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Coventry University

Access Agreement

The following procedures will apply to students paying UK/EU fees, who start as new undergraduate students from 1 September 2006, excluding those applying during the entry cycle for 2005/06 but deferring entry until 2006/07. These procedures and figures assume the introduction for 2006/07 of the currently approved new arrangements for tuition fees, and may be subject to change if legislative, statutory or government requirements alter, and in the light of inflation. All figures and statements below are subject to modification in the light of approval granted by the Office for Fair Access (OFFA). Subject to the above, the approach given below will continue for five years, ie until 2010/11 inclusive.

Students studying a University course at another institution under a franchise agreement are eligible for all the fee and bursary arrangements shown below.

Students on courses offered by other institutions whose final awards are validated by the University are covered by the fee, bursary and scholarship arrangements of the institution at which the course is studied, which may be different from those applying to similar courses offered by the University itself.

Unless otherwise stated students on courses not funded by HEFCE (eg NHS courses) are not covered by these provisions.

The University already has an excellent record of widened provision and outreach activity, so its main approach under the new arrangements will be to improve retention and employability, which will particularly enhance the attraction of higher education for under-represented socio-economic groups.

The student numbers and expenditure shown below reflect the projected situation when the arrangements cover students in all years of study, and are therefore estimates rather than specific targets.

a) Level of fees, fee limits for UK and EU students

- (i) *All full time students taking one of the University's undergraduate degree or HND courses will be charged £3000 per annum.*
- (ii) *All full time students taking one of the University's Foundation Degree courses, or undergraduate foundation years ("year zero") courses, will be charged £2000 per annum.*

b) Bursaries and other financial support for full-time students to be provided from estimated additional fee income

- (i) *The University assures that all full time UK/EU students who are in receipt of a UK government maintenance grant taking one of the University's courses as listed under (a) above will receive at least £300 financial support from the University, as specified in §41 of the OFFA guidance document 2004/01 and §6.2.3 of the Secretary of State's letter of guidance.*

- (ii) *Full-time students will be considered for bursaries and scholarships as shown below; students may receive at most one bursary and one scholarship.*

- **Bursaries**

- (iii) *All full time students who are in receipt of a UK government maintenance grant for a given academic year will receive a fixed bursary of £500 for any year to which the government's assessment applies, which includes the £300 minimum required by the Government.*
- (iv) *All full time students who have applied for a UK government maintenance grant, but have been assessed as having a residual income higher than the limit defined by the Government, will receive a fixed bursary of £750 for that year if their residual income in that year is within £10,000 above the level defined for a Government grant.*
- (v) *These two provisions are targeted specifically at improving access for under-represented socio-economic groups, with the emphasis being on those who fall just above the level at which the Government offers support for low-income families, those being the groups most at risk under the new fee procedures. The University estimates that approximately 70% of its full-time undergraduate population of ca. 10,000 (2004/05) will benefit from these two bursaries, of which approximately 40% of the first degree and "year zero" population and approximately 60% of students on FD and HND are drawn from under-represented groups.*

- **Scholarships**

- (vi) *With the following scholarships the University aims to maintain its present attractiveness to students from under-represented groups, and to improve recruitment of high achieving students from these groups who might otherwise be deterred by financial constraints. The criteria are specified below in broad terms: detailed terms and conditions will be included in promotional literature.*
- (vii) *Any full time student who is admitted to a course with a tuition fee set at £3000 as a new student on the basis of an entry qualification score of at least 320 points on the UCAS tariff gained from full A-levels, and who has made a firm (CF, UF) commitment to the University, will receive a scholarship of £2000 in the first year, renewable each subsequent year of the course depending on good academic achievement in the preceding complete stage. These scholarships are intended to be very attractive to high performance students from socio-economic groups to whom an additional financial incentive could be decisive.*
- (viii) *For each institution with which the University has signed an appropriate partnership / widening participation agreement there will be a number of full-time scholarships of £1000 for courses with a tuition fee set at £3000. The candidates will be selected according to criteria agreed between each partner and the University, but with entry performance of at least 300 UCAS tariff points gained from full A-levels (or, in the case of FE Colleges, equivalent vocational qualifications); the scholarships are renewable for each year of study, depending on good academic achievement in the preceding complete stage. These scholarships are intended to be very attractive to students from low participation socio-economic groups who form a significant proportion of the students at the target colleges and schools in the region.*
- (ix) *For new courses determined by the University to merit special scholarships, there will be scholarships of £2000 for new full-time students; the scholarships are renewable for each year of study on that course, depending on good academic achievement in the preceding complete stage.*
- (x) *For new full-time students on a course with a tuition fee set at £3000 who are involved with performance activities which the University wishes to promote, scholarships of up to £2000 will be awarded for performance not directly linked to individual academic entry qualifications. The scholarships will promote and reward excellence in performance areas such as sport, enterprise, music, and artistic endeavour; the scholarships are renewable for each year of full-time study depending on continued high achievement in the particular performance field concerned. These scholarships are intended to be attractive to students*

with non-standard academic qualifications who might otherwise not choose to enter higher education.

- (xi) *Any full-time students on HEFCE-funded courses with a tuition fee set at £3000 who achieved an average academic performance of at least 70% in their previous complete stage of study on one of the University's courses will receive a scholarship of £1000 in their current year at the University. These scholarships are intended specifically to increase retention of high achieving students who are at most risk from financial constraints, which would include many from groups at present under-represented in HE.*

c) Student Support, outreach and related activities

The University intends to enhance current student support provision in the following areas with a view to augmenting current pastoral care facilities and thereby to improve the student experience and increase retention, in particular for those sectors at present underrepresented at the University for reasons likely to be remedied by such action. The aim of these expanded services is predominantly to address the particular needs of students from currently under-represented groups thereby increasing their ability to apply for admission to HE and to continue their studies under the constraints which at present inhibit study.

- (i) *The University will establish a new student support centre to form a unified facility for central academic and pastoral support for students, which will be particularly valuable to students who have outside work or domestic commitments, ie those currently under-represented groups to whom present provision may form a deterrent to entry into (or continuation in) HE.*
- (ii) *The University will mount additional summer schools to A / AVCE students, masterclasses, shadowing opportunities and dedicated experience days aimed at those about to apply for University, and will also increase its pre-admission summer schools for new students, concentrating on numeracy, literacy, and study skills; these activities will be of particular benefit in increasing the confidence (and thereby the success) of those from groups at present under-represented in HE because of perceived shortcomings in these areas.*
- (iii) *In addition to the bursary and scholarship schemes and student support measures above, in the wider context we will also use additional fee income to focus on related activities such as careers, employability, entrepreneurship, flexible delivery and e-learning; we will also expand attendance monitoring so as to provide additional pastoral support to those who appear to be undergoing poor attendance for financial or personal reasons.*
- (iv) *Additional administrative posts will be created specifically to manage the flow of information to intending applicants and to current students, and to process their applications for financial support.*

d) How we will provide information

The University's prospectus and web pages will contain clear and concise information for prospective students on:

- (i) *the fees for their course (§a above)*
- (ii) *bursaries for which they may be eligible (§b above)*
- (iii) *scholarships for which they may be eligible (§b above)*
- (iv) *student support (§c above)*
- (v) *typical living costs for a student based in Coventry*

In addition the University will give clear and specific information on the above in all relevant promotional materials and outreach activities, especially those targeted at groups at present under-represented in HE who are likely to benefit most from the bursaries and related schemes.

e) Total amount to be spent on access measures

The total support to be offered in scholarships and bursaries will, of course, depend on the number of eligible students. Various options have been modelled, and the University at present estimates

additional expenditure of £5.7m pa (by year 5) as direct financial support for students through bursaries, a further £6m pa on scholarships, £270k pa on direct costs of other outreach activities, and £2.5m on indirect support through enhanced services to make HE more attractive to groups at present under-represented. This is predominantly new expenditure, with the exception of approximately £50,000 already allocated on sports scholarships and £2500 to support student artistic activities. The amount estimated to be spent on additional support and outreach activity is therefore £15m. This represents 75% of the University's estimated additional fee income under the new procedures of approximately £20m by year 6 of the scheme. These figures are overall totals, ie not purely those elements targeted at students from under-represented groups.

f) Institutional milestones and objectives, including institutional baseline data

The University's prime objective in the above initiatives is to enhance the recruitment and retention of better motivated, better skilled, and better supported students, going out from the University with a high employability rating. The main milestone is therefore an increase in applications and admissions, and an improved retention rate, together with improved employability. The student numbers and expenditure shown above reflect the projected situation when the arrangements cover students in all years of study, and are therefore estimates rather than specific targets or milestones.

The baseline data and milestones are as follows:

- current complete year applications figures (UCAS, 2004 entry): 17,700: target 1% growth per annum over the next 5 years*
- current full time enrolment of new students (HESES 2004/05): 4989: target 1% growth per annum over the next 5 years*
- current retention rate 1st year to 2nd year: 80% : target 1% improvement per annum*
- current retention rate 2nd year to 3rd year: 90%: target 1% improvement per annum*
- latest FDR return (2002/03): 60 % in "graduate" posts: target 1% growth per annum.*

It is the University's intention to continue to meet its benchmark on access performance indicators.

g) Compliance

The University's compliance with the OFFA code and the agreed access statement and milestones will be overseen by the Academic Executive, the Board of Governors, and senior management, principally the Vice-Chancellor, the Finance Director, and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor responsible for recruitment, retention and the quality of the student's overall experience.

h) Additionality

The University is already a world-leader in the use of WebCT for e-learning; additional investment in new releases of this package will make it even better, bringing with it the flexibility of study attractive to groups at present under-represented because of other commitments. The University already has sports scholarships for outstanding sportspeople, which can now be increased to give greater scope and cover a wider variety of performance-related excellence. The provision of summer schools for and experience days for year-12/13 pupils will be expanded. The University's existing support for students in mathematics and study skills will continue, and will play a greater part in the overall aim of increasing retention.