

University College Birmingham

Access Agreement 2012/13



UCB
University College Birmingham

Introduction

University College Birmingham (UCB) is a specialist higher education institution with one of the most socially diverse student bodies of all in the university sector. This Access Agreement is designed to ensure that students have available to them the high quality resources and specialist tutors they need in order to get the most from their education. It also strongly encourages applicants from backgrounds not traditionally associated with higher education and supports students through their study time with UCB.

Tuition fees have been set at this level to make our specialist programmes as affordable as possible whilst compensating for the loss of teaching grant and other substantial funds from the Higher Education Funding Council for England. UCB is, according to data from Higher Education Funding Council for England, one of the most efficient institutions in the university sector.

A range of student fee-waivers will ensure that the poorest students gain the most financial support, providing many with a reduction in fees of £1000 and some as much as £4000. Fee waivers will also encourage progression from UCB's own further education programmes to our foundation and bachelors degrees. A comprehensive system of academic and personal support is extended to maximise the success of all students recruited, and a large programme of outreach activities (many in conjunction with three other Birmingham universities) will help to encourage all of those with the potential to succeed to consider higher education as an option.

This agreement covers:

- I. Home/EU students enrolling on the following types of programmes between 2008/9 and 2012/13 who will be eligible for the Government's "Increased Support for Students in Higher Education" (effective from September 2008) for the duration of their courses:
 - Full-time undergraduate, HE certificate, diploma, foundation degree and first degree courses.
 - Full-time undergraduate sandwich degree courses.
- II. Students enrolled on the courses identified above between September 2006 and August 2008 and who were subject to the payment of variable tuition fees for the duration of their courses.

It does not cover:

- I. Students who enrolled on the courses identified above prior to September 2006 (these students are required to pay or contribute to the standard tuition fee depending on the level of their household income, as set out at their enrolment).
- II. Postgraduate students or part-time HE students.
- III. International (non EU) students.
- IV. Students studying PGCE courses.

1. Fee limits and fee income above £6,000

- I. *The tuition fees we intend to charge new entrants in 2012-13 and permitted increases for 2013/14 onwards*

Home/EU students who enrol (including those who defer entry from 2011/12) for the first time in September 2012 on any foundation degree or bachelors degree will pay a tuition fee of £7800 per annum for their first taught year. We will increase our undergraduate tuition fee in each year that a student continues in study in line with the rise permitted by the Government, to ensure that the fee maintains its real-terms value.

Students who have completed an undergraduate course (for instance a foundation degree) at another UK Higher Education provider in the 2011/12 Academic Year and who transfer to UCB without there being a break in their study will be entitled to pay tuition fees at the lower *existing student* rate in 2012/13 (see overleaf).

Many programmes include a full or half year industrial placement and, when Home/EU students undertake one of these in a subsequent year, they will NOT BE CHARGED A TUITION FEE for the period of the placement.

The tuition fee for part-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses has not yet been set. We anticipate that such fees will be roughly in proportion to the fees for full-time courses.

II. The tuition fees we intend to charge existing students in 2012-13

Students who enrolled on UCB undergraduate programmes between September 2006 and August 2008 will continue to be subject to the payment of variable tuition fees for the duration of their courses as set out to them at the time of their enrolment. They are not subject to the tuition fee specified above.

Continuing Home/EU students on full or half year industrial placements will NOT BE CHARGED A TUITION FEE for the period of the placement.

III. The estimated number of entrants at each fee level we charge

We have planned that in 2012/13 we will have the following full-time equivalent new Home/EU entrants to UCB, similar to our 2011/12 numbers (numbers are full-time equivalent), although it might be expected that the introduction of higher fees will bring about a temporary reduction in student numbers:

<u>Undergraduate</u>		<u>Postgraduate</u>	
Full-time	1096	Full-time	20
Part-time	134	Part-time	10
		PGCE	46

2. Expenditure on additional access and retention measures

a) Expenditure planned on additional access and retention measures

UCB will spend £643,000 in 2012/13 on outreach and retention measures.

b) Our assessment of UCB's access and retention record.

UCB's record on access is very good indeed. Data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency shows 96.3% of our young, full-time, first degree students are from state schools, which is well above the performance of similar institutions and the national average. 13.4% of the same group are from areas designated as a 'low [HE] -participation neighbourhood'; again, well above the performance of the national average and similar institutions. We have a large foundation degree offer, and this performs equally well at encouraging widespread access: 98.3% of these programmes' young, full-time students are from state schools and 17.2% from low-participation neighbourhoods, both well above national averages and greater than similar institutions. The picture is similarly successful with mature students: 11.% of mature full-time undergraduate students and 26% of foundation degree students are from low-participation neighbourhoods; again well above national averages and greater than similar institutions. However, one particular access performance measure shows that we are below average: the proportion of students in receipt of a disabled student living allowance, at 2.8% instead of 4.8% (for full-time first-degree students).

Although our retention record has historically been very good there has lately been a slight decrease in the number of students retained- both young and mature - such that we are slightly below the performance of similar institutions and the national average. This is an area in which we intend to

concentrate our efforts in the short and medium term, to ensure that those we recruit have the best chance of succeeding on their programme.

3. Additional access measures

The following measures are all 'countable' for the purposes of the Office for Fair Access' consideration of this agreement. Much more outreach and retention activity is undertaken funded from other sources.

a) A broad overview of UCB's investment in outreach and student retention

To address the situation outlined above, we intend allocating a significant proportion of our additional spend on retention measures. The remainder will be spent on maintaining our current very good levels of recruitment of students from state schools and low participation neighbourhoods by working both collaboratively in a partnership with other universities and independently as an institution. Work on improving disabled student participation will also be carried out under existing schemes. Target numbers for this activity are given in Annex B.

b) Examples of the sorts of activity UCB is funding

UCB works very closely with a number of schools which act as a location for the delivery of level 3 vocational qualifications to adults in communities that have low levels of eligibility for/participation in HE. These programmes are closely aligned with Foundation Degrees and are intended to provide alternative routes into education for (mostly young) adults. We will extend this activity to incorporate HE progression advice and skills for success.

We have also created the *Vocational Advantage Scheme* which provides a vehicle for intensive work with at least 10 secondary schools in low participation neighbourhoods; encouraging them to improve vocational programme provision for 14-19 year olds by taking advantage of free support from UCB tutors and involving young people in extension activities to improve their eligibility to progress into HE. This provision is also closely aligned with UCB's vocational HE offer and should help to encourage those school pupils to see vocational awards as a means to progress to higher education if it helps achieve their goals.

We have allocated a small portion of the funding to pay for the post of data officer, to enable better targeting and reporting of our access activity.

UCB has also formed a collaborative partnership with the University of Birmingham, Aston University and Birmingham City University to take forward the legacy of the Birmingham and Solihull AimHigher (AH) partnership. Established in 2004, that partnership of five HEIs, two local authorities and 118 local schools, academies and FE/6th Form Colleges in Birmingham and Solihull, proved very successful in developing an extensive provision of widening access activities, including collaborative provision of mentoring, masterclass, summer school and information, advice and guidance activities to schools. The new partnership will seek to take forward this work in collaboration with schools, focusing upon pre-16 education, within a new organisational model which draws upon the experience and successful initiatives of the AH partnership. UCB will jointly fund this partnership's work with a contribution of £25,000 in 2011-12 and £35,000 in 2012-13 and is intimately involved in its governance and management. Partnership activities will complement UCB's own extensive programme of widening access and fair access measures outlined elsewhere in this agreement.

Just over a third of the funding will go to support retention measures, to ensure that those who are recruited have a good chance of successfully completing their programme. This will principally be through individual and group support in the Learning and Skills Development Centre and the provision of specialist subject workshops to assist students.

How UCB's investment in outreach and retention compares to arrangements prior to 2012-13

The level 3 work in schools and some of the retention activity is currently in existence, but the additional funding will enable an increase in our provision. The data officer is also in existence, but funding will enable the continuation of that post. The HE partnership activity and the *Vocational Advantage Scheme* are substantial new activities.

c) Financial support for students

We have decided to stop awarding Higher Education Bursary and Scholarship Scheme ("HEBSS") awards for students who enrol for the first time in 2012/13. Instead, a range of fee-waivers will be offered.

I. UCB's contribution to the National Scholarship Programme

UCB will match fund (on a 1 for 1 basis) the £147,000 we are likely to receive from the Government for the new National Scholarship Programme (NSP) when it commences in 2012/13. This will fund approximately 98 fee waivers in the 2012/13 academic year, each of £3000 off the first year only of tuition fees, allocated on a strictly first-come-first-served basis to new full-time undergraduate entrants in 2012/13 onwards who:

- Have a residual household income of £16,000 or less AND
- Have been at an English state school or college for a period of at least 3 years AND
- Have not previously completed an undergraduate programme.

II. Other Bursaries and Fee Waivers provided under this agreement for new undergraduate students

a. UCB will give a £1000 fee waiver or bursary (to be decided) to any new student admitted in 2012/13 onwards on a full-time foundation degree or bachelors degree who:

- Have a residual household income of £16,000 or less AND
- Have been at an English state school or college for a period of at least 3 years AND
- Have not, on entry to UCB, previously completed an undergraduate programme.

Unlike the NSP fee waiver, this will be for EVERY TAUGHT YEAR of their course except students may not get BOTH this bursary and an NSP fee waiver in the same year.

b. UCB will also give a £1000 fee waiver off the first year fees to any new student admitted in 2012/13 onwards on a full-time foundation degree or bachelors degree who has previously been a student on a full-time FE programme at UCB. Such students could also get the £1000 fee waiver or bursary above if they meet the necessary criteria. This fee waiver is not means tested but a large proportion of UCB FE students are from backgrounds with little or no experience of HE.

d) Planned spend on fee waivers, bursaries and scholarships for continuing students

UCB's Bursary Scheme targets continuing students on full-time and sandwich undergraduate programmes from low-income households. The Scheme is a cash award scheme and for 2012/13 will operate as follows:

I. Students who enrolled between 2008/09 and 2010/11 :

- Students with household incomes of £25,000 or less (including single, independent students) will receive a Bursary of £1,080 per annum*. It can be seen therefore that those students in receipt of the full maintenance grant of £2,906 will be able to meet the difference between the maintenance grant and the tuition fee and receive £761 towards the cost of living.
- Students with household incomes of between £25,001 and £42,516 (including single, independent students) will receive a Bursary of £648 per annum*.

- Students with household incomes between £42,517 and £60,032 (including single, independent students) will receive a Bursary of £384 per annum*.
- Full-time students on undergraduate programmes in receipt of a Disabled Students' Living Allowance will receive a Bursary of £1,624 per annum* regardless of household income.

II. Students who enrolled in 2011/12 (including those who defer firm offers from 2010/11):

UCB simplified the Bursary scheme from 2011/12 in order to refocus it towards students in the lowest household income bracket and towards providing funding for more extensive outreach activities. UCB's Bursary scheme for students who enrolled in 2011/12 is that students with household incomes of £30,000 or less will receive a Bursary of £750 per annum*.

* students on sandwich (long placement) programmes will not be eligible to receive a bursary during the placement period.

e) *Other financial support for students*

UCB is committed to helping students who find themselves in financial hardship. We have a range of additional funds and measures to assist in this respect, including:

- Waiving the tuition fee for the year that sandwich students spend in placement.
- Informing applicants of UCB's John Slaughter Memorial Fund which offers loans and hardship payments to all deserving students ineligible for other forms of financial support.
- Providing fee waivers for UCB students progressing to one of our masters programmes
- Utilising money available through external hardship funds help students.

4. Targets and milestones

See Annex B

5. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

a) *How we will monitor and evaluate the measures set out in this agreement and progress against targets and milestones*

The activity outlined in this agreement will be monitored by the Executive Management Team and evaluated by Academic Board's Equal Opportunities Committee.

b) *The senior person responsible for delivery of this agreement*

UCB's Deputy Principal will take responsibility for delivery of the agreement.

c) *Student representation*

Student representation is highly valued at UCB and the Student Guild have an ex-officio seat on both Academic Board and its Equal Opportunities Committee. A well-developed student satisfaction monitoring system is used to evaluate the student experience of each of the activities in this agreement.

d) *Institutional monitoring arrangements*

The data officer will provide the Executive Management Team and Equal Opportunities Committee with benchmarking data (e.g. from the Higher Education Statistics Agency) and statistical reports to enable an assessment of the extent to which targets are being met. The Birmingham and Solihull Higher Education Progression Partnership is developing a comprehensive impact and evaluation plan which will monitor student engagement with partnership activities, track the progression of those learners with whom the partnership works most closely, evaluate the overall effectiveness of the partnership activity and

disseminate good practice. Evaluation will include both quantitative and qualitative measures and will provide evidence to partner HEIs and schools engaged in the programme.

6. Provision of information to prospective students

Information regarding bursaries and other financial support available to students is posted on the College's web site at www.ucb.ac.uk (Student Support section). A leaflet, setting out detailed information about fee levels, bursaries and other financial support available from the College, will be sent to all applicants. In addition, a student finance session is included in the programme for each HE Open Day, Progression Evening and enrolment enabling students to hear, first hand, about the support available and to ask specific questions. Students requiring more detailed information and/or advice should contact the Director of Student Services in the Student Information Suite on the 7th floor of the Summer Row site or by telephone on 0121 604 1000 Ext 2230. This Access Agreement is also published on the Office for Fair Access web site at www.offa.org.uk. Details of the financial support available at the College will be posted on the UCAS web site at www.ucas.com - institutional code B35.

Further information on student support can also be found at www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance or, the Student Loan Company's web site www.slc.co.uk

We will ensure that all local schools and colleges are aware of how to access this information.

We will work with the Guild of Students at UCB to disseminate the information to existing students through Guild communication channels. We will also post a message on students' personal Virtual Learning Environment pages, providing them with a link to the agreement on the website.

Table 5b - Other milestones and targets

Alongside applicant and entrant targets, we encourage you to provide targets around your outreach work (including collaborative outreach work where appropriate) or other initiatives to illustrate your progress towards increasing access. These should be measurable outcomes based targets and should focus on the number of pupils reached by a particular activity/programme, or number of schools worked with, and what the outcomes were, rather than simply recording the nature/number of activities.

Please select milestone/target type from the drop down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones/targets (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
				2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Number of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds engaged in intensive activity with collaborative partnership using a basket of indicators	2010/11	500	500	750	1000	1000	1000	Birmingham and Solihull HE Progression Partnership is 4 HEIs jointly working with Year 9, 10 and 11 learners in at least 10 local schools in raising awareness of HE progression and to extend fair access. This is a short-term and collective target (see below)
Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Proportion of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in the intensive activity target group on Level 3 programmes at age 17 is greater than local average for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, using a basket of indicators	2010/11	We await release Participation by Highest Level of Qualification Data for 2009 / 10 at Local Authority Level by DfE	NA	To be greater than local average for peer group (against a basket of indicators of disadvantage)	To be greater than local average for peer group (against a basket of indicators of disadvantage)	To be greater than local average for peer group (against a basket of indicators of disadvantage)	To be greater than local average for peer group (against a basket of indicators of disadvantage)	Birmingham and Solihull HE Progression Partnership is 4 HEIs jointly working with Year 9, 10 and 11 learners in at least 10 local schools in raising awareness of HE progression and to extend fair access. This is a medium-term and collective target as the intensive work cohort would not start to be at age 17 until 2013/14 (see above)
Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Proportion of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in intensive activity target group applying for FT place in HE is greater than local average for YP from disadvantaged backgrounds, using a basket of indicators	2010/11	We await analysis of 2010 UCAS applicant and 2009 HESA entrant data to inform baselines and subsequent targets	NA	NA	To be greater than local average for peer group (against a basket of indicators of disadvantage)	To be greater than local average for peer group (against a basket of indicators of disadvantage)	To be greater than local average for peer group (against a basket of indicators of disadvantage)	Birmingham and Solihull HE Progression Partnership is 4 HEIs jointly working with Year 9, 10 and 11 learners in at least 10 local schools in raising awareness of HE progression and to extend fair access. This is a long-term and collective target as the intensive work cohort would not be expected to progress to HE until 2014/15 (see above)
Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Number of schools actively engaged in UCB Vocational Advantage scheme and offering level 3 vocational curriculum	2010/11	0	10	10	10	10	10	
Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Proportion of young people from Vocational Advantage supported programmes accepting a FT place in HE.	2010/11	0	To be same as local average for YP from Low Progression Neighbourhoods	To be same as local average for YP from Low Progression Neighbourhoods	To be same as local average for YP from Low Progression Neighbourhoods	To be same as local average for YP from Low Progression Neighbourhoods	To be same as local average for YP from Low Progression Neighbourhoods	Evaluated by local reporting from schools

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

Name of institution	UNIVERSITY COLLEGE BIRMINGHAM
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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.

The College's Access Agreement has now been amended to include ITT students

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 College does not do Undergraduate ITT. The tuition fee for Post-Graduate ITT in 2012/13 is £7,800.

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.)

We intend to spend an additional £5,000 of the additional tuition fee income from ITT students on access measures

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.

- a) The College has no Under-Graduate ITT.
- b) Students doing the College's Post-Graduate ITT course will be eligible for financial support through the College's Access Fund and "John Slaughter" hardship fund as well as the TDA's ITT Bursary scheme (as long as they have a 2.1 or better Degree). Expenditure from the College administered hardship funds is likely to be around £5,000 in 2012/13 for Post-Graduate ITT students.

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).

There will be no additional activities but the existing activities will be extended to include the College's Post-Graduate ITT course.

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.

No additional targets or milestones.

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.

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.