



Access Agreement

Academic year 2012/13

1. Background

- 1.1. The University of Lincoln's approach to fees and fair access is driven by its mission and values
- The University of Lincoln is a university of high quality, rooted in traditional values, but addressing contemporary agendas through excellence in teaching and research and a focus on the experience of all students.
 - The University is committed to providing access to higher education for all students who have the desire and potential to succeed and in reducing or removing the barriers to student success, through the provision of both financial and individual support, enabling each student to achieve their goals and fulfil their potential.
 - The University has been very successful in the past in recruiting and retaining students from under represented groups, as evidenced in the HESA published performance indicators and it is the intention of the University to sustain that performance.
 - The University works closely with the University of Lincoln Students' Union in all aspects of its activities. The University has consulted extensively with the Students' Union in developing this Access Agreement and has agreed the 2012/13 student support arrangements with the elected officers.

2. Fee Limits

- 2.1. The University will set its Home/EU full-time first degree tuition fee level for new entrants to all programmes in 2012/13 at the maximum prescribed fee of £9,000 and intends to apply annual increases in line with the amount set by the Government in each following year.
- 2.2. The University will charge no sandwich placement year tuition fee for students entering in 2012/13 entrants.

3. Expenditure on Additional Access and Retention measures

- 3.1. In 2012/13, the University is projected to invest approximately 24.6% of the additional income generated by charging the higher

tuition fee level into the funding of student support measures targeted on providing financial support to students from low income backgrounds, mature students, student outreach, retention and success.

- 3.2. This investment is focussed on further developing the quality of the student experience and funding the access and participation work which is a fundamental part of the University's activity.
- 3.3. Details of the investment and student support package are set out in Appendix B.

4. National Scholarship Programme Recipients

- 4.1. The University will invest approximately £456,000 in 2012-13 to match fund the NSP allocation for that year.
- 4.2. In total, 304 students, who reside in University-allocated accommodation, will receive a National Scholarship, in the form of a £3000 accommodation discount in Level 1 (NQF level 4) of their programme, thus reducing the financial impact of moving from home to University accommodation, for both students and their families.

5. Other Students in Receipt of Full State Support

- 5.1. In total, an estimated 34% of 2012-13 Level 1 (NQF Level 4) full-time undergraduate Home/EU entrants (1088 students) will come from households with an income of less than £25,000.
- 5.2. Of these, 75% (816) are projected to seek University accommodation. All of these 816 students will receive a £3,000 accommodation discount, of which 304 will be classified as National Scholarships recipients, as above.
- 5.3. The remaining 272 students in Level 1 (NQF level 4) of their programme will receive a student support package valued at £3,000, made up of a fee waiver and/or direct bursary payments and/or other benefits in kind, at the student's discretion. This arrangement will enable the student, in consultation with family members, to decide how their support package can be tailored to their own needs. In our consultation with the Students' Union, the elected officers were very keen for the University to enable those students not residing in University accommodation to have flexibility and choice.
- 5.4. The £3,000 student support package will facilitate student recruitment and retention by reducing concerns for applicants and their families regarding the costs of moving away from home to study at the University (an issue often raised by applicants and their

families with University advice and guidance staff) and in providing students who are not living in University accommodation with a more flexible approach to where their support is focussed.

- 5.5. "Young" 2012-13 entrants from households with an income below £25,000 will receive a cash bursary of £700 in each of levels 2 (NQF level 5) and 3 (NQF level 6) of their programme. This is aimed at supporting student retention and success.
- 5.6. "Mature" 2012-13 entrants from households with an income below £25,000 will receive a cash bursary of £900 in each of levels 2 and 3 of their programme. This is aimed at supporting student retention and success.

6. Financial Support for Low Household Income Students

- 6.1. For those students who come from households with an annual income of between £25,000 and £40,000 (approximately 16% of the University of Lincoln Home/EU full-time undergraduate student population), who are not, therefore, eligible for a National Scholarship Programme award, the University will provide a bursary which averages £550 per student per level (£600 for household income £25,000-£30,000 and £450 for household income £30,000-£40,000).

7. Additional Measures Focussed on Outreach, Retention and Success

The University is committed to providing a broad package of measures, which will build on the arrangements already in place to provide an additional focus on outreach, retention and success.

- 7.1. The University will provide additional hardship funding of £250,000 per annum in steady state, phased in as follows: 2011-12 £50,000, 2012-13 £133,000, 2013-14 £216,000, 2014-15 £250,000, 2015-16 £250,000. This fund will be managed in conjunction with the Students' Union and will support student retention and success, through the provision of targeted funding, based upon the personal circumstances of each applicant.
- 7.2. The University will work with local Schools and Colleges to develop a grant support package for 50 students each year, from disadvantaged backgrounds, aged 16 to 18, nominated by their own School or College, who aspire to enter higher education. The grant support of £500 per student per year will be linked to students engaging with the University and its outreach programme.
- 7.3. The University already provides significant skills development and support for students, as part of their academic programme. However, the University recognises that some students, particularly mature students, or those from a disadvantaged background, may

enrol whilst lacking in some basic skills, which they need to enable them to be both successful on their course and to gain employment following graduation. To meet this need for skills support, the University will invest £90,000 per year, from 2012-13, to develop a small unit to provide specialist support in raising key skills to an appropriate level.

- 7.4. The University will invest £300,000 per year in outreach activities, including Schools and College Liaison and Summer School work, to support a broadening of this activity, enabling a further geographical spread of activity, to engage with new schools, colleges and students, who have not previously benefitted from having a relationship with the University. This investment will also help to fill some of the void left by the cessation of the Aim Higher programme.
- 7.5. A critical time for students from disadvantaged backgrounds is often the period after having received an offer from the University, when the practical and emotional realities of entering higher education may become overwhelming and can lead to students failing to accept an offer, or subsequently not enrolling. To support these applicants and their families, the University will invest £90,000 per year, from 2012-13, in an outreach guidance service which will proactively contact, support, encourage and inform prospective students.
- 7.6. The University recognises the value that can be obtained through joint working with local and regional partners, in relation to outreach and student support activities. The University will invest £20,000 per year in these activities, such as the East Midlands Universities collaboration on research and evaluation of widening participation activities, which was previously funded through Aim Higher.
- 7.7. The University holds a Frank Buttle Trust Quality Mark and will continue to support students joining the university, from a background of local authority care, by providing a Scholarship of £1500 each year to every student who meets the criteria for an award.

8. Measuring Success – Targets and Milestones

- 8.1. The University will use appropriate HESA key performance indicators, as set out in Appendix B, to measure the success of our outreach, retention and success activities.
- 8.2. The indicators chosen by the University reflect a focus on the recruitment, retention and success of both mature and young students, from disadvantaged backgrounds, and students with disabilities.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

- 9.1. The University will monitor the success of the activities set out in this Access Agreement through the Portfolio Recruitment and Education Partnerships Committee, the Student Experience Committee (which has a number of active student members), the Executive Board and the Board of Governors, which has a student (normally the President of the Students' Union) as a member.
- 9.2. The University Registrar is the senior manager responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the Access Agreement and is a member of, or is in attendance at, all of the above.

10. Provision of Information to Prospective students

- 10.1. The University will ensure that all relevant information about fees and financial support for each year of a student's study are communicated fully, clearly and in an easily accessible format. The University will use its website and printed communications to the full to carry fee and support information, but personal consultations for applicants and family members, particularly for those with complex circumstances, will also be available at Open Days and through the outreach guidance service.
- 10.2. The University will aim to provide a high level of information, tested with current students and applicants, about the introduction of the higher fee levels in 2012/13, throughout the application cycle in 2011/12, to ensure that as many applicants, family members, teachers, friends, relatives and influential advisors, including the local media, are aware of the levels of financial support available and how to seek further personal advice, where that would be helpful.
- 10.3. The University will provide timely information on fees and support packages to UCAS and the SLC, as they reasonably require, enabling them to update their applicant facing web services.

