

## **DORSET TEACHER TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACCESS AGREEMENT FOR THE OFFICE OF FAIR ACCESS (OFFA)**

### 1. Introduction

1.1 The Dorset Teacher Training Partnership has a proven track record in the delivery of higher quality Initial Teacher Training. The SCITT operates in a geographical area that is some considerable distance from the nearest HEI offering ITT and is particularly attractive to local graduates who are:

- returning to paid work after a break to have children
- unable to undertake a full time course in another part of the country due to family or economic circumstances
- contemplating a career review and change in direction
- unemployed, having moved to the area for family reasons

The Partnership recognises that it has a responsibility to widen access and admission and will use additional fee income to support improvements in participation rates from under-represented groups.

### 2. Length of agreement

2.1 This agreement is for 5 years from the academic year 2006/07. However, we have committed to return to OFFA by May 2008 to seek approval for our monitoring criteria which, due to a lack of current relevant data, has not yet been developed (see section 7).

### 3. Fee limits

3.1 We will charge a fee of £3,000 for our full-time postgraduate ITT course from the 2006/07 academic year. The fee limit will rise with inflation (in line with annually published Government regulations).

3.2 Trainees with a deferred place which was confirmed before 1 August 2005 and who start in September 2006 will not have to pay variable tuition fees.

### 4. Bursary support

4.1 The Partnership will offer a graduated bursary, related to the income bandings used to determine the Maintenance Grant. All trainees in receipt of the full state maintenance grant of £2,700 will be entitled to a bursary of at least £500. Other trainees who receive more than the minimum maintenance grant will be entitled to a bursary of at least £300. We will utilise the Student Loans Company Higher Education Bursary and Scholarship Scheme to calculate eligibility for bursary support. (Figures represent the position for 2006 and will be subject to inflationary rises).

- 4.2 We will also use a proportion of the additional fee income to develop a scholarship scheme to attract and recruit a diverse range of trainees to the course.
- 4.3 It is expected that bursary payments will be made in three instalments. One at the end of each term. Scholarship payments are likely to follow a similar pattern.
- 4.4 All bursary and scholarship support is additional to previous financial support.

#### 5. Publicising fees and financial support

- 5.1 A number of methods will be used to ensure that prospective students are as clear as possible about the fee charged, and the amount of student support they may be entitled to. These are outlined below:
- 5.2 The course brochure will contain a section on finance, including fee and support information. Support information will include institutional support and support available from the government through the teaching bursaries, maintenance grant and maintenance loans.
- 5.3 The fee and support information will also be published in a leaflet which we will distribute in the course of any outreach activity.
- 5.4 The fee and support information will be clearly articulated to all applicants at interview stage, before they make their key decisions on whether to accept a place.

#### 6. Outreach

- 6.1 The Partnership will continue to work closely with the Local Authority to raise awareness of routes into Initial Teacher Training within the County of Dorset.
- 6.2 In addition we will seek to identify areas of under-representation in our trainee cohort. Any significant issues will be addressed through outreach initiatives such as Briefing Meetings or Open Days.

#### 7. Institutional Targets and milestones

- 7.1 We do not currently have access to data which would be suitable to determine a baseline for targets and milestones around low income or socio-economic groups. However, through subscription to the Student Loans Company Higher Education Bursary and Scholarship Scheme we will be in a position to monitor the numbers of trainees participating in our institution who are in receipt of full or partial state support. We will also wish to develop targets around other under-represented groups if identified.
- 7.2 We will seek to maintain or increase the proportion of students in our target groups, but will only be able to set meaningful targets once data is available. Therefore, we commit to return to OFFA to revise this agreement by May

2008, with a view to an amended agreement taking effect from the 2008/9 academic year

8. Monitoring Arrangements

- 8.1 We will formally monitor the progress of the access agreement at least once a year through the Executive Group who report biannually to the Steering Group. Initial monitoring will be concerned with participation rates and the development of data on lower income and other under-represented groups, against which to monitor. When specific baselines, targets, and milestones are determined we will look to monitor against these.
- 8.2 Our annual report to the Steering Group will form the basis of our annual monitoring report to OFFA.