

Access Agreement Proposal (revised 2 September 2009)

Introduction

Bishop Burton College's Strategic Plan 2006-2010 articulates intent to expand Higher Education opportunities. This commitment incorporates the objectives of promoting pathway progression for our own level 3 learners, increasing the number/type of Foundation degrees and developing an HE Centre at the College.

The opportunity to raise variable fees needs to be seen in the context of our market position with land based higher education provision and our success in engaging with students from state sector schools, a HEFCE measure of success of widening participation. A significant assumption being made is that the introduction of variable fees will increase fee income to the College enabling it to invest further in the infrastructure for learning at levels 4 and 5.

Bishop Burton plans to direct the additional income generated from tuition revenue to promote participation in vocational, largely land based higher education. This will be facilitated by direct financial support for students, by enhancing teaching and learning resources and encouraging progression and achievement within an enhanced learning resource environment that has a bespoke e-learning facility and enhanced access to an increased range of e-resources.

The following summarises the key elements of our proposed Access Agreement

1. Level of Fees

- Level of fee or fee limits: £ 2,900 per year for all directly funded full time students. This fee will be introduced in the academic year of 2010/11. It will be levied to all United Kingdom students and to students who are nationals of any other state of the European Union.
- The fee will apply for the full duration of the course and will be subject to an annual inflationary rise or 3% whichever is the higher.

2. Bursaries and other financial information

Bishop Burton College strategy for bursaries is intended to maintain and develop demand for its specialist higher education offer and promote participation. The Strategic Aim of Expanding Higher Education will be supported by the objective of developing our Foundation Degree provision and appropriate "top up" award and ILT resources available to students as shown below:

Students starting full time degree courses in 2010 will be eligible for a Netbook package enabling mobile broadband access to enhance their study capability. This is a small lightweight Netbook computer for computing on the move. It is a cross between an internet ready mobile phone and a laptop computer enabling communication and study wherever you are.

Bursary support will be available for continuing students in 2010/11, the following categories:

- a) Students progressing from a Level 3 course at Bishop Burton College, the sum of £750 per year.

- b) Students, who have a home address that falls within the European Social Fund Multiple Deprivation Index, will be entitled to claim a bursary, the sum of £750 per year. We estimate 60 students in 2006/07 who will be categorised as low income students.
- c) All full time Foundation degree students excluding those that qualify for a bursary outlined above will be eligible for an annual bursary of £600
- d) All full time Honours degree students excluding those that qualify for a bursary outlined above will be eligible to apply for an annual bursary of £400.

Students will only be eligible for one of the above bursaries in any one-year. All bursaries will be paid in two instalments, the first in November and the second in March based on student retention by these dates. This is intended to act as a basic incentive to retention, achievement and progression between levels.

Continuing students have the option to have the Netbook Package instead of the bursary if they wish.

3. Outreach activities to be funded through additional fee income:

Bishop Burton College is already successfully engaging with under represented groups in higher education, all additional outreach activity will consolidate and build upon this.

The College intends to promote and develop a range of initiatives. These are currently largely focussed on the 16-18 age group locally students and further the articulation between our own Level 3 provision and higher education at Bishop Burton College.

We intend to raise aspiration of a much wider audience, including:

- Targeted outreach activity for Key Stage 4 learners in local schools, particularly in the Hull area.
- Other feeder further education colleges (locally and regionally)
- Local adults through a range of outreach activities.
- Summer tasters
- Targeted promotional material ,events and transport to visits to the campus
- Further employer links with a view to developing employer based bursaries.

IAG staff will be used to raise the progression aspirations of work-based applicants and make progression opportunities clearer to non-traditional learners.

We will target professionals in the local landbased industries to promote HE participation exploiting the significance placed on the development of course knowledge and skills in marketing courses to those students.

We will also develop existing and establish new links with industry groups, employers' forums and trade unions where level 3 progression is currently poor e.g. Modern Apprentices.

We will work with other lead colleges in the sector to develop a strategy for raising awareness of Foundation Degrees for the landbased services involving traditional and non-traditional feeder groups and employers.

We will build on our existing Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) services to target landbased SMEs with a development framework which offers opportunities for coherent training to those SMEs which lack a Training and Development function.

4. Provision of information on financial support available to students and prospective students

Students will be informed of financial support available both as an aggregate and annual tuition fee through the prospectus, our website, promotional literature, at interview and in offer of place letter. It will clearly explain fees structure and the financial support service available.

IAG services will be used to address course cost concerns in an open and clear way with quality advice on sources of financial support and financial planning. The service will focus on personal support functions and will adapt support functions to address other student concerns such as workload, academic content and time pressures.

5. Expenditure of additional fee income

The College will direct additional revenue obtained from increased fees to support higher education teaching and learning. Based on current recruitment plans the introduction of variable fees could generate an additional fee income £568,000 in 2009/10. The table below outlines how this additional fee income is projected over the period of this Access Agreement.

The actual cost of bursaries in 2008/09 was £238,900.

Year	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Fee	£2,621	£2,900	£2,987
Total FT student numbers	500	600	650
Year 1 FT student numbers	300	350	350
Continuing FT student numbers	200	250	300
Additional fee income	£685,500	£990,000	£1,129,050
Value of netbook/bursary	£250,000	£300,000	£260,000
Investment to widen participation	£435,500	£690,000	£869,050

Investment will continue as follows:

- Continuing to develop a range of Foundation Degrees that meet the needs of industry, particularly in the region.
- Through outreach activities as previously outlined.
- Through providing additional specialist resources dedicated to enhancing the higher education teaching and learning experience.
- Developing a Centre of Higher Education with bespoke and e-resource facilities.
- Developing applied research activities linking student projects to industry.
- Literacy and numeracy support for HE students.
- Development of a range of progression activities for level 3 learners to include, taster days, information days, accredited courses and study skills training.
- Encourage progression of NVQ learners to HE.
- Develop flexible study modes on Foundation Degrees to enable access to a wider range of learners.

6. Institutional milestones and objectives

Access Agreements require colleges to set milestones and objectives in relation to its higher education provision. Bishop Burton College proposes the following:

- Recruitment targets: to meet published target intakes onto full time Higher Education programme delivered by the College
- Retention targets: to achieve an annual retention rate of 85% + in each year of the full time Higher Education programmes delivered by the College – Baseline 2003/04 85%.
- Progression targets: to achieve an annual internal progression rate from full time FE vocational level 3 programmes of 20% of completers, rising to 30% over the following 3

years. To achieve an annual internal progression rate from foundation degree completers on to articulating honours degrees of 75% - Baseline 2003/04 17%.

- Achievement targets: to achieve an annual level of 95% of completers at level 5 and level 6 obtaining their qualification – Baseline 2003/04 94%.
- Widening participation: to increase current levels of students coming from widening participation categories – Baseline 2004/05 11%.
- Curriculum development: to respond to the identified needs of employers and students by developing new foundation degree programmes in consultation with industry partners.
- Promotion of the significance of study skills, IT and learning support to enable students to cope more easily with the demands of HE.

Compliance Statement

The College will undertake annual monitoring of this access agreement to confirm compliance and progress towards the achievement of the milestones it has established. Responsibility for the monitoring report will rest with the Assistant Principal Higher Education. This report will be presented to the College's Executive Team for approval and following such approval will be sent to the Quality Improvement Committee.

The monitoring report will be submitted to the Director of OFFA following its approval by College's Executive Team prior to the July deadline.

The report will include:

- Financial data summarising the recruitment levels, payment of bursaries and other financial support made to students.
- Outreach activities that have been undertaken during the year.
- Progress made in meeting institutional milestones and objectives.

Access agreements cover sheet and checklist

The following cover sheet and checklist can be downloaded from our web-site, (www.offa.org.uk) **This information will not be published by OFFA.** All fields must be completed. The access agreement is free format and should be submitted as a Word document.

Contact information

Principal contact for OFFA

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Senior manager responsible for access agreement

Title:	Mr	
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Sign-off (to be completed on paper copy only, by head of institution, or appropriate deputy)

I enclose the access agreement from the above institution.

Name:	Kevin Kendall
Position:	Assistant Principal Higher Education
Signed:	Kevin Kendall
Date:	2 September 2009

Note on publication of access agreements

Access agreements are public documents and will be published on the OFFA web-site (www.offa.org.uk), normally within three weeks of approval.