

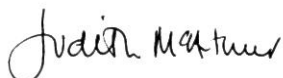
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Chesterfield College Access Agreement

November 2008 (updated August 2009)

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Signed on behalf of the Institution



Judith McArthur (Principal)

Date 17th September 2008

1. The College

Chesterfield College is a Learning and Skills Council Beacon College and provides education and training to the communities of Derbyshire, North Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire. These communities have within them pockets of extreme deprivation and low educational achievement. Hidden unemployment in Chesterfield and Bolsover is estimated to be approaching 12%. In Derbyshire over 20 wards are in the 10% most deprived in the country and the districts comprising our local catchment area have the lowest participation rates in learning in the county.

A key strategic objective of the College is to improve participation in Higher Education, to meet both regional needs to develop a high skill qualification workforce and to develop individual ambition and aspirations. Only 35% of employees in Derbyshire are in higher order occupations compared to 40% nationally, while 25% are in lower order occupations compared to 20% nationally, a low pay, low qualification culture exists in the region.

The College has over, 3,700 full-time further education learners, 3,000 part-time learners, 550 Higher Education learners and over 400 learners participating in work based learning.

The College is committed to meeting the challenge of widening participation by the development of new Foundation Degrees, with our partner higher education institutions and the developing Lifelong Learning Networks. Foundation degrees will be available by both full-time and part-time modes of attendance, while the development of our existing directly funded Higher National provision will continue to respond to employers needs.

The College has 550 higher education students of which approximately 140 are studying full-time (includes year 1 and year 2). There are 14 Foundation Degrees running at present along with 3 final level 'top-up' degree courses, in addition the College offers 4 Higher National qualifications. The Higher National courses continue to be highly regarded and well supported by local employers.

The estimated full-time higher education cohort for September 2009 is 140 students, of which approximately 130 will be HEFCE funded. Virtually all full-time students are existing Chesterfield College students who have progressed internally and they all come from the locality.

The agreement is for the period of 3 years to 2011 and subject to reasonable adjustment for inflation.

The Challenge

To respond to the local demography by providing progression routes into Higher Education. The College encourages Level 3 students to progress by delivering a range of activities, visits and tasters to encourage progression to level 4 and above. Some of these are funded through Aim Higher, whilst others are funded through the College own resources.

The College is in close proximity to a number of Universities, therefore the College does not seek to duplicate provision but to create Foundation degrees in selected vocational areas including Engineering, Event Management, Sport and the Creative Sector. The main thrust of the growth is in part-time provision for adult learners in employment.

2. The Agreement

Level of fees

- The level of fee will be £2,300 for entry in 2009/10 with an increase for inflation in 2010/11.
- This fee will apply to full-time HEFCE Directly Funded Foundation Degree and HND programmes. This currently applies to Foundation Degrees validated by Sheffield Hallam University or Leeds Metropolitan University and HNDs by Edexcel.
- This agreement does not apply to franchised provision with the University of Derby or SHU. The Corporation will agree fees for part-time HEFCE funded courses annually.

Bursaries and other financial support for students

- The College gives a clear assurance that it will give a **£400** mandatory annual bursary to all new entry students not on courses franchised from the University of Derby.
- Mature students – defined as students who are **aged 23 or over** on the 1st September in the first year of the course will qualify for a further mandatory bursary of **£300**.
- Students who are under the age of 23 **and qualify for a Higher Education Maintenance Grant will also receive** a discretionary bursary of £300.

The maximum bursary for any student is £700.

The Bursary will be paid in 3 instalments:

1. First Instalment in October
2. Second Instalment in February
3. Third Instalment in April

The level of bursaries will be reviewed in 2009.

The level of tuition fee set by Chesterfield College reflects the following College commitments:

That the cost of full-time higher education study will not act as a barrier to those students who are capable and willing to undertake higher education study. That increased income from tuition fees will directly benefit the students, enhancing their learning experience and encourage further progression and achievement.

That additional revenue gained from enhanced income from tuition fees will be focussed towards attracting under-represented groups, in the local area, into higher education through focused outreach activities and the introduction of bursaries that are not currently available in the College.

3. Provision of Information to Students

Financial information will be made available to all prospective students prior to the commencement of their course and will be clear, concise and accessible.

The information will state the annual and aggregate fees for the course, bursary arrangements and other financial support i.e. the HE support fund which may be available. This will enable students to predict the likely level of debt incurred by the end of the course.

This information will be provided through a variety of channels and media including:

- On the College website
- In the Higher Level Courses brochure
- Through the Information, Advice and Guidance Office
- Through the Student Services Office
- By contacting Registry
- At careers talks/events with our local partner institutions and schools
- Briefings and talks in-college by our team of higher education advocates, especially to our level 3 vocational students
- During Adult Learners weeks
- At all Higher Education interviews and inductions

4. Higher Education Outreach Work

The College currently engages in extensive outreach work with schools and partners aiming to engage members of the local community in the North Derbyshire and North Nottinghamshire Coalfields, which are areas of high deprivation. A new campus opened in Clowne 2 years ago and the College is delivering one sport related programme from this site.

The College Information, Advice and Guidance Service works closely with local schools to raise awareness of vocational higher education options. Each year a series of Foundation Degree taster courses are offered and promoted through the Schools Liaison team. Learner Services/Advice and Guidance Managers work with the academic staff to deliver an extensive programme of tasters, HE visits and outreach type activities, which are part-funded by the College and part-funded through AimHigher. Activities are targeted at students on vocational Level 3 courses

within the College, Work-Based Learning students and students who would be the first in the family to progress to higher education.

Additional investment will be used to both enhance the existing outreach activity, extend outreach work and raise awareness of opportunities and benefits of higher education with those courses and groups of people traditionally underrepresented in higher education.

Date	Milestone
June 2005	Publish Higher Education and Bursary Scheme
September 2006	Outreach Activities Implemented
September 2006	Introduce 4 new Foundation Degrees
October 2006	Increase applications from vocational Level 3 learners living in the Chesterfield area by 10%
October 2006	HE Scheme Updated
September 2007	Expanded programme of HE outreach activities – focus on local schools and vocational learners
September 2007	Introduce 2 new Foundation Degrees
October 2007	HE Scheme Updated
January 2008	Introduce 1 new Foundation Degree
September 2008	Introduce 2 new Foundation Degrees
September 2008	Retain a higher proportion of learners from deprived postcodes. Improve retention levels by 5% on the baseline of 2004/05

Targets – Widening Participation Strategic Assessment - June 2009 onwards

2008 - 2011	Achieve targets for Bursary Fee Income and Funding designated for WP activities, outlined in the OFFA agreement.
2008 – 2012	Increase the number of Level 3 learners within the College progressing to University by 5% between September 2008 and September in 2012. The number of students progressing to HE courses at Chesterfield College to grow by 10% over the same period.
2008 - 2012	To increase the proportion of HE learners from non-white backgrounds and with disabilities; including initiatives to enhance disclosure of disabilities.
2008 – 2012	Deliver the higher education curriculum plan approved at the HE Steering Committee – notwithstanding changes to HEFCE funding and new emerging priorities.
2008 - 2012	Continue to improve the proportion of HE learners from a) non-white backgrounds b) with a disability; including initiatives to enhance disclosure.

2008 – 2012	Achieve Cohort Success Rate for all higher education courses of at least 67% in 2010 rising to 70% by 2012.
2009	<p>Launch a further suite of Foundation Degree courses to broaden the appeal of higher level study. Courses to be validated include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FdA Leadership and Management • FdA Salon Management • FdSc Networking Technologies • FdSc Sport Coaching <p>Also to provide progression routes for sport and exercise students onto the BSc (Hons) Health Related Exercise and Fitness in 2009 and a BSc in Sport Coaching in 2010.</p>
2010 onwards	Work with the College Access team and partner Universities to deliver the first year of an Honours Degree at Chesterfield College.
2009 onwards	Develop and deliver a programme of HE Modules (with credit) for students who are unable to commit to a full Foundation Degree programme.
2009 onwards	Embed procedures for the Accreditation of Prior Learning across the College and through the LLN share expertise with other Colleges.
2009 onwards	Work collaboratively with partner universities, specifically Sheffield Hallam University, to enhance progression to HE, including HE at Chesterfield College, from schools in the Chesterfield area. This may include the delivery of HE modules as part of the Year 12 curriculum.
2009 onwards	Integrate widening participation activities - the College has appointed a Widening Participation Manager who reports to the Curriculum Director. This role will work alongside the HE Development Manager to ensure that the College provides and promotes a coherent offer.
2009 onwards	Formally monitor the destinations of HE learners; thereby evidence progression to higher level study and evaluate the extent to which HE adds value to learners in employment.
2009 onwards	Enhance the delivery of Personal and Professional Development modules at Levels 4, 5 and 6. Disseminate good practice within the College to develop skills and provide a supportive learning environment which contributes to positive retention, achievement, progression and employability.
2009 onwards	Actively publicise the resource devoted to supporting HE learners who are experiencing difficulties relating to their background or personal circumstances.
2009 onwards	Collect and analyse information on learners who are the first in

	their family to under take a higher education qualification.
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5. Monitoring Arrangements

The College's Higher Education Manager will present an annual report to the Higher Education Steering Committee on the progress towards the milestones. Any remedial action required will form part of the College HE Development Plan.

The College's Finance and General Purposes Committee will approve changes in fees and bursaries.

Appendix – HE Admissions

The College has a comprehensive Admissions Policy and this is supplemented by a separate HE Admissions Statement and guidance and procedures for the Recognition of Prior Qualifications and Experience (APEL).

College Admissions Policy Statement

Chesterfield College aims to ensure that admissions systems are fair and transparent. All members of the College community are of equal value and entitled to receive a high quality service designed to meet their individual needs. To achieve this, the College is committed to providing impartial advice and guidance in its admissions process to help applicants choose a course that is right for them.

The College is committed to ensuring that disabled learners, including those with learning difficulties, are treated fairly. Reasonable adjustments will be made throughout the applications and enrolment process to ensure that they are not disadvantaged.

Higher Education Admissions Statement

The following HE Admission Statement has been approved by the College HE Steering Committee

The College seeks to ensure that all applicants for higher education courses receive full information about higher level courses and are only enrolled onto a course of study where they can reasonably be expected to achieve.

Information about higher education courses is communicated through a comprehensive HE Prospectus, web-site, course leaflets, UCAS entry profiles, College Open Days and information events for students and parents. The central advice and guidance team provide potential applicants with full information and impartial advice about opportunities at the College and at other HEIs.

Procedures exist to ensure that information is accurate and up to date. Where the College makes any change to the HE course, applicants will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity.

Where appropriate, potential applicants are invited to attend a HE taster course, so that they can experience higher education before making a commitment.

Potential applicants are given opportunities throughout the information, application, interview, enrolment and induction process to identify and discuss any support needs. Opportunities for diagnostic assessment and assistance with completing applications for financial and learning support are available through learner services.

All higher education applicants are offered the opportunity to be interviewed by the Course Tutor or the HE Manager. The interview is a two way process where the tutor is able to provide the applicant with full information about the course, including the course content, assessment process and academic support. The tutor will also advise on any relevant support needs and sources of financial support.

Course Tutors are provided with an admissions guide and training on admissions procedures and interviewing skills.

The criteria used for selection include the achievement of stated entry qualifications. There is a standard UCAS tariff which applies to all HE courses, but additional criteria are specified for specific courses, for example a portfolio of work or a GCSE or equivalent in Maths and/or English. Entry qualifications are checked by the Course Tutor prior to enrolment. Records of applicants and qualifications are kept for 5 years in a secure location.

Mature applicants, with prior qualifications and work experience are offered the opportunity to go through an APEL process.

Course Tutors are required to ensure that the same admissions procedures apply to late applicants.

Tutors deliver an induction in accordance with the College HE induction checklist.

The proportion of applications to enrolments and the profile for higher education learners is monitored through the self-assessment process and reported to the Performance Committee and the Equality Board.

Any complaints arising from the admissions process is dealt with through the College Complaints Procedure which includes clear guidelines for appeals against decisions.

Accreditation of Prior Experience and Learning

Over the past three years a very small number of students have been given recognition for their prior qualifications. All cases were documented by the APEL Committee and reported to the relevant Examination Committee.

The College anticipates a growth in demand for accreditation of prior experience and qualifications. Therefore a funded project worker is employed to review current systems and develop APEL guidelines and documentation that can be used across the College.