



University of Sussex

Widening Participation Strategy and Access Agreement

**Submission to the Office for Fair Access for the planning period
2006/7 – 2010/11**

**December 2004
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Widening Participation Strategy and Access Agreement

1. Introduction

Our vision and general aims

Sussex is one of the leading universities in England, in student recruitment, in excellence in teaching and the student experience, in research and in serving the needs of business and the community. Each of these activities informs and enhances the others. Our undergraduate places are in high demand, with applications increasing strongly year on year, high entry grades and almost no use of Clearing. By continuing to renew the academic programmes and facilities that we offer, we aim to continue enhancing these strengths. Sussex is also a diverse, multi-cultural community that aims to be open and welcoming to all in society who can benefit from, or contribute to higher education and research. We recruit students from a wide social base and recognise and seek to respond to their different attitudes, values and needs.

Widening participation: our current position

Sussex performs well at attracting undergraduates from state schools. Eighty-five per cent of our students come from state schools, well above the relevant HEFCE benchmark of 80 per cent.

Sussex has also for many years attracted a high proportion of mature full-time students (i.e. those aged 21 or over). Currently, 23% of our undergraduates are mature, which is a very high proportion compared to universities with similar entry standards. Our inclusive atmosphere and excellent support services also mean that we attract many disabled students (7.5% - also a high proportion viewed nationally).

Our Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) leads our provision of higher education to groups in the local community for whom the traditional full-time undergraduate degree is not appropriate or accessible. During 2004/05, about 2900 local students will be studying part-time through CCE.

However we have work still to do to improve the proportion of our non-mature students from less well-off backgrounds. Latest available figures show that Sussex admits 18% of young full-time students from nationally-defined 'lower' social groups, compared to a benchmark of 22.6%. When our mature students are counted-in, this gap disappears, but we do accept that should try to attract more young students from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds to full-time degrees. This is our 'headline' target, but we are not focusing on it to the exclusion of other groups: our work through the many schemes set out later in this document has strands that also address the needs of mature students, part-time students, those from ethnic minorities, and those with disabilities.

Widening participation in higher education across all social groups is a long-term project that needs to involve the whole education system from early school years onwards, to raise the aspirations and achievement of young people from all backgrounds. It also involves creating and sustaining 'lifelong learning' opportunities. Sussex will be a very active player in this process.

Our key widening-participation aims (for full-time undergraduates except where stated) are to:

- ◆ increase the proportion of young students from nationally-defined lower social groups, to meet the benchmark indicator published by the Higher Education Funding Council¹.
- ◆ keep the proportion of our mature students in the upper quartile of like institutions².
- ◆ keep the proportion of those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds at or above the regional norm³.
- limit withdrawals of full-time undergraduates: no more than 5% should fail to progress to year 2.
- continue to expand part-time pathways and progression opportunities at all levels of study.
- seek to identify and eliminate any effect of widening participation factors (e.g. socio-economic background, age, ethnicity, disability) on final degree outcomes.

The scope of this Access Agreement only covers the aims flagged as ‘♦’ above. More detailed information about these targets, the specific milestones we set ourselves and the monitoring arrangements we propose are set out in section 12 below.

2. How our Widening Participation strategy links to our other strategies

As well as being embedded in our overall corporate strategy, our widening participation aims are closely and explicitly linked to these other strands of policy development:

- our **Learning and Teaching** strategy, which includes making our curriculum more attractive to wider social groups, including a focus on employability; also, by looking closely at how the curriculum is delivered and assessed, to support our aims for student retention, final achievement, and the needs of disabled students;
- **academic developments** that are very relevant include the recently and very successfully established **Brighton & Sussex Medical School**, a current root-and-branch review of our **Science Curriculum**, other initiatives in the areas of **Business & Management**, **Media & Film**, **Creative & Performing Arts**, and a new part-time **Foundation Degree in Community Studies**;
- our **Equal Opportunities** strategy, of which our **Race Action Plan** and our **Disability Strategy** are important elements;
- our **Admissions Policy** and practices, which we are currently reviewing in the light of the recently-published recommendations of the *Fair Admissions to Higher Education* review led by Prof Schwartz;
- our **Human Resource Strategy**, especially its **staff development** dimensions.

3. Leadership and development of our Widening Participation strategy

Widening Participation policy development at Sussex is headed by Pro-Vice Chancellor Mary Stuart who gives leadership and ensures that the widening participation agenda is strongly represented in the University’s senior management thinking. Supporting PVC Stuart, the Academic Registrar (Owen Richards) oversees the implementation, internal communications and monitoring aspects of the strategy, assisted in turn by our Widening Participation Officer (Sara McKernan), who is also a local area manager within the national *Aimhigher* project. There is close liaison with the Planning directorate, our Equalities and Diversities team (led by PVC John Dearlove) and our Learning & Teaching team (led by PVC Rose Luckin).

4. Summary of current strands of Sussex’s widening participation activity

4.1 Our independent work

SussEx Access Scheme (SEAS)	SEAS is, certainly in terms of volume, the main plank of our central widening participation effort. Working through a network of schools with WP challenges (mainly London-based at present) the scheme registers pupils from year 11 upwards who get a mixture of direct outreach/HE taster opportunities, and also access to a range of www/seas.ac.uk email-based advice and facilities. The scheme’s aims are to raise aspirations, boost confidence, give practical advice on applying to HE and it also offers an admissions compact (guaranteed offer) arrangement. In 2003/4 over 4000 students were participating in the SEAS scheme.
Outreach by Sussex academic departments	A full list of current widening-participation activities led by our departments is set out in Appendix 1. Just to give a flavour of the volume and diversity of this work: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Substantial outreach work by our Centre for Continuing Education, promoting part-time study and awareness/aspiration-raising in the local community;• 6th form conferences (recently: American Studies, Languages, Sociology, Law);• The <i>Creative Science Centre</i> project, led by (TV star!) Dr Jonathan Hare;• a major <i>Science at Sussex</i> event; Science and Engineering (workshop) Days;• outreach, HE taster events and masterclasses across the full subject-range of Humanities, Social Studies, Science, Technology, Business and Medicine.• Special lectures (e.g. Engineering Christmas lecture);• Many direct links and staff development arrangements with current school teachers, and ensuring that the future teachers we train via PGCE are made very conscious of the widening participation agenda.

Work with mature students	A dedicated Mature Student Adviser works with students and Access providers at the pre-entry stage. We offer a year-round drop-in session where mature applicants get advice and a specially-oriented tour of the University, led by current mature students. Our main Open Days have mature-specific strands, Q&A sessions etc. Bespoke outreach visits and other links maintain regular close contacts with local Access providers and the Open College Network. We offer a range of mature-specific induction and orientation events.
Widening Participation Scholarship schemes	Several significant charitable donations currently enable us to offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sussex Access Scholarships</i>: currently 13 scholarships of between £1000-1500 for each year of study to students from backgrounds of no HE; • <i>Dangoor Scholarships</i>: a new scheme enabling us to offer about 60 one-off scholarships of £1000 to 2005 entrants.
Other relevant support work	We make a significant investment in student advisers, academic/social orientation ('freshers week'), careers advice, etc. All of this work has an increasing orientation towards giving targeted support to students from non-traditional backgrounds.

4.2 Our work through the national Aimhigher project

Core Aimhigher outreach work	Our Widening Participation Officer combines her work for Sussex with also being Brighton & Hove Area Manager for the Sussex Aimhigher project. This involves intensive work with around 280 students in each local year-group (years 9 to 11), plus outreach events by arrangement with years 10-13 in a wider group of schools and colleges. Activities include: HE taster events (general and subject-specific); parents events; conferences (recent examples: Science; Health & Social Care); special lectures; work experience on campus; general advice and promotion of relevant information about the full range of HE opportunities on offer within Sussex and more widely. Sussex students take a lead with this work: eg. our Mathematics students tutor 100 local pupils each year; dozens more are involved in similar work in other subjects. A key aim of the project is to create links between schools/colleges and Departments that are self-sustaining, and to do so carefully, to ensure that these links benefit the HE students as well as students in the schools.
Piloting Workplace-based learning	Our Centre for Continuing Education is leading a key strand of pilot work to develop and give real testing to workplace-based learning models of study. This is an area where models of delivery that work are not available 'off the shelf', and is very important to address the needs of people who for economic or career reasons find it hard to engage with traditional (even traditional part-time) HE offerings.
HE Summer School (HESS)	Now under Aimhigher coordination, HESS offers 90 students from non-traditional HE backgrounds an in-depth 4-day residential taster of HE during the summer vacation. The academic content is carefully tailored to give year 11 students a realistic and exciting feel for what HE is like. Participants are followed-up to ensure that momentum is not lost in terms of applying to HE.
Excellence Fellowships	Sussex coordinates several of these fellowships, which offer working teachers in schools and colleges an opportunity to have their time 'bought out' to work with our academics on specific major staff development projects.
Regional Development Office (RDO)	In pursuing 'third stream' collaborations, the RDO often catalyses discussions (e.g with FE colleges) that lead to developments relevant to widening participation.
Overhead investment in Aimhigher by Sussex	Although the <i>direct</i> costs of Aimhigher activity based at Sussex are borne by an external stream of funding, Sussex makes a significant investment in the overhead costs of the project. Senior and middle-management time and other costs of accommodating the project workers amount to at least £10,000 each year.

4.3 Other collaborative local work

Sussex Liaison & Progression Accord (SLPA)	The SLPA is an admissions compact scheme linking the three HEIs in Sussex with c.40 local state schools and colleges. The compact scheme itself (involving guaranteed standard offers) is not specifically widening-participation-aimed, but the SLPA is an excellent vehicle for promoting understanding between staff in the schools and colleges, and HE staff. This helps in areas that <i>are</i> directly relevant to widening participation, e.g how post-16 curriculum developments are affecting students, and in relation to Access courses.
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ACCESS AGREEMENT

Sections 6-12 below constitute our formal Access Agreement with the Office for Fair Access.

5. The new fee regime from 2006/7

The Higher Education Act 2004 permits English universities, with the approval of the Office of Fair Access, to charge up to £3000 p.a. tuition fees to UK and EU full-time undergraduates. This maximum fee will be capped until at least 2010 but the fee limit will be increased in line with inflation over that period. Students will no longer have to pay their fees 'up front' but will have the option of repaying their fees, alongside their loans, after they leave higher education and are earning more than £15,000 p.a., at a zero real (RPI-linked) rate of interest. In our view, the augmentation of university funding by this increase in tuition fees is a long-overdue response to an extended period of serious under-funding of higher education which leaves a very challenging legacy to put right, e.g. in terms of staff pay and infrastructure development. There should be no perception that universities will suddenly become affluent. We note in particular that Government has confirmed, in statements relating to the Act, that the new fee income is *not* a substitute for existing streams of public funding for universities. The new income begins to restore more reasonable conditions of operation, but universities like Sussex will need to continue being very prudent about how much we can spend directly on extra student support, amongst the many other demands, which all affect the student experience.

6. The cost of undergraduate study at Sussex from 2006/7

Full-time programmes

Subject to the approval of the Office for Fair Access we propose that our standard undergraduate fee for full-time UK and EU students for 2006/7 will be £3,000 p.a., and for the period of this access agreement (i.e. the five years from 2006/7 to 2010/11) we expect to increase our fee year on year by the maximum allowable (inflation-linked) amount.

The only exceptions to this that we currently envisage relate to years abroad and sandwich years out, where the pricing issues are complex and we have yet to make final decisions. We intend to make and publish these decisions by Easter 2005, in plenty of time to inform the choices of prospective students for 2006 entry. In the meantime we reserve the option to charge up to what we understand to be the statutory maximum of £1,500 p.a. (in 2006/7) for this kind of year out.

Part-time programmes

This access agreement does not cover part-time programmes *per se*, but for clarity and completeness it is worth stating our position on part-time fees. Like most other universities, we are awaiting the outcome of current discussions between the Government and representatives of the HE sector. Perhaps the key issue is how the apparent disparity between arrangements for full-time and part-time students will be resolved, in respect of part-time students' access to state maintenance support and the facility to pay tuition fees in arrears. However, the picture is very much complicated by the fact that part-time students are not a homogenous group; the right fee for students in hardship or from backgrounds of disadvantage may be very different from the fee for someone studying for professional development with employer sponsorship, or just as a hobby. We intend to keep the general issue under review until the latter part of 2005, and meantime to continue to set fees for part-time programmes on current lines.

7. Our plans to invest extra fee income in access and student support measures

At a summary level, this is the scale of investment that we plan:

Table 1	Yr 1 (2006/7)	Yr 2 (2007/8)	Yr 3 (2008/9)	Yr 4 (2009/10)	Yr 5 (2010/11)
Total estimated additional fee income	£3.64M	£7.6M	£11.8M	£13.0M	£13.0M
Estimated amount of additional income to be spent on direct student support	£712K	£1486K	£2286K	£2395K	£2422K
Estimated amount of additional income to be spent on outreach	£185K	£200K	£220K	£241K	£243K
Total estimated investment (and as % of new income)	£897K (24.6%)	£1686K (22.2%)	£2506K (21.2%)	£2636K (20.3%)	£2665K (20.5%)

8. Direct financial support for students

8.1 Form of payment of support to students

All student support payments mentioned below will be provided in the form of cash. Figures quoted in this section are per annum for each year of study up to and including completion of four-year full-time programmes. The only full-time programme-year excluded is the 5th year of our BSMS medical degree, during which students receive an NHS bursary.

8.2 Our widening participation bursary and scholarship schemes

The student support scheme that we propose below emerges from a careful review of Sussex's position and widening participation targets. As set out in section 1 above, the main features of our situation are these:

- We consistently meet or exceed HEFCE benchmark for young students from state schools;
- We attract a consistently high proportion (23%) of mature students on full-time undergraduate degrees – around double the norm for similar institutions in the 1994 Group, for instance.
- We are relatively less successful at attracting *young* students from lower social groups, and our headline WP target is to reach HEFCE benchmark on this indicator.

In this context, we have looked for a structure of student support that is likely to be attractive to appropriately-qualified young students from lower socio-economic groups, and in fact explicitly to target support in that direction, whilst also ensuring a fair deal for our large numbers of mature students – who are amongst the most needy. The fact that mature students will be a very large proportion of those whose family incomes are in or below the range £15,000-£21,000 presents a problem: since we can only afford to put a certain proportion of new fee income into extra student support it is essential that we manage resources carefully to directly reach our main target WP group, i.e. *young* entrants from lower social groups. Bursary schemes of the pure-means-test type envisaged under the UUK/SCOP model scheme would not allow us to focus support in this way. Therefore we have had to find a more balanced and 'targetable' approach.

The solution we have adopted is a balanced structure of *both* a means-test-based bursary scheme (aimed at the least well-off students, many of whom will be mature) and a part-means-tested, part-selective, widening participation scholarship scheme. The way this works in more detail is as follows:

- **Sussex bursaries**

For students qualifying for a full government maintenance grant (which in 2006/7 is a £2,700 grant for students with family income of less than £17,500 p.a.) we will give a bursary of £1,000⁴.

We estimate that this scheme will benefit approximately 19% of our eligible intake. The cost projection of this is set out in Table 2 below. There will be no 'taper' arrangement of partial means-tested bursaries above this level of family income; instead students will be eligible to apply for....

- **Chancellor's scholarships**

Students with family income of less than £24,000 will be eligible to apply for one of 200 Chancellor's scholarships, each worth £1000 p.a.

The selection criteria for this scheme will be focused on applicants who:

- have no family background of HE; and/or
- have a background of educational or social disadvantage (e.g. coming from a school that sends a relatively low proportion of students to higher education); and/or
- present evidence of having made a real contribution to their local community.

Within this scheme we envisage operating a quota system, with 80% of scholarships going to students aged under 21 and 20% for mature students. This roughly mirrors the current mature student proportion of our current student body and is our way of ensuring that a reasonable proportion of student support actually gets to our target group. This scheme will benefit approximately 10% of our eligible intake. The cost projection of this is set out in Table 2 below.

- **Other Sussex scholarships and awards**

As well as the means-test-based schemes above, we will continue to offer some other needs-blind scholarship schemes (usually subject-based, focused on academic promise and/or high entry grades). The typical amount involved is £1000 p.a. As these awards are needs-blind and/or externally-funded we are not seeking to count them towards this access agreement *per se*, but they need to be mentioned for context.

Features of our student support scheme

A student from a less well-off background can potentially secure a Sussex Bursary *and* a Chancellor's Scholarship *and* another needs-blind scholarship for academic achievement. It will certainly not be unusual for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to secure support worth £2000 p.a. or more.

For these pure-means-test-based bursaries we intend to sign up to the model bursary scheme as devised by the UUK/SCOP advisory group, so that bursaries will be paid direct to students along with their student loans. However, we believe that there is a high risk of this national project failing to deliver the IT outputs needed by both HEIs (i.e. notification of family income) and applicants (e.g. a family income ready-reckoner). Some allowance for extra costs falling on HEIs is therefore built into the cost projection for operational support. For students awarded Chancellor's Scholarships we will make local arrangements to pay students after arrival. There is likely to be some phasing of these payments through the academic year; we are consulting with our Students Union about what the best arrangement for this might be and will publish clear information to applicants. Scholarship payments for the 3rd year will probably be re-validated against family income data.

In the start-up phase of the new arrangements we envisage that funding of both the Sussex bursary and Chancellor's scholarship strands of our support package will come overwhelmingly out of new fee income. However, we intend to put considerable effort into fund-raising to leverage in external contributions from alumni and other donors, to put resources into scholarship, hardship and similar schemes with a clear widening participation focus. Since this fund-raising effort will in itself be paid for out of new core income, we have costed it into our projected investment in Table 2 below.

Overall (and having allowed for some overlap of students getting both a bursary *and* a scholarship) we estimate that our student support proposals will benefit approximately 26% of eligible students in our entry cohorts from 2006 onwards, in a way that we feel is proportionate to our WP objectives and intelligently targeted to meet those aims. Since all awards are for the substantial sum of £1000 p.a. they will make a real difference to students and will work, we think, in terms of both recruitment and retention of our target groups.

Support for part-time students

We are keeping the issue of direct institutional support for part-time students under review, but until the uncertainties relating to part-time study under the new fees regime set out in section 6 above have been resolved, we do not feel able to commit ourselves to a specific scheme or level of investment.

Table 2: Detailed breakdown of our projected direct investment in student support

	Yr 1 (£K)	Yr 2 (£K)	Yr 3 (£K)	Yr 4 (£K)	Yr 5 (£K)
Bursaries	370	840	1330	1380	1380
Scholarships	200	500	800	850	870
Bursaries & Scholarships operational support (new office)	90	92	100	105	110
Extra fundraising resource	52	54	56	60	62
Estimated total amount of additional income to be spent on direct student support:	712	1486	2286	2395	2422

9. Brighton & Sussex Medical School

The Brighton & Sussex Medical School (BSMS) has been recently and jointly established by the Universities of Sussex and Brighton. BSMS students are members of *both* universities, and since the two universities' proposed student support schemes are somewhat dissimilar we have had to consult carefully with regard to how student support arrangements will work. We have reached these main conclusions:

- at least 25% of new BSMS fee income will be re-invested in student support and outreach;
- BSMS will follow the line taken by both universities, of using the unit of £1000 p.a. to disburse support;
- BSMS have indicated a preference for a support model similar to Sussex's Chancellor's Scholarships;
- BSMS may reserve some extra scholarships for years 3+4 only, for reasons related to their curriculum.

We will publish more detailed information relating to BSMS student support in due course.

10. Provision of information to students

Our prospectuses for 2006 and onwards will make prospective students aware of the aggregate fees bill for the completion of their courses. The specific ways in which we intend to invest new monies in provision of information to students are these:

- New information materials (paper, www, possibly other media) giving financial advice to prospective students about the new fees regime and our support schemes. These will be developed in cooperation with our Students Union, and may be jointly 'branded';
- providing web-based facilities to enable enquirers to find out about and apply for our scholarship and bursary offerings, including – in collaboration with our Students Union welfare office - a 'ready reckoner' of applicants' family income (likely to be needed because national projects in this direction may not deliver).
- Making financial advice a larger part of our outreach work generally and refining materials and approaches for widening participation target groups specifically. This has major training and team-working implications.

A summary estimate of projected costs for this additional information provision is given in Table 3 below.

11 Outreach work

As section 4 above sets out, we already put considerable resource into many strands of widening participation work. The additional access measures that we propose to engage with from 2006, set out below, are mainly extensions of our existing activities, but some are new. All of the strands of work mentioned in section 11.1 below are natural developments of our existing outreach activities and so are entirely complementary to our pre-2006 activities. The target group will be potential students in circumstances of socio-economic or educational disadvantage, except where more specific target groups are indicated.

11.1 Expansion and development of our independent Widening Participation work

Outreach/Inreach	Description	Proposed expansion/development	Milestone/volume target by 2007/8 except where stated
SEAS scheme	See section 4 above for description of the SEAS scheme.	We will expand this scheme by c.50% above current baseline, consolidating presence locally (eg. Crawley) and targeting deprived areas of Kent & Hampshire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits increased from c.70/year to c.110/year; • Participants increased from c.4000 to c.6000
More outreach and inreach work by Departments	See section 4 above and Appendix 1 for current types and volumes of activity. We wish to firmly embed widening participation outreach work within our departmental structures.	A condition for the allocation of new posts in departments will be a clear widening participation strategy which allocates new activity to support young people to enter HE by doing more subject specific related support and aspiration raising work with our SEAS schools. Faculty will receive staff development to assist them in working with under 18 year olds and will work closely with teachers to ensure this work is effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 extra outreach events per year (partly covered by expansion of SEAS above); • Inreach events (6th form conferences, workshops etc.) to increase volume of activity by 50% • More support for Sussex Liaison & Progression Accord.
More residential HE taster events	'Bespoke' residential HE taster events, probably targeting inner London; with an ethnic/religious diversity angle.	Starting with one additional residential event for 2006/7, to scale this up cautiously (in terms of numbers and size of events) as demand and resources allow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 such event for 20-30 participants in 2006/7, looking towards roughly doubling this by the end of the planning period.
Mature student-oriented outreach	See section 4 above for current activities.	Increase outreach and orientation work for mature students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand activity by about 50%.

Pre-arrival and orientation support	Description	Proposed expansion/development	Milestone/volume target by 2007/8 except where stated
New mentoring/buddy scheme.	We will initiate a new 'buddying'/ mentoring scheme which features our postgraduate students linking with school age students.	This would be part of the expansion of the facilities offered via our SEAS scheme. The scheme will provide ementoring and face to face support for young people. Training and support will be provided for the postgraduate students participating in the project. This scheme will build on the best practice in ementoring and face to face support developed in other universities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To offer this facility to SEAS participants in 2006/7; • To expand provision thereafter as demand (and supply) allows.
Other targeted induction/orientation support	We will invest more, and in more targeted ways, on support for students on arrival and the immediate period thereafter.	More and better orientation work tailored to the needs of specific groups. E.g. generic and subject-specific study skills work (of different kinds) with students with certain kinds of entry qualification, or mature students. A more targeted approach to Computing and Library induction. Developing welcome and social orientation events that are more diversity-sensitive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific extra volumes and milestones not yet mapped, however the kinds of test of effectiveness are fairly clear, i.e. immediate feedback on satisfaction levels and impact through to retention figures and reasons given for leaving.
	Specific strands of this need to address the needs of disabled students and those from ethnic minorities.	As above, but with specific focus on the key areas of addressing the needs of students with disabilities and those from ethnic minorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same general comment on volumes and milestones, but note that these strands of work will be specifically monitored under DDA and RRAA-related action plans.

11.2 Collaborative work via Aimhigher and Sussex Liaison & Progression Accord

The AimHigher project (jointly funded by HEFCE and Learning and Skills Council) is the main national and regional vehicle for widening participation work that is not institution-specific. The main direct costs of the AimHigher project (including the HE Summer School) are funded through regional project teams in a discrete way, therefore although Sussex has staff employed by the AimHigher project, their costs are outside the remit of this access agreement. But it is important to note the following points about the local AimHigher context:

- The project plan for Sussex AimHigher involves considerable expansion of activity (now planned in some detail into 2006). This is requiring growth of the project team based at Sussex which looks after the Brighton & Hove area – an increase from 1.4 FTE to 1.9 FTE;
- It involves our Centre for Continuing Education taking a lead role with regard to developing models of workplace-based learning;
- There will be an increased need for the schools liaison teams of the three Sussex HEIs to coordinate with each other and with the AimHigher project about the timing and nature of outreach work with schools.

We estimate that the net effect – arising from the local management and overhead costs of the extra Sussex-based staff, the extra coordination work, plus a generally increased level of input to project management/steering group, means that the scale of investment that Sussex is making in this project *for which it is not reimbursed* is likely to move from about £10,000 p.a currently to about £15,000 p.a. over this planning period.

We also think that the Sussex Liaison & Progression Accord (see section 4 for more information on this), whilst in itself not a widening-participation-focused scheme, will play an important supporting role in terms of keeping channels of communication open between HE and schools and colleges, and facilitating dissemination of information about curriculum and admissions policy matters. This looks likely to require explicit investment of the order of £5,000 p.a., which *is* relevant to this agreement.

11.3 Cost of extra investments in information-provision and outreach work

Bringing-together the projected costs for activities outlined in sections 10 and 11 above gives these figures:

Table 3 Breakdown of our projected direct investment in information-provision and outreach work

	Yr 1 (£K)	Yr 2 (£K)	Yr 3 (£K)	Yr 4 (£K)	Yr 5 (£K)
New information/facilities for prospective students, extra training of outreach staff etc	15	15	15	18	18
Expansion of SEAS scheme	20	22	24	26	28
More outreach and inreach by academic departments	80	85	90	90	90
More residential HE taster events	5	5	10	15	15
Extra outreach – mature-specific	10	11	12	14	14
New mentoring/'buddy' scheme	5	10	15	20	20
Other expansion of targeted induction/orientation support.	30	32	34	38	38
Extra overhead costs of relevant collaborative work (AimHigher, SLPA)	20	20	20	20	20
Estimated total additional investment	185	200	220	241	243

12. Targets, milestones and monitoring arrangements

12.1 Our widening participation targets and milestones

i) Proportion of Undergraduate full-time entrants from disadvantaged backgrounds

We identify under-recruitment of young (under 21) full-time undergraduates from social groups 4-7 as our main WP challenge, and improving the proportion of students that we recruit to reach the relevant (location-adjusted) HEFCE benchmark is our main target. The current comparison, based on 2002/3 data, is: HEFCE benchmark 22.6%, Sussex actual 18.0%.

Milestone targets are:

2003/4	Yr 1 (2006/7)	Yr 2 (2007/8)	Yr 3 (2008/9)	Yr 4 (2009/10)	Yr 5 (2010/11)
18.0%	19%	20%	21%	22%	23%

ii) Proportion of mature entrants

We already make a strong contribution to widening participation in this area, by comparison with like institutions with similar entry requirements, and we are committed to continuing to do so. The overall proportion of our full-time undergraduate student body who are mature on entry is 23.8% (in 2003/4). However, in order to benchmark ourselves against available data⁵ for like institutions we need to focus just on UK domiciled first degree entrants. Using the 1994 Group⁶ for this purpose provides these figures:

	<u>Total degree entrants</u>	<u>Number of mature entrants</u>	<u>Percent entrants who are mature</u>
The University of Sussex	1,905	360	18.8
The University of East Anglia	1,970	345	17.5
The University of Essex	1,625	275	17.1
The University of Surrey	1,395	220	15.9
The University of Reading	2,690	265	9.9
The University of Warwick	2,695	255	9.4
The University of Exeter	2,520	215	8.6
Royal Holloway	1,225	85	7.0
University of Durham	3,360	230	6.8
The University of Bath	1,710	100	5.9
The University of York	1,875	100	5.3
The University of Lancaster	2,355	125	5.2
LSE	<u>705</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>3.0</u>
	26,030	2,595	10.0

For Sussex to be at the head of this table with nearly double the 1994 Group average proportion of mature students is significant in itself for what it says about our commitment to lifelong learning. But the other sense in which our mature recruitment is important is that 37% of our mature students are from social groups 4-7, and these mature students make a valuable contribution to the 'social mix' agenda. The sharp focus of the HEFCE lower-social-group performance indicator on *young students only* is therefore very unfortunate for us: Sussex would do much better on a performance indicator for social mix which combined the data for young and mature students. Notwithstanding the performance indicators, it remains clear to us that by continuing to play to our existing strength in this area we are making a strong contribution to the widening participation agenda, therefore our target is to keep the proportion of mature full-time undergraduates at least in the upper quartile of the group of institutions listed above. Specific interim milestone targets are not identifiable at this stage, but will be adopted if annual monitoring indicates a need.

iii) Ethnic mix

We have conducted our own benchmarking exercise regarding our current performance at recruiting Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) students. The key data are as follows:

	Sussex undergraduate ethnic composition, 2003/4	South-East UCAS degree acceptances (2002 entry) ⁷
Asian Bangladeshi	0.3	0.3
Asian Chinese	0.7	1.0
Asian Indian	1.3	2.4
Asian Pakistani	0.4	0.9
Asian Other	0.9	1.1
<i>Asian sub-total</i>	<i>3.6</i>	<i>5.8</i>
Black African	1.3	1.0
Black Caribbean	0.6	0.5
Black Other	0.4	0.5
<i>Black sub-total</i>	<i>2.3</i>	<i>2.0</i>
Other	5.0	1.7
<i>BME sub-total</i>	<i>10.9%</i>	<i>9.5%</i>
White	82.3%	84.1
Not known/refused	6.8%	6.4

These figures show that Sussex currently performs better than the average for HEIs in the South-East region at attracting BME students. However, we are in no way complacent about this and wish to flag our intention not to allow this comparison to move negatively, and to ensure that our proportion of BME students remains at or above the regional norm as measured above. In the context that our entry requirements will continue to rise, and the fact that our BME students come disproportionately from schools – mainly in inner London – which face challenges in helping their pupils to achieve high grades in A level (and equivalent vocational qualifications), this commitment to keep ahead of the regional norm is quite challenging. Specific interim milestone targets are not identifiable at this stage, but will be adopted if annual monitoring indicates a need.

12.2 Institutional monitoring arrangements

We will monitor progress and compliance with this agreement in these ways:

- i) Monitoring conformance of actual spending against projections for direct student support and outreach measures: via regular financial monitoring reports coming to Senior Management Group, Finance & General Purposes Committee, and the University Council;
- ii) Monitoring the *effectiveness* of investments and new activities in relation to progress against targets and milestones: via regular (at least annual) reporting to a combination of -
 - our internal Widening Participation Group
 - Senior Academic Committees (focus on student participation, progression and achievement rates)
 - Senior Management Group and the University Council.

Appendix 1: Audit of current widening participation outreach activity by Sussex Departments

This list does *not* include centrally-run outreach work, which is summarised in section 4 of the main document.

School/Department	Description of work	Timing/regularity	No of recent participants (where known)
HUMANITIES			
American Studies	Roland Marden – Sixth form conference	Annual	
Art History	1. Visits to schools (M Howard & E Welch) 2. Link with William Ellis sixth formers 3. Y10 taster for AimHigher (T Hamlin)	1. Annual 2. n/a 3. Annual	1. 2. 3. 12
English	1. Talks and presentations for local schools 2. Talks for campus visits (D Decaires-Narain)	1. Occasional 2. Occasional	1. 2.
History	1. Taster in history for Aimhigher (A Howkins) 2. A Level masterclass for SEAS (B Williams)	1. On demand 2. June 2003	1. 15 2.
Languages	1. Y10/11 Taster session for Aimhigher 2. Sixth form French day in September 3. A Level revision courses on campus 4. GCSE students attending seminars 5. Tasters link with Warden Park School 6. Work with schools - Spanish	1. On demand 2. Annual 3. repeatable 4. Occasional 5. 6. In planning	1. 12 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.
Linguistics and English Language	1. Many short talks for WP groups (N Woods) 2. Careers talks at local schools and colleges	1. Ongoing 2. Ongoing	1. 2.
Media & Cultural Studies	1. Media tasters for Y10/11 Aimhigher and SEAS (T Austin, A Drew, K Whittington)	1. Annual	1.20
Music	Planned taster - Music informatics (very popular with WP students)	In planning	
LIFE SCIENCES			
Biochemistry, Biology /Environmental Science, Chemistry	Science at Sussex Event	Nov 2004 – annual?	100
Biology and Environmental Science	1. Day Schools for A level students 2. Work experience – years 10 – 13 3. National Science Week – Y7 to Y9 4. WP visits / tasters 5. Biology A Level masterclasses 6. Science and Engineering Ambassadors Scheme	1. 2004 2. Ongoing 3. Annual – March 4. 2004 5. Occasional 6. Annual cycle	1. 2. 14 3. 200 4. 5. 6.
Chemistry	1. Science and Engineering Days – year 9/10 workshops in genetics, chemistry 2. Work experience – Aimhigher participants 3. Beacon Enrichment day – year 11 4. Other schools and colleges talks and events	1. Annual 2. Annual 3. Occasional 4. Ongoing	1. 2. 3. 4.
Psychology	1. Y12 SEAS taster sessions Rosie Meek et al	1. 2003	1. 25
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY			
All Scitech	Science at Sussex Event	Nov 2004 – annual?	100
Engineering and Design	1. Science and Engineering Days – year 9/10 workshops in astronomy, engineering 2. Girls into Engineering (H Prance) – offered to Aimhigher participants 3. Media studio sessions for Aimhigher/SEAS 4. Xmas Lecture (in assoc with the IEE) for Y10-12	1. 2. Annual 3. On demand 4. Dec 2004	1. 2. 60 3. 4. 300
Informatics	1. Tasters in website design for Y10-12 Aimhigher and SEAS 2. Informatics days for Y12 SEAS 3. Informatics AS lab days (planned for 2005)	1. 2004 2. On demand 3. Ongoing	1. 40 2. 3.
Mathematics	1. Y10 maths taster day for SEAS 2. Y10/11 maths taster morning for Aimhigher 3. Y12 maths taster day for SEAS 4. Maths A Level masterclass for SEAS	1. On demand 2. Occasional 3. On demand 4. On demand	1. 60 2. 15 3. 4.
Physics & Astronomy	1. Creative Science Centre (J Hare/D Daniels) 2. 'Science is fun' for Aimhigher (L Thomson) 3. Physics tasters for Aimhigher Y10/11 4. Physics A Level masterclass for SEAS 5. "Earthquake Day" with Aimhigher Y9 6. AS-level labdays for physics and engineering 7. Gifted & Talented/Aimhigher lab days	1. Ongoing 2. Ongoing 3. Annual 4. On demand 5. On demand 6. Annual 7. Ongoing	1. hundreds 2. 3. 4. 5. 40 6. 300 7. 470

School/Department	Description of work	Timing/regularity	No of recent participants (where known)
SOCIAL SCIENCE & CULTURAL STUDIES			
Economics	Economics/management day for Y12 (M Barrow)	Occasional	40
Geography	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Water issues in Africa for schools in Brighton and London 2. Annual 6th Geographical Association conference with sixth formers 3. School visits to the Geog Resource Centre 4. "Earthquake Day" for Aimhigher Y9 5. A Level masterclass 6. Tasters for schools & colleges (A Lester/T Binns) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On demand 2. Occasional 3. On demand 4. On demand 5. On demand 6. On demand 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 15 5. 6.
Sociology	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sociology 6th form conference (L Martell) 2. Sociology taster for Y10/11 Aimhigher students 3. Sociology A Level extension class 4. Talks at WP Schools and Colleges 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual 2. Occasional 3. On demand 4. On demand 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 550 2. 10 3. 4.
SUSSEX INSTITUTE			
Centre for Continuing Education	<p><i>Recent widening-participation activity (in 2004)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of online learning facilities. 2. Set-up of links with disadvantaged communities in Hastings 3. Set-up of foundation degree in Community Studies 4. Set-up of programme in Deaf Studies 5. Ongoing programme of taster' courses, augmented by new open lectures. 6. Set-up of new vocationally-oriented entry-route courses to Law, Social Work, Teaching 7. Work with refugees & asylum seekers with higher qualifications, giving access UK HE 8. Development of 'Lets Learn' workplace-based professional development course (within AimHigher) 9. Renewal of Access links and new progression routes from open to award-bearing courses <p><i>Note: the types of activity led by CCE are focused on bringing part-time and lifelong learning to local communities, so are different in kind to those listed for other departments.</i></p>		
Sussex School of Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recently-launched BA programmes for teaching assistants – have a strong WP orientation. 2. Excellence Fellowships (DfES) for research by teachers into transition to HE by non-traditional students 3. Ethnic minority initiatives for recruitment into PGCE (assisted by budget from TTA) 4. Science Education Team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GlaxoSmithKline Science & Technology Masterclasses - Work with school pupils (Y10/11) - Work with teachers (science-related staff development, some schools with WP issues) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current 2. Ongoing 3. Ongoing 4. Occasional <p>On demand Ongoing</p>	4. 64
Sussex Law School	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 6th form conference targeted at WP students 2. Y10/11 taster for Aimhigher (H Rajak/P Eden) 3. Series of talks at sixth form colleges 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Occasional (2004 latest) 2. Annual 3. Annual 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 25 3.
MEDICINE (BSMS)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talks for Y10 Aimhigher students 2. Medicine taster for Y10 Aimhigher (H Smith) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On demand 2. On demand 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 40 2. 20
BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT	<p>Science Day for Y10-12 specialist schools (M Winder et al)</p> <p>May be repeated for Aimhigher students</p>	Occasional	70

¹ Specifically, the location-adjusted version of the benchmark.

² For which we take the 1994 Group as proxy.

³ Measured via UCAS data on accepted applicants to the group of South-East HEIs outside London.

⁴ This element of our scheme meets the required commitment to provide institutional bursaries exceeding the minimum £300 to students in receipt of the full HE Maintenance Grant.

⁵ Source: HESA Performance Indicators, 2002/3

⁶ Specifically the 1994 Group less Birkbeck and Goldsmiths College, whose missions are not typical of the rest of the group.

⁷ Source: UCAS datasets. Note that this data is not limited to *UK domiciled* students/applicants, mainly because the UCAS data itself cannot be disaggregated in this way. We are not currently aware of any other public source of data on the UK-domiciled only ethnic make-up of individual institutions, which would enable us to construct an alternative set of benchmarking data for South-East institutions only. It is essential that such benchmarking is restricted to the local region, as is quickly apparent if one compares South-East demographic patterns and norms for HE entry by ethnic group with the equivalent national norms.