

Heythrop College
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Access Agreement

Entry 2006

1. This Access Agreement outlines Heythrop's plans to support and enhance genuine equality of opportunity for its prospective students.

Institutional Context

2. Heythrop is a specialist College of the University of London offering undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in the disciplines of Theology and Philosophy. The College traces its origins to the foundation of a Jesuit seminary in Louvain in 1614 and it was the joint petition of the University and the Society of Jesus which gained Heythrop its Royal Charter and admission to the University in 1971. The links with the Jesuits and the wider Catholic Church are still fundamentally important to the College ethos, which is, nonetheless, a genuinely inclusive institution welcoming staff and students of all faiths and none.
3. This institutional context is centrally important to Heythrop's current position in relation to widening participation for students. The College has been committed to equality of opportunity since its inception. Unusually for its time, the Royal Charter actually affirmed that the College would not discriminate on the basis of "religion, race, sex or politics". The Mission Statement (appended) restates this ethos.

Current Priorities

4. Current priorities in widening participation of under-represented groups include:
 - issues related to the College's academic interests (particularly in inter-religious dialogue and pastoral studies)
 - retention
 - improved pre and post-entry student support.

Reflecting Academic Strategies

5. Heythrop is already active in the field of inter-religious dialogue and has established a specialist Centre to develop this work. In 2006 we will be launching a new undergraduate degree in Abrahamic Religions which will be unique at undergraduate level in the UK in focussing on the interconnectedness of the Jewish, Muslim and Christian traditions. We therefore wish to actively encourage recruitment and retention of ethnic minority and religiously disparate students and will seek to develop targeted

recruitment in Muslim and Jewish communities. Since Heythrop is entirely non-discriminatory in terms of the religious affiliation of its students it would not seek to recruit on religiously exclusive grounds. A measure of success will be to see increased religious diversity within the College, which may be in part measured by increased ethnic diversity.

Recruitment and Retention

6. Much of Heythrop's work is conducted through part-time and/or evening programmes, providing opportunities for new entrants to Higher Education or (re) training for professional people. The majority of its provision is postgraduate. Perceiving the difficulties that mature students have in committing to conventional modes of study, we wish to investigate whether evening-based part-time BAs would be useful to them. We are also aware of retention problems in both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, particularly with older students who have many competing financial and time demands. When fee income starts to recover (by 2008-09), we intend to target additional bursaries to support help mature returners or new mature participants in higher education to cope with its financial implications.
7. Take-up rates of bursaries will be monitored to measure improving access for students from poorer backgrounds.

Student Welfare

8. Heythrop does not have the strongly developed student support services normally associated with HEIs, in part because its postgraduate profile, small size, highly specialist focus and commitment to one-to-one teaching has hitherto provided substitute systems of a particular kind. The College's strategic determination to "normalise" its processes against the best of good practice elsewhere in the sector, and the relative financial relief to follow from HEFCE funding, together with its planned expansion, all point to the importance of professionalising and expanding student support systems. This is a significant element of the 10-year Strategic Plan presently in preparation.
9. The intention is to improve access, to widen participation and to support retention through developing:
 - Improved recruitment, admission and induction systems
 - Support to new students in finding accommodation, and development of residential accommodation directly within the College's control
 - Study skills provision
 - Programme design which takes account of changing needs of the student profile
 - Welfare services
 - Continuing professional development for our many mid-career and mature students.

10. Specific targets in this area include:
- improved facilities for students with disabilities;
 - development of increased sources of student accommodation, some within the College's direct control
 - systems for more proactive support for students seeking accommodation;
 - introducing a modest amount of on-site careers guidance (additional to the Heythrop students have notionally had with the federal University provision);
 - resourcing a Student Union "Office Manager" post to support the Student Union Executive in their aim to develop welfare services; improving student social space and facilities;
 - developing professional and web-based study skill support;
 - improving staff resource for student support co-ordination.
11. There is recognition of the need to improve learning resources access for evening and part-time students through staffing in the libraries and developing on-site and remote access. There is more planning to do but part of the additional fee income, once achieved, will be used to support part-time students' access to resources.
12. All of these measures are designed to improve the experience of, and the retention of, students who are unfamiliar with higher education in a College which, while justifiably proud of its care for individual students, has been hitherto limited in systematic support for those students in most need.

Principles

13. The bursary scheme will predominantly targeted at students from lower income households, with the poorest students receiving the most support.
14. The existing modest welfare and hardships bursary fund will be reserved for students not eligible for the new fee-related bursaries, or for students deserving support on other grounds.
15. Bursaries will rise in line with the inflation increases allowed for fee increases.
16. Students will normally retain their bursary for the duration of their course, subject to any change in status for the College, to any significant change in their HEMG and to satisfactory academic progress.
17. Potentially all undergraduate students entering from 2006 will be eligible for a bursary.
18. A second target of bursaries will be mature students on undergraduate or postgraduate programmes who are not otherwise eligible under the HEMG means testing criteria.

19. A proportion of the additional fee income, once achieved, will be used in targeted recruitment in areas associated with significant minority groups, both religious and ethnic.
20. A proportion of the additional fee income, once achieved, will be used to support measures to improve the experience of and the retention of the most disadvantaged students.

Proposals for Fees and Bursaries from 2006-07

21. Heythrop will charge a flat fee of £3,000 to Home/EU students who register for entry in 2006, except for students who have agreed a deferred entry from 2005 by the deadline of 1 August 2005, whose fees will be charged under the previous system.
22. All undergraduate students in receipt of a Higher Education Maintenance Grant of any value will receive, each year, bursary funding of at least £300¹, rising to a maximum equal to 50% of their HEMG.
23. Bursaries will be paid in two instalments (dates tba) and will require students to have been continuously registered up to and including the date of award. Bursaries may be reduced to offset any debts the student owes to the College at the date of award.
24. Students will be given full information about fees and bursaries through the College's WebPages, prospectus, in correspondence and in both the applications process and at registration. Equally, this information will be provided at Open Days and the various outreach activities noted below.

Outreach

25. The College will develop its relationships with Jewish and Muslim organisations and communities.
26. The College will target recruitment activity (e.g. through mail shot and visit) to schools and FE colleges in areas with high ethnic minority populations.
27. The expenditure on outreach activities will grow as the fee income recovers from 2008-09.
28. Day taster courses for Year 11 and 12 students will be developed and Heythrop will consider the viability of summer schools, possibly in collaboration with other colleges of the Federal University of London.
29. Heythrop will pursue membership of Aimhigher London Central Group participate in appropriate outreach activities.

¹ or the then-prevailing difference between the maximum HEMG and the Heythrop tuition fee.

Milestones

June 2005	Internal College approval of the draft Access Agreement and the fees and bursaries proposals.
Summer 2005	Web-site announcement of fees and bursaries subject to OFFA's approval of the draft Access Agreement.
Summer 2005	Start 12-month run-in to HESA, making "shadow" returns and collecting data in conventional sets.
Summer 2005	Surveys on estate undertaken as a condition of HEFCE funding to reach full statutory compliance for disabled access and use. Implementation of DDA compliance works through 2005-06.
October 2005	Internal College approval of the Strategic Plan which incorporates many of the aims expressed here.
2005-2006	Develop robust systems of data collection and analysis ²
2005-2006	Provide full financial information about fees and bursaries to prospective and actual students during their application process, in Open Days, in outreach activities.
	Join Central London AimHigher consortium
	Implement strands of the student support strategy.
	Investigate appeal to students of either evening-based BAs and/or full-time MAs
	Develop day "taster sessions" for target schools and colleges.
	Continue to build student support services
2008-2009	Implement second tranche of bursaries, full outreach activity

² In its anomalous funding position, Heythrop has never been required to develop either the statistical reports which enable institutions to track progress towards targets, or the events and publications etc which can properly promote outreach activity. The lack of reliable past data means that statistical analysis of trends in the student profile is undeveloped but tables on page 7 give the current position.

The College's own strategic planning and the advent of HEFCE funding will support effective data collection and analysis. The College's long-standing but generalised commitment to widening access will thus become better focussed and progress towards targets more closely monitored in the next few years.

Monitoring

September 2005 Establish Equal Opportunities Group, one of whose responsibilities will be monitoring successful implementation of the Access Agreement and achievement of the targets in areas defined above. It will be chaired by the Principal or his nominee and will report to the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Governing Body

From 2006

- Monitor recruitment across all programmes but especially new BA in Abrahamic Religions.
- Monitor postcode origins of applicants and entrants as measure of success in reaching disadvantaged areas, and/or areas of ethnic and possibly religious minority groups;
- Monitor retention rates, particularly amongst mature students.
- Monitor growth towards targets in increased religious diversity in the College, measured in part through increased ethnic diversity.
- Monitor take up of bursaries as a measure of improving access for students from poorer backgrounds;
- Monitor numbers of disabled applicants and entrants. Annual reporting from Admissions Committee on disabled applicants and measures taken to support them.
- Return conventional reports to HESA and use collected data increasingly in internal planning.
- Report to HEFCE through the Annual Monitoring Statement.

Ms M F Boylan

Director of Administration and Clerk to the Governing Body

June 2005

Predicted growth in Student Numbers

fte	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
BA	255	310	350	390	405	410
MA	140	140	140	140	140	140

Undergraduate Entrants 2004³

Age Profile	under 21	21-25	26-30	31-40	over 40	total
	60	20	4	8	10	102

Disability	wheelchair user	1
	blind/partially sighted	1
	autistic spectrum disorder	1
	unseen disability (epilepsy)	1
	unknown	8
	in receipt of disabled students allowance	3%
	HESA 2002 average for England 2.6%	

Ethnicity	white British	75
	other white	8
	Chinese	1
	Indian	1
	Black African	3
	mixed white/Asian	2
	not known/information refused	10

Socio-economic classification*	Higher managerial and professional occupations	15
<i>*derived from applicants expected to enter in September 2004</i>	lower managerial and professional occupations	19
	intermediate occupations	7
HESA 2002 average for England % young entrants to HE from low SEC backgrounds 27.9	lower supervisory and technical occupation	4
	semi-routine occupations	12
	not known	46

³ from UCAS records

Accepted applicants by school type 2003 entrants

Grammar School	2	2.86%
Sixth Form College	7	10.0%
Comprehensive school	16	22.86%
Independent School	12	17.14%
Further/Higher Education	6	8.57%
Other maintained	7	10.0%
Other	1	1.43%
Combined state school	32	45.71%
HESA 2002 average for England		86.4%
unknown	19	27.14%