

ACCESS AGREEMENT 2012

1. Background and context

Leeds Trinity University College (LTUC) has a successful history and strong track record in the recruitment of students from under-represented groups. The Catholic social mission of the College is played out in our desire to empower individuals, regardless of their background or route into higher education, to achieve their true potential and reach the highest standards possible.

2. Objectives

LTUC recognises the opportunities in the implementation of this agreement in providing a focus for it to further strengthen its record of supporting the widening of access to higher education. The objectives of this agreement build on existing work in key areas and are as follows:

- Develop and sustain appropriate partnerships with schools, colleges, employers, local authorities and other bodies in order to support aspiration raising and access to higher education
- Further extend outreach activities focussing on low socio-economic areas
- Provide enhanced support, particularly for new arrivals, for students from under-represented groups to enhance retention and, ultimately, achievement
- Improve access to clear and direct information assuming no prior knowledge of the HE sector
- Establish mechanisms for robust data collection and analysis to provide evidential base for success in widening participation activities

3. Duration and Scope

3.1 As outlined in the OFFA guidance this agreement covers the academic year 2012/13 only.

3.2 This agreement relates only to setting of fees for full-time undergraduate foundation and honours programmes. As per the guidance it does not at the moment include TDA funded undergraduate and postgraduate ITT programmes.

3.3 Fees for part-time degree courses, postgraduate provision, international (non EU) students and all other courses will be determined by LTUC and approved by the Board of Governors.

3.4 Existing students enrolled on undergraduate honours and PGCE programmes before September 2012 will continue to be subject to arrangements for fees and bursaries as laid out in the previous access agreement first submitted to OFFA in November 2004.

4. Fee levels and additional access expenditure

- 4.1 LTUC intends to charge all full-time undergraduate entrants tuition fees of £8,000 per annum for 2012-13 regardless of their study programme.
- 4.2 It is estimated that 682 new students entering LTUC for 2012/13 will be charged this fee. An estimated 70 foundation degree students will be charged up to £2,500 per annum.
- 4.3 LTUC anticipates applying permitted real term rises on this fee level for 2013-14 onwards.
- 4.4 LTUC intends spending £1,403,000 on additional access and retention measures in 2012 /13. This represents 33.2% of the total additional fee income for 2012/13.

5. Current outreach activity and performance

- 5.1 LTUC has an excellent track record in terms of the extent and success of its widening participation strategy. Notable points include:
- A dedicated Schools and Colleges Liaison Team which is large relative to the size of the institution (4.5 FTE)
 - Extensive reach with schools and colleges in West Yorkshire, with relationships with over 75 institutions, together with a highly-targeted approach to prioritise schools with high ratios of under-represented pupils
 - Proactive engagement with organisations such as AimHigher and WYLLN
 - An intensive and structured school partnership schedule, including formalised progression agreements with over 20 schools and colleges, and more in development
 - A comprehensive programme of pupil talks and workshops on topics such as “why go to university”, “making the most of your personal statement”, “student finance”, and “preparing for your interview”, with over 160 events held every year
 - A structured programme of HE “taster days”, academic focus days, and residential summer schools for up to 120 learners
 - High take-up of offers to attend at careers fairs and parents’ evenings, and advice provision for other school-based advisors
 - Effective use of current students acting as Associates and mentors to under-represented pupils in schools and colleges

5.2 The following tables indicates the institution’s current performance against several key statistical indicators:

(a) % of students recruited from state schools

Reporting Year	LTUC Performance	Benchmark	Variance	Location Adjusted Benchmark	Variance
2009/10	97.0%	95.0%	2.0	96.2%	0.8
2008/09	95.9%	95.1%	0.8	95.7%	0.2
2007/08	97.4%	94.4	3.0	95.4	2.0

Source: HESA Performance Indicators Table 1a

(b) % of students recruited from low socio economic classes

Reporting Year	LTUC Performance	Benchmark	Variance	Location Adjusted Benchmark	Variance
2009/10	38.0%	36.1%	1.9	37.1%	0.9
2008/09	41.1%	39.6%	1.5	40.6%	0.5
2007/08	36.6%	35.8%	0.8	36.7%	-0.1

Source: HESA Performance Indicators Table 1a

(c) % of students recruited from low participation neighbourhoods

Reporting Year	LTUC Performance	Benchmark	Variance	Location Adjusted Benchmark	Variance
2009/10	22.7%	12.9%	9.8	18.5%	4.2
2008/09	20.9%	13.3%	7.6	19.0%	1.9
2007/08	18.8%	11.9%	6.9	16.1%	2.7

Source: HESA Performance Indicators Table 1a

d) Non-continuation in higher education after year 1

Reporting Year	LTUC Performance	Benchmark	Variance
2009/10	10.9%	8.9%	-2.0
2008/09	11.4%	9.5%	-1.9
2007/08	10.9%	9.3%	-1.6

Source: HESA Performance Indicators Table 3a (all entrants)
NB 2009/10 data is provisional at time of writing this report

e) Projected Outcomes (Likelihood of an UG student achieving a degree)

Reporting Year	LTUC Performance	Benchmark	Variance
2009/10	77.7%	78.1%	-0.4
2008/09	77.3%	77.7%	-0.4
2007/08	73.7%	75.7%	-2.0

Source: HESA Performance Indicators Table 5
NB 2009/10 data is provisional at time of writing this report

5.3 From these tables, it can be concluded that LTUC's outreach activities are very successful in attracting students from under-represented groups. In terms of retention, however, while LTUC's performance is reasonable, tables d) and e) show consistent under-performance, with the institution never quite achieving its benchmark as set by HEFCE. Therefore further targeted investment will be made in this area as detailed below.

6. **Additional access measures**

6.1. Outreach activity:

As noted above, LTUC already has an excellent track record in terms of its outreach initiatives, and it intends to build upon its current level of activity even further by undertaking the following initiatives:

- Extend WP outreach to pupils under 14 years, including primary schools

- Initial guidance from OFFA has suggested exploring the opportunities around activities aimed at lower age groups – i.e. longer-term targets. LTUC is well placed to do this as every year it places 560 Primary Education students into schools, and will develop a plan to use this resource, and other students and staff volunteers to raise awareness and aspiration with younger pupils.
- Consolidate school / educational partnerships
 - There is an opportunity to further consolidate LTUC’s current programme of partnership activity within West Yorkshire. There are currently 130 schools / colleges within West Yorkshire (comprising of Primary Schools, 11-16 schools, FE colleges and Academies), of which LTUC has existing relationships with only 75. LTUC will construct a plan to develop relationships with the remaining schools and colleges, prioritising those that meet widening participation criteria¹.
- Review options to support non-traditional learners
 - In order to develop recruitment and support of non-traditional learners, LTUC will review options to develop a facility to meet the needs of these students. This could include a ‘one-stop-shop’ for; Admissions, Information, advice and guidance, Business Liaison and Study Skills. It could also offer greater support for those wishing to commence Level 4 study, but who may be intimidated by traditional methods of matriculation.
- Regional collaboration
 - In collaboration with the other HE providers in West Yorkshire, both HEIs and FECs, LTUC will invest in the Higher Education Access and Progression Partnership (HEAPP), building on the partnership working and shared expertise established through the West Yorkshire Lifelong Learning Network and AimHigher. The HEAPP will target both adult learners and young people. It will continue the development of high level skills in the region by maintaining the West Yorkshire progression agreement framework and providing an effective communication channel between He providers, the Leeds City Region and Leeds Local Enterprise Partnership; and it will define and oversee an appropriately coordinated programme of sub-regional widening participation activity. The HEAPP will be established in 2011-12 and its effectiveness carefully monitored during a two-year development phase.
- Develop “LTUC Credit Scheme”
 - LTUC will develop an activity package for Partner Institutions and individual students, promoting collaboration and social mobility, and

¹ E.g. Domicile address within top 13,000 super-output areas recognised through IMD, high proportion of no family history in HE

enabling Leeds Trinity to identify and monitor widening participation and evaluate schemes. The scheme would enable individuals, who meet defined WP and academic criteria, to register to a scheme which gives access to targeted work shops regarding various aspects of higher education, and residential summer schools. If they go on to apply to LTUC, the admissions process would be appropriately contextualised with “credits” contributing to the required entry qualifications.

6.2. Retention activity:

LTUC already has a number of support mechanisms in place to promote student retention and successful outcomes, which it intends to maintain. Examples include a student support centre offering facilities such as counselling and financial advice, a careers advice service, an employer partnership office, and a robust system of progress tutors.

In terms of non-continuation and outcome measures, however, LTUC continues to slightly under-perform against its benchmarks, and the institution will therefore be placing more emphasis on this area. The institution intends to enhance this activity in the following ways:

- A integrated and seamless total student-lifecycle / IAG approach
 - LTUC recognises that successful retention requires a fully co-ordinated and comprehensive approach, considering the entire student journey from pre-application to graduation. LTUC is actively reviewing software options to allow it to capture relevant data about students who apply and register with the institution (e.g. SEC profile, if a cared-for young person, first generation into HE), and then track their progress throughout their study programme. As a result “at risk” students would be identified early, and a proactive and tailored support plan put in place.
- Specialised academic support for WP students
 - LTUC will actively review its current system of academic support to ensure this fully meets the needs of students from under-represented groups. One aspect of this review will be the duration of the relationship between student and staff member, and the option of extending this beyond the study programme duration, commencing pre-application (e.g. summer school) through to post graduation.
- Peer support
 - Fellow students can provide a very effective support network, and LTUC will review ways in which this can be improved by working and consulting with current students and the Students’ Union. This could include setting up mentoring arrangements, as well as forming interest and concern groups.
- Student representation
 - LTUC recognises the value of students’ input and feedback about all aspects of their experience at the institution. Therefore LTUC will continue to proactively elicit feedback from the student body via mechanisms such as focus groups, polls and forums. It commits to responding to comments and feedback in an action-orientated manner to foster on-going improvements.

- Expectation management
 - It is crucial that students considering HE have a clear idea of what their student experience will be like and the expectations that will be made of them (e.g. the level of academic work required on vocational courses), as failure to do this can lead to disengagement. Therefore LTUC will look to further enhance its communication of what it offers and what will be required of students in all its publicity materials.
- Transition to HE
 - In order to facilitate the transition into HE, LTUC already runs “Intro Week” on an institution-wide basis. Recognising that under-represented students may require an even greater level of support, LTUC will consider ways to offer an enhanced introductory experience such as targeted activities pre-enrolment.
- Programme review and development
 - LTUC recognises that the new funding arrangements may deter some students from applying for traditional three or four year full-time study programmes, especially from under-represented groups. Another potential scenario could see students feeling overwhelmed by accruing debts, and dropping out of their courses as a result. Therefore LTUC commits to a review of its course provision to consider options such as accelerated degrees, flexible courses etc.

7. Financial support for students

- 7.1. Currently LTUC offers means tested bursaries to students enrolled on undergraduate programmes who are in receipt of a Higher Education Maintenance Grant.
- 7.2. There appears to be little evidence, however, that these bursaries are effective at attracting and retaining under-represented students in a targeted way.
- 7.3. Therefore LTUC will review alternative systems of financial support. This will be via the match-funding for students who are awarded a National Scholarship to ensure funds are targeted at those already identified as being most in need of financial support. For students starting in the 2012/13 academic year those in receipt of a National Scholarship award from Leeds Trinity will receive £6000 spread over three years as follows:
- 7.3.1. Year 1 - £3000 tuition fee waiver and £1000 cash
 - 7.3.2. Year 2 - £1000 Leeds Trinity card
 - 7.3.3. Year 3 - £1000 Leeds Trinity card
- 7.4. Criteria for eligibility will be based on household income, are or have been a cared-for person or a carer.
- 7.5. Full details on criteria for eligibility and the process for awarding scholarships are available on the Leeds Trinity website.

8. Targets and milestones

8.1. LTUC intends to make progress against the following milestones and performance indicators:

	Internal measure 2009/10 activity level	HESA PI 2009-10 (Location adjusted benchmark)	Targets 2012-17
Enhanced use of student volunteers in primary schools	n/a	n/a	500 hours contact time per annum by 2017
No. of school / college interventions	169	n/a	280 per annum by 2012/13
No. of WP target institution partnerships	20	n/a	Additional 4 per year
% students from SECs 4, 5, 6, 7.	n/a	37.1%	Continue to outperform by average 0.5% over five years
% of students from state schools	n/a	96.2%	Continue to outperform by average 0.5% over 5 years
% students from low participation neighbourhoods	n/a	18.5%	Continue to outperform by average 2.5% over 5 years
% no longer in HE	n/a	8.9%	Achieve benchmark by 2015
Projected outcomes (likelihood of UG students achieving a degree)	n/a	78.1%	Achieve benchmark by 2015
Employment indicator (inc further study)	n/a	90.6% ²	Continue to outperform benchmark by average 2% over 5 years

² Current HESA performance indicator

9. **Monitoring and evaluation**

- 9.1. Promoting access to under-represented groups is, and will continue to be, an institution-wide responsibility with active engagement from academic and support staff. Specific responsibility for the outreach work, however, sits with the institution's Schools and Colleges Liaison Team which reports to the Director of Marketing.
- 9.2. Formal monitoring of the measures set out in the agreement and progress against targets and milestones will be conducted by the institution's Strategic Management Team and Academic Board (which includes student representation) under the guidance of the Principal. This will include the related monitoring of LTUC's Widening Participation Strategic Assessment.

10. **Provision of info for prospective students**

- 10.1. LTUC appreciates how important it is that prospective students have all the relevant information about the fees an HEI will charge them, and that it is an important part of the consideration and selection process. Therefore LTUC will ensure that information about tuition fees is clearly and prominently communicated on all key interfaces with prospective students in a timely fashion.
- 10.2. Examples of these communication vehicles include the prospectus and other collateral material aimed at prospective students, the web site, Open days, information given at UCAS fairs and other similar public conventions. UCAS will also be supplied with information regarding fees promptly.

