

# **University of Surrey**

## **Access Agreement Relating to Variable Fee Introduction from 2006 Entry**

### **1. Introduction**

The University of Surrey is a research intensive university with a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes targeted at producing graduates with first class education and professional knowledge and with skills which make them highly desirable employees in the world of work. This, together with the Professional Training Year, taken by around 80% of UniS undergraduate students, contributes to the University's enviable record of being consistently at or near the top of the employment league for UK universities.

The University's Access Agreement has, at its heart, a policy decision to charge HEU students the maximum fee (as set by the 'higher amount' in the Higher Education Act 2004) for its full-time UG programmes. [Throughout this Access Agreement we will use the term 'UniS standard fee' for the fees set at this level, currently expected to be £3,000 pa for 2006-07. We will use the term 'basic fee' for fees set at the level of the 'basic amount' as defined in the Higher Education Act 2004, currently expected to be £1,200 pa in 2006-07.]

The Access Agreement also reflects the need to temper the financial effect of the UniS standard fee in different ways, where programmes exceed standard length or incorporate particular features we wish to encourage, such as the Professional Training Year. The Agreement also recognises that there is a strong emphasis in our portfolio of programmes on subjects which are of national importance but to which it is difficult to recruit, such as science, engineering and languages. This Access Agreement contains measures to maintain and strengthen the quality of our intake to such programmes.

A substantial range of generous bursary and scholarship provisions, drawn from variable fee income, will counter as far as possible the effect of fees on students from disadvantaged backgrounds in order to maintain and enhance our long-standing commitment and track record in this area.

The University will commit around one third of its additional fee income to direct student support, by bursaries, scholarships and awards. The balance of the additional income will be used to improve further our widening access and participation activity and the delivery of high quality education to our students, addressing academic and support service aspects of delivery as well as the facilities available to them. Some of the improvements are already included in the University's forward expenditure plans, others are being developed and prioritised. Overall they are aimed at improving the 'student experience' in the broadest sense.

The University of Surrey has Connected Institution agreements with The Royal Academy of Dance, the Guildford School of Acting Conservatoire and the Academy for Contemporary Music. The Royal Academy has decided not to charge variable fees above the basic £1,200 pa fee for students entering for the 2006/07 academic year. The Conservatoire and the Academy for Contemporary Music have decided to charge the UniS standard fee, and to award associated bursaries in line with the specifications laid out in this agreement. The conditions within this agreement therefore relate to the University of Surrey, the Conservatoire and the Academy for Contemporary Music. The specifications

for scholarships relate to the University of Surrey alone, and not to the connected institutions.

The details of 'Exceptional Costs' associated with this Access Agreement have not been included in the Annex at this stage. There will be substantial 'additional' administrative costs associated with implementing this agreement, particularly in the context of processing of fees, scholarships and bursaries, with dealing with enquiries and with monitoring of Milestones. These are, however, impossible to quantify at the current time.

## **2. General**

The fees, bursaries, scholarships and awards defined in this agreement are specified for a full time student. For a student registered on a full time programme who is, exceptionally, taking a part of the programme on a part time basis (for example repeating part of a year), the amount of the tuition fee, bursary, scholarship and/or award (if appropriate) will be pro-rata to the proportion of the full-time year they are taking (to be measured in terms of the number of credits for which they are registered). Other part time registration is not covered within this agreement.

All fees, bursaries and scholarships described in this agreement relate to undergraduate students only. Eligibility for each category is defined in the relevant section.

The bursaries, scholarships and awards will only be payable to students paying the UniS standard fees defined in this Access Agreement. Individual sections define eligibility. Any student paying the basic fee (eg through having a confirmed deferred entry place by 1<sup>st</sup> August 2005) will not be eligible.

## **3. Tuition Fees**

### *3.1 General information*

Details of all UniS tuition fees (and other related information) will be promulgated through the UniS website and will be updated when the fee situation changes. Fee levels quoted in this Access Agreement relate to the 2006 year of entry and, in subsequent years, all fee levels will be increased with inflation, in line with regulations published by the government, for both new and continuing students. Defined fee levels relate to H/EU students.

### *3.2 UniS standard fee*

The University of Surrey will charge a standard fee of £3000 per annum for undergraduate students on all programmes, apart from the exceptions detailed below (sections 3.3 – 3.5).

### *3.3 Foundation year*

For students following the Foundation Year at Guildford College, as part of their University degree programme (Level 0), a fee set at the basic level of £1200 pa will be charged for this year. The Foundation Year is an integrated year taken by a minority of students on Engineering and Science Degree programmes, to prepare them for entry to Level HE1 of the Undergraduate programme. Because the fee for this programme is set at the basic amount, students do not, during the Foundation Year, qualify for the bursaries or scholarships set out in Sections 4 and 5 below. However, on successful entry to Level HE1, they become eligible for scholarships and bursaries.

### *3.4 Professional training year*

For students undertaking the Professional Training Year as part of their University degree programme, a fee of approximately 15% of the UniS standard fee (£450 at the 2006/07 rate) will be charged. The actual rate charged to an individual student will relate to the year the professional training is undertaken, reflecting the effect of fee inflation defined above, i.e. 15% of the UniS standard fee which is applicable for the year in question.

### *3.5 NHS funded students*

It is our understanding that students on NHS funded degree programmes fall outside the variable fee regime. In consequence, such students will be excluded from the enhanced fee provision and from the related bursaries, scholarships and awards defined in this Access Agreement.

## **4. Bursaries**

### *4.1 General information*

Bursary levels quoted in this Access Agreement relate to the 2006 year of entry. In subsequent years it is intended that, for both new and continuing students, all bursary levels will be increased broadly in line with the percentage increase in the UniS standard fee, but subject to any applicable regulations published by the government. Defined bursary provision applies to home students.

### *4.2 UniS Bursaries*

Bursaries will be provided to all eligible students who have been means tested to receive state support and who fall within the criteria for this support (equivalent to the same criteria proposed by the UUK/SCOP Advisory Group for the national standard £300 bursary) on a linear scale from zero, for students on the threshold definition for support, up to £1000 per annum, for those on full state support. These bursaries will be payable to such students for all academic years of their programmes (but not to those on the Professional Training Year with its substantially reduced fee requirement), regardless of any other bursary / scholarship support received.

### *4.3 UniS Enhanced Bursaries*

Students who qualify for a UniS Bursary and who also achieve any one of the scholarships defined in Section 5, or qualify for an Extended Programme Award (see Section 6) will automatically have the value of their bursary doubled, for as long as they hold the scholarship or award.

## **5. Scholarships**

### *5.1 General conditions applicable to the scholarships detailed below*

Any of the scholarships defined below may be held at the same time as a bursary, but a student may not hold more than one scholarship at any one time, and may not hold a scholarship at the same time as an Extended Programme Award (see Section 6). Any student holding a scholarship payable in the academic year following the Professional Training Year (where taken) may apply to have this scholarship paid a year early, i.e. during their Professional Training Year. The value of all scholarships quoted applies for the 2006 entry. Values will be reviewed annually, for both new and continuing awards. . On the assumption that students in receipt of UniS Bursaries achieve academic results typical of our overall student population, 41% of students gaining scholarships will be in receipt of UniS Bursaries and hence from lower income families. Therefore 41% of the estimate costs of providing the Scholarships listed in this section 5 have been included in the costs shown against 'Estimated amount of additional income to be spent on bursaries (£)' in the Financial Information table in the attachment to this Agreement. Defined scholarship provision applies to H/EU students.

### *5.2 UniS Academic Entry Scholarships*

5.2.1 Academic entry scholarships of £1,000 pa will be awarded to all students achieving an excellent academic standard at entry. The reference level for the award of these scholarships will be grade A in 3 subjects at 'A2' level, excluding general studies, or equivalent level of attainment, as determined by the University, achieved by a student prior to entry. These scholarships will be retained for all levels (ie each year) of the programme, other than the Professional Training Year, subject to the student achieving marks equivalent to an upper second class performance at the previous academic end-of-level assessments. Further details of tariff equivalences and performance levels will be promulgated on the UniS website.

5.2.2 To support our Widening Participation programme, the overall performance of the school at which the student gained their qualifications will be taken into account in awarding these scholarships, which may hence be awarded at slightly lower tariff levels where the school meets specified criteria.

5.2.3 An additional number of academic entry scholarships will be awarded to students at entry performance levels lower than those detailed in 5.2.1 above, for disciplines where student recruitment is challenging. These scholarships will be allocated on a basis related to target intake levels and recent application popularity.

### *5.3 UniS Academic Performance Scholarships*

Academic performance scholarships of £1,000 pa will be awarded to all students achieving an excellent academic standard at any end-of-level assessment (other than the Professional Training Year) during their programme. The reference level for the award of these scholarships will be marks equivalent to a first class performance. These scholarships will be retained for all following levels (ie each year) of the programme, other than the Professional Training Year, subject to the student achieving marks equivalent to an upper second class performance at the previous academic end-of-level assessments.

## **6. Extended Programme Awards**

For students on a defined set of extended duration undergraduate programmes (such as an MEng), the UniS standard fee will be charged for all academic years (pro-rata for any part year at the end of a programme) but an Extended Programme Award of £1500 pa (pro-rata for a part year) will be made for required periods beyond the standard three years (or four years if including a Professional Training Year) of an honours programme. This Award recognises the extra cost to the student of these longer degrees. The value of the Extended Programme Award will be reviewed and adjusted annually, broadly in line with percentage increases in the UniS standard fee. Bursaries as defined in Section 4 may be held at the same time as Extended Programme Awards but Scholarships (see Section 5) cannot. The provision of extended programme awards applies to H/EU students.

## **7. Provision of information to students**

### *7.1 General information*

The UniS undergraduate prospectus for 2006 entry will give general information on fees, bursaries, scholarships and awards defined within this Access Agreement (marked subject to the approval of the Agreement by OFFA). The prospectus will also include general information about variable fee implementation and bursary support. Further detail will be available on the UniS website after approval has been obtained for this agreement. Any additional programme material will include detail where relevant. Information will include

examples showing fee and bursary levels (and possible scholarship enhancements) for a range of individual circumstances.

### *7.2 Individual student information*

During the admission cycle, the University will write individually to each applicant confirming the fee payable for the programme and providing information mapping the level of bursary support to the means tested contribution from public funds or to the applicant's residual income as assessed by the LEA, allowing the applicant to understand what level of UniS bursary will be payable depending on the outcome of this testing (as well as information on any scholarship that may be awarded). This will be accompanied by information on payment processes and timing requirements.

In the case of any student accepted during Clearing, information on the fee, bursary and scholarship conditions will be sent as part of the Clearing process

Continuing students will be informed about fees payable for the next year of their programme together with bursary information (as above) and confirmation of the continuation of any scholarship or of any new scholarship or award granted. This will be accompanied by information on payment processes and timing requirements.

### *7.3 Outreach activity*

Talks about student finance are included within various open day and outreach activities. In the future, such talks will include information about fees, bursaries, scholarships and other student support. For bursaries, this will include examples of how their value relates to the national standard bursary and to the means tested state support criteria.

## **8. Outreach activity**

### *8.1 Background*

The University of Surrey (UniS) has a long-standing track-record of promoting widening access and participation. It is therefore intending to continue the significant range of activity developed over the last decade. This includes the funding of a dedicated team of staff within its Educational Liaison Centre (ELC) who work with the Department of Marketing and Public Affairs and with Academic Schools to reach out to students from a range of disadvantaged backgrounds. Because of this existing provision, the University does not see a requirement for major additional funding on aspiration raising in under-represented groups, although details of additional expenditure on the development of curriculum related support material are given in the Annex to this agreement and the use of this money is described below. In contrast, substantial sums will be spent on 'improving the student experience' with a working group and a forum currently working in the University to define what enhancements are required and which will have significant impacts. The enhancements will include aspects associated with student support (academic, administrative and pastoral) and are designed to have a beneficial effect on retention, particularly in the context of students from under-represented groups.

### *8.2 Past activity*

A key feature of the University's activity in the area of widening participation has been the forging of partnership links through the ELC, particularly between the HEIs, FECs and schools within the sub-region. Our local Compact scheme was first established in 1991 and by 2002 had grown into a Regional Accord encompassing some twelve higher education

providers and 50 schools and colleges. This scheme will be reviewed in the context of the Schwartz report on Fair Access.

Our success in this field led to UniS (ELC) chairing the steering group of the UCAS-funded "Paving the Way" project in 2000/01. This was a partnership with a number of other HEIs. The aim was to work with selected under-represented groups in order to move towards institutional change and inform the national widening participation agenda.

UniS (ELC) also led the HEFCE-funded Widening Participation 'Access and Participation Together' (APT) project in the period 1999-2002. The APT partnership covered Surrey, North Hampshire and Berkshire. It was thus natural that with the advent of Aimhigher, UniS (ELC) became the sub-regional 'area' lead for the Surrey County partnership.

### *8.3 Current and ongoing activity*

UniS will continue to fund its own institutional outreach activity through the widening participation team within ELC, alongside the new Aimhigher programme. This commitment is evidenced by the following activities:

#### 8.3.1 School and College Activity:

- School and college activity is provided from Year 8 to Year 13. In 2003-04 approximately 1500 school and college students benefited from hands-on activity held both at UniS and also off-site.

#### 8.3.2 Tutoring and Mentoring Schemes:

- In 2003-04, 83 UniS students were involved as Tutors, Mentors or Student Managers and supported 106 Sixth Formers who in turn acted as classroom assistants in some 58 local schools.
- ELC supports the Undergraduate Ambassadors scheme by training and finding placements for third year students.

#### 8.3.3 Summer Schools:

- Every year ELC co-ordinates national residential tasters which are offered to sixth formers considering HE. In July 2004, 80 Year 12 students attended a Science and Engineering taster. In July 2005 two further residential tasters are planned in Science and Engineering and in Arts and Humanities.
- In May 2004, ELC also organised a science taster attended by 50 Year 10 students.

#### 8.3.4 Compact:

- UniS continues to operate a Compact scheme through ELC to facilitate access to the University for students with special circumstances from local schools and colleges.

#### 8.3.5 Conferences:

- ELC regularly organise and help to facilitate conferences for both teachers and students. In March 2004, for example, over 300 Year 11 students attended a conference at the University and in July 2003, 400 Surrey sixth form college teachers attended a day conference.
- ELC help to organise and facilitate conferences delivered off site. For example in July 2004, ELC supported a Progression to HE conference at Woking College.

#### 8.3.6 Science & Technology Bus:

- A Science and Technology Bus has been maintained for the last eight years. It is a mobile classroom with workbenches, laptop computers and up-to-date equipment. It delivers activities in Key Stages 1, 2 & 3 and reaches over 1500 pupils each year.

### 8.3.7 Supporting UniS Departments:

- Specific widening participation projects are also centrally funded. Funds are made available through a widening participation group to Academic Schools and Departments on a competitive basis. A number of these projects have achieved positive links with local schools and colleges.
- ELC organises opportunities for direct academic involvement. Examples include an annual Christmas Lecture for Schools, the National Science Week outreach programme every March, and one-off subject masterclasses.

### 8.3.8 Active Community Fund:

- Separately funded by HEFCE to promote volunteering by staff and students, this fund is also managed by ELC in conjunction with UniSport and the Students' Union. A number of local WP target schools and community and sports programmes, which have synergy with widening participation outreach, are supported. Some 900 volunteering placements are managed each year.

### 8.3.9 Alumni fund:

- This has raised a further £105,000 to support students in the form of scholarships and financial support for those with financial difficulties. A proportion of the fund will also be used to improve the learning experience of all students through enhancement of campus facilities such as the library.

### 8.4 *New activity*

A growing emphasis of the competitive fund, mentioned above, is the development of curriculum related materials which can be used in outreach work, either within the classroom or during taster events on campus. These require academic expertise as well as curriculum and teaching knowledge. The current finance available for this fund is limited and will be enhanced with income from variable fees to raise the profile of this activity across the University. Money will be targeted at purchasing additional expertise / time and the production of material. The availability of this 'off-the-shelf' material should facilitate a greater number of academic staff becoming involved in related outreach activity.

## 9. Milestones

UniS will monitor the success of its bursary and scholarship provision by close scrutiny of applications and acceptances to individual academic programmes. This scrutiny will include the number of students receiving bursaries, compared with current numbers receiving state support, and the number receiving scholarships where the performance of the school has been taken into account in defining the academic attainment level. The University has set a target for the 4-year period to 2010, of a one per cent increase year on year in the number of students receiving bursary support, both at any level and at the maximum level. For the 1255 Home/EU students who entered Level HE1 in 2003-04 (excluding NHS-funded students) the current numbers falling within these categories are given below.

Full time undergraduate students currently receiving partial state support: 184 (15%)

Full time undergraduate students currently receiving full state support: 332 (26%)

A report will be produced each year focussing on this information and future bursary and scholarship provision will be reviewed based on the perceived success of the provision in maintaining and enhancing, where possible, the number of students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. Any additional relevant information which may be made



available in the future as part of the application process, for example parents' HE background, will be included in this analysis.

The University currently monitors the numbers of students coming from schools in its region and will correlate this in the future with those defined as widening participation target schools.

The University will continue to monitor its performance against the relevant HEFCE widening participation benchmarks with the intention of achieving or exceeding benchmarks in all categories and of understanding the reasons for divergence from benchmarks. Participation of under-represented groups, non-continuation of study, projected learning outcomes and efficiencies and employment success will all be tracked and we will be able to examine these measures separately for groups in receipt of bursaries and scholarships. UniS has a good record of achieving its HEFCE benchmarks for widening access and participation, with the few significant variances in past years being due more to volatility in the calculation of the benchmark than in variability of UniS performance. The indicators will continue to be considered each year and information drawn from them to influence future policy.

## **10. Monitoring arrangements**

All fees, bursaries and scholarships will be administered centrally by the University Registry. Data will be compiled every year by the Registry, with support from the Planning Department where appropriate, on the implementation of fees, bursaries and scholarships and other aspects of the agreement, including information on the achievement of the milestones. A report on these data will be considered by the Teaching Policy and Development Committee who will report to the Executive Board. A summary of these data will be contained within the Annual Monitoring Statement including achievement of the milestones indicated above.

Internal Audit will periodically review the basis on which these data are collated for report to the Audit Committee and thence to Council.

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