

Leicester College

Access Agreement

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Signature of head of institution:

Name: Maggie Galliers, Principal and Chief Executive.

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The College's Commitment to Widening Participation

- 1 Leicester College is committed to widening participation in learning at all levels. Its commitment to engaging and supporting learners from a range of backgrounds is made explicit in its Mission and its Values:

Mission

To deliver a wide range of high quality learning experiences to support the diverse communities we serve and the personal, social and economic development of individuals and enterprises. We believe in Learning for Success.

Values

- Raising aspirations, achieving ambitions
- Demonstrating excellence in teaching, learning and support
- Valuing diversity, promoting equality
- Working together to get the best results

The Context

- 2 Leicester College serves one of the most diverse communities in the Country and so encouraging participation by learners from a range of backgrounds and particularly from under-represented and/or disadvantaged groups is a priority.
- 3 The City is the 29th most deprived local authorities in the Country with over half the wards having high levels of multiple deprivation and it is estimated that 40,000 adults in the City have low levels of numeracy and literacy.
- 4 Leicester City also has the highest proportion of minority ethnic groups in the Country: 36% of the population according to the 2001 Census, (although more

recent estimates suggest a figure closer to 40%); and this figure increases to over 60% among the younger population.

Higher Education at Leicester College

5 Leicester College has two main aims underpinning the higher education strategy. These are to:

- raise the level of skills in the sub-region
- widen the participation of students from under-represented groups in higher education

6 In order to focus the higher education curriculum on skills and employability, the College has developed a suite of Foundation Degrees in a range of vocational areas in conjunction with local employers and three local universities. The courses are suited to both full and part-time learners, such as apprentices and are intended to develop “work-ready” graduates with both academic ability and practical experience.

7 The key focus for widening participation is on learners from the City of Leicester and the sub-region. The College itself provides for over 5,000 full-time learners and the majority of these learners are from under-privileged areas. We want to develop our higher education provision as a recognised progression route for these and other local learners who want the opportunity to study a high quality university-level course without incurring the high costs of studying away from home. Hence we have placed increasing importance on activities aimed at recruiting from the College as well as other local schools and colleges so that progression to the College’s HE provision becomes one of the recognised routes for learners completing level 3.

Level of fees:

8 The fee level for all full-time directly-funded higher education courses in 2011/12 will be £1850 for a full academic year. The fees have been set at a level which will provide additional resources to develop the quality of provision and to fund further widening participation activity. They remain highly competitive with most university provision and relatively low so that students are not deterred by the fear of excessive debt. *Fees will be increased annually with the rate of inflation in line with that applied to the minimum regulated fee.*

9 . Increased income from the fees will provide:

- direct financial support for students in need
- enhancements to the quality of learning opportunities in order to improve retention and achievement levels
- outreach activities

Amount of additional income to be spent on access measures in 2011/12

10 Additional income will be spent under the following headings:

- Establishment of a retention project to provide additional academic and pastoral support for at risk HE learners (£10,000). The funds will provide additional support for mentoring as well as more broadly targeted activities such as academic writing workshops.
- The College will provide an HE hardship fund (£5,000) towards the cost of visits and equipment. Guidance notes for higher education students seeking payments under this fund are available on the college website.
- The College will provide a range of widening participation activities for internal and other learners in the sub-region at a cost of (£10,000). These will include a programme of Masterclasses to be led by HE programme and FE programme leaders.

Information to Students

11 *Information will be disseminated in the following forms:*

- *Updated information on student tuition fees for 2011/12 will be provided as part of a supplement to the Prospectus on the College's web site. Currently the Prospectus directs students to the web site for fees information.*
- *The Access agreement will be displayed prominently on the web site.*
- *Each student handbook for 2011/12 will provide a note on the hardship fund and how they can access it*

12 Milestones

- Achievement of Retention and Success rate targets set by the College's Higher Education Quality, Standards and Improvement Committee.
- Percentage target of learners recruited to HE programmes from Leicester and Leicestershire as set out in the College's Widening Participation Strategy.
- Development of new programmes in responsive to local demand.
- Overall quality as established by external reviews by QAA and HEI partners.

13 Monitoring

To ensure the agreement is carried through in the Access Agreement, activity will be monitored as part of the remit of the College's Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee, one of the two sub-committees of the Academic Board. The

Committee is chaired by the Deputy Principal for Quality and also represented is the Deputy Principal for Curriculum and Planning and Assistant Principal for 14-19 and Higher Education. Oversight of the agreement will be added to the terms of reference of the Committee.

14 Finance

	2011-12*	2012-13
Estimated additional fee income (£)	£50,000	£97,000
Estimated spend on financial support to students with household income levels up to £39,305 (£)*	£5,000	£10,000
Estimated spend on financial support to students with household income levels between £39,306 and £49,305 (£)*		
Estimated amount of additional income to be spent on outreach (£)	£10,000	£10,000
Exceptional costs associated with the access agreement (e.g. administration costs) (£)	£2,000	£4,000