering courses of the highest quality, and nurturing a positive student experience for all.

LFA takes active steps to encourage enquiries, enrolment, and participation from all student groups, ensuring students from under-represented groups, or disadvantaged backgrounds, can access our courses and are supported throughout their studies and beyond.



3. Access

HESA's POLAR4 data shows the likelihood of different groups of young people to enter higher education from English maintained schools. Access quintile 1 being least likely and access quintile 5 most likely.

Quintile	2021 UK Students	Proportion	2021 LFA UK BA Students*	LFA %
5th Quintile	548,680	20.0%	13	46.4%
4th Quintile	549,395	20.1%	4	14.2%
3rd Quintile	549,675	20.1%	4	14.2%
2nd Quintile	538,680	19.7%	1	3.5%
1st Quintile	551,470	20.1%	2	7.1%
Unknown			4	14.2%

Source: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/associations-between-characteristics-of-students/access-to-higher-education/>

*This includes all LFA UK domiciled undergraduate students taking their studies during 2021 (Intakes 2019-21 and 2020-2022).

LFA offers one accelerated 2-year BA (Hons) Filmmaking course, so our student population is very small when compared to other higher education providers.

We attract both UK and international students and can only provide this comparison for our UK domiciled students. Of the 28 UK domiciled students, we over index in Quantile 5, those who come from areas most likely to enter higher education, and under index in the other quintiles. We are working to improve the balance to enable access to our courses for students in the other quintiles.

4. Fees & Funding

It has been difficult to collect data from students regarding their financial background as they are not means tested but we do recognise that the biggest obstacle to students from the lower socio-economic backgrounds is access to funding.

Since LFA's inception, back in 2001, we have financially assisted up to a third of course cohorts through our half scholarships and bursaries.

In 2017, as part of our strategy to attract more female students, we launched the "LFA Pioneer's Award", a scholarship, for a female student, who would not otherwise be able to afford the course, on our 1-year Filmmaking Diploma course. This scholarship can now also be awarded to a qualifying female student on either the BA (Hons) Filmmaking or MA Filmmaking course.

We have also introduced 6 Team Assistant positions for UK/EU nationals, where students can earn up to £5,000 per year working for LFA helping them to fund their courses and gain relevant work experience in the sector.



5. Gender, Ethnicity, Age & Disability

We have compared LFA's student data for 2020/21 with HESA's higher education student enrolments by personal characteristics for the year 2018/19 which is the latest data available. Although this is not a true comparison over time, it does provide a reasonable indicator of the performance of our access policies.

	HESA 2018/19 FT first degree UK students	Proportion	LFA 2020/21 first degree UK students*	Proportion
Gender				
Female	289,275	56.0%	37	45.6%
Male	226,575	43.9%	42	51.8%
Other	305	0.1%	2	2.4%
Ethnicity				
White	297,565	57.7%	13	46.4%
Black	36,330	7.0%	0	0%
Asian	54,995	10.7%	1	3.5%
Mixed	19,790	3.8%	3	10.7%
Other	8,205	1.6%	7	25%
Not known	3,910	0.8%	4	14.3%
TOTAL	420,795	81.5%	28	
Age group				
20 and under	400,695	77.6%	17	60.7%
21-24 years	59,220	11.5%	9	32.1%
25-29 years	21,385	4.1%	1	3.5%
30 years and over	34,845	6.8%	1	3.5%
Age unknown	10	0.0%	0	0%
Disability status				
Known disability	70,520	13.7%	5	17.8%
No known disability	445,635	86.3%	23	78.5%
TOTAL	516,155		28	

Source: Figure 4 – [HE enrolments by personal characteristics](#) (first year, first degree, full time)

*This includes all LFA UK domiciled undergraduate students taking their studies during 2021 (Intakes 2019-21 and 2020-22).

Looking at our UK student population, we have identified areas where we would like to make improvements, particularly:

- **Gender** - LFA has a higher number of male students, and we will continue to work to redress the balance.
- **Ethnicity** - LFA is underrepresented in its UK Black and Asian student population, and we will work to encourage more applications and enrolment from students from these backgrounds.
- **Age** - LFA has always had a good representation of students between the ages of 21-24 as pre 2018 we mainly offered postgraduate level courses (Filmmaking Diploma and Screenwriting Diploma).

In 2018, we introduced our BA (Hons) Filmmaking course resulting in an increase of students aged 18-21. The introduction of our MAs in Filmmaking and Screenwriting in 2019, has resulted in the lower overall percentage of the UK '20 and under' student population. We will continue to monitor this and look to expand the number of places we offer on our BA (Hons) Filmmaking course, to attract more UK students '20 and under'.



Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

We have not included wider groups (carers, people estranged from their families, people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, refugees, and children from military families) in our assessment due to a lack of available data for these groups.

6. Progression

LFA strives to improve the student progression rate by offering:

Undergraduate Work Placements: There are two opportunities for our undergraduate students to undertake a work placement in their second year of study enabling them to gain invaluable work experience. We work with London-based companies across a range of disciplines, and welcome students to find additional options to suit their preferences.

Filmmakers Club: Our Filmmakers' Club provides ongoing support to our graduates with networking opportunities and job listings after graduation.

Postgraduate Progression: LFA continues to help prepare graduates for postgraduate study. Since the launch of the BA (Hons) Filmmaking in September 2018, two of our graduates have progressed on to our MA Filmmaking course.

7. LFA's ambitions and strategy

LFA seeks to contribute to the national strategy of widening access and participation to underrepresented groups. Considering our current performance, we have identified four areas where we aim to improve:

1. Encourage more applications and enrolment from UK students within quantiles 1 to 4.
2. Continue to increase the number of female applications and enrolments.
3. Increase application and enrolment of UK domiciled students identifying as Black or Asian.
4. Increase application and enrolment for 18–20-year-old UK domiciled students.

8. How will we deliver our ambitions?

To widen application and enrolment from UK students across all the HESA POLAR4 quintiles, especially those who are female, identify as Black or Asian, and are '20 and under' looking to study for their first degree we are expanding LFA's outreach programme.

LFA's outreach programme, introduces potential students, (in local schools, community groups, and in further education), to the opportunities of an education in filmmaking and the potential career possibilities.

LFA's Young Filmmaking Academy provides short practical courses during school holidays introducing 13–17-year-olds to filmmaking - a great way for young teenagers to identify if filmmaking is an educational and career opportunity for them.

LFA's partnership with BFI allows us to deliver the BFI Film Academy course, which is designed to introduce young people, aged 16 to 19, to practical filmmaking and specifically aims to target those underrepresented in the industry, providing practical training across all filmmaking disciplines. There is only an admin fee of £25 required for those accepted onto the course, which can be waived for those from low-income backgrounds, making it our most inclusive course.



We will also continue to redress the balance of UK male/female student applications and enrolments, by continuing to offer the LFA Pioneer's Award. First launched in 2017, it is an annual scholarship where we co-finance a place for a female studying on one of our undergraduate or postgraduate courses. Since its launch, we have seen an increase in female applications but continue to identify this as an ongoing area for improvement.

We will monitor these programmes to measure their effectiveness to improve our access for all. Our targets for the upcoming academic year are:

- Encourage application and enrolment from more UK domiciled students in quintiles 1 to 4, identifying the barriers for future improvement.
- Improve the ratio of female to male students in line with the UK student population to achieve a more balanced representative dynamic for those enrolling on the BA (Hons) Filmmaking course.
- Increase the number of UK domiciled students who identify as Black or Asian who apply and enroll on the BA (Hons) Filmmaking course from 0 to 5%, with a further ambition to match the national level in September 2023 applications and enrolment.

9. Involving our students

At LFA we are highly collaborative, regularly consulting with our student body for their input and feedback. While developing this access and participation statement we have actively consulted with our students, and they are supportive of the work that is being undertaken. Their input and feedback have been incorporated in our ambitions and strategy.

10. Investment

LFA will make the necessary level of investment to execute and deliver the strategy and targets detailed

