

University of Brighton Access Agreement 2011-2012

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Summary

The University expects to invest some 33% of its additional fee income in enhanced access measures in 2011-12 this will be reduced to 23% by 2013-2014. Some £4.5m of this will be committed bursary provision, a further £422k will be invested in delivery of additional outreach and support activities, and £130k on necessary administrative support and SLC fees to operate the bursary scheme. It expects to award bursaries to between 40 and 50% of eligible students.

In 2011-12 the University will

- 1 charge a full-time home/EU undergraduate fee of £3,375
- 2 make scholarships worth some £57,500k to students performing best in their subjects in their end of year assessments and to talented disabled athletes. This sum is extra to those outlined above
- 3 award a care leavers study grant of £1,000 a year to eligible care leavers

For new students

- 4 pay its full bursary (£900) to eligible students with relevant incomes up to £25,000 a year
- 5 award a bursary to eligible students with relevant incomes up to £31,000

For returning students

- 6 returning students will be on the four tier bursary system outlined in the 2010 Access agreement and in table 3

1 Commitment

The University's revised Access Agreement reflects its institutional commitment set out in its Corporate Plan 2007-12 to have '*packages of support in place for home/EU students and international students that keep pace with financial need*'.

2 Assumptions

- 2.1 The University has based its Access Agreement on a number of assumptions, including:

- continued allocation of the HEFCE Widening Participation Formula Funds including those in respect of disability
- continued provision of the Access to Learning Fund
- continuation of a system available to the sector to aid assessment of entitlement to bursaries, through the SLC.

3 Fee levels

- 3.1 The University will charge fees as shown below in 2011-12. This includes courses delivered by/at partner colleges and courses at the Brighton and Sussex Medical School delivered jointly with the University of Sussex. These fees will remain at these levels, uprated for inflation, for the duration of a student's course.

Table 1: fee levels 2011-2012

Course	Annual fee,
Full-time first degree (including PGCEs)	£3,375
Foundation Degree	£3,375
Sandwich year out	£750
Degree top-up from Foundation Degree (or HND)	£3,375
Brighton and Sussex Medical School (Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery)	£3,375

- 3.2 The tuition fees in Table 1 are based on current HEFCE funding guidelines. Following HEFCE's decision on withdrawal of funding for students studying for equivalent or lower qualifications (ELQs), from 2009-2010 the University will be charging newly enrolling ELQ students the full cost course fee at the same rate as international students.

4 Bursaries

- 4.1 The bursary scheme described here applies to students on courses delivered by/at the University, those HE courses delivered by/at partner colleges and those at BSMS. This scheme does not apply to new and continuing ELQ students. From 2010-11 students who are ELQ-exempt (e.g. on a Foundation Degree) will only be eligible for consideration for a University of Brighton bursary if they are still eligible for means-testing as part of student support, (for example, they have two years previous HE study). Students who are ELQ-exempt but not eligible for means-testing by Student Finance England will no longer be considered for bursaries.
- 4.2 The University intends to allocate significant funds for bursary support and expects that between 40 and 50% of home/EU full-time undergraduates will receive a bursary if they apply. Parental or family income will be used to determine eligibility. Bursary levels will have an inverse relationship to levels of income, as summarised below.

Table 2: bursary scheme 2011-12

Approximate annual family income	Annual Bursary
Up to £25,000	£900
£25,001 to £31,000	£500

Table 3 : bursary scheme 2007-10

Approximate annual family income	Annual Bursary
Up to £25,000	£1,080
£25,001 to £27,490	£860
£27,491 to £32,340	£750
£32,341 to £40,330	£540

- 4.3 This bursary framework exceeds the minimum levels required by the Government for those students from families with incomes £25,000 or less.
- 4.4 The University will base payments of bursaries on assessments of income made by the Student Loans Company, based in turn on information provided by the student and their family. Students deemed eligible in 2010-11 based on family income will not require SLC re-assessment if returning in 2011-12, unless there is a change in their circumstances. The University will continue to carry out its own internal assessment of all Home and EU students annually for bursary eligibility.
- 4.5 The University will pay the bursary provision in two instalments, at the start of terms 2 and 3. The first payment will be dependent on the data returned in the census to the SLC.
- 4.6 In addition, from 2008-09 the University will award £1,000 a year to any student who enrolls on leaving care – Care Leaver Study Grant. This is not means-tested.

5 Information for students

- 5.1 To ensure that students are aware of the availability of bursaries, and how to apply, information is provided both on the main University of Brighton website, the student and staff intranets, and on the New Student Area, a site specifically designed for prospective students and accessible once they have accepted a place at the University.
- 5.2 Following the first instalment of bursary payments in January, a follow-up publicity campaign is carried out, targeting all eligible students who have not yet applied reminding them of the scheme and cut-off dates for application.
- 5.3 The University will be reviewing the way it communicates about student finance in the light of the recommendations in the OFFA publication *Awareness, take-up and impact of institutional bursaries and scholarships in England (2009/07)*

6 Scholarships

- 6.1 In addition, all full-time undergraduate students will be considered for a University Scholarship of £500. These scholarships will be awarded to the first and second year students who perform most strongly in their end of year assessments. A small number of additional scholarships will be available for students entering the third year of four year programmes. Scholarships are for one year only. Students on franchised courses at partner colleges are included. BSMS students are included unless they are already in receipt of a University of Sussex Chancellors Award.

In addition, the University will award up to five Disabled Sports Scholarships for disabled athletes who show exceptional talent and potential. These scholarships will be for £1,000 each.

Table 3: Scholarships 2011-12

Scholarship	Value	Number
University Scholarships	£500	105
Disabled athletes	£1,000	5

7 Outreach activity funded through additional fee income

- 7.1 The University has a strong track-record in delivering outreach activity, both directly and in partnership with others. In 2011-12 the University has budgeted to spend £422k of the additional fee income to enhance existing widening participation activity. This represents a significant increase in investment in widening participation from the period prior to the introduction of the new fees/bursary framework. It is additional to its core investment of some £650k to support widening participation (including for disabled students). The University sees the additional fee income as a valuable opportunity to underpin and extend activity. Much of the investment will be in areas of support for students who may be more vulnerable (for example, extended library opening hours; additional learning support). Other areas of investment include additional outreach activity, including with Primary pupils; key stage 3; support for vocational students; targeted support for Access students. This work is planned and delivered in conjunction with Aimhigher Sussex.

8 Institutional objectives and baseline data

- 8.1 The Access Agreement is an integral part of the University's commitment to widening participation, recognising that the range of institutional activity, commitments and efforts are broader in focus than the remit of Access Agreements and OFFA but that the funds anticipated from fees will enable real progress to be made against some challenging targets. The overall objective is set out in the Corporate Plan 2007-12, *Aim 3, to become recognised as a leading UK university for the quality and range of its work in economic and social engagement and productive partnerships.*
- 8.2 This Aim specifies as an Indicator of Success, that by 2012, the University will have:
'made further progress in widening participation as measured by nationally-published indicators including maintaining its above-benchmark position for previous education and locality of origin, and moving closer to the benchmark for social class; and by data on bursary take-up.'
- 8.3 The Widening Participation Strategic Assessment includes detailed targets and milestones.

9 Monitoring arrangements

- 9.1 The day to day monitoring of the Access Agreement and its related milestones will be undertaken by the Widening Participation Manager. Internal monitoring will be considered by the Widening Participation and Diversity Committee which reports to the University's Academic Development Committee.
- 9.2 Annual monitoring to meet OFFA's requirements will also be considered in this way.