

**Ravensbourne College of Design and
Communication**

**Access Agreement
Fees and Bursaries
2009/2010**

Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication

WIDENING PARTICIPATION

1. INTRODUCTION

Ravensbourne is a small College of Design and Communication working to provide high quality specialist education to all of its students. The College seeks to maintain and increase its student diversity in collaboration with partnership organisations. It further seeks to raise aspirations of potential students who might not otherwise consider Higher Education and prepare applicants for study at advanced level. The College aims to explore innovative approaches to Learning and Teaching as well as student support that meets the needs of students whatever their background. The College has a commitment to set targets leading towards a socially inclusive student body, seeking to remove obstacles that the most disadvantaged groups may have when considering study at the College. Finally the College is working to ensure no increase in student non-completion.

2. KEY OBJECTIVES

- Engage with partner schools, colleges and other external agencies to increase student demand for Higher Education with particular reference to the Design and Communication Industries.
- To ensure the College admissions policy and processes recognise ability and enable access to students regardless of backgrounds which may disadvantage previous learning and achievement.
- Continue to increase the proportion of students from lower socio-economic groups.
- Ensure the implications of the Widening Participation Strategy are reflected in strategic planning and curriculum planning.
- Develop approaches to Learning and Teaching and student support, which support the implications of a differentiated student body.
- Maintain standards of excellence, ensuring the College retention and achievement benchmark standards do not decrease.
- Seek to enhance employability skills to enable improved outcomes amongst under-represented groups.

3. PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The College approach is to embed change ensuring the Widening Participation aspirations of the College are linked at all levels to policy and planning. Consequently the Widening Participation strategy is informed by and will help develop:

- Human Resource Strategy - Positively supporting applicants of ethnicity and disability, monitoring staff profile against national benchmarks

- Faculty and Course Monitoring - The annual monitoring and review cycle enables the College to work at a micro-level to benchmark widening participation achievements against College and national targets
- Learning and Teaching Strategies -The College Learning and Teaching strategy seeks to ensure a responsive curriculum to support learning and prepare students for work within the Creative Industries sector
- Equal Opportunities Policy and Race Relations Policy -The College EO and RRP policy embraces key factors in the Widening Participation strategy and works from an understanding there is a key relationship between the two areas
- Admissions Policy -The College admissions policy allocates places on a basis of individual student ability to benefit from the proposed course of study, and works within the Swartz framework for fair admissions to Higher Education
- Curriculum Development -The development of new programmes of study will enable access to a wide variety of social and ethnic backgrounds. In particular Foundation Degrees and the Level 0 programme are intended to maximise opportunity to a diverse range of learners offering programmes to build skills and confidence developing an independent learning culture
- Student Support -The College accepts the responsibility to meet the education needs of students with particular learning difficulties and pro actively intervenes to enable them to participate as fully and successfully as possible in all aspects of College life
- Employability - The employability unit works within the widening participation context and seeks improved employment outcomes for students by ethnicity, gender, and for students with a known disability
- Marketing -The marketing activities of the College seek to raise awareness in underrepresented groups for possibilities for study in HE. Within the region the College offers a wide menu of activities to assist partnership organisations to raise aspirations of learners The College offers supportive advice and guidance focused towards individual needs.
- Estates and Facilities - Using impact assessment the College seeks to minimise disadvantage of particular students by acting to provide for and meet the requirements of all students
- Financial planning with regard to fees and bursaries - Working within the Office of Fair Access framework the College seeks to ensure students from low income households are not financially disadvantaged in application to the College

The Director of Information Services has the responsibility for championing widening participation at senior management level and has the overall role of developing cross college processes in this area. The Diversity Committee reporting to Governors monitors' progress towards widening participation targets cross College. Faculties and Courses monitor progress for recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups

within their particular areas. The Learning and Teaching Committee seeks to ensure that curriculum developments work towards a more inclusive institution.

4. RAISING ASPIRATIONS

Ravensbourne is currently a member of three Life Long Learning Networks. These networks are a HEFCE initiative to widen participation, by increasing the number of learners progressing from vocational programmes or the workplace, into higher education, and to equip them for lifelong employment in the creative industries.

By being full members of these networks, Ravensbourne was last year allocated 67 additional student numbers, specifically to recruit students with vocational qualifications and from non-traditional backgrounds.

Through effective collaboration, the progression manager has formed working relationships with over 20 FE Colleges offering vocational programmes resulting this year in 10 progression agreements being formed. Work is on going to continue to maintain and increase these numbers.

As a result of these partnerships, students are offered a variety of taster days and projects at Ravensbourne, including help with portfolio building, and interview advice. All students that participate in the progression agreement are subsequently given a pre-ucas interview.

Ravensbourne works closely with the following schools and Colleges.

Creative Way

Barking College
Bexley College
Brook House Sixth Form
Greenwich Community College
Hackney College
Havering College and Havering Sixth Form
Lewisham College
Mid Kent College
Newham College and Newham Sixth Form
North West Kent College
Redbridge College
South East Essex College
Thurrock and Basildon College
Tower Hamlets College
Trinity College

Others

Brit School
City of Westminster College
City and Islington College

Lambeth College
Orpington College
Kensington and Chelsea College
Croydon College
Kingston College
Carshalton College
Coulsdon College
Merton College
Southwark College
Barnet College
South West Thames College
Waltham Forest College
Canterbury College

School – 14-19 diploma

Hayes School
Cator Park
Charles Darwin
Bullers wood
Newstead Wood
Bishop Justice

Aim Higher Schools

Ravensbourne School
Christ the King
Crown Woods
Kelsey Park
Charles Darwin
Coopers Tech
Negus Sixth Form
Thomas Tallis
Kidbrooke
Kemnal Tech
Leyton Sixth Form
Orpington College
Priory School
Shooters Hill Campus
Lewisham College
Woolwich Poly
Richmond College
Cator Park
Coulsdon College
Croydon College
Erith School
Glenthorne High School
John Ruskin

5. PREPARATION FOR STUDY

The College seeks to develop a framework of opportunities to prepare students for study in HE with clear progression pathways into courses of study. The College recognises that many students are ill prepared for the independent and adult learning environment of HE. A number of courses have already been developed to enable school pupils to have a higher education 'experience' in the form of master classes, summer schools and taster sessions. It is intended to develop a broader framework of progression and bridging courses to enable students to study at the College on level 3 qualifications and progress internally via a supportive compact arrangement. The current provision of summer schools, master classes and taster sessions will be enhanced leading directly to supported entry to the College HE courses.

6. FAIR ADMISSIONS

It is the College's policy to use an interview as the primary means of assessing an applicant's suitability for their course of choice. The College believes that the opportunity provided by interview for applicants to meet and talk with staff and student representatives affords the most effective means of taking full account of all the applicant's skills and characteristics.

The College does not make decisions regarding a candidate's suitability solely on the basis of information available from an application form (academic qualifications, personal statement and reference) where an interview is possible. The College reserves the right to not invite applicants for interview in certain circumstances including cases where a candidate's application form indicates that they are ineligible for consideration or where the programme of choice has no places to offer.

Applicants will be considered for entry if they have any qualification at a suitable level for entry as identified on individual course documents. The current admissions strategy does not include targets for individual courses but seeks to monitor and benchmark progress of courses against national standards. Not all courses can achieve ideal representation range against all targets. For example Foundation Degrees and Level 0 courses are more likely to recruit from a socially inclusive student cohort.

7. LEARNING AND TEACHING

The College has recently completed a revalidation cycle of those courses validated by Sussex University. This gave an opportunity to ensure that courses are developed to offer an inclusive curriculum and a supportive learning experience to students. A review of current practice has begun which will lead to guidelines for tutors when planning curriculum development. The review has three phases induction, on course, learning outcomes and assessment. These are seen as key elements in planning a programme and ensuring an inclusive curriculum.

7.1 Induction - This is a crucial period in the student experience when students become accustomed to the world of HE and develop confidence in their new environment.

The College has developed a student induction policy with guidance for tutors about the induction phase. The intention of supportive induction is to offer the student the skills to learn successfully within the College context. The student handbook establishes the basic student entitlement and offers information about student services. This is sent to students prior to entry to the College with a pre arrival pack to ensure the student has access to relevant information about the College. The College offers a learner style diagnosis for students with supportive explanations to enable students to manage their learning. All students are offered a general induction programme ensuring that they are made aware of relevant aspects of the College including,

- Financial advice
- Minimum study requirements
- Learning Resources Centre facilities
- IT induction
- Student support services
- International student support

7.2 On Course The Learning and Teaching Strategy is reflected in key aspects of the Widening Participation Strategy. The Courses offered at the College build on the level of skills, knowledge and expertise which students arrive with. Foundation Degrees are an important part of the Learning and Teaching widening participation strategy. These courses offer accessible, vocational pathways relevant to employment needs, with smooth transition onward to honours degrees, where appropriate for the student. Level 0 courses offer guaranteed progression to Degree level courses on successful completion of the first year. Students are encouraged to work towards an understanding of electronic working methods to prepare them for a future in the industries, which the College serves. New course development of learning outcomes seeks to ensure language that supports inclusively and a culture of clear, challenging outcomes, which enables learners to achieve their full potential. Resources are disproportionately focused towards the first year of study ensuring an early supportive environment, which allows students to build familiarity with electronic learning environments as the course continues. A full programme of staff development has been offered to enable staff to debate and consider a range of subjects in relation to the Inclusive curriculum.

7.3 Assessment A review of the College assessment processes has just been completed. This has resulted in an action plan to develop new policy and process to ensure fair and supportive assessment across courses at the College. A working group has been established to progress this work. This will be reflected in the pending course revalidations and will seek to embed best practice for assessment of a differentiated student body. The College sees the development of clear formative assessment processes as a key support mechanism to check learning has occurred and to give students clear and transparent information with regard to progress. This will work in parallel to support the summative course assessments as a holistic assessment process.

8. STUDENT SUCCESS

Retention and achievement are seen as key indicators in Higher and Further Education particularly in the context of widening participation. The College seeks to maintain or improve its retention and achievement while setting improvement milestones in widening

participation. Curriculum development seeks to ensure that the following mechanisms are available on all courses to support student success:

Financial Inclusion: Sufficient flexibility to allow a student to work part time to support their learning. Clear and supportive financial advice

Academic Inclusion: Teaching methods, which are not barriers to students who might otherwise feel like 'academic outsiders'. Support tutorials (available both F2F and virtually) on course to facilitate learning

Peer inclusion: Supportive community environment, which welcomes all students and provides a collaborative learning environment. Peer group activities (available both F2F and virtually) including Rave on Air, trips out and exhibition preparations

Student services inclusion: Effective support for students with learning difficulties or particular disability. Provision of individual support that recognises that all students have difficulties at some points of the course

Civic inclusion: Structures of governance and policy that facilitate participation, students are represented at all levels of the governance hierarchy, including the Board of Governors.

9. EMPLOYABILITY

The College seeks to ensure that students have the best opportunity for employment regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability or social background. The following mechanisms are part of the College employability strategies used:

- Work placements offered to all students
- Course modules utilise skills gained through industry experience
- Targeted careers support
- Industrial representation on courses amongst the teaching staff.

The College will monitor student employment on course completion in relation to gender, disability and ethnicity.

ACCESS AGREEMENT

10. LEVEL OF FEES

Ravensbourne College currently offers four types of undergraduate and one type of postgraduate programme. The College has decided to offer a variable fee structure against type of course. Cost of all courses will rise in 2008/09. This is to recognise the College move to a new site on Greenwich Peninsula. This will give access to students to a higher standard of facility and the cost reflects this improvement. Fees are also expected to rise with inflation on an annual basis, as dictated by the HEFCE guidelines.

As a small institution the balance between fees and bursaries is critical. The access agreement for fees and bursaries is the most conservative the College can offer.

COST OF STUDY AT RAVENSBOURNE FROM AUTUMN 2009

COURSE TYPE	COST OF STUDY PER YEAR	LENGTH OF TUITION PER YEAR
Two year long Programme BA	£3,225	45 weeks tuition
Three year Programme BA/BSc	£3,225	30 weeks tuition
Two year Foundation Degree	£3,225	30 weeks tuition
One year 'Top up' BA/BSc	£3,225	45 weeks tuition
One year Post-Graduate Programme MA/MSc	£3,400	45 weeks tuition

11. BURSARIES AND OTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORT

College will set aside no less than 20% of additional fee income to offer additional financial support to students who apply through the College bursary system.

From experience, applicants to the College were confused by the range of bursaries they were entitled to. Whilst we provided information and an advice service, we were concerned that our bursary provision was not necessarily marketable. Therefore we have decided to rationalise our bursaries as below. We will continue to support the previous range of bursaries until the remaining recipients graduate from the college.

This is the minimum bursary position. The College may increase its bursary offer to respond to market forces.

TYPE OF BURSARY	METHOD OF APPLYING	TARGET GROUP FOR BURSARIES	AMOUNT OF BURSARY PER STUDENT PER YEAR	NUMBER OF BURSARIES/ AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT PER YEAR
Tuition Fee Bursary Bursary of £319 payable to students if eligible for full maintenance grant	Automatic; eligibility verified when 'student support financial assessment' has been completed and details passed on to institution via the Student Loan Company	Students who are eligible for full maintenance grant on courses charging tuition fee of £3225	FIXED £319 for each year of study	Total number of bursaries: variable Total amount: variable
Ravensbourne Award Means tested bursary of up to £300 payable to students if eligible for full maintenance grant	Eligibility verified when 'student support financial assessment' has been completed and details passed on to institution via the Student Loan Company	Students who are eligible for full maintenance grant on courses charging tuition fee of £3225	FIXED £300 for each year of study	Total number of bursaries: variable Total amount: variable
Talented and Gifted Postgraduate Bursary	College application form Awarded as above. A limited number of bursaries will be open to international students	Talented and gifted postgraduate students	FIXED £1,000 one off award	Total number of bursaries: 10
Governors' Award One off bursaries given to applicants to enable opportunity for work experience in industry at home or abroad.	College application form Applications considered by the Board of Governors.	Students able to identify particular individual circumstances of financial or personal difficulty	FIXED £500 one off payment	Total number of bursaries: variable Total amount: variable

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1. Students who withdraw during the course will normally be required to return an appropriate portion of the award to the fund.
2. Bursaries will rise with inflation in the same ratio as fees
3. Tuition Fee bursaries will be applied to appropriate European Union Students only

12. INFORMATION OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND ADVICE

Advice and Guidance on college bursaries and application details are available on the College website. The College website also contains specific information about bursary and other financial support available. All applicants are sent an information pack when they receive interview information. A financial advisor is available at College Open days and by telephone, e-mail or personal interview to give advice and guidance.

13. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The College is committed to working collaboratively with a range of partner organisations, to raise aspirations and ensure progression opportunities for potential students who might not otherwise consider Higher Education.

Partners

- National Arts Learning Network
- The Creative Way Life Long learning Network
- The South London Life Long Learning Network
- Aim Higher London South
- Arts Aim Higher London

Collaborative Outreach Activities with Schools

- Taster Days (10 planned for 08-09)
- Attainment and Enrichment Projects (7 planned for 08-09)
- Summer School (two weeks in July 08-09)
- TV Industry Awareness Days (biennial)
- Student shadowing (1 group per year)
- Guided Tours (approx 6 per year)
- Open Days (6 per year)

Academic Links Tutors

- Attendance at over 33 careers events last year.
- Ensuring advice on portfolio presentation, interview techniques and UCAS forms.
- Advice on the financial implications of going on to further study.

Student Ambassador Volunteers

- 50 Student Ambassadors actively engaged in volunteer opportunities.
- Approximately 55 individual projects with schools and colleges for Student Ambassadors to get involved in per year.

Life Long Learning Networks

- Through membership of three Life Long Learning Networks, Ravensbourne were last year allocated 67 additional student numbers, specifically to recruit students with vocational qualifications.

Progression Agreements

- Effective collaborative working relationships with 20 local FE Colleges have resulted this year in 10 progression agreements being formed.
- Work is on going through the Progression Manager to continue to maintain and increase these numbers.

Activities with FE Colleges

- Information and Social Events for tutors, students and parents.
- Pre UCAS interview days for all partner colleges.
- Taster days and projects, working in collaboration with the outreach activities offered to local schools.
- Visits from course tutors at Ravensbourne to FE Colleges to form relationships and work on curriculum alignment.

Level 0

- In 2006/7 a new 1yr undergraduate course 'Level 0 Design and Communication' was developed to extend the college focus on widening participation. 20 additional student numbers from the National Arts Learning Network (NALN) were dedicated to the Level 0 course which will provide the first year of a three or four year experience. It was designed to provide guaranteed progression to seven design based undergraduate courses for students from a wide range of backgrounds, including those with non traditional entry qualifications or experience.

WIDENING PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES ~ 2005-2007

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Target	Type of Activity	No of Events Beneficiates	Outcome and Evaluation	Budget Allocation
Positive attitudes and aspirations towards HE amongst those from under - represented groups	Taster days and visits for Year 8+ who come from a widening participation background	20 one day taster events to targeted WP partners 200 attendees	Aspirations raised	£12,000
Increased awareness and attainment towards HE amongst those from under - represented groups	School and College subject enrichment projects	6 school and college enrichment projects 100 students	Raised achievement and application	£12,000
Broaden knowledge and understanding of art, design and communication and encourage participation in HE by young people who might not otherwise consider this as an option	Aspiration raising and achievement of school pupils by extending their study of design and communication	Summer Challenge Activities 120 students	Raised achievement and application	£8,000
Improved application from particular institutions identified within College target audience	Academic Links Tutors visits	50 academic links visits to schools and colleges	Improved application	£10,000
Continue to develop work in partnership with Aim Higher network S.E.and London	Administrative support for HELP programme	Administrative support for 3 days per week	Purposeful Partnerships with Schools and Colleges	£9,000

Improved application from particular institutions identified within College target audience	Teacher Training Event	1 event per year 30 staff	Increased information and guidance for teachers; increased application rates	£2,000
Design and Communication awareness raising opportunities for community partners	Community Projects	4 projects held per year 50 students	Aspirations raised	£12,000
Recruitment onto courses in HE for non traditional learners leading to improved retention on courses	Bridging Programmes	3 bridging programmes including broadcasting, CAVE and Fashion 30 students	Raised aspirations and achievement leading to increased application	£15,000
Develop partnerships with local schools and FE colleges	Recruitment, training and support of student ambassadors	50 student ambassadors representing the College through HELP	Ambassadors recruited and delivering programme	£6,000
Develop a College pedagogic framework to inform an inclusive approach to the development of e-learning	L&T research support for the development of a pedagogic framework	L&T short-term part-time posts to support pedagogic framework development	Effective pedagogic framework to support e-learning that embeds inclusivity	£15,000

Develop a series of e-learning projects at Faculty level that embed inclusive curriculum issues	L&T course support for the development of e-learning materials	L&T short-term part-time posts to support course development	A growing number of e-learning resources at Faculty level	£25,000
Support pedagogic development projects that enhance learning support, in particular, their dissemination and absorption into College processes	Support for the work of the student feedback project including new projects and write-up and dissemination	Two cross-College projects	Write-up/dissemination of the student feedback project	£10,000
Programme of staff development to include diversity issues embedded into all training sessions.	Series of staff development opportunities both internal and external	See staff development brochure	All College staff aware of diversity in relation to their work at the college	£10,000
Research applicants and potential applicants by demographics to ensure full range of potential students apply to the College	Improvement in range of applicants to courses at the College	Open Days and follow up questionnaires	The College will be able to ensure that courses fit market and range of potential applicants	£12,000
Review and improve cross College course documentation and assessment policies to ensure differentiated learning and teaching	Revalidated courses fit for purpose with inclusivity as part of core College agenda. Learning outcomes which ensure inclusion		Annual Quality Monitoring on courses relating to student demographics. Cross college annual review of students. Assessment policy	£80,000

15. MONITORING

Data is available on the College intranet. The College Registry produces an annual report. This feeds into the Annual Course Review cycle at the College. The Institutional Annual Monitoring Return for HEFCE then informs the College's strategic direction. Monitoring will also form part of the Race Relations Review and the Annual Widening Participation Evaluation, which is received by Academic Board.

16. GROWTH OF ACCESS ACTIVITIES IN RELATION TO MEASURES IN 2006-07

Type of Activity	Proposed growth in volume	Budget
School visits by Academic Links Tutors to offer advice and guidance to year 10 and above about HE and employment in creative industries	20%	£4,000
Talks to parents at school events about creative industries futures	20%	£4,000
Portfolio advice sessions to years 12 and 13 to prepare for an HE interview	50%	£8,000
Set individual course objectives in relation to College WP strategy	50%	-
Continue to develop partnerships with local schools and FE college with particular interest in the Thames Gateway area. Offer menu of activities to suit individual school needs	50%	£12,500
Work in partnership with Aim Higher network S.E. and London	10%	-
Taster days for year 8 and above to come from schools in social exclusion areas	100%	£6,000
Continuing Professional Development opportunity for teachers	0%	£8,000 (Ongoing cost of provision)
Summer master classes to year 10 pupils to raise the aspiration and achievements of school pupils by extending their understanding of Design and Communication	30%	£9,000
Design and Communication awareness raising opportunities for community partners	20%	£1,000

Mentoring scheme by students to help year 12/13 pupils decide on which university and enable successful completion of UCAS form	40%	£5,000
Student Ambassador scheme	50%	£2,000

NEW ACTIVITIES FROM 2008

Type of Activity	Stakeholders	Outcomes and evaluation	Budget
Payment of UCAS fee for students from identified partnership schools, where the student puts only Ravensbourne as their institution of choice	Identified partnership schools	Improved progression from identified partnership schools	£3,000 (Approx. 200 applications)
Targeted supportive interview process for students from identified partnership schools	Identified partnership schools	Improved progression from identified partnership schools	£4,000
Free coaches to bring pupils from Greenwich area to College Open Days	Identified partnership schools	Improved progression from identified partnership schools	£2,000
Targeted postal marketing to post code areas with low HE participation	Identified postal code areas	Increase in applications from identified post codes	£6,000
Creative Industry Open Days to schools in post code areas with low HE participation	Identified partnership schools: (circa. 20 events)	Increase in applications from identified post codes	£6,500
Supportive relationship building from point of first application to enrolment for all applicants	Internal action	Improved conversion rate from applicant to enrolment	-
		TOTAL WIDENING PARTICIPATION BUDGET 2008/09	£81,000

17. KEY RISK ISSUES

Key Risk Issues	Actions
Students do not apply to Ravensbourne because there may be better bursaries elsewhere	Ravensbourne bursary may need to be improved as the application year progresses
Students do not apply to H.E because fees are too high	OFFA national promotion
Clearing may see much higher movement if improved clearing offers available by some institutions	Monitor applicants. Continuous relationship building communications with students once place offered. Improve bursaries where necessary to react to market forces
No guarantee of income for 2009/10 fees	Financial planning within conservative fee assumptions 2009/10
Student expectations for courses with high fees boundary may be unrealistic	Clear communication of course details and faculty before the point of application.