University of Brighton Access Agreement 2008-09

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Summary

The University expects to invest some 30% of its additional fee income in enhanced access measures in 2008-09 and beyond. Some £5m of this will be committed bursary provision, a further £345k will be invested in delivery of additional outreach and support activities, and £130k on necessary administrative support and SLC fees to operate the bursary scheme**.**

In 2008-09 the University will

1. charge a full-time home/EU undergraduate fee of £3,145
2. pay its full bursary (£1,050) to eligible students with relevant incomes up to £25,000 a year
3. award a bursary to eligible students with relevant incomes up to £39,305
4. pay bursaries in four bands, from £520 to £1,050, in inverse relationship to income
5. pay these bursaries to all eligible students, those enrolling for the first time in 2008-09 and returning students
6. make scholarships worth some £212k to students performing best in their subjects in their end of year assessments and to talented disabled athletes. This sum is extra to those outlined above

1 Commitment

1.1 The University's revised Access Agreement reflects its institutional commitment set out it its Corporate Plan 2007-12 to have '*packages of support in place for home/EU students and international students that keep pace with financial need*'. It has therefore revised its fees/bursary scheme in the light of Government policy and announcements about inflation; and also in the light of data about the operation of its scheme in 2006-07. However, OFFA's deadline for revised schemes for 2008-09 means that data for 2007-08 are not yet available.

2 Assumptions

2.1 The University has based its Access Agreement on a number of assumptions, including:

- continued allocation of the HEFCE Widening Participation Formula Funds including those in respect of disability
- continued provision of the Access to Learning Fund
- continued funding for Aimhigher
- continuation of a system available to the sector to aid assessment of entitlement to bursaries, through the SLC.

3 Fee levels

3.1 The University will charge fees as shown below in 2008-09. This includes courses delivered by/at partner colleges and courses at the Brighton and Sussex Medical School delivered jointly with the University of Sussex. These fees will remain at these levels, uprated for inflation, for the duration of a student's course.

Table 1: fee levels 2008-09

Course	Annual fee,
Full-time first degree (including PGCEs)	£3,145
Foundation Degree	£3,145 (a small number of these courses may be offered at a lower fee)
Sandwich year out	£690
Degree top-up from Foundation Degree (or HND)	£3,145
Brighton and Sussex Medical School (Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery)	£3,145 (years 1 to 4)

3.2 The tuition fees in Table 1 are based on current HEFCE funding guidelines. Following the conclusion in December 2007 of HEFCE's consultation on funding for students studying for equivalent or lower qualifications (ELQs), the University may wish to review tuition fee levels for these students to mitigate the effect of reduced HEFCE grant.

4 Bursaries

4.1 The bursary scheme described here applies to students on courses delivered by/at the University, those HE courses delivered by/at partner colleges and those at BSMS.

4.2 The University intends to allocate significant funds to enable bursary support to be paid to roughly half the University's full-time undergraduates. Parental or family income will be used to determine eligibility. Bursary levels will have an inverse relationship to levels of income, as summarised below.

Table 2: bursary scheme 2008-09

Approximate annual family income	Annual Bursary	Estimated number of students receiving bursary annually
Up to £25,000	£1,050	3,940
£25,000 to £27,000	£840	380
£27,000 to £32,000	£730	380
£32,000 to £39,000	£520	700
Looked After Children	£1,000 (in addition to any other bursary)	not known

4.3 This bursary framework exceeds the minimum levels required by the Government for those students from families with incomes £25,000 or less.

4.4 The University will award £1,000 a year to any student who enrols on leaving care – Looked After Children. This is not means-tested.

4.5 The University will base payments of bursaries on assessments of income made by the Student Loans Company, based in turn on information provided by the student and their family. Students deemed eligible in 2007-08 based on family income will not require SLC re-assessment if returning in 2008-09, unless there is a change in their circumstances. The University will continue to carry out its own internal assessment of all Home and EU students annually for bursary eligibility.

4.6 The University will pay the bursary provision in two instalments, at the start of terms 2 and 3. The first payment will be dependent on the data returned in the census to the SLC.

5 Information for students

5.1 To ensure that students are aware of the availability of bursaries, and how to apply, information is provided both on the main University of Brighton website, the student and staff intranets, and on the New Student Area, a site specifically designed for prospective students and accessible once they have accepted a place at the University.

5.2 The University produces a hard copy Money Guide which is on hand at open days and at recruitment fairs. This guide sets out all financial support available to students, including bursaries and scholarships, and directs them to further sources of information.

5.3 Following the first instalment of bursary payments in January, a follow-up publicity campaign is carried out, targeting all eligible students who have not yet applied reminding them of the scheme and cut-off dates for application.

6 Scholarships

6.1 In addition, all full-time undergraduate students will be considered for a University Scholarship of £1,000. These scholarships will be awarded to the first and second year students who perform most strongly in their end of year assessments. A small number of additional scholarships will be available for students entering the third year of four year programmes in 2008-09. Scholarships are for one year only. Students on franchised courses at partner colleges are included. BSMS students are included unless they are already in receipt of a University of Sussex Chancellors Award.

In addition, the University will award up to five Disabled Sports Scholarships for disabled athletes who show exceptional talent and potential. These scholarships will be for £1,000 each.

Table 3: Scholarships 2008-09

University Scholarships	£1,000	207
Disabled athletes	£1,000	5

7 Outreach activity funded through additional fee income

7.1 The University has a strong track-record in delivering outreach activity, both directly and in partnership with others. This is described in full in its widening participation strategy. In 2008-09 the University intends to allocate £345,000 of the additional fee income to enhance existing widening participation activity. This represents a significant increase in investment in widening participation from the period prior to the introduction of the new fees/bursary framework. The University sees the additional fee income as a valuable opportunity to underpin and extend activity. Much of the investment will be in areas of support for students who may be more vulnerable (for example, extended library opening hours; additional learning support). Other areas of investment include additional outreach, including with Primary pupils. This work is planned in conjunction with AimHigher Sussex.

8 Institutional objectives and baseline data

8.1 The Access Agreement is an integral part of the University's commitment to widening participation, recognising that the range of institutional activity, commitments and efforts are broader in focus than the remit of Access Agreements and OFFA but that the funds anticipated from fees will enable real progress to be made against some challenging targets. The overall objective is set out in the Corporate Plan 2007-12, *Aim 3, to become recognised as a leading UK university for the quality and range of its work in economic and social engagement and productive partnerships.*

8.2 This Aim specifies as an Indicator of Success, that by 2012, the University will have:

'made further progress in widening participation as measured by nationally-published indicators including maintaining its above-benchmark position for previous education and locality of origin, and moving closer to the benchmark for social class; and by data on bursary take-up.'

9 Monitoring arrangements

9.1 The day to day monitoring of the Access Agreement and its related milestones will be undertaken by the Widening Participation Manager. Internal monitoring will be considered by the Widening Participation and Diversity Committee which reports to the University's Academic Development Committee.

9.2 Annual monitoring to meet OFFA's requirements will also be considered in this way.

EM/SPU
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