



ACCESS AGREEMENT

September 2007

1 Introduction

Carlisle College has a proven track record in the delivery of high quality vocational Higher Education and in widening participation in HE. The College strives to ensure fair and equal access to HE courses for all those who wish to, and are able to, benefit from this level of study. The college works with Aim Higher as part of a widening participation agenda as well as offering an Access course to enable students to progress to HE.

This Access Agreement details the terms of the variable tuition fees charged by the College to HE students from September 2007 and how the College plans to enable individuals to achieve their potential in HE.

2 Fee Limits

2.1 Courses covered by the agreement

This agreement applies to all courses for which Carlisle College receives funding directly from the Higher Education Funding Council for England. The fees charged for indirectly funded courses will be determined by the university providing the funding.

2.2 Students included within the agreement

All students who are eligible to pay EU tuition fees are included in this agreement. If Carlisle College recruits any students who are classified as overseas students, they will pay an arranged separate tuition fee, which is to be determined.

2.3 Agreement renewal

This agreement will be reviewed annually from 2007.

2.4 Tuition fees

From 1 September 2007, Carlisle College will charge tuition fees of up to £3,070 to students on full time undergraduate programmes. This higher level tuition fee will not apply to students who started their HE programme of study prior to 1 September 2006.

Fee levels beyond 2007/08 for all students will be subject to the annual inflationary increase announced by the Government.

2.5 Part time students

Part time students will pay a pro-rate tuition fee calculated on a modular basis in line with the current full time students' fees policy. Therefore the fees paid will depend on the number of modules to be studied in each academic year.

3 Bursary Scheme

To encourage HE participation, the College will offer a bursary scheme from September 2007. We aim to ensure that the impact of top up fees is minimised and that all students in need of financial support benefit from the scheme.

The scheme will be based on Government income threshold levels for state support and these will increase in line with any government announcements.

The additional revenue raised through the increased fees will support students by providing bursaries of up to £1000 per annum in 2007/08. Bursaries beyond 2007/08 will incorporate government announced annual inflationary increases.

This bursary scheme is additional to any financial support which may be currently available to the College's HE students.

4 Provision of Information to Students

Clear information about the tuition fees that apply to HE courses at Carlisle College and the financial support available to students will be readily accessible in the college prospectus, website, College literature, leaflets and advice from the Learner Services department, and at interview.

All prospective HE students will be advised of the aggregate amount of fees that will be charged for the completion of their chosen course prior to the start of the course.

Internal marketing will be used for existing level 3 students.

Internal communication will ensure an accurate and consistent message is disseminated and clearly understood.

5 Outreach Work

The College will promote Higher Education to non-traditional students through partnerships and contacts with local community organisations, agencies including connexions and employers. It will continue its engagement in the Cumbria Aim Higher programme.

Over 400 year 10 and 11 pupils from local schools attend Carlisle College to engage in vocational courses to provide additional breadth to their studies, and/or to allow successful participation in vocational programmes that provide aspiration and real opportunities to pursue further vocational study post 16.

The College's Access to HE programme provides opportunities to over 100 adult students per year to develop skills and knowledge to enable them to progress into Higher Education.

Carlisle College delivers a number of vocational and skills for life courses in the workplace and in community venues. Through these courses, we aim to engage learners into the learning process and encourage progression into mainstream College provision, and where appropriate, into Higher Education.

6 Progress against Milestones (as identified in the College's 2006 Access Agreement)

- To improve the internal progression from College FE courses from 14%. To improve on a retention rate of 72% for HE courses.

Of the 146 learners enrolled on an HE programme in September 2006 55 had progressed from a College FE course. This is 38% progression showing an improvement of 24% since 2005/06.

The retention rate for 2006/07 was 83% for directly funded HE programmes and 88% for indirectly funded programmes (by enrolments).

- To improve on an achievement rate of 85% for HE courses.

Final results are currently being processed and the overall achievement rate for those completing in 2006/07 will be available in December 2007.

- To increase participation on HE programmes and achieve learner growth targets in the Strategic Plan

College recruitment onto directly funded HE programmes declined in 2006/07 but the College has planned a growth of 47 learners (35 FTEs) through the Cumbrian Lifelong Learning Network (Cumbria Higher Learning) in 2007/08 as part of the establishment of the new University of Cumbria.

- To maintain the current broad mix of undergraduates in terms of age, gender and levels of disadvantage whilst improving the recruitment of non traditional learners onto its programmes.

Recruitment patterns during 2006/07 are as listed below:

- 85% aged over 21 and 15% under 21
- Mode of study for over 21 years - 10% Distance Learning, 27% FT, 63% PT
- Mode of study for under 21 years - 5% distance Learning, 59% FT, 36% PT
- 6% of total cohort coded as disadvantaged - similar % across over and under 21 cohorts
- 47% of over 21 years are Female, 53% Male
- 27% of under 21 years are Female, 73% Male
- Recruitment patterns have not changed significantly since 2005/06

7 Milestones for 2007/08

The College will look to achieve the following milestones:

- To improve the internal progression from Level 3 College FE courses by 3%.
- To improve on a retention rate of 83% for HE courses to 85%.
- To improve on an achievement rate for HE courses by 2%.
- To increase participation on HE programmes and achieve learners growth targets in the Strategic Plan
- To maintain the current broad mix of undergraduates in terms of age, gender and levels of disadvantage whilst improving the recruitment of non traditional learners onto its programmes.

8 Institutional Monitoring Arrangements

Carlisle College undertakes to monitor compliance with the commitments made under this agreement. The following indicators will be monitored annually:

- The number of students taking up the bursaries and patterns of awards
- The retention and achievement rates for HE students
- The age, gender ethnicity and socio-economic characteristics of the students.

The HE co-ordinator will report on the above annually to the College's Board, senior managers and governors.