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Chesterfield College Access Agreement

November 2008 (updated)

Institution: Chesterfield College

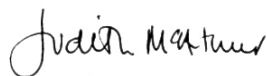
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Signed on behalf of the Institution



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 13%. In Derbyshire 22 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, 3,500 full-time further education learners, 5,000 part-time learners, 350 Higher Education learners and over 300 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 350 higher education students of which approximately 100 are studying full-time (includes year 1 and year 2). There are 11 Foundation Degrees running at present with a further 2 scheduled to start in 2008/09, 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 2008 is 100 students, of which approximately 70 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 4 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 Hospitality. 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 £2,200 for entry in 2008/09 and will rise to £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. 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.

An IAG Transition Officer is based at the College and 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

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.