

## Access agreement: St George's Hospital Medical School

### Fee limits

The School intends to charge the maximum top-up fee permitted for all eligible full-time undergraduate programmes, with the exception of the Foundation Programme for Medicine, which is delivered by Kingston University for the School. No top-up fee will be charged for this programme. Also excluded from the top-up fee regime, by virtue of the Higher Education Act 2004, are NHS-funded full-time undergraduate programmes, currently Physiotherapy, Diagnostic Radiography and Therapeutic Radiography.

The decision to charge no top-up fee for the Foundation for Medicine programme signifies both the importance attached to this programme as a means of widening access to medicine, and also – mirroring as it does Kingston University's fee structure – our commitment to our partnership with Kingston.

### Amounts of additional income to be spent on access measures

The School intends to spend approximately 15% of its additional fee income on bursaries and outreach work. The split between these activities will vary between years, but our estimate is as follows:

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Total estimated additional fee income	£693k	£1,413k	£2,151k	£2,727k	£3,132k
Estimated additional fee income to spent on bursaries	£80k	£165k	£253k	£324k	£376k
Estimated amount of additional fee income to be spent on outreach	£24k	£47k	£70k	£85k	£94k

This assumes:

- An initial proportion of 15% of students being eligible for the maximum state award; 6% of students being eligible for some but not the maximum state funding. (This is based upon modelling of 2003/04 tuition fees.)
- The proportion of students gaining a bursary increasing by one percent per annum over this period.
- A total student cohort that is growing via the introduction of 600 additional student numbers, detailed plans for which have not yet been finalised.
- Figures are cash sums based on 2006-07 maximum top-up fee being £3,000, and the standard fee level at that time being £1,200.
- No allowance is made for increases in fee or bursary, although in practice both are assumed to increase in line with regulatory changes allowing for inflation and other changes.

### Bursaries and other financial support for students

The School is committed to a bursaries scheme that extends beyond the minimum regulatory requirement. This recognises that the study of medicine in particular imposes

unusually high costs on students, in relation to the length of programme but also in respect of the travel and lodgings requirements in the clinical programme.

The School's bursary scheme will be open to all UK students, and will be as follows:

- For students receiving the maximum state grant: £1,200 per year
- For students receiving  $\frac{3}{4}$  or above of the maximum state grant: £800 per year
- For students receiving between  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the maximum state grant: £500 per year
- For students receiving between  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the maximum state grant: £250 per year
- For students receiving up to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the maximum state grant: £150 per year

Consistent with the rationale in the previous paragraph, these bursaries will be payable as cash to the students themselves, rather than as fee remission. These will be administered, as far as is possible, through the mechanisms developed by University UK and set out in UUK inote 77, to which the School will sign up.

The bursaries are targeted at students whose financial circumstances may make them hesitant about entering higher education. They are new bursaries; the School has not previously operated a similar scheme.

### **Provision of information to students**

The School's strategy for providing information to students and prospective students has three elements.

- *Information in the prospectus:* the School's undergraduate prospectus will include clear statements of the fees that we will charge for our programmes and an outline of the School's bursary scheme.
- *Targeted information for applicants:* the School will provide specific information about the School's bursary scheme, including an outline of the criteria used for assessing applications, to all applicants invited to interview. When offers are confirmed, students-to-be will be sent details of the total cost of tuition fees for the duration of the course and also how they may apply for bursary support.
- *Information on the internet:* all material covered by the above statement will be available on the internet.

The School aims, by this strategy, to ensure that no applicant or prospective student is unsure about the financial implications of study with the School.

### **Outreach work**

St George's has undertaken considerable work to improve access to its programmes, and is proud of its achievements in this area. Often this work has been supported by specific funding initiatives, but a core of funded School support remains. We have one dedicated member of administrative staff (the Assistant Registrar, Fair Access) undertaking outreach work with academic and support staff and current students from across the institution to widen access and participation. Current activities are grouped around three headings:

A programme of activities to *raise aspirations*, including:

- Hands-on sessions run in conjunction with open days (more than 300 students per year participate).
- The *Experiments Roadshow* – interactive demonstrations given in target schools by current undergraduate students. Over 1000 school pupils have taken part in such sessions this year; the Roadshow has been used by other UK and international higher education institutions.
- Intensive spring and summer schools – over 200 attendees in 2004.
- Taste of Medicine CD-ROM – containing material to encourage school students to consider careers in medicine and health. 67,000 pupils so far have access to this product; it is hoped to make this available on-line in 2005.
- HANDS ON medicine scheme – working with pupils in schools with which we have compact agreements, combining work experience with student shadowing; 25 school pupils will benefit in 2005.

Work to *facilitate admission* to Higher Education

- We have introduced adjusted A-level entry criteria for A100 medicine – assessing applicants on their performance relative to their school average.
- Mock interviews and UCAS training – held at the Medical School or at target schools.
- Compacts with 5 local schools, guaranteeing visits/taster sessions, help with application and interview preparation, and interviews for candidates reaching threshold criteria.
- We are undertaking, jointly with three partner university institutions, research into barriers to admission, with particular foci on social class and ethnicity. This work will inform current training for staff involved with admissions.
- Foundation Programme for Medicine – offered in collaboration with Kingston University. 9 students on the 5-year MBBS programme have joined from the first cohort of the Foundation Programme.

We also work to support *retention*. This has a focus broader than widening participation, but is relevant. Activities include:

- Remedial support in biology and chemistry, offered in conjunction with Burntwood School, a local comprehensive and a key partner in widening participation work.

The School plans to expand its programme of outreach work, with a number of new projects and activities to supplement current action. Expansion is likely to take the form of both increases in staffing levels associated with fair access (perhaps one more staff member) and increases in resources available to support such activities. The specific developments and projects to be undertaken will be determined in due course, but possible approaches include:

- Work with primary schools in our local borough, to build upon the Personal Social and Health Education curriculum.
- Sessions with primary schools to explore the differences between television and real-life hospital drama.
- Using current students in school visits and assemblies for primary schools.
- Leading the development, with other London HE providers, of a tracking database for health-care based widening participation activity, so the success of specific widening

participation activities can be measured, regardless of the higher education institution at which students eventually choose to study.

- Supporting teachers and careers advisers in schools to raise aspirations, with specific training; work with teachers to be carried out in partnership with Burntwood School.
- Development of online teacher resources – eg lesson plans, curriculum materials – aimed at highlighting healthcare professions and careers to school students.
- Participation in the AimHigher national e-mentoring scheme.
- Development of community open-days for local families to visit the Medical School, participate in activities, and seek to raise familial aspirations for higher education.

The School has also made the bursary scheme open to all UK students, not only those that are ordinarily resident in England.

## Milestones

The School intends to measure its success by reference to HEFCE performance indicators. The following table shows past performance and proposed milestones for the School on measures relating to social inclusion and diversity.

Measure (all first degree, ie tables 1a & 2a)	Baseline	Milestones	
	Current 5-year average	5-year average 08-09	5-year average 2010-11
Young, State School	55.6	62.2	65.5
Young, Social classes III, IV, V	14.4	16.4	17.4
Young, low participation neighbourhood	7.6	9.4	10.3
Mature, no previous HE and low participation neighbourhood	2.6	4.0	4.7

The HEFCE PIs are a readily available data set which encourages transparency and accountability. Use of the PIs also eliminates additional data collection costs. A five year average is proposed for both the baseline and the milestones – this reduces the impact of an unusual year (be it over- or under-performance). The average is taken by using the most recent five years' published data, meaning that even the most recent component of the average may be based upon data which is two years' out of date. Although regrettable from a statistical point of view, it does encourage a long view of the situation.

The proposed milestones take into account the fact that the impact of top-up fees is as yet unknown. The 08-09 milestone is likely to include only one year of actual top-up fees within its range; the proposed improvement between now and 08-09 is therefore larger than the subsequent increase.

St George's is similar, in the round, to few other institutions:

- We are relatively small in terms of the number of students that are registered at the School.

- We are a specialist institution, with students registered in only 3 of the 14 widely recognised broad subject areas offered by universities.
- A significant proportion of our activity (roughly 25% of the full-time equivalent students registered at the School) is delivered in partnership with Kingston University, via the joint Faculty of Health and Social Care Sciences.
- One programme (the five-year MBBS degree) accounts for a dominant proportion of our educational activity.
- Longer programmes bring different issues in relation to recruitment, retention and progression.

The selection of comparator institutions is therefore fraught with difficulty. In developing this access agreement the School has considered the performance of the following other institutions:

- Kingston University: our closest strategic partner, similarly located in south-west London.
- Royal Holloway, University of London: another strategic partner, with (broad) similarities in history and mission.
- The School of Pharmacy: a small, specialised health-related institution based in central London.
- The Royal Veterinary College: a small, specialised health-related institution, based in outer London.

### **Institutional monitoring arrangements**

Bi-annual reporting to the School's Senate will support monitoring of the arrangements outlined in this agreement. A report at the end of the autumn term will provide information on bursaries awarded that session; a report in the summer term will cover outreach activities, so as to inform the HEFCE annual monitoring statement.

Hugh Jones  
Academic Registrar

23 December 2004