

UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD
Office for Fair Access – Access Agreement 2007-2012

1. Introduction

Salford University is an enterprising institution offering a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes supported by high quality research and academic enterprise. It was established in 1896 as the Royal Technical Institute to provide advanced training and education to develop a skilled workforce for the world-renowned industries of the region. Since its inception the institution has provided educational opportunities that have enhanced the employability of local people, especially those who would not otherwise have had the opportunity of higher education. Throughout its history of close engagement with the local community the University has specialised in education for capability, and its programmes are still closely linked to the major employment sectors locally.

2. Background to Agreement

The Office for Fair Access (OFFA) was established by the Higher Education Act of 2004. The Act also gave universities in England the right, from 2006/07, to charge tuition fees above the standard level for full-time undergraduate programmes. OFFA's role is to ensure that the new fee arrangements do not have a detrimental effect on participation by students from under-represented groups. Each university must have an agreement with OFFA setting out how access to programmes will be safeguarded for students from low income groups. It is intended that the Salford agreement will be updated annually on the basis of a five year horizon.

3. Scope of Agreement and Fee Limits

This Access Agreement relates to all undergraduate programmes for which the University receives income from HEFCE. There will be a common tuition fee which it is expected will be increased annually in line with inflation increases announced by the Government. The common tuition fee will apply to:

- all full-time undergraduate programmes, foundation degrees, foundation years and HNDs run by the University commencing in 2006/07 and subsequently;
- the following programmes run under franchise by Further Education colleges on behalf of the University commencing in 2006/07 and subsequently:

Foundation Degree in
Complementary Therapy

Stockport College
Wigan and Leigh
College

Foundation Degree in Water Sports
Leisure Management

Myerscough College

Foundation Degree in Sport and
Exercise Management

South Trafford College

Year 1 Graphic Design

Carmel College

- exchange years that are not part of an ERASMUS programme (charged at the rate of one semester's fees).

The common tuition fee will not apply to:

- full-time UK/EU programmes run as part of an NHS contract;
- placement years or semesters undertaken as part of an undergraduate programme commenced in 2006/07 and subsequently (although a fee will be charged for a non-placement semester);
- exchange years and semesters supported through ERASMUS;
- international students (separate tuition fees apply for these students).

For session 2008/09 the level of the common tuition fee is £3145 per annum or £1573 per semester.

4. Bursaries and Scholarships

Recent changes in Government policy have increased the income thresholds for eligibility for grants so that considerably more applicants will qualify for support than before.

In addition to the support offered by the Government through grants, the University will offer the following bursaries and scholarships with effect from 2008/09:

- Statutory Bursary (see note 1) £310 per annum payable to all students entitled to full HEMG;
- Vice-Chancellor's Scholarships (see note 1):
 - £1000 payable to all who reach the entry standard of grades AAB at A level;
 - £1000 for all entrants to Modern Languages, Physics and Engineering who meet the programme and general entry requirements.
- Global Placement Bursary:
 - £1000 for two semesters spent overseas or £500 for one semester spent overseas.
- Salford Bursary (see note 1):
 - £500 for all students with a Salford postcode at the time of application who receive an HEMG (pro rata for partial HEMG).

[NOTES: (1) A student may hold only one of these awards at any one time. The highest award for which the individual is eligible would apply.

(2) In addition the University offers several special prizes based on a range of criteria. These prizes would not be subject to only holding one award at a time. Further information about these is available at:

<http://www.isite.salford.ac.uk/money/help/grants/scholarships/>

(3) The bursaries and scholarships scheme will be reviewed annually.

(4) Continuing students who started under the student support arrangements that existed between 2006/07 and 2007/08 will continue to receive bursaries and scholarships under that scheme.]

5. Additional Student Support

In addition to the bursaries, scholarships and prizes the University offers a range of services to support the success of students from all backgrounds. These include:

- general and financial advice for students to foster good financial management and to provide information about funding opportunities;
- administration of Access to Learning Fund and other student support funds on the basis of objective criteria to direct support to those students in most need (including meeting the needs of Looked After Children);
- Job Shop to help students to find appropriate term-time and vacation work to support their studies and to enhance employability (backed by a comprehensive careers information, advice and guidance service);
- competitively priced student accommodation within walking distance of the University;
- support for disabled students, including financial help with the costs of dyslexia assessment;
- study skills support, and enhancement of mathematical and academic writing skills;
- significant investment in new teaching and learning facilities to provide a high quality learning environment;
- induction, mentoring, Personal Development Planning (PDP), Achievement Coaches and other initiatives to enhance performance and to ensure success.

6. Outreach Activities

In order to raise aspirations within the local area (traditionally one of below-average educational attainment), and to encourage local disadvantaged

groups to consider the advantages of higher education the following outreach activities are well-established:

- close liaison with the University's 50 top feeder institutions;
- working with providers of Access programmes (the University has the highest number of Access course entrants in the sector);
- playing a key role in Greater Manchester Aimhigher activities;
- running the Salford Young People's University (years 5-10; more than 80% of participants on free school meals);
- arranging events for parents, careers advisors and teachers;
- involvement in the Greater Manchester Strategic Alliance (GMSA), a prototype Lifelong Learning Network.

7. Provision of Information to Students

It is vital that prospective and current students have access to relevant information on which to make an informed decision about their studies. The University is committed to providing information, in a clear and accessible form, about programmes of study, the financial aspects of study and the support available. The main means by which the University will provide information are as follows:

- Enquiry stage
 - undergraduate prospectus and related web material, giving detailed information about programmes, costs, facilities and all aspects of student life;
 - Applicants Guide. A publication giving more specific information about accommodation, costs and support arrangements for those considering making an application.
- Application stage
 - specific information for students declaring disabilities;
 - offer letters and subsequent communications giving information on fees, living expenses, fee assessments and support arrangements.
- Pre-Registration
 - welcome pack. A reminder of some details already sent and an explanation of actions necessary to register.
- Registration
 - detailed information about programmes and about financial status checked and queries answered.

- Post-registration
 - ongoing information available from i-Site, Student Assistance Office, School Offices and Students' Union;
 - financial advice and support available through Student Assistance Office.

8. Milestones and Monitoring

The University will monitor its success in fulfilling the Access Agreement on the basis of the following statistical indicators:

- take up of HEMG;
- take up of statutory bursary;
- take up of Salford bursary;
- take up Vice-Chancellor's scholarships;
- take up of Global Placement Bursary;
- patterns of demand for ALF;
- patterns of demand for disability support funds;
- patterns of recruitment of students from Access Programmes.

The monitoring information will be prepared annually and reviewed by Strategic Leadership Team, Senate and Council. It will build on and be incorporated into existing monitoring measures.

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