
SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

ACCESS AGREEMENT 2012/13

SECTION 1: CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Corporate strategy

The University's long history of institutional support and commitment to access, widening participation and promoting diversity is reaffirmed in the Corporate Plan¹, where it re-states an ambition to maintain 'a strong national reputation for recruiting students from a broad range of backgrounds'. This institutional statement is underpinned by a strong track record in making higher education available and accessible to groups and communities traditionally under-represented in the sector whilst ensuring high rates of their progression and retention. It is also closely allied to the University's pivotal position in the Sheffield City Region as a driver of economic and social development, supported by its equally long history of strategic links and partnerships with institutions, organisations and employers. The evolution of strategy has paralleled a shift towards inclusivity and away from the provision of discrete services and support for widening participation students. This integrated rather than separate approach means inclusive learning, teaching and support strategies have become embedded into standard practices and processes available to all students.

1.2 Sheffield City Region

The economic, educational and social context within the Sheffield City Region will continue to exert an important influence on the University's strategy as it continues to recruit a large proportion of its students from this geographical area. In 2009/10 45% of full-time undergraduate students came from within a 25 mile radius of the University. Significant improvements have been made in educational attainment across all levels. The most recent assessment of the City Region's performance² shows that by 2008 the proportion of working age population qualified to Level 2+, Level 3+ and Level 4+ increased by 7.6% (61.3%), 9.1% (42.2%) and 7.5% (24.5%) respectively. Although these growth rates are closing the gap, the Sheffield City Region continues to lag behind improvements in both Yorkshire and Humber and the East Midlands more generally, and at national level in England.

This growth in achievement levels must in part be due to the tremendous success and impact of the Aimhigher collaborative cross sector initiative (within which the University is the host and a leading participant) in raising both aspirations and awareness of higher education (HE) among young people across South Yorkshire. Between 2004/05 and 2008/9, applications to HE increased significantly in all the four boroughs - Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield - ranging from 18% - 69%. This in turn led to a 12% increase in the cohort of South Yorkshire applicants entering universities in the region and 6% growth in admissions of young (age 19 and under) South Yorkshire applicants from the 40% most deprived neighbourhoods.

The Sheffield City Region report also predicts that cuts in public spending will have a greater impact on the City Region than nationally, where an estimated 31% of the workforce is employed in the public sector. Similarly, the economic recovery is expected to take longer than the UK, with the loss of output in 2008 not being recouped until 2013. This scenario is

¹ Refreshed Corporate Plan 2011-2013, March 2011. Sheffield Hallam University

² Progress in the Sheffield City Region 2009/10, March 2010. Yorkshire Futures

echoed in the latest regional economic assessment³ that projects 53,000 job losses over the coming five years, with Sheffield and Barnsley likely to be disproportionately affected by contraction in the public sector.

Despite the increase in high level skills within the Yorkshire and Humber workforce, a study in 2010⁴ showed the region has dropped from sixth to seventh place of the nine English regions.

1.3 Current institutional performance

The University has an outstanding and sustained track record in achieving an inclusive profile of student participation. Along with this the University has maintained student retention and success performance which compares well with many institutions with significantly less inclusive patterns of student participation.

The University has performed consistently well against the HEFCE/HESA Performance Indicator (PI) measures over the period of the current Widening Participation Strategic Assessment (WPSA), achieving or exceeding most of its targets or enhancing its position against the 2004/05 baseline identified for previous Access Agreements and the WPSA. It also performs well above HEFCE benchmarks in many instances, though there is an exception, in line with the sector more generally, in respect of participation from social classes 4-7. This record is summarised in the Table 1 below.

Table 1: Sheffield Hallam University performance against HEFCE benchmarks 2004/5 - 2009/10 for Young Full-time Undergraduate Entrants

Performance Indicator	2004/05		2009/10		Outcome
	University baseline	HEFCE benchmark	University position	HEFCE benchmark	
State school entrants*	95%	92%	97%	94%	= +3%
Low participation area*	18%	18%	18%	16%	+2%
SEC class 4 - 7*	31%	35%	34%	37%	= -3%
Retention (not in HE)	8%	9%	6%	8%	+2%

Notes:

- The * HEFCE benchmark figures used here are 'location adjusted.' The University's performance for mature students from low participation areas with no previous HE qualification is 4% above benchmark. Similarly, the retention performance for mature students is also 4% above benchmark.
- This strong and sustained track record of delivering and maintaining significant levels of participation from those groups traditionally under-represented in higher education is further reinforced by the level of widening participation premium provided to the University. Further detailed analysis of current performance is provided in sections 3.1 and 3.2 below.

1.4 Investment

The University's strategy already invests significantly across the student 'lifecycle', from raising aspirations and outreach activity at pre-entry to supporting employability and graduate employment outcomes on graduation. This is complemented by further investment in three

³ Rebalancing the Yorkshire and Humber Economy - challenges and opportunities, February 2011. Yorkshire Futures.

⁴ High Level Skills in Yorkshire and the Humber: Understanding the Drivers of Change, Ekosgen, August 2010. Yorkshire Futures.

themes which are integrated across the lifecycle - partnership work, staff development and research and evaluation. Within its current WPSA, the University invests approximately £7m (excluding current bursary expenditure).

1.5 Access Agreement Aims and Objectives

The University's widening participation vision states:

"Sheffield Hallam aspires to be an inclusive institution that is a catalyst for economic and social transformation. It will have progressive approaches to learner recruitment, admissions, teaching, learning, assessment and employability. Acknowledging that the social and educational backgrounds of students often determine attainment, expectations and ambitions, the University aims to support learners in a way which values diversity and enables all individuals to reach their potential and progress in their chosen careers."

A set of strategic aims and delivery objectives are proposed to position the University within the context of the new Access Agreement. These have been formulated after reviewing existing statements contained in the University's WPSA, our interpretation of OFFA guidance, an analysis of the University's performance and our corporate aim to be an inclusive institution.

The University's strategic aims are:

1. Consolidate reputation and performance for participation of groups under-represented in higher education and make further improvements in targeted areas.
2. Provide a supportive, challenging and inclusive learning experience which enables all learners to reach their potential and progress into employment or further study.
3. Lead and engage with partnerships to extend access to higher education learning opportunities by facilitating and supporting achievement, aspiration and the provision of information and guidance.
4. Ensure strategic governance of access to HE as part of developing the University as an inclusive and sustainable institution appropriate to its statutory, social and economic context.
5. Celebrate and disseminate evidence of organisational success in widening access and participation whilst striving for continuous improvement against targets.

The strategy is supported through a programme of existing and new delivery objectives:

Existing

1. Invest in long term outreach activity in partnership with schools, colleges, local authorities and other stakeholders.
2. Deliver a programme of targeted student financial support measures to underpin student success.
3. Monitor and critically assess performance and impact through an institutional evaluative framework.
4. Improve the University's performance in the retention and success of students.

New

5. Jointly lead with the University of Sheffield new arrangements for collaborative activity with schools, colleges and other stakeholders to deliver aspiration raising initiatives, improved attainment and impartial advice and information in targeted communities.
6. Collaborate with the University of Sheffield to support HE access and participation of mature learners within the Sheffield City Region.
7. Review participation in our most highly competitive and selective subject areas to devise new approaches that ensure access and opportunity for targeted groups.

8. Establish a programme of activity and initiatives which provide support to targeted groups with a view to fair access to graduate employment
9. Support the introduction and implementation of the National Scholarship Programme.

SECTION 2: FEE INCOME

Sheffield Hallam University intends, subject to approval of this Agreement, to introduce an annual charge of £8,500 for full time undergraduate study for those students commencing their study in the academic year 2012/13. This charge will apply to all undergraduate courses irrespective of mode of study or qualification type and will be pro rata for any student studying on a fractional or part time basis. This fee will be reviewed annually and may rise in line with permitted increases announced by Government each year.

The outstanding performance of the University in combining inclusive participation and higher rates of student success and retention (see sections 1.3 above, 3.1.2 and 3.2.2 below) has led to a commitment to invest 19.7% of additional income for purposes outlined in the Access Agreement. Therefore we will be planning to allocate additional expenditure of £3m in 2012/13.

We feel our analysis reflects an appropriate and reasonable interpretation of the guidance. It also reflects evidenced-based analysis and experience of success which enable us to be clear and confident about what needs to be invested to achieve targets set out later in this document.

SECTION 3: ADDITIONAL ACCESS MEASURES

3.1 RAISING ASPIRATIONS AND OUTREACH

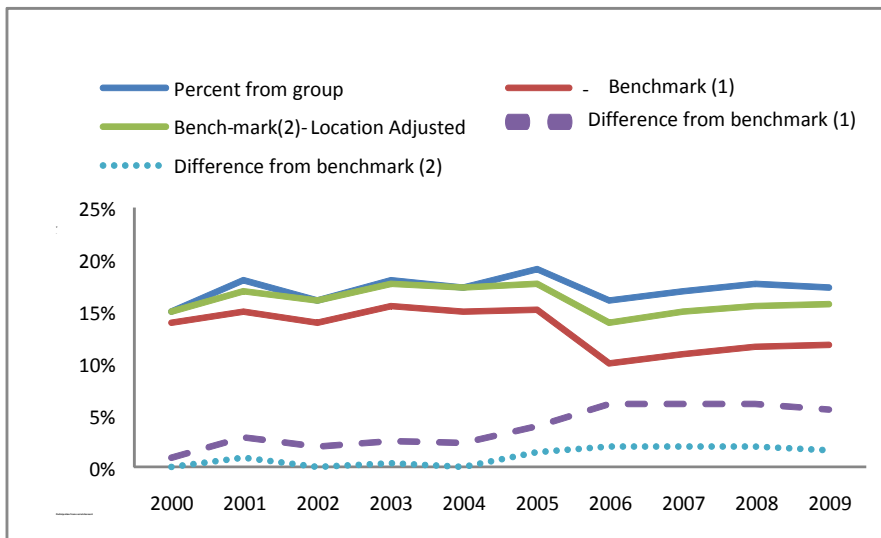
3.1.1 Aims and Objectives

- Invest in long term outreach activity in partnership with schools, colleges, local authorities and other stakeholders.
- Jointly lead with the University of Sheffield new arrangements for collaborative activity with schools, colleges and other stakeholders to deliver aspiration raising initiatives, improved attainment and impartial advice and information in targeted communities.
- Collaborate with the University of Sheffield to support HE access and participation of mature learners within the Sheffield City Region.
- Review participation in our most highly competitive and selective subject areas to devise new approaches that ensure access and opportunity for targeted groups.
- Support the introduction and implementation of the National Scholarship Programme.

3.1.2 Current participation performance

The University has a strong track record in widening access and participation for under-represented groups, evidenced by its consistently high performance against HEFCE PI measures for recruitment. This is true in both absolute and relative terms, when compared to HEFCE benchmarks for the sector and those which are location adjusted. This is illustrated by the performance trend analysis for recruitment of young full-time undergraduates from low participation neighbourhoods (LPN) in Figure 1 below, which shows continuing improvement against benchmarks for the past ten years, in particular for the period since 2005 and the introduction of our first WPSA.

Figure 1: Participation of young full-time degree students from low participation neighbourhoods



WPSA targets have been achieved or exceeded for state school entrants, which have increased to 97%, maintaining a position 3+% above benchmark against the 2004/05 baseline. The trend position for low participation neighbourhoods is especially marked for mature entrants, where the latest data shows performance above standard and location adjusted benchmarks at 9% and 4% respectively.

One area which has improved significantly but remains below benchmark is participation of young full-time undergraduates from social classes 4-7, though it should be stressed this is generally the case across the sector. However, the proportion in this group has increased from its baseline of 30% to 34% over the same period, achieving an increase above our WPSA target and gradually narrowing the gap against benchmark. It should also be emphasised that this absolute increase has occurred at a time of rising tariff entry points over recent years.

3.1.3 Evaluating outreach performance

The University has been successful across a range of long term outreach initiatives to raise aspirations, awareness and applications to higher education. This can be seen in the growth and impact of several key strategic developments in recent years. The Associate Schools and Colleges Partnership, network of 104 key education partners within a 50 mile radius of the University, was formed in 2006 and comprises a majority of institutions ranked in the highest quartile of multiple deprivation indices. Here applications and enrolments to the University have increased by 23% and 16% respectively since 2006/07. The Associate Schools and Colleges Partnership provides the network through which a wide variety of outreach visits, conventions, mentoring, master classes and subject specific taster experiences are co-ordinated and delivered. The Uni4U programme targets Years 9-13, currently bringing nearly 4,000 students into the University and reaching a wider audience of approximately 30,000 students a year. The University's COMPACT Scheme to support learners facing acute disadvantage, supported 336 students in 2009/10, some 309 of whom subsequently enrolled. Similarly, our work with Looked After Children and Care Leavers has gradually increased in scope to include strategic partnerships with the University of Sheffield and local authorities, alongside a programme of inspirational in-reach and taster activity. Total current Access Agreement investment in this field of work is £500k per year. Transition funding for the remainder of activities under the current Access Agreement is projected to be £165,000. This is therefore shown in Section 4 under 'Current Access Agreement'.

The success of these initiatives owes much to collaborative working through the Aimhigher network, where the University has led a partnership of the two Sheffield universities, local colleges and local authorities spanning South Yorkshire. Between 2005 and 2009 HE applications from the four boroughs increased in the range 18% - 69%, leading to a 63% increase in the proportion of South Yorkshire applicants gaining admission to regional HEIs, against an general increase nationally of 43%. This included 6% growth overall in admissions of young (age 19 and under) South Yorkshire applicants from the 40% most deprived neighbourhoods, rising from 35% to 41% of the cohort. Similarly, vocational progression has also been a strong feature of partnership and outreach working, particularly through the Higher Futures Lifelong Learning Network. Joint work with 10 college partners across the Sheffield City Region led to a 6% increase in the progression rate of Level 3 students on targeted vocational courses between 2006/07 - 2008/09.

3.1.4 New activity for 2012/13

The University will continue to invest in the success of its Associate Schools and Colleges Partnership model as the basis for maintaining and sustaining collaborative outreach (and in-reach) programmes. In Section 4, £200,000 of new expenditure is shown under Outreach Enhancement in order to continue activity previously funded by Aimhigher. The ending of funding for the Higher Futures Lifelong Learning Network (LLN) in 2010 and loss of Aimhigher funding from July 2011 will have a serious impact on the University's partnership strategy for widening access and participation. Measures have been taken to embed the good networking practices and benefits of the LLN; similar efforts will be necessary to sustain the Aimhigher network through 2011/12. This is reflected in the investment over the coming year that will enable the transition to new network structures from 2012/13, represented in Section 4 as £350,000 under Gap Funding from 2011/12. However, significant levels of earmarked funding which went into schools and colleges within the sub region will be lost after July 2011. The impact of this on the ability of the University to maintain its outreach activity is currently unknown but the loss of such significant levels of funding (circa £3m per annum) is likely to be very significant. In response to this, our joint commitment with the University of Sheffield to sustaining long term outreach work is shown in Section 4 as £250,000 expenditure under Collaborative Partnerships and Networks.

Investment is therefore planned in the following areas during 2012/13:

1. Develop a suite of online materials to provide remote access for partners to work with groups of staff, students and influencers around impartial information, advice and guidance on HE study.
2. Work with partner schools and colleges to develop systems for monitoring and tracking progression of students, including where appropriate those engaged through the Pupil Premium programme and National Scholarship Programme.
3. Building on the success of Aimhigher South Yorkshire, work with the University of Sheffield to devise a collaborative networked approach to the sustained provision of information, advice and guidance activities designed to raise aspirations and achievement within under-represented groups and communities within Sheffield City Region.
4. Maintain capacity for student mentoring programmes, targeting particular groups to encourage progression and transition to the University.
5. Explore potential for innovative approaches to Level 3 access to HE that provide a progression framework for mature learners within the Sheffield City Region.
6. Devise and test measures across the University to ensure an inclusive profile within those selective University courses that provide higher added-value benefit to learners in their future careers and employment.

7. Participate in the National Scholarship Programme and develop criteria with partners for supporting students who qualify for bursary, waiver or other financial support measures.

3.1.5 Targets and milestones - Raising aspirations and Outreach

- Maintain the University's student profile against existing above benchmark performance measures up to 2016/17.
- Increase participation of NS-SEC Classes 4-7 to achieve benchmark performance measure by 2016/17.
- Support access to HE for 300 mature learners per year by 2016/17.
- Consolidate the 6% growth in admissions of Sheffield City Region applicants to HEIs achieved up to 2009 through to 2016/17.
- Achieve our National Scholarship Programme targets for each year up to 2016/17.

3.2 STUDENT RETENTION AND SUCCESS

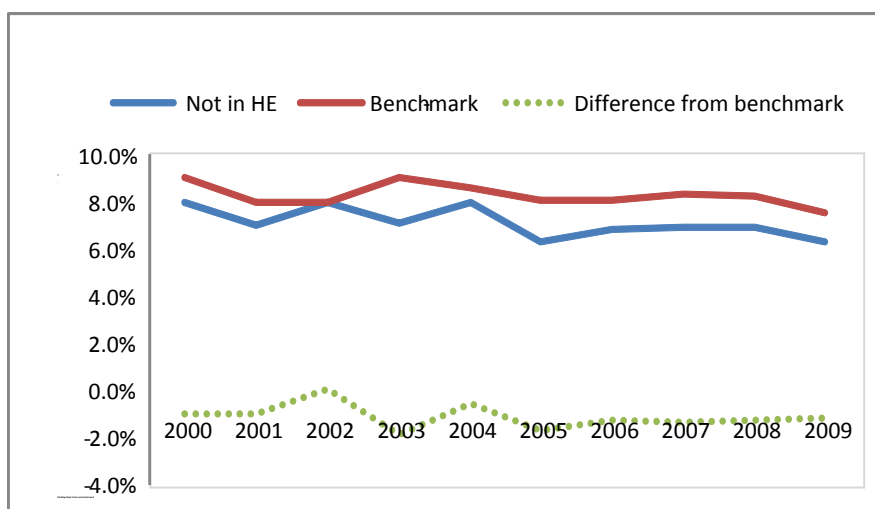
3.2.1 Aims and Objectives

- Provide a supportive, challenging and inclusive learning experience which enables all learners to reach their potential and progress into employment or further study.
- Improve the University's performance in the retention and success of students.
- Establish a programme of activity and initiatives which provide support to targeted groups with a view to fair access to graduate employment.

3.2.2 Current Performance

The University has a strong national reputation for recruiting students from a broad range of social backgrounds and securing high rates of progression and retention. This is clearly evidenced by the University's performance against HEFCE PI's for non-continuation following year of entry and projected learning outcomes shown in Figures 2 and 3 below.

Figure 2: Non-continuation of young full-time degree entrants from year 1 to year 2

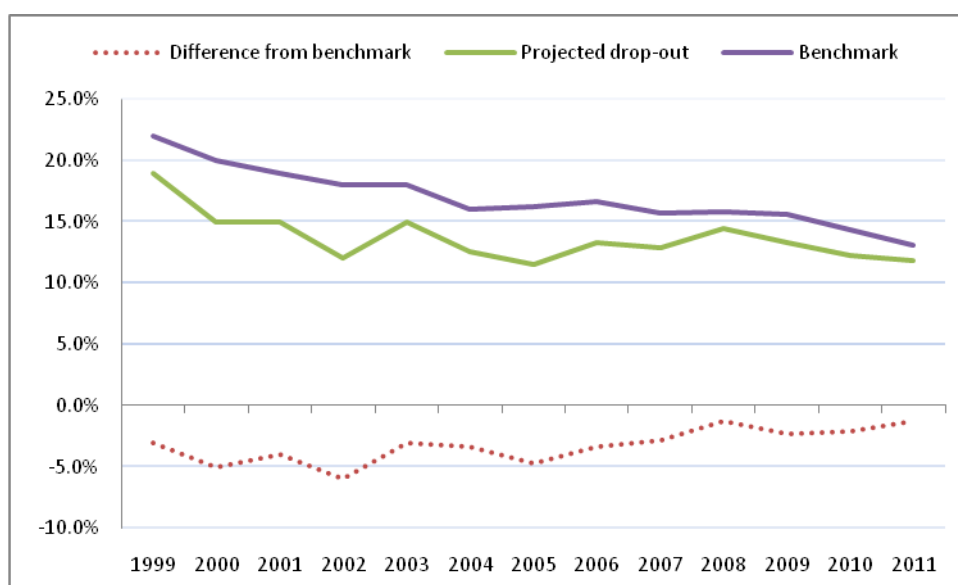


Performance against this particular indicator is comparable to many institutions with significantly less inclusive student cohort profile and is further illustrated by a sustained positive variance against benchmarks. This has been achieved through planned investment

and strategic focus. Over the last decade the University has embedded good inclusive practice in teaching, learning, assessment and student support across the institution.

Student progression through to successful attainment of learning outcomes and qualification has also improved significantly over the last decade, again showing continued strong performance ahead of benchmark. This further illustrates the University's strong reputation of maintaining an inclusive student community whilst supporting good rates of academic achievement.

Figure 3: Comparison of University performance against HEFCE benchmarks for projected learning outcomes



3.2.3 New activity for 2012/13

In 2009/10 the University undertook a fundamental and wide-ranging review of student experience. One of the five themes within that review was student retention and success. The conclusions of this work were that many items of good inclusive practice were identified as important to the University's sector-leading performance. The conclusions of the review were to ensure continued investment and focus on those things where evidence suggests they are significant and to establish a Retention and Student Success Framework for the University⁵. The Framework identifies a number of additional interventions which will need to be made to ensure further progress. These interventions have been developed into specific actions at all levels across the University and will provide the basis of planned programme of additional investment. This is shown in Section 4 as expenditure of £100,000 under Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Student Support. Discussions to date indicate the areas of future investment will be:

1. Improved pre-entry/transition advice and information through the exploitation of dynamic and interactive online facilities, in particular implementation outputs from the Future Student Relationship Management project which are targeted at students at risk of drop out.
2. Extend capacity for mentoring, peer support and buddying schemes targeted at those students identified as vulnerable to non-completion and/or drop out. In particular evaluate the effectiveness of schemes across the institution and look to develop the corporate framework and understanding.

⁵ Retention and Student Success Framework, July 2010. Sheffield Hallam University.

3. Put in place a professional standards and development framework to ensure more consistent implementation of good practice, in particular inclusive learning, teaching, assessment and support.
4. Significant development of assessment and feedback practices and inclusive learning strategies across the institution, in particular to build on good practice through integration within revalidation processes and evaluation of new student support roles with a view to wider implementation.
5. Establish a comprehensive monitoring and management information framework for student retention and success, in particular course-based accountability.
6. Create an appropriate cross-institutional infrastructure to monitor and develop implementation of the University's Student Success and Retention Framework and sustainable arrangements for the dissemination and sharing of best practice.

3.2.4 Employability and Post Qualification Progress

The strong position of the University in respect of inclusion and student retention and success has been developed to include consideration of employability. There is significant evidence to suggest that inequality linked to social background, disability and ethnicity are apparent in the graduate employment market. The University has introduced support and service provision which attempts to prepare particular disadvantaged students to be more competitive in the graduate employment market (e.g. Impact mentoring scheme).

The University has identified additional actions which we will introduce from 2012 to increase the competitiveness of targeted students. The actions are based on evidence that students do significantly better in securing graduate level jobs if they have:

- better degree classifications (i.e. Good Honours defined as a First or 2:1)
- experienced structured work experience
- social capital related to social and economic background

This investment is shown in Section 4 as expenditure of £100,000 under Employability Measures, where the University will introduce from 2012 the following additional measures targeted at disadvantaged students:

1. Support to secure and incentivise the take up of sandwich years and structured work experience outside of the University, in particular fee waivers for sandwich placement years.
2. Provide on-campus work experience and internships with structured support and development.
3. Encourage uptake of learning contracts by students who declare a disability, building on University research evidence which shows significant negative variance of academic performance if students do not have a learning contract compared to those who have learning contracts in place.
4. Extend career/employment related mentoring and buddying.

3.2.5 Targets and Milestones - Student Retention and Success

- Reduce non continuation from year 1 to year 2 to 5% (Young FT Degree) and 8% (Mature FT Degree) by 2016/17.
- Increase achievement of projected learning outcomes to 90% (FT Degree) by 2016/17.
- Increase first time module pass rate for Level 4 undergraduates by 5% over the period to 2016/17.
- Increase uptake of learning contracts by students who declare a disability to 70% by 2016/17.
- Increase the rate of FT undergraduate students attaining full-time graduate employment by 3%, based on data provided for the Destination of Leavers in Higher Education, by 2016/17.

NB - In all areas above rates for low participation neighbourhood students will be monitored and performance will be improved at least in line with University-wide progress.

3.3 FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

3.3.1 Aims and Objectives

- Deliver a programme of targeted student financial support measures to underpin student success.
- Improve the University's performance in the retention and success of students.
- Collaborate with the University of Sheffield to support HE access and participation of mature learners within the Sheffield City Region.
- Establish a programme of activity and initiatives which provide support to targeted groups with a view to fair access into graduate employment.
- Support the introduction and implementation of the National Scholarship Programme.

3.3.2 Current Performance

The University currently offers a range of bursaries and other types of financial support to students as part of our approved Access Agreement. These have been targeted at students with particular financial circumstances or are designed to encourage participation and raise aspirations from low participation neighbourhoods through partnership with schools and colleges. There is evidence that some of our more targeted bursaries such as those for care leavers might be significant, as are the funds which are distributed in response to evidenced circumstances of hardship.

3.3.3 New activity for 2012/13

We are planning to make available significant further funding (in addition to the National Scholarship Programme allocation of £831,000 to support 277 scholarships) for the financial support of students. This is shown in Section 4 as total expenditure of £1.83m under Bursaries and Financial Support to Students. This will comprise:

- 560 Targeted NSP fee waivers (£2000) and bursaries (£1000)
- One year continuation of our Hallam Partnership Bursary (£300) which is targeted to students who enrol from the Associate Schools and Colleges Partnership
- Any residual funds will be added to our Access to Learning funding. Appropriate criteria will be approved by our Student Finance Panel.

We are also planning that investment in employability measures will include fee waivers for students undertaking sandwich placements years from 2014/15'

We are committed to distribute our National Scholarship Programme allocation plus matched funding in line with the published guidance. Arranging the fair and equitable distribution of the allocation will be complex and challenging. The University has therefore established a working group to develop the criteria and processes for selecting eligible applicants, based on data comprising household income at or below the £25,000 threshold, alongside additional criteria of care leavers, free school meals and mature Access to HE students. Proposals will be devised and approved by August, for publication on the University's website at the start of September 2011.

We are committed as part of this process to consult with student representatives. Based on discussions to date, the options currently under consideration as part of our Access Agreement from 2013/4 and 2014/15 are:

- A National Scholarship Programme scheme (valued at £3,000 per student) which is available to all students whose household income falls beneath the £25,000 threshold.
- To fund students studying on a collaborative University approved regional foundation year/access course for mature students.
- To devise a new scheme to support student living costs where continuation with study is evidenced to be at risk.

3.3.4 Targets - Financial Support for Students

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribute our National Scholarship Programme allocation to those with evidenced need• Ensure effective distribution of the Hallam Partnership Bursary |
|---|

SECTION 4: EXPENDITURE ON ADDITIONAL ACCESS MEASURES

The profile of University investment for 2012/13 is shown in the table below. We confirm that this expenditure is 'OFFA countable' and includes both continuing and new expenditure arising from the transition between our existing and new Access Agreement. Specifically, this comprises funding to sustain network activities previously funded by Aimhigher and the Higher Futures Lifelong Learning Network during 2011/12, ongoing outreach investment and future collaborative partnership working. Additional investment in two areas - Employability Measures and Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Student Support - represents an apportionment of wider institutional investment by the University. Matched funding for participation in the National Scholarship Programme is included in Bursaries and Financial Support to Students.

	2012/13 Expenditure on Additional Access Measures	2012/13 £000's
4.1	Gap funding from 2011/12 (sustainability funding for Aimhigher and Higher Futures Lifelong Learning Network)	350
4.2	Current Access Agreement Outreach (continuing)	165
4.3	Bursaries and Financial Support to Students (including £830k matched fund for the National Scholarship Programme)	1830
4.4	Outreach Enhancement	200
4.5	Employability Measures (relevant to Access Agreement)	100
4.6	Learning Teaching Assessment and Student Support Measures (relevant to Access Agreement)	100
4.7	Collaborative Partnerships and Networks (long term outreach)	250
	Total	£2995

Note: That this represents the 1st year of the Access Agreement investment only. Expenditure in future years includes additional investment in employability fee waivers for sandwich years, which applies for 2014/15 onwards, and increased investment in retention and student success.

SECTION 5: TARGETS AND MILESTONES

A composite listing of all targets and milestones contained in Section 3 appears below. The University believes these represent an appropriate balance and mix between consolidation of strong performance in inclusive participation, combined with stretching goals for retention and student success, across the Additional Access Measures.

1. Maintain the University's student profile against existing performance measures up to 2016/17.
2. Increase participation of NS-SEC Classes 4-7 to achieve benchmark performance measure by 2016/17.
3. Support access to HE for 300 mature learners per year by 2016/17.
4. Consolidate the 6% growth in admissions of Sheffield City Region applicants to HEIs achieved up to 2009 through to 2016/17.
5. Achieve our National Scholarship Programme targets for each year up to 2016/17.
6. Reduce non continuation from year 1 to year 2 to 5% (Young FT Degree) and 8% (Mature FT Degree) by 2016/17.
7. Increase achievement of projected learning outcomes to 90% (FT Degree) by 2016/17.
8. Increase first time module pass rate for Level 4 undergraduates by 5% over the period to 2016/17.
9. Increase uptake of learning contracts by students who declare a disability to 70% by 2016/17.
10. Increase the rate of FT undergraduate students attaining full-time graduate employment by 3%, based on data provided for the Destination of Leavers in Higher Education, by 2016/17.
11. Distribute our National Scholarship Programme allocation to those with evidenced need.
12. Ensure effective distribution of the Hallam Partnership Bursary.

SECTION 6: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.1 Aims and Objectives

- Ensure strategic governance of access to HE as part of developing the University as an inclusive and sustainable institution appropriate to its statutory, social and economic context.
- Celebrate and disseminate evidence of organisational success in widening access and participation whilst striving for continuous improvement against targets.
- Monitor and critically assess performance and impact through an institutional evaluative framework.

6.2 Institutional framework

The University's arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of fair access and widening participation mirror its inclusive approach to the organisation and delivery of services that support under-represented groups (see section 1.1), in that our approach is integrated and embedded within a wider institutional framework. This institutional framework for monitoring and evaluation comprises three levels of scrutiny - corporate, operational and activity.

At a corporate level, this Access Agreement is the responsibility of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, working closely with the Director of Student and Learning Services and other senior management in directorates and in faculties. Performance outcomes are reported through operational review to the University Executive, the Academic Board and Board of Governors. Both the Board of Governors and Academic Board include student representation.

In respect of raising aspirations and outreach work, the University-wide Recruitment Tutor Team (RTT) will receive reports on work with schools, colleges and other partners. Retention and student success measures will be monitored by new forums at both University and faculty level established under the University's Student Success and Retention Framework. These operational arrangements are complemented by the University's overarching planning, monitoring and review cycle, comprising the annual business planning and annual quality review processes, both of which are carried out at departmental and faculty level.

At the individual activity level, staff and teams responsible for delivery will routinely evaluate their achievement and progress against operating plans and agreed measures. The aggregation of activity monitoring will provide an evaluation of performance against institutional targets and milestones contained in the Access Agreement under Section 5.

Data capture and reporting against a number of institutional PIs enable the monitoring of a wide range of course level indicators relevant to access and participation, and to the targets set in the Access Agreement. Evaluation of the impact and outcome of activities is further enhanced by the University's capacity to undertake investigative research into particular themes or topics through its Institutional Research Team.

6.3 Collaborative arrangements

The University has considerable experience of strategic and operational management of collaborative work through its leadership of the Aimhigher and Higher Futures Lifelong Learning Network, and other joint initiatives with the University of Sheffield. Arrangements will be developed with the University of Sheffield to set up appropriate joint bodies to oversee the monitoring and evaluation of collaborative activity. The University's responsibilities and contribution to particular initiatives and activities will be developed and managed through the institutional framework outlined above.

SECTION 7: PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

The University has established mechanisms to address the provision of financial information, advice and guidance to potential and enrolled students. These include the Student Finance Centre, a partnership with the Students' Union Advice Centre, and dedicated staff with student finance expertise within the Outreach/Schools and Colleges Liaison Office (SCLO) team. The partnership with the Students' Union includes the University resourcing a money advice service in the Student Union Advice Centre. The Outreach/SCLO team have created an extensive toolkit of resources to develop financial awareness amongst prospective students.

The University has also played a leading role within the South Yorkshire Aimhigher partnership in the provision of a wide range of financial information and advice to a large number of young people.

The University proposes to maintain and enhance its financial information, advice and guidance to prospective and enrolled students by:

1. Extending further the skills set of the staff and the resources to engage prospective and enrolled students.

2. Ensuring all relevant University publications and events provide comprehensive, up to date and accessible information.
3. Developing and producing electronic, printed and multi-media materials, to include information for students about the aggregate cost of their course before the course commences.
4. Enhancing staff development, and providing briefings and updates to ensure deliverers of student support are well informed and able to provide accurate and timely information, advice and signposting.
5. Maintaining the existing partnership with the Student Union Advice Centre and other collaborative partnerships to support the provision of advice and information within the Sheffield City Region.
6. Providing timely information to UCAS and the Student Loans Company to support their applicant-facing web services.

Student and Learning Services
Sheffield Hallam University
June 2011

Annex A: Access agreements for 2012-13: OFFA template for mainstream ITT providers (HEIs and FECs)

Name of institution	Sheffield Hallam University
----------------------------	-----------------------------

Please complete this template, and the Excel return at Annex B, and return to us using the HEFCE extranet by 30 March 2012.

Where your arrangements are the same as for other courses, we would encourage you to cross-refer to your main agreement wherever possible, rather than seeking to replicate information from that main document here.

Part one: Introduction to your agreement

A. Your current position in relation to access and, where appropriate, retention

Please use this section to set out any specific issues or aims for your access agreement work in respect of ITT that aren't already set out in your existing agreement for 2012-13. This section doesn't have to be long; however, it will help us to understand what your access agreement is setting out to achieve in respect of ITT. You may wish to consider whether there are separate issues for undergraduate and postgraduate ITT.

You may also wish to cross-refer to the issues or aims stated in your main agreement, if appropriate.

Institutional performance assessment

In addition to our performance assessment against HESA benchmarks contained in the existing Access Agreement (see sections 1.3, 3.1.2 and 3.2.2), the University would cite the following additional evidence of its ability to maintain an inclusive student profile against continued excellent performance the recruitment, retention and employment outcomes for its ITT students, including those from identifiable under-represented groups. This data is drawn from the University Corporate Performance Review 2011 and the latest self-evaluation document (SED) prepared for the TDA and OFSTED for the academic year 2010-11.

The proportion of Ug ITT entrants with 300+ tariff points has remained above 50% between 2007/8 - 2009/10, higher in each year than the national trend. Similarly, the number of PGCE entrants with a 1st or 2:1 has improved over that period, the latter by 10% from 44% to 54% compared to a sector increase of 2%. Grade performance between 2008/9 - 2010/11 shows that Grade 1 on the Primary/Early Years Programmes dipped by 4% to 44% while Grade 2 increased by 3% to 43%. For the Secondary Programme Grade 1 has been maintained at 31%, while Grade 2 has increased by 3% from 46% to 49%. Over that period withdrawal rates reduced from around 12% to 7.6%. Benchmark data from 2009/10 shows University students have consistently achieved

QTS completion rates at 91%+, higher than both competitors and the sector, whilst employment rates consistently match sector benchmarks for each year between 2007/8 - 2009/10. This performance profile has seen the University improve its position by 20 places to 33 in the Good Teacher Training Guide 2011 rankings, moving us from 8th to 2nd among our top ten competitor institutions.

Against this backdrop of high performance overall, data from the SED also shows growth in Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) participation and of male students into teaching, reflecting the success of our outreach and recruitment strategies. This is discussed further in Part three. The recruitment profile between 2008/09 - 2010/11 is summarised in Tables 1 and 2 below. The trend for BME students in both Ug and PGCE courses has increased steadily, particularly in Early Years, where recruitment is now exceeding or close to both internal and TDA targets. Recruitment of male students is more varied. The PGCE courses have shown an upward trend over that period, while the pattern for undergraduate students has fluctuated, particularly in primary. The most recent OFSTED report in 2010/11 highlights that recruitment of identified priority groups compares favourably with competitors and the sector, highlighting an inclusive ethos and particularly strong commitment to equality and diversity as one of the University's strengths.

Table 1: Trends in recruitment of BME entrants to Ug and PGCE courses 2008/9 - 2010/11

Year	Undergraduate			PGCE		
	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
Primary	3%	4.3%	5.5%	1%	8%	6%
Early Years	1.9%	3.5%	14.1%	4%	4%	8%

Note: Over this period the University target has remained at 10% and TDA has adjusted to 9%.

Table 2: Trends in recruitment of male entrants to Ug and PGCE courses 2008/9 - 2010/11

Year	Undergraduate			PGCE		
	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
Primary	10.6%	17.4%	9.2%	18.7%	16.9%	20.8%
Early Years	1.9%	0%	1.6%	0%	12.5%	12%

Grade attainment data reveals high standards across the programme, with no significant statistical differences for these identifiable groups. However, the relatively small numbers of students in some areas makes it difficult to draw conclusions from proportional analyses. This is therefore an area that will be kept under close scrutiny (see section G).

Part two: Fee limits, spend on access and financial support for ITT trainees

B. Fees you are proposing to charge for your ITT courses

Your access agreement should set out the tuition fees you intend to charge new entrants to a) undergraduate and b) postgraduate ITT in 2012-13. There is no requirement or expectation that your fee for undergraduate or postgraduate ITT should be the same as for your other courses – this is a matter for you to decide.

The University's tuition fees for undergraduate and postgraduate ITT students in 2012-13 will be as follows:

- a. Undergraduate - an annual charge of £8,500 for full-time study, pro-rata for part-time or fractional study.
- b. Postgraduate - an annual charge of £9,000 for full-time study, pro rata for part-time or fractional study.

All fees will be reviewed annually and may rise in line with permitted increases announced by Government each year.

C. Amounts of additional fee income to be spent on access measures

Taking into account any new access agreement investment relating to ITT, as well as your existing agreement, what is your estimated spend on access measures as a proportion of your income over £6,000 per fee?

As a broad guideline, for undergraduate ITT, our starting expectation is the same as that set out in our original guidance on how to produce an access agreement for 2012-13 (see OFFA 2011/01, paragraph 39). For postgraduate ITT, we would expect you to recycle a minimum of around 10 per cent of your fee income over £6,000 on access or retention measures. (Note: we will be taking a holistic view when considering whether your proposed spend is in line with our expectations. In other words, we do not necessarily require you to ring-fence set amounts for undergraduate or postgraduate initial teacher training. You simply need to make sure that the overall levels of spend – including ITT – are in line with our expectations.)

In accordance with the existing Access Agreement, the University intends to commit 15% of the combined additional income from Ug and PGCE ITT target student numbers. This proportion is consistent with the balance of investment outlined in the Access Agreement, taking account of the University's outstanding performance in combining inclusive participation and higher rates of student retention and success, and represents £255,000 of additional expenditure in 2012-13.

D. Financial support for trainees

In this section you should set out:

- *what you plan to spend on targeted fee waivers, bursaries and in-kind support for a) undergraduate and b) postgraduate trainees in 2012-13*
- *the amounts of support and the eligibility criteria for new entrants.*

You may wish to state whether the financial support for these trainees is the same or differs from your existing agreement.

The following bursaries and fee waivers will be available to our ITT students in 2012-13. All awards will be assessed against the same income-related eligibility criteria as that which applies to the University's wider undergraduate student population. In accordance with the existing Access Agreement (see section 3.3.3) any residual funds will be added to the University's Access to Learning funding.

a. Undergraduate

Students will be eligible to receive the Hallam Partnership Bursary (£300), which is targeted to students who enrol from the Associate Schools and Colleges Partnership, and the new Hallam £500 bursary targeted at students with a residual household income of less than £25,000 who do not receive the National Scholarship Programme (NSP) award.

b. PGCE

All students with a residual household income of less than £25,000 will receive a £1,500 support package comprising a £1,000 bursary and £500 fee waiver.

Part three: outreach and retention

E. Outreach and retention work

If you are proposing to introduce additional outreach or retention work in respect of ITT, over and above the outreach/retention work you have committed to in your existing 2012-13 access agreement, please include details here.

Alternatively, please indicate where your outreach or retention work in respect of ITT is already covered by your main agreement.

For the purposes of an access agreement, outreach work includes any activity that involves raising aspirations and attainment among potential applicants from under-represented groups and encouraging them to apply to higher education. This includes outreach directed at young or mature students aspiring to full or part-time study. We particularly encourage sustained, co-ordinated activities that work with pupils and other potential applicants over a number of years.

By retention, we mean the additional (new) retention measures you commit to put in place to improve student retention and success (ensuring that trainees from under-represented groups access the full benefits of higher education).

Raising aspirations and outreach

Outreach activity forms part of our mainstream strategy for raising aspirations and outreach development through the Associate Schools and Colleges Partnership and joint work in the Sheffield City Region, as set out in the existing Access Agreement (see section 3.1). This is enhanced at Faculty level by three key activities.

Three Education Recruitment Partnership meetings are held annually to bring together recruitment leads for teacher education with around 10-15 teachers and advisers from partnership schools for face-to-face dialogue and briefing sessions. We will look to extend this work to the wider ASCP network.

Outreach to adult communities, particularly BME, refugee and low income groups is undertaken in partnership with the Local Authorities and 'third sector' organisations across the region. This focuses around the Development Teacher Programme, a three day preparation taster course, supplemented by a series of pre and post programme workshops and one-to-one support sessions. Approx. 500 learners have attended the course in its various formats over the past 18 months; the only one of its kind still operating nationally. Funds will be used to sustain this activity.

The University is now a strategic partner in five new Teaching School Alliances (TSA), building on its strong local and regional identity, as noted in the OFSTED report 2010/11. It has also set up a Partnership Board with Sheffield Local Authority to develop strategies for raising aspirations and achievement. The network of partnership schools facilitates a major programme of continuing professional development (CPD) activity, including mentor training to support students on placement.

Retention

Support for ITT students falls within the University Retention and Student Success Framework and the measures to support employability outlined in the existing Access Agreement (see section 3.2). Specific action to inform developmental support within the Faculty includes the following interventions.

The Faculty's admissions policy and procedures guarantees close scrutiny and support for applications from under-represented groups, where potential rejections of BME and male applicants are referred to the Admissions Co-ordinator. All students have a designated Academic Tutor to provide both direct and referral to appropriate University support services, complemented by the role of the University Link Tutor. Students from identifiable under-represented groups are presently tracked to ensure support is relevant and up to date. Funding will be used to enhance this area of monitoring through a new role currently being piloted in 2011-12.

The findings of the progression research referred to under section G will be available in 2012, and used to inform further investment in recruitment, retention and employability support for ITT students on Ug and PGCE programmes.

Part four: Targets, milestones and monitoring

F. Targets and milestones

You may choose to develop specific additional targets and milestones which assess your performance in ITT over time – particularly if ITT trainees make up a significant proportion of your overall student body.

Alternatively, you may have targets and milestones in your existing 2012-13 access agreement which you now also wish to apply to undergraduate and/or postgraduate ITT trainees.

These targets may be statistical – based on how representative your entrants are and/or your retention performance – and might include annual or interim milestones to help you monitor whether you are making progress.

You may wish to include criteria around the numbers of trainees in receipt of a full or partial maintenance grant, as financial data will need to be collected to determine bursary support and the data will also be accessible through the Student Loans Company for HEBSS subscribers. You may also wish to consider the TDA guidance at Annex C which gives information on specific groups that are underrepresented in the teaching profession.

In this section, please state whether you intend to develop additional targets and milestones, or the extent to which you intend to use targets and milestones in your existing agreement which you now wish to extend to apply to undergraduate and/or postgraduate ITT trainees. Where you have new or amended milestones and targets, you should set these out in your Excel template (Annex B) at Table 6.

We do not intend to develop specific additional targets or milestones for our ITT students, but instead to apply those targets and milestones from our existing Agreement as they relate to HESA benchmark data and other Management targets. Specifically, these are NS-SEC participation, Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN), non-continuation (retention), projected outcomes, first time module pass rate, disabled students with learning contracts and full-time graduate employment (see tables 5a & b). The University's monitoring arrangements (see Section G) are also relevant in this regard.

G. Your monitoring arrangements

In your existing 2012-13 access agreement, you set out how you intended to monitor your fulfilment of your agreement. If you wish to add anything further, following the inclusion of ITT in your agreement, you may do so here.

In addition to the monitoring framework outlined in the Access Agreement, the Department for Teacher Education will be looking at trends in attainment data for identifiable groups to inform both recruitment and student support strategies, both to increase student numbers of BME, disabled and male students and invest in appropriate support mechanisms (e.g. mentoring). This will complement and build on wider research looking at the progression of students from entry to completion and employment, correlated to the academic profile, tariff points and degree classification.

At an institutional level, the University has conducted an equality analysis of its refreshed Corporate Plan 2011-2013, from which a number of priorities have been identified. Our Equality performance in respect of students with 'protected characteristics' (e.g. BME, disabled) as defined by the Equality Act 2010, will be measured using the University Corporate Performance Framework. The alignment of equality to key performance indicators will ensure that performance can be measured, reviewed and reported on tri-annually via annual performance reviews and quality review.

Part five: Information to students

H. Provision of information to trainees

As set out in our initial guidance for 2012-13 access agreements (OFFA 2011/01), you must publish clear, accessible and timely information for applicants and trainees on the fees you will charge and any financial support you will offer. This information should make it clear exactly what level of financial support you are offering trainees in each year of their studies. As well as providing clear and up-to-date information through your own information channels (websites, prospectuses etc), you also committed to provide such timely information to UCAS and SLC as they reasonably require to populate their applicant-facing web services. We will assume that this commitment extends to GTTR, where appropriate.

If you wish to add anything further, following the inclusion of ITT in your agreement, you may do so here.

There is nothing further to add to the existing Access Agreement, other than to confirm that provision of information will extend to GTTR as appropriate.