

UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER ACCESS AGREEMENT

Revised March 2006

Introduction

Unless otherwise stated, “student” refers exclusively to full time registered undergraduate European Union students of University of Winchester.

The Access Agreement applies to all students who start their course after 1 September 2006 except those who were granted deferred entry from the 2005/6 academic year to 2006/7 who will not be required to pay fees above the standard level of £1,200 per year. Such students will not be entitled to the bursaries and scholarships outlined in the agreement.

In accordance with the Secretary of State's guidance, this agreement assumes that OFFA has shared use of all data supplied by the University to HEFCE, the TTA and HESA.

Bursaries and scholarships

Full details of a range of bursaries and scholarships available to students are provided below. The numbers of students entitled and the total cost are estimated for each of them.

Consortium Colleges

The Hampshire Higher Education Consortium includes, in addition to University of Winchester, the following colleges of further education:-

Basingstoke College of Technology
Eastleigh College
Cricklade College

This Access Agreement does not cover the relevant higher education courses delivered by these colleges as they are not seeking permission to charge higher than the standard fee.

FEE LIMITS

Students will not for the duration of their course be subject to any increase in the fee beyond that indicated in the Access Agreement and notified to them before they commit themselves to the course.

Fees for 2006/7

The Access Agreement applies to all students who start their course after 1 September 2006 except those who were granted deferred entry from the 2005/6 academic year to 2006/7.

For the academic year 2006/7, the University will charge fees up to a limit of £3,000 for all higher education courses.

Fees beyond 2006/7

The fee limit for the duration of the Access Agreement following 2006/7 will not increase year on year by more than the rate of inflation.

STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Unless otherwise indicated, all of the bursaries and scholarships detailed below are cumulative. For example, a student entitled to a full student maintenance grant (those whose income and that of their household is £17,500 or less) will be entitled to both a £800 Winchester Bursary and the Winchester Scholarship maintenance award. Such a student who also has a recent background in social care institutions and qualifies for the King Alfred scholarship will get that and the Winchester Bursary and the Winchester Scholarship maintenance support award.

While the bursaries and scholarships are intended to meet the specific student needs identified below, students will be free to use the money for any purpose they choose, including reducing the fee debt to be repaid to government in the future.

The University aims to allocate 27% of the additional income received from charging higher than standard fees to provide financial support for students from groups under represented in higher education. This expenditure is additional to any previous support. Student financial support for all students will amount to 39% of additional income received from charging higher than standard fees.

Where the total cost to the University for each bursary and scholarship is estimated below, the amount stated is per year once a steady state is achieved in 2009/10 when all students will be subject to the new variable fees regime.

Unless otherwise indicated, student financial support outlined in this agreement is available only to students ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom.

Winchester bursaries

Students entitled to a full student maintenance grant

All students entitled to a full student maintenance grant (those whose income and that of their household is £17,500 or less) will receive a bursary annually for the duration of their course, at least equal to the amount by which the fee charged for their course exceeds the level of the full grant. It is intended that these bursaries will be administered through a national scheme, still being developed, which will be operated by the Student Loans Company on behalf of higher education institutions.

In addition, all students entitled to a full student maintenance grant will be entitled to a further bursary of £500 annually for the duration of their course. Therefore, a student entitled to a full student maintenance grant on a course where the fee is £3,000 will receive a bursary of £800 for each year of the course (plus a Winchester Scholarship - see below).

All students who qualify for these Winchester Bursaries will be from under-represented groups as measured by their entitlement to student grants. It is estimated that 400 students will be entitled to these bursaries at a cost of £320,000 per year.

Students entitled to a partial student maintenance grant

Students entitled to any amount of student maintenance grant less than the full grant (those whose income and that of their household are between £17,501 and £37,425) will be entitled to an annual bursary of £400 for the duration of their course (plus a Winchester Scholarship - see below).

All students who qualify for these Winchester Bursaries will be from under-represented groups as measured by their entitlement to partial state maintenance grants. It is estimated that 1,224 students will be entitled to a bursary at a cost of £489,600 per year.

Payment

Both of these bursaries will be payable in the second week of January (subject to the Student Loans Company being able to make payments at these times as they will be part of the proposed national bursary scheme).

Winchester scholarships

Maintenance Support Awards

All students, irrespective of their and their household's income, will be entitled to support with their living costs amounting to £900 for those on a three year course. Payments will be made as follows:

Year 1 £200

Year 2 £300

Year 3 £400

Year 4 £400 (applies to 4 year courses only and not to repeat years or extended 3 year courses)

All of the awards will be payable at the start of the second semester of each year. The intention is that the funds will help pay the cost of deposits on accommodation due at that time for the coming second and third academic years and, in the third year, offer extra help when financial hardship might be most pronounced.

It is estimated that 3,324 students will be entitled to this at a cost of £970,275 per year. The proportion of students who qualify for this scholarship who come from under-represented groups is estimated to be 50.2% as measured by their entitlement to full or partial state maintenance grants.

King Alfred Awards

Students entering higher education at the University who are under 25 and who have been 'looked after' for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who have left care (as defined by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000) will be entitled to a one-off King Alfred scholarship of £2,000 (in addition to any other bursaries and scholarships to which they may be entitled).

The scholarship will be payable upon enrolment in the first year.

It is estimated that 5 students will qualify for this scholarship each year at a cost of £10,000. All students who qualify for King Alfred scholarships will come from under-represented groups.

Winchester Partnership Colleges Scholarships

Any student who enrolled at the University after directly leaving one of the 22 compact partner FE and 6th Form Colleges will be entitled to a Winchester Partnership Colleges Scholarship of £100.

The scholarships will be payable at the start of the second semester of the first year of study.

The annual cost of these scholarships will be £25,000. It is estimated that 50% of students who qualify for Winchester Partnership College Scholarships will come from under-represented groups.

Winchester Compact Scholarships

In addition to the Winchester Partnership Colleges Scholarship, any student who enrolls at the University after directly leaving one of the 22 compact partner FE and 6th Form Colleges and does so via the Compact scheme will be entitled to a Winchester Compact Scholarship of £200

The scholarships will be payable at the start of the second semester of the first year of study.

The annual cost of these scholarships will be £25,000. All students who qualify for Winchester Compact Scholarships will come from under-represented groups.

Teacher Education Scholarships

All students in their fourth year of the BA Education will be entitled to a scholarship of £1,800, equivalent to the difference between the standard fee (£1,200 in 2006) and the £3,000 full fee in recognition of the extra costs compared with the three year and PGCE qualified teacher status routes. The awards will be payable at the start of the second semester of the fourth academic year. As indicated above, a 4th year BAEd student who also qualifies for the full means tested Winchester Bursary will receive a further £1,200 (the £800 Bursary plus a £400 Winchester Scholarship maintenance award), thereby incurring a net cost of £0 for the fourth year of study.

It is estimated that 140 students will be entitled to Teacher Education Scholarships each year at a cost of £252,000. The proportion of students who qualify for Teacher Education Scholarships who come from under-represented groups is estimated to be 50.2% as measured by their entitlement to full or partial student loans amongst the full time University undergraduate student population as a whole.

Hardship funds

The University will increase its Hardship Fund from £177,000 in 2004/5 to £277,000 in 2006/7, funded from additional fee income. These funds will be available to students on course to meet unexpected financial hardship. The availability of such funds will be an important safety net for students from poorer backgrounds and so enhance widening participation. It is estimated that 80% of students in receipt of support from the Hardship fund will be from under represented groups.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The University will seek to raise the aspirations of under-represented groups across the sub-region and more widely. In addition to the outreach and widening participation activities outlined below, the University has worked hard over recent years to put in place the support systems that are already helping students from economically and educationally deprived backgrounds to succeed once they have been recruited. These include a raft of equal opportunity strategies and action plans and a first rate student services operation which has never in recent years received less than the maximum possible rating from QAA subject review inspections.

The University aims to allocate 2% of the additional income received from charging higher than standard fees to fund additional outreach activities. This expenditure is additional to previous funding for such activities.

Current performance

Because of the work already done, the University already meets nearly all of its benchmark targets as determined by Hefce's *Performance Indicators in Higher Education in the UK*. This achievement reflects the considerable investment already made in outreach and related widening participation activities.

The Hefce performance indicators provide a consistent set of measures of the nature and performance of the sector. The indicators relating to outreach fall into four main categories: access indicators, non-continuation rates, outcomes and efficiency, and students in receipt of disability allowance. While only the first and last of these directly relate to outreach success, the other two are also important because they indicate the success or otherwise of the institution in achieving increased widening participation while also ensuring these students achieve, and that high academic standards are maintained. A six year sequence of data is available, comparing the University with the sector as a whole, with similar institutions and other institutions in the sub-region. Only a summary is provided here.

Access Indicators

The access indicators provide information about the participation of certain groups that are under-represented in higher education relative to the population as a whole. 'Location-adjusted' benchmarks, in addition to the original benchmark, are included for the access indicators. These are designed to take account of the effects of an institution's location by including region of domicile as a third factor in the benchmark. The access indicators have been produced separately for young and mature students, and for full-time and part-time students. There are three access indicators for young full-time entrants:

- the percentage of entrants who attended a school or college in the state sector.
- the percentage from National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification Classes 4, 5, 6 and 7.
- the percentage whose home area, as denoted by its postcode, is known to have a low proportion of 18 and 19 year-olds in higher education.

The percentage of young full-time first degree entrants to University of Winchester from state schools or colleges has increased over the six year period to 97%, well above its benchmark, compared with 87% for the country as a whole. With regard to the percentage of entrants from NS-SEC 4-7, the indicator for the sector is 28%. The proportion of entrants to University of Winchester is 25%, slightly below the location-adjusted benchmark of 26% for first degree

entrants. The percentage of young full-time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods has increased slightly overall in the sector to 13%. The indicator for undergraduate entrants for the University has increased to 11%, slightly higher than the location-adjusted benchmark of 10%.

The proportion of mature full-time first degree entrants with no previous HE experience and from low participation neighbourhoods has remained stable at 14% overall in the sector. The indicator for University of Winchester has increased to 12%, above the location-adjusted benchmark of 10%. University access figures for mature part-time undergraduate students continue to meet the location-adjusted benchmark.

Non-continuation rates

Indicators for non-continuation rates measure the proportion of students who remain at an institution, transfer to another institution or leave higher education altogether after their first year. These are provided for young entrants, in terms of low participation neighbourhoods or not, and mature entrants, in terms of previous experience of HE or not. The indicators for the University have remained equal to or better than the overall benchmark for the six years of data. The indicator for young entrants from low participation neighbourhoods for 2001-02 entrants is 6% better than the benchmark of 9% and the indicator for young entrants overall is 3% better than benchmark. The non-continuation rate for mature students with no previous experience of HE for 2001-02 entrants is 4% better than benchmark. The indicator for mature students with previous HE experience is slightly worse than its benchmark but the indicator for all mature students is 4% better than benchmark. Overall, the University is better than its retention benchmark and is better than the sector average.

It is possible to measure institutional performance against benchmarks in terms of the ability to both widen access and retain students. The expected trend is that institutions with a percentage of entrants from low participation neighbourhoods (LPNs) that is better than benchmark will have a retention rate that is worse than benchmark. The performance of University of Winchester is better than the expected trend, as the indicator for young full-time undergraduate entrants from LPNs is slightly better than the location-adjusted benchmark and that for non-continuation following year of entry better than benchmark.

Projected learning outcomes

The six year set of indicators for projected learning outcomes shows that the University has remained better than its benchmark, and the proportion of students who neither receive an award nor transfer has continued to remain lower (better) than the benchmark.

Outreach and Widening Participation

The University's Widening Participation strategy addresses social exclusion, race, disability and gender. The widening participation agenda is linked to the Aimhigher initiative, details of which are provided below. It is not possible to provide fully detailed estimates for the reach of outreach and widening participation activities at present as they are still in the planning stage. It is intended to invest 2% of the additional fee income in these and similar outreach activities which will be reported on through monitoring.

The University's current widening participation strategy details existing and planned activities and targets:

- Increase applicants from Compact FE Colleges to 900
- Increase number of Compact FE Colleges to 22
- Visit at least once all 9 A list Aimhigher schools and all 6 B list Aimhigher schools
- Make good use of APEL in relation to Foundation Degrees, particularly for those progressing from Advanced Apprenticeships
- Provide better access for low participation neighbourhoods through the Basingstoke campus. Basingstoke has 27 National Statistics Office defined "super-output" areas within the 40% most deprived in England for education, skills and training, with 10 of these within the 20% most deprived.
- Develop subject links across groups of staff from FE and sixth form colleges, using existing curriculum networks where possible. Focus on vocational subject areas. As many meetings as possible to be hosted by University of Winchester.
- Recruit up to 375 students for non-residential tasters for 2005
- Recruit up to 110 students for 2005 residential summer schools
- 60 Student Ambassador visits to schools and colleges – develop work to include some pilot subject-based links and activities
- Make summer school and taster day webpages interactive, with students able to participate in discussion fora prior to attending, therefore reducing the likelihood of drop-out
- Target faith communities, including an academic member of staff making contact with various faith leaders, giving presentations and setting up stalls at various events.
- Increase Chute House Basingstoke numbers in excess of 200 by focusing on part time foundation and postgraduate degrees
- Target recruitment from ethnic minority communities and from those disadvantaged by particular backgrounds such as young people who have been in public care

Additional outreach activity funded from increased student fee income will include:

- Help with UCAS applications in target FE and sixth form colleges – run staff development sessions for college staff showing examples of good and poor applications to enable them to better advise students, especially those from families with no higher education experience.
- Link with training providers to encourage apprentices on to Foundation Degrees and BA Business. Target recruitment of 10 ex-apprentices per annum.
- Work with training providers to identify gaps in coverage of Foundation Degrees which University of Winchester might fill. This work is already underway but needs expanding when increased funding allows.
- Establish stands at business events and speakers at business lunches with current students giving inputs
- Appoint Student Ambassadors from foundation degree courses, especially in Basingstoke, to be used in community group and business settings
- Target ethnic minority businesses for Foundation Degrees in business
- Publicise courses in ethnic minority publications
- Recruit and deploy Student Ambassadors from minority ethnic groups, especially in events outside Hampshire

- Work with compact FE colleges, particularly those outside the Hampshire & IoW Aimhigher partnership, to target outreach activities at students from under-represented groups. For example, through subject-based activities linked to BTEC courses and other vocational programmes. These might involve workshops using University of Winchester Student Ambassadors and/or staff, aimed at raising aspirations, confidence, awareness of HE courses and enhancing learning styles.

Aimhigher

The current Aimhigher partnership, led by University of Winchester on behalf of a wide partnership including all HEIs in the Hampshire/Isle of Wight sub-region, is only one manifestation of a strongly collaborative approach to outreach activities amongst the HEIs concerned.

In 1996, The University of Southampton led a consortium including Southampton Institute, University of Winchester (then King Alfred's College), the University of Portsmouth and University College Chichester to create the Wessex and Solent Partnership for Widening Participation, the aim of which was to promote access from disadvantaged and under-represented groups to higher education. Initial work with schools and colleges was focused on developing facilities and systems to support disabled students. From 1999 this was extended to encompass a range of activities including collaborative outreach, on-campus aspiration raising and access arrangements. The University of Portsmouth also led a related widening participation project for Portsmouth which included collaborative support from other HEIs in the sub-region.

In 2002 the introduction of the HEFCE/LSC funded *Partnerships for Progression* (P4P) provided an opportunity to build upon this history of collaboration, to strengthen the role of further education colleges and schools and to work more closely with new partners, such as the OU, the local LEAs, Connexions and the local Learning and Skills Council. University of Winchester has assumed leadership of this partnership for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, providing the Chair (the Principal) and employing the Director and central team. This partnership has resulted in a considerable expansion of collaborative activities to promote access. The recent integration of P4P with the Education Action Zone/Excellence Challenge initiatives to form Aimhigher (Hampshire & Isle of Wight), together with a significant uplift in funding, has further enhanced the partners' capacity to promote measures to increase and widen participation in higher education.

Currently, there are ten Aimhigher Action Programmes, each with a number of collaborative projects and activities:

1. On Campus Aspiration Raising activities (summer schools and taster days). Led by the University of Southampton, this has resulted in better targeted summer schools in each of the HEIs, with substantially increased participation from young people in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. In addition Aimhigher regionally provides for summer schools with regionally based targeting in each of the HEIs, with matched funding from the ESF.
2. Off Campus Aspiration Raising activities (outreach in schools and the community), led by the University of Portsmouth and involving all partner HEIs, includes taster days, a student ambassador scheme and a range of community projects aimed at raising aspirations for HE.

3. Admission and Progression Routes. This action programme, led for the partnership by Southampton Institute, involves putting together cross-sector curriculum development teams to identify ways of facilitating admission and progression in a range of vocational subjects where there are particular progression issues and/or skills shortages. A common compact framework is under development as part of this initiative.
4. Staff Development. Led by the core Aimhigher team at University of Winchester, this involves promoting staff awareness of the challenges for learners in the changing school, FE and HE environment.
5. Information, Advice and Guidance. Led by Connexions, this involves developing common guidance materials, including teachers' packs and web sites, to enhance the understanding of young people and adults of the benefits and opportunities of progression to HE.
6. Mapping, Tracking, Monitoring and Evaluation. Led by the core Aimhigher team, this involves collaborative targeting, monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of Aimhigher activities.
7. Work Related and Work Based Learning. Led by Education Business Partnerships, this involves raising aspirations and attainment through learning programmes linked with employers.
8. Aspiration Raising among Black and Minority Ethnic Communities. A new action programme for 2004/5 involving targeted aspiration raising and mentoring.
9. Aspiration Raising for Disabled Students. A new action programme for 2004/5 involving targeted aspiration raising and mentoring.
10. 10. Transition to post-compulsory education. A new action programme for 2004/5 involving mentoring support to enhance retention at FE and progression to HE.

The collaborative widening participation activities of the four HEIs in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, especially those under Action Programme 3 above, provide a strong basis for a Lifelong Learning Network proposal currently being developed by the HEIs (plus University College Chichester for the Isle of Wight) for submission to HEFCE's Strategic Development Fund in 2005.

Diversity and Equal Opportunities

Race

The University's student population is 91.4% white compared with the national figure of 74.4%. The local population is 97.8% white. While these figures demonstrate that the University has had some success in attracting a disproportionate amount of students from ethnic minorities given its geographical location, more needs to be done. The University has therefore developed a strong Race Equality policy and a highly detailed and focused action plan to promote good race relations and to increase the proportion of students from ethnic minority communities. These have been audited by the Equality Challenge Unit and Hefce has affirmed that they were "judged as being very positive by the independent review....and something for [the University] to feel rightly proud of". The University acknowledges that the behaviour and culture of organisations

encapsulated by the term “institutionalised racism” exists to a greater or lesser extent in all organisations. The University is committed to identifying and dealing with these behavioural and cultural issues which, taken together, could lead to a state of institutionalised racism.

Gender

The University’s female student population at 78.4% compares to 56.6% for the sector as a whole. The balance is skewed by a relatively high proportion of students studying primary teacher education.

Disability

According to Hefce’s *Performance Indicators in Higher Education in the UK*, the indicator for Winchester for full-time undergraduate students in receipt of disability allowance is better than benchmark and almost 2% higher than the sector average. Across the HE sector, 5% of students have declared a disability. At University of Winchester the figure is 6.6%. The only category of disability where the University scores lower than the national average is *Wheelchair users/ Mobility difficulties*, not entirely surprising at a University built on the side of a hill. Nonetheless, lift access makes all levels of the site accessible and a new £275,000 residential unit capable of accommodating students with severe disabilities and their carers has just been opened. The current programme of works to improve access to students with disabilities involves expenditure of nearly £1 million over a two year period.

PROVISION OF INFORMATION

Prospective students will be fully advised of the fee limits and bursaries and other financial support available for the duration of their course before they apply. This will include the aggregate cost of tuition fees for the whole period of study. Prospective students will be advised that they will not be subjected to increases in fees beyond any indicated in the agreement and notified to them before they commit themselves to the course. The University will supply information on the cost of living in the area.

Details of fees and financial support will be made available in a number of ways, including:

- Prospectus
- University of Winchester website, available by direct link from the UCAS and Student Loans Company websites (subject to their agreement)
- A detailed leaflet *Financial Support for Students* available on request and given out at open days
- All students who have informed UCAS that they wish to accept an offer of a place will receive a *Starter Pack* which includes more detailed information on fees and all sources of financial support.

An on-line calculator will be provided to allow prospective students to work out the costs of their course and living in the area and the amount of financial support they are likely to receive depending on their individual circumstances.

The University is working with the Student Loans Company to develop a standard national format for explaining what financial support is available.

INSTITUTIONAL MILESTONES AND OBJECTIVES

Widening participation

1. Throughout the period of the Access Agreement, continue to meet or exceed all of the Hefce location adjusted performance indicators relating to access and participation where these are already being met.

By 20011/12, meet or exceed all of the Hefce location adjusted performance indicators relating to access and participation

These performance indicators are the main milestones by which the University will measure its performance in safeguarding and improving access.

2. Increase the number of non-standard entrants per year recruited to Level One programmes from 269 to 280 by 2007 and at least maintain at that level for the duration of the Access Agreement.
3. Establish, with partner institutions, a Life Long Learning Network to enhance progression from vocational post-16 qualifications to higher education. Hefce business planning funding for this has been secured and a submission to the Hefce Strategic Development Fund is anticipated in 2005.

Outreach

1. Increase the number of Compact College partners from 21 to 22 and mainstream the compact agreements throughout the period of the Access Agreement
2. Develop subject links across 8 of Hampshire colleges' curriculum networks by 2007, particularly targeting vocational courses such as BTECs which tend to have higher proportions of 1st generation potential HE students.
3. By 2007, increase the number of annual visits to schools linked to University of Winchester under Aimhigher arrangements from 9 to 15 to encourage engagement in widening participation activities
4. Recruit over 300 students from Aimhigher target schools and colleges for non-residential taster days in 2005 and maintain at least at that level for the duration of the period covered by the Access Agreement
5. Recruit over 100 students for 2005 residential summer schools and maintain at least at that level for the duration of the period covered by the Access Agreement

Diversity

Disability

1. Continue to exceed the sector norm (5%) for the proportion of students who have declared a disability.
2. Fund 25 disability projects in academic schools and departments by 2007

Race

Increase the number of students from minority ethnic origins by 20%

UNDERTAKING TO MONITOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE AGREEMENT AND PROGRESS TOWARDS MILESTONES

University of Winchester undertakes to monitor compliance with the agreement through periodic reports from the Vice-Principal (Administration) or his nominee being received by the Common Management Group. An annual report will also be submitted to the Board of Governors.

Progress against the milestones will be included in these reports.