

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY

ACCESS AGREEMENT 2007/08

The University's Access Agreement for 2007/08 is based upon its original agreement established for 2006/07, which has been modified and enhanced in the light of experience with the first intake of students under the new financial regime. The provisions of the Agreement are intended to extend educational opportunity to the maximum number of students who are likely to succeed, by providing financial assistance to those whom we judge need it most.

These provisions are outlined below and apply to all UK students on DfES-funded programmes and to UK students on degree courses in Social Work.

The amounts of money quoted are in all cases at 2007/08 rates and in the case of the mandatory and discretionary bursaries are subject to annual inflationary increase. These bursaries are based on Government income threshold levels for state support and will increase in line with any Government announcements. The value of other bursaries and scholarships will be reviewed annually.

Additional fee income due to variable fees is estimated at £20.3m by 2010/11 when all students are eligible to be charged the full variable fee. The estimated costs of the bursary/scholarship schemes for 2010/11 will be £6.4m, 31% of the total new fees. We estimate that about 8300 students in financial need will be supported per year, by 2010/11, by qualifying either for a bursary or a bursary and scholarship. Of the £6.4m of total spend we estimate that £4.5m can be directly attributed to students from underrepresented groups (defined as students receiving full or partial means tested support).

1. Student Bursary Scheme

1.1 Mandatory Bursaries

Any student entitled to receive full financial support as calculated by the LEA will receive £310 per annum.

1.2 Discretionary Bursaries

Any student entitled to receive any degree of partial financial support as calculated by the LEA will receive £520 per annum.

2. Looked-after Children Bursary Scheme (new Scheme)

Any student entering the University from care will receive a bursary of £1000 per annum (excluding any paid placement year). This includes all children being looked after by a local authority at the time of application. The University has now achieved the Frank Buttle Trust Quality Mark.

3. Regional Bursaries Scheme (new Scheme)

The University will provide a Regional Bursary of £250 per year to any student with a permanent home address within a 30-mile radius of the University as identified by postcode schedule held by the University

4. Opportunities Scholarship Scheme (extended Scheme)

The University will provide up to 60 Opportunities Scholarships of £1000 per year each for students entering on the basis of access course qualifications rather than A-levels or other qualifications.

5. Academic Scholarships Scheme

The University will provide an Academic Scholarship of £1000 per annum to any student admitted on the basis at least 280 UCAS tariff points derived from qualifications recognised for this purpose by the University. No student can receive both an Academic Scholarship and an Opportunities Scholarship.

6. Creative Industry Scholarships Scheme (new Scheme)

The University will provide a Creative Industry Scholarship of £1500 per annum to any student admitted to a qualifying programme on the basis of at least 300 UCAS tariff points derived from qualifications recognised for this purpose by the University. No student can receive both an Academic Scholarship and a Creative Industry Scholarship or both an Opportunities Scholarship and a Creative Industry Scholarship. A list of qualifying programmes is attached.

7. Transition Support Scheme (modified Scheme)

7.1 *At the University*

In the context of this agreement, DMU already spends over £0.78m pa in student support relevant to students from underrepresented groups. This includes such provision as our disability support unit, the student financial advice centre, the learning support centre and library service support. Income from variable fees will enable us to continue to expand such facilities. The transitions support team was introduced in Student Services in 2005/06, and the support also included an innovatory mentoring scheme. A further innovation was the introduction of a Transition Support Worker for disabled students, to enable more effective entry to the university. Our distribution of the Access to Learning Funds – currently at c£0.9m for 2006/07 – makes a significant impact on student retention.

7.2 *Partner Colleges and Schools*

A key component of the University's strategy for widening participation is the University's transition support service offered to prospective DMU students in partner colleges and schools. The University wishes to make Higher Education and DMU a real option for students with little or no family participation in HE. The scheme will target approximately 100 schools and colleges in the region.

Key features include:

- Transition support from HE guidance workers and mentors to inform choice, develop skills and enable smooth transition to HE.
- On-going transition support to students in DMU's partner colleges and institutions to maintain and support DMU's profile
- The scheme combines the ethos of widening participation from non-traditional groups with the concern for ensuring the quality of student intake.
- The guidance package will also address the concern that students from non-traditional backgrounds can be less well-prepared for university and at an increased risk of withdrawal.
- We will continue to evaluate the transition support model for its wider applicability to student support – particularly those activities concerned with transition, induction and retention.
- The service will be promoted via Student Advisers and WP Co-Ordinators in partner schools and colleges.

The cost of the scheme to cover student transition support over the three-year period is estimated at:

2007/08:	£125,000
2008/09:	£125,000
2009/10:	£125,000

8. **Rationale**

The purpose of the *Discretionary Bursary Scheme* is to recognise the financial position of students who are in receipt of state assistance yet who do not attract the full rate because their residual family income exceeds the requirements by a relatively small sum. Such students are likely to be disproportionately affected by this deficit, and the bursary is a means of addressing this issue.

The *Looked-After Children Bursary Scheme* is a new initiative and aims to provide help with the transition to university of a group of young people who do not have the traditional family support to call upon and thus to improve the overall ability of such students to reach and succeed in HE.

The *Opportunities Bursary Scheme* is also intended to widen participation by encouraging students entering on the basis of non-traditional access qualifications. The number of such bursaries is doubled to up to sixty per annum for 2007/08, having been successfully introduced in 2006 with 30 bursary awards to be allocated.

The new *Regional Bursaries Scheme* is designed to support and encourage students who are studying locally from home, and so is also a means of supporting widening participation.

The *Academic Scholarships Scheme* continues to promote quality of applications, and this approach is extended in the new *Creative Industries Scholarship Scheme* which is specifically targeted at applicants for programmes key in delivering the University's mission.

9. Provision of Information to Students

The University has developed a communication and information strategy in relation to tuition fees, bursaries and scholarships. The strategy includes the development of a fully integrated marketing campaign to promote the University's bursary and scholarship offering to the relevant target audiences. The main focus of this campaign is to provide clear and accessible information and guidance to prospective students, their families and teachers;

Key elements of this campaign include:

- The production and distribution of a DMU student funding guide for prospective students;
- The production and distribution of a guide to DMU scholarships and bursaries for teachers.
- Direct mail activities to specific prospective students who are the target audiences for specific scholarships. For example local students and subject specific information for those thinking about the studying a creative industries related programme.
- Up to date information features prominently on the DMU website; www.dmu.ac.uk
- Tailored presentations and guidance for our school and college liaison activity.

A key aim of the campaign is to eliminate confusion and anxiety amongst all groups but to assure less confident groups that opportunities to study with us are not constrained by new financial packages, in particular first generation students.

Additional costs of supporting this strategy are estimated at £30k pa.

The University will ensure that all students are clearly informed of the aggregate cost of tuition before they start their programmes and of the support available to them.

10. Administration of Bursaries and Scholarships

The University has opted in to the bursary scheme operated by the SSL, and the awards are administered and managed by the Academic Registry supported by the Finance Office.

11. Partner Colleges

All DMU students, whether studying at DMU or at a partner institution, are eligible for the above schemes. Partner institutions running DMU programmes are able to offer further bursaries and scholarships from their own funds, in addition to the schemes detailed above. DMU notifies OFFA from time to time of such additional schemes as they arise.

12. Outreach Activity

Our outreach activities can be divided into direct activity and aspiration-raising activity.

12.1 *Direct Activity*

Our target for applications for 2007/08 is approximately 21000 and we are actively working towards this. Student numbers from the recent transfer of our Bedford campus to the University of Bedfordshire have been removed from our target.

DMU currently engages in over 500 separate events per year, comprising both staff visits to schools and colleges (including parent evening events) and visits of students from schools and colleges to the University. By these means we make contact with over 18000 year 12 and year 13 students per year.

The emphasis of the visits to schools and colleges is to provide advice for the application process, on student finance, on life at the University and is aimed at parents as well as students. The focus of inviting visitors to the University is on similar topics while also giving a direct taster of DMU life and specific subject areas of interest. Our target market is largely first-generation University applicants.

The majority of the schools and colleges with which we work are in inner city or inner town locations. About 25% of our students are from FE colleges. All of our work is with the public sector.

We plan to slightly increase the number of opportunities to bring students and parents to our campuses, as part of this agreement. In 2005/06 we hosted 21 inward visits.. This will increase to 35 opportunities to visit the University in 2006/07 year at a cost of £10k.

We also intend to increase the number of university-wide open days from two per year to five.

12.2 *Aspiration raising activity*

We continue to work within the Aimhigher programme to provide approximately 5,000 participants each year with a number of aspiration and attainment raising activities. Under the Aimhigher brand DMU also works collaboratively with the other local FE and HE providers to offer a thorough representation and example of the FE & HE provision available with our region. Collaborative projects for further development include events targeting disabled groups and looked after children and the development of a shared Aimhigher Ambassador training and development programme.

The following activities are now embedded within the universities outreach programme:

- Year 6 Parent and Pupil University Experience Days
- Year 8 Tasters
- Year 10 University Experience Days
- Year 10 Summer Schools
- Years 11 Study Skills package
- Year 11 and 12 Masterclasses for gifted and talented students
- Year 12 Tasters
- Parents Evenings / Careers Events / option Evening Support

The following activities are under development and due for roll out in the near future:

- Year 7 Problem Solving Event
- Year 11 Transition to Further Learning and Transition to Work Support

A budget of £92,000 is allocated to undertake this work.

13. Disabled Applicants

3.8% of our full-time students and 1.7% of our part-time students are registered for the Disabled Student Allowance. We aim to raise this by the application of our policy for support, which is geared towards taking positive steps to seek and identify need at the application stage and agreeing at that stage means of satisfying that need. This involves our Disability Support Unit in considerable work with applicants. Current provision includes:

- Alternative format for printed materials available, e.g. Braille, large print.
- Enquiry Centre fitted out with facilities for enquirers with disabilities, e.g. wheelchair access, hearing loop, text phone, confidential interview room.
- Provision of special leaflet on dyslexia.
- Web site designed for use by disabled applicants.

14. Milestones

1. Year on year maintenance at or above benchmark performance levels in relation to proportions of student population with regard to social class, ethnic make-up, low-participation neighbourhood background.
2. Take-up of bursaries and retention rates of students with bursaries, monitored annually in relation to estimates.
3. Improvement in progression of 4% by 2010.
4. Expansion of visits of school and college students to 35 per year.
5. Expansion of mature applicant summer schools to 6 per year.
6. Achievement of 2006 application targets. Consequent annual setting and reviewing of targets and supporting activities.
7. The continuation of the current aspiration and attainment raising outreach activity and the implementation of new developments
8. Annual review by Academic Board of work of its Admissions Committee.

15. Monitoring Arrangements

Progress and success of these arrangements is subject to operational quarterly monitoring activity by a group chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor linked to a review cycle appropriate to the nature of individual milestones. This group will prepare a formal annual monitoring report for consideration by the Board of Governors and the Academic Board.

16. Contact Information

Principal Contact for OFFA

Title	Mr
First Name	Eugene
Last Name	Critchlow
Post Held	Academic Registrar
Telephone	0116 2577310
Email	critchlo@dmu.ac.uk

Senior manager responsible for access agreement

Title	Professor	
First Name	David	
Last Name	Asch	
Post Held	Deputy Vice-Chancellor	
Telephone	0116 2577010	
Email	DAsch@dmu.ac.uk	

17. Scale of Bursaries and Scholarship Support to Students

Title	Estimated Number per year	Value (£) per year	Year 1 Cost (£)	Year 2 Cost	Year 3 Cost
Mandatory Bursary	1900	310	600,000	1,100,000	1,500,000
Discretionary Bursary	700	520	360,000	700,000	900,000
LAC Bursary	5	1000	5,000	9,000	13,000
Regional Bursary	900	250	225,000	320,000	350,000
Opportunities Scholarship	60	1000	60,000	110,000	150,000
Academic Scholarship	570	1000	570,000	1,200,000	1,600,000
Creative Industries Scholarship	500	1500	750,000	1,300,000	1,700,000
Transition Support			125,000	125,000	125,000
Information to students			30,000	30,000	30,000
Totals			2,725,000	4,894,000	6,368,000

18. Fees

The University intends to charge the full annual tuition fee of £3070 in 2007/08. In following sessions the fees will be adjusted in line with annual inflation.