

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY

ACCESS AGREEMENT 2008/09 to 2010/11

The University's Access Agreement for 2008/09 is based upon its agreement for 2007/08, but modified to take account of the enhanced arrangements for student support from 2008 onwards announced by Government. The provisions of the Agreement are intended to extend educational opportunity to the maximum number of students who are likely to succeed, by providing financial assistance to those whom we judge need it most. The modification to the previous agreement consists of replacing a two-tiered bursary scheme (Mandatory and Discretionary Bursaries) with a single-rate Student Bursary scheme which benefits all students starting in 2008/09 and identified under the regulations as eligible for means-tested support. All our other provisions established in our 2007/08 agreement will continue.

Returning students will continue to receive the benefits of the Access Agreement obtaining when they started their programmes, subject to the following increases to fees and to bursaries for 2008/09:

- Tuition fees: £3145
- Mandatory bursary: £320
- Discretionary bursary (for students in receipt of partial means-tested support): £540.

The provisions outlined below apply to all UK students on DfES-funded programmes and on degree courses in Social Work starting in September 2008 and subsequently.

The amounts of money quoted are at 2008/09 rates unless otherwise indicated. Student Bursaries are subject to annual inflationary increase as they are based on Government income threshold levels for state support and will increase in line with any Government announcements. The value of other bursaries and scholarships will be reviewed annually.

1. Student Bursary Scheme

Any student entitled to means-tested financial support (full or partial) as calculated by the LEA will receive £400 per annum.

2. Looked-after Children Bursary Scheme

Any student entering the University from care will receive a bursary of £1000 per annum (excluding any paid placement year). This includes all children being looked after by a local authority at the time of application. The University has achieved the Frank Buttle Trust Quality Mark.

3. Regional Bursaries Scheme

The University will provide a Regional Bursary of £250 per year to any student with a permanent home address within a 30-mile radius of the University as identified by the postcode schedule held by the University

4. Opportunities Scholarship Scheme

The University will provide up to 60 Opportunities Scholarships of £1000 per year each for students entering on the basis of access course qualifications rather than A-levels or other qualifications.

5. Academic Scholarships Scheme

The University will provide an Academic Scholarship of £1000 per annum to any student admitted on the basis of at least 280 UCAS tariff points derived from qualifications recognised for this purpose by the University. No student can receive both an Academic Scholarship and an Opportunities Scholarship.

6. Creative Industry Scholarships Scheme

The University will provide a Creative Industry Scholarship of £1500 per annum to any student admitted to a qualifying programme on the basis of at least 300 UCAS tariff points derived from qualifications recognised for this purpose by the University. No student can receive both an Academic Scholarship and a Creative Industry Scholarship or both an Opportunities Scholarship and a Creative Industry Scholarship. A list of qualifying programmes is attached.

7. Transition Support Scheme

7.1 *At the University*

In the context of this agreement, DMU already spends over £0.78m pa in student support relevant to students from underrepresented groups. This includes such provision as our disability support unit, the money and welfare team, the learning support centre and library service support. Income from variable fees will enable us to continue to expand such facilities. The transitions support team was introduced in Student Services in 2005/06, and the support also included an innovatory mentoring scheme. A further innovation was the introduction of a Transition Support Worker for disabled students, to enable more effective entry to the university. Our distribution of the Access to Learning Funds – currently at c£0.8m for 2007/08 – makes a significant impact on student retention.

7.2 *Partner Colleges and Schools*

A key component of the University's strategy for widening participation is the University's transition support service offered to prospective DMU students in

partner colleges and schools. The University wishes to make Higher Education and DMU a real option for students with little or no family participation in HE. The Transition Teams will target approximately 50 schools and colleges in the region and work with those students most at risk of dropping out of HE.

Key features include:

- Transition support from HE guidance workers and mentors to develop skills and enable smooth transition to HE through increased awareness of the different learning styles required at this level.
- On-going transition support to students in DMU's partner colleges and institutions to maintain and support DMU's profile
- The scheme combines the ethos of widening participation from non-traditional groups with the concern for ensuring the quality of student intake.
- The guidance package will also address the concern that students from non-traditional backgrounds can be less well-prepared for university and at an increased risk of withdrawal.
- We will continue to evaluate the transition support model for its wider applicability to student support – particularly those activities concerned with transition, induction and retention.
- The service will be promoted via Student Advisers and WP Co-Ordinators in partner schools and colleges.

The cost of the scheme to cover student transition support over the three-year period is estimated at £125,000 pa.

8. Provision of Information to Students

The University has developed a communication and information strategy in relation to tuition fees, bursaries and scholarships. The strategy includes the development of a fully integrated marketing campaign to promote the University's bursary and scholarship offering to the relevant target audiences. The main focus of this campaign is to provide clear and accessible information and guidance to prospective students, their families and teachers;

Key elements of this campaign include:

- The production and distribution of a DMU student funding guide for prospective students and teachers;
- Direct mail activities to specific prospective students who are the target audiences for specific scholarships. For example local students and subject specific information for those thinking about the studying a creative industries related programme.

- Up to date information features prominently on the DMU website; www.dmu.ac.uk and is informed by market research.
- Tailored presentations and guidance for our school and college liaison activity.
- A “ready reckoner” funding calculator has been developed for students to access online to guide them on what support may be available to them.

A key aim of the campaign is to eliminate confusion and anxiety amongst all groups but to assure less confident groups that opportunities to study with us are not constrained by new financial packages, in particular first generation students.

Additional costs of supporting this strategy are estimated at £20k pa.

The University will ensure that all students are clearly informed of the aggregate cost of tuition before they start their programmes and of the support available to them.

9. Administration of Bursaries and Scholarships

The University has opted in to the bursary scheme operated by the SLC, and the awards are administered and managed by the Academic Registry supported by the Finance Office.

10. Partner Colleges

All DMU students, whether studying at DMU or at a partner institution, are eligible for the above schemes. Partner institutions running DMU programmes are able to offer further bursaries and scholarships from their own funds, in addition to the schemes detailed above. DMU notifies OFFA from time to time of such additional schemes as they arise.

11. Outreach Activity

Our outreach activities can be divided into direct activity and aspiration-raising activity.

11.1 Direct Activity

Our target for applications for 2008/09 is approximately 25000 and we are actively working towards this.

DMU currently engages in over 500 separate events per year, comprising both staff visits to schools and colleges (including parent evening events) and visits of students from schools and colleges to the University. By these means we make contact with over 18000 year 12 and year 13 students per year.

The emphasis of the visits to schools and colleges is to provide advice for the application process, on student finance, on life at the University and is aimed at parents as well as students. The focus of inviting visitors to the University is on

similar topics while also giving a direct taster of DMU life and specific subject areas of interest. Our target market is largely first-generation University applicants.

The majority of the schools and colleges with which we work are in inner city or inner town locations. About 25% of our students are from FE colleges. All of our work is with the public sector.

We plan to slightly increase the number of opportunities to bring students and parents to our campuses, as part of this agreement. In 2006/07 we hosted 44 inward visits.. This will be maintained during 2007/08 at a cost of £10k.

We have increased the number of university-wide open days from two per year to five; three of which take place on Saturdays.

11.2 *Aspiration raising activity*

We continue to work within the Aimhigher programme to provide approximately 5,000 participants each year with a number of aspiration and attainment raising activities. Under the Aimhigher brand DMU also works collaboratively with the other local FE and HE providers to offer a thorough representation and example of the FE and HE provision available with our region. Collaborative projects for further development include events targeting disabled groups and looked after children and the development of a shared Aimhigher Ambassador training and development programme.

The following activities are now embedded within the universities outreach programme:

- Year 6 Parent and Pupil University Experience Days
- Year 7 Problem-solving Event
- Year 8 Tasters
- Year 10 University Experience Days
- Year 10 Summer Schools
- Years 11 Study Skills package
- Year 11 Transition to Further Learning and Transition to Work Support
- Year 11 and 12 Masterclasses for gifted and talented students
- Year 12 Tasters
- Parents Evenings / Careers Events / option Evening Support

A budget of £92,000 is allocated to undertake this work.

12. Disabled Applicants

In 2006/07 4.2% and 1.7% of our part-time students are registered for the Disabled Student Allowance. We aim to raise this by the application of our policy for support, which is geared towards taking positive steps to seek and identify need at the application stage and agreeing at that stage means of satisfying that need. This involves our Disability Support Unit in considerable work with applicants. Current provision includes:

- Alternative format for printed materials available, e.g. Braille, large print.
- Enquiry Centre fitted out with facilities for enquirers with disabilities, e.g. wheelchair access, hearing loop, text phone, confidential interview room.
- Provision of special leaflet on dyslexia.
- Web site designed for use by disabled applicants.

13. Milestones

1. Year on year maintenance at or above benchmark performance levels in relation to proportions of student population with regard to social class, ethnic make-up, low-participation neighbourhood background.
2. Take-up of bursaries and retention rates of students with bursaries, monitored annually in relation to estimates.
3. Improvement in progression of 4% from 2006 to 2010.
4. Visits of school and college students will be maintained at 45 per year.
5. Annual setting and reviewing of targets and supporting activities.
6. The continuation of the current aspiration and attainment raising outreach activity and the implementation of new developments
7. Annual review by Academic Board of work of its Admissions Committee.

14. Monitoring Arrangements

Progress and success of these arrangements is subject to operational quarterly monitoring activity by a group chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor linked to a review cycle appropriate to the nature of individual milestones. This group will prepare a formal annual monitoring report for consideration by the Board of Governors and the Academic Board.

15. Contact Information

Principal Contact for OFFA

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16. Scale of Bursaries and Scholarship Support to Students

Title	Estimated Number per year	Value (£) per year	Year 1 Cost (£)	Year 2 Cost	Year 3 Cost
Mandatory Bursary	1500	400	580,000	1,100,000	1,600,000
Discretionary Bursary	1200	400	470,000	870,000	1,250,000
LAC Bursary	5	1000	5,000	9,000	13,000
Regional Bursary	2200	250	540,000	1,000,000	1,400,000
Opportunities Scholarship	60	1000	60,000	110,000	150,000
Academic Scholarship	290	1000	290,000	530,000	740,000
Creative Industries Scholarship	580	1500	860,000	1,600,000	2,200,000
Transition Support			125,000	125,000	125,000
Information to students			30,000	30,000	30,000
Totals			2,960,000	5,374,000	7,508,000

17. Fees

The University intends to charge the full annual tuition fee of £3145 in 2008/09. In following sessions the fees will be adjusted in line with annual inflation.