



# **Access to HE Provider Handbook 2024-2025**

Recruiting Access to HE students

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## 1. The Recruitment and Admission of Students

### Entry requirements and considerations

- 1.1 Although there is **no entry age** limit for admission onto an Access to HE course and therefore none can be stated in any advisory documentation, it should be noted that students will normally have substantial experience of life outside of formal education, gained since completing compulsory schooling. Where exceptions are made to this criterion, providers should be clear about the particular circumstances which justify such an exception being made.
- 1.2 Providers should, therefore, ensure that none of their course marketing material or other course documentation makes any reference to an entry age limit.
- 1.3 Providers should ensure that the information provided within their recruitment material is accurate and informative. The duration intended, content and entry requirements should be made available and be clear to the student. It should also be noted that there is no QAA set entry requirements and student enrolment is the responsibility of the educational institution. That said, those of widening participation should be at the forefront of all providers when setting entry requirements.
- 1.4 Providers need to ensure that their entry requirements do not disadvantage the progression of the students, particularly where the students' intended HEI progression route requires GCSE achievement. The Provider will need to require the students to already possess the relevant GCSEs at the start of the Access Diploma course or have the opportunity to gain them whilst undertaking their Access to HE course.
- 1.5 Individual students are strongly advised to make early contact - before registration - with their intended HEIs to get confirmation about necessary entry qualifications before committing to the Access to Higher Education Diploma and Universities and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS). Providers are recommended to include this direction to students during the Information and Guidance (IAG) process eg during an open event or interview.
- 1.6 The IAG should also ensure applicants are aware of the expected study time, course funding, the UCAS application cycle, key dates and expectations and accurate information regarding the Advanced Learner Loan.
- 1.7 For more information and advice, we recommend that providers make use of the QAA recruitment guidance which can be found in the 'Resources' section, **Principles for Admission to Access to HE Diplomas**.

## 2. Governance Regarding Promotion of the Access to HE Diploma

- 2.1 The Diploma titles are set by the AVA and cannot be changed by the providers. The approved Diploma title is the title that will appear on the Diploma certification and is the one uploaded onto the QAA database. Therefore providers can only use the approved Diploma titles and must not advertise amended titles e.g., Access to Health Studies instead of Access to Higher Education Diploma (Health).
- 2.2 In terms of wording generally, there are certain ways QAA expect that the Access to HE Diploma should be referred to. For instance, simply referring to Access on its own is **not** acceptable, neither should providers refer to it as 'Access Diploma' or 'Access course'. Providers should always use '**Access to HE Diploma**' or '**Access to HE**' or '**Access to Higher Education**'. When referring to a specific diploma title, it should be '**Access to HE Diploma (*Diploma name*)**' or '**Access to Higher Education Diploma (*Diploma name*)**'. Phrases such as 'Access to Health' or 'Health Access' or some such ambiguous wording must **never** be used.
- 2.3 Providers must refer to students as 'Access to HE students' and **not** use phrases such as 'Access students'. This is to ensure that no one is confused about what qualification is being referred to. Getting into the habit of calling the qualification by its official title and using the correct QAA terminology and phrasing is vital to help create accurate and informative marketing material.
- 2.4 The AVA is also required to monitor the use of the logo and word trademark under license criterion 43, so using these correctly helps to prevent any occurrence of non-compliance with AVA and QAA requirements.
- 2.5 To ensure that the correct logos for both Access to Higher Education and AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group are used accordingly, please refer to the published guidelines listed below.
- [Access to HE Trademarks](#)
  - [AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group Brand Guidelines](#)

## 3. Promoting the Access to HE Diploma

- 3.1 AIM has produced a resource pack with a marketing guide and printed material to help providers with the promotion of the Access to HE Diploma. Information can be found on [www.aimgroup.org.uk/access-to-he/centre-support/resource-pack](http://www.aimgroup.org.uk/access-to-he/centre-support/resource-pack)
- 3.2 In essence, providers should take into consideration the fundamental key elements of promoting the diploma:
- Create collateral which caters for the diversity of the student intake and the generally older demographic
  - Providers should emphasise the Advance Learner Loan write off facility
  - Think 'destinations' when promoting Access to HE and not the diploma per se
  - Providers should use a good mix of traditional approaches and social media for promotion purposes
  - Create engaging videos, blogs, social media posts, to attract interest.

### 4. Advertising Web Check

4.1 Throughout the year AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group will review the promotional materials produced by providers ensuring that marketing and promotional collateral is accurate.

4.2 The AVA will check that:

- The correct AVA logo is used (if present)
- The correct QAA Access to HE logo is used (if present)
- The correct Access to HE wordmarks and trademarks are used
- There is no mention of minimum or maximum ages for student recruitment
- The correct Diplomas are advertised correctly including correct titles and unit combinations
- There is accurate guidance in terms of the Advanced Learner Loans (if applicable)

4.3 Where providers are not compliant, the AVA will offer support through tailored SMART action plans and collaborative efforts to achieve compliance.