UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

University Access Agreement 2012/13

Introduction

1. The University of Birmingham offers an inspirational student experience at a selective leading global University. We are proud of our strong outreach and retention record that has been built up over a long period of time, and which places us in the vanguard of the Russell Group. We are planning to build on this record by committing the equivalent of over 29% of our additional fee income to an enhanced range of outreach and access activities. Over the last 5 years, the HESA performance indicators show that we have consistently recruited in the region of 80% of our intake from State Schools and out-performed many of our peer institutions in terms of the volume and proportion of students from lower socio-economic groups. On retention, the exceptional quality of our students and the high quality of their teaching and learning environment ensures that we are able to retain a higher proportion of our intake than either the average of our peers or the majority of the English Higher Education sector.

2. Building further on this successful record in promoting fair access, we will continue to demonstrate innovation and leadership in the development of our outreach and retention activities, and are committed to investing almost £4.6m per annum by 2015/16 in those activities, including the further development of our existing approach to contextual admissions. We intend to expand our flagship Access to Birmingham (A2B) scheme beyond the West Midlands; we are committed to continuing our leadership role in successful, collaborative Aimhigher activities despite the withdrawal of Government; and are seeking to expand our 'Forward Thinking' progressive programmes which work with Gifted and Talented widening participation students over the course of their secondary education. To support the Access to the Professions agenda, we have made an investment of £3.5m in our employability strategy, which includes increasing the number of funded internships for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. We are also investing in an enhanced academic support tutoring system to support the increased retention of our students. In both these latter cases, we expect there to be a demonstrable impact on our ability to recruit students from disadvantaged backgrounds

3. We will complement this investment in outreach and retention activities with a revised, progressive package of financial support totalling £10.6m by 2016/17 for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including the expected HEFCE contribution of £2m in that year. This package enables our students to participate in the full residential aspects of the University of Birmingham Experience. In 2012/13, our offering under the National Scholarships Programme will be a scholarship of £3,000 to all Home state school students who have residual household incomes of under £16,190. Over and above this, those eligible for Free School Meals who choose to live on campus will be eligible for an additional award bringing their funding to the value of a year living in one of our self catered Halls of Residence. For our remaining Home state school students with residual household incomes of between £16,190 and £42,600 we will offer a tapered range of awards of between £2,000 and £250.

Fee Limits & Fee Income above £6000

4. To ensure we can continue to deliver the inspirational experience our students deserve, and extend our high quality and progressive outreach, retention and financial support activities as indicated above, we will charge our full-time undergraduate students on all our courses a fee of £9,000 per annum. We estimate that our intake in 2012/13 will be in the region of 4,500. For courses commencing in 2012/13 which include a placement year studying or working, we intend to charge a maximum fee of £4,500 for that year.

5. The above fees will be increased by any permitted rate of inflation approved by the Government.

Assessment of our Access and Retention Record

6. The following self-assessment is underpinned by a firm belief that our performance should be placed against that of those institutions most similar to us in the Russell Group. Comparison against the sector as a whole underplays both the success we have achieved and, crucially, the clear commitment we have to fair access and widening participation. We are also of the opinion that assessing our access and retention record only against the HESA Performance Indicators (PIs) distorts our commitment and success with, in particular, outreach. This self-assessment, therefore, is based on a broader assessment of our outreach activities, much of which has been highly successful raising students' aspirations and encouraging applications to other HEIs.

HESA Performance Indicators

7. Our performance in the three main HESA performance indicators ranks us within the top quartile of the English Russell Group universities. We have made significant progress over the past 6 years in the number of students admitted from low socio-economic groups, and now have 21% of our students from these groups. For students from low participation neighbourhoods, a measure that HEFCE only includes partially in its WP premium, we continue to make steady progress towards our benchmark.

8. In terms of the HESA first year continuation PI, over 95.5% of our full-time first degree entrants are still in higher education the following year and over the last five years our non-continuation rate has fallen by 30%, to 4.3%, an improvement that in the Russell Group is second only to UCL. This demonstrates that whilst not being complacent, we can be confident that our current retention activities are highly effective in supporting our students. In fact, progression rates amongst our current A2B cohort are strong and comparable with non-WP students.

Current Outreach Activities

9. Against these sector wide measures, and taking into consideration our performance against the English Russell Group institutions, we feel that the demonstrable success of our existing WP activities provides a sound foundation on which to build a wider range of WP activities, and a funding package tailored to the needs of specific cohorts of applicants.

Access to Birmingham

10. Our sector-leading 'Access to Birmingham' (A2B) programme is at the heart of our Access activity, and targets the most disadvantaged or disaffected students. It has been commended by the QAA and HEFCE and widely used by other institutions as the model of best practice on which they have based similar schemes. For example, it helped create the 'Realising Opportunities' collaborative programme. It is aimed at applicants who have suffered some form of disadvantage who, nonetheless, are identified by their school and teachers as having the intellectual potential to succeed at Birmingham. A2B applicants undergo an intensive programme and receive an entry grade offer which is usually 2 grades below the standard offer. The scheme now includes an A2B scholarship that is awarded to A2B students who achieve the standard offer grades for their course. Cohort research demonstrates that the introduction of this scholarship has improved the A level grade attainment of A2B applicants.

11. Statistical analysis demonstrates the other successes of this scheme:

   • The increasing volume of applicants has risen from 529 in 2007 to 830 in 2011 and the number being admitted to Birmingham via this route has increased from 125 in 2007 to 199 in 2010;

- The level of academic achievement at the University is strong with 12% in 2010 achieving at least one A* grade at A level;
- In 2010 85 (44%) achieved the standard entry grades for their first choice course and were therefore awarded the A2B scholarship;
- The average percentage of A2B students qualifying for the scholarship over the last three years has been 34%;
- The academic achievement of A2B students remains strong with 60% of the 2009 cohort achieving either a first or 2.1 at graduation

Forward Thinking Programme

12. The University has introduced a series of progressive programmes over the past 3 years, recognising the value of consistent interventions with WP students through their school career. This is in line with findings from WP research and more recent HEFCE advice that highlights the value of such programmes. The University worked with 279 students from 3 school clusters in 2009/10. In 2010/11, this has expanded to include two cohorts in year 8, three cohorts in year 9, two cohorts in year 10 and one cohort in year 11. Selected students are identified by their school as being Gifted and Talented pupils who meet HEFCE targeting criteria for widening participation.

13. The programme involves a series of visits to the University, engagement with parents, mentoring in year 10 by existing undergraduates and support with revision and post 16 progression. The first cohort of this programme will move into post-16 education in 2011/12, at which point we will have a baseline on which to set a target comparing the proportion of the students we work with that move to level 3 against the local average. In 2013/14, we will have a baseline from which we can compare the proportion of students that we have worked with as part of our pre-16 interventions who apply to HE with the local average. Both targets will be added in later access agreements. Students who decide that they want to apply to the University in the future will be able to do so through our A2B Programme.

Aimhigher

14. The University has played a leading role in the success of the Aimhigher activities in collaboration with other institutions in the West Midlands. We believe that this work has a significant impact on the aspirations of young people. The area Aimhigher office is currently hosted at University of Birmingham, and we are in discussions with our three HEI partners to retain it after the withdrawal of Government funding, in order to facilitate and evaluate the new collaborative work which we will develop to build on the success of Aimhigher in our area. In contributing to the current success of Aimhigher, we have participated in the following activities:

- Primary School engagement project aimed at years 5 and 6;
- Masterclasses for years 10 to 13;
- Residential activity (see below);
- A programme of information, advice and guidance to under 16s; and
- The Aimhigher Associate Programme.

15. In 2009/10, 41 students worked as Aimhigher Associates, providing one to one support for 232 young people further 30 students provided mentoring for our institutional programmes During that year we also funded an e-mentoring programme with the Brightside Trust that complements our face to face programmes. The recent Aimhigher report demonstrates the motivational impact of this work on young learners. 148 students worked as general student ambassadors supporting school visits and open days, and a further 52 students provided 'shadowing' experiences for our A2B scheme**.** The use of current students, many of whom are WP students themselves, provides powerful role models for the students being supported.

Academic Enrichment Programme

16. Each year, the Academic Enrichment Programme supports 100 able WP students, boosting their academic performance and enabling them to apply to high quality degree programmes, often associated with the professions. This project was funded initially by the Sutton Trust and Goldman Sachs Foundation, and is supported currently by a combination of University funding and philanthropic donations. For three consecutive years, we have hosted 100 year 12 students on a 5 day residential course. This is the beginning of a longer term intervention involving e-mentoring; support with drafting a university application; and study skills support. 57 of 132 of the participating students applied for a degree programme at the University of Birmingham via the A2B scheme in 2009-10. Of these, 45 students received an A2B offer, and 16 were successful in gaining a place. Of the remaining participants, a significant number were successful in securing a place at another University, which for many had not been regarded as a viable option prior to joining the scheme.

Summer Schools

17. In 2009/10, we hosted 96 year 10 students on two Aimhigher funded summer schools which offered a multi disciplinary experience of HE. In a separate initiative we hosted 104 students on a University funded residential course dedicated to the Health Professions.

Realising Opportunities Programme

18. The University of Birmingham is a member of Realising Opportunities (RO), a unique collaboration of 12 research intensive universities working together to promote fair access and social mobility of students from under-represented groups. The Realising Opportunities programme provides support for students through interventions designed to raise aspirations and enable them to demonstrate their potential for success at a research intensive university. These interventions are offered both at their local participating university, and nationally, so that the student can tailor the programme to meet their own needs and interests. The programme includes a national conference which is a compulsory element for all participating students.

19. Each student is supported through the programme by a student e-mentor. The mentor, an undergraduate student from one of the 12 universities, provides ongoing support and encouragement. Successful completion of RO, which includes a robust academic element, will lead to students receiving an alternative offer through UCAS from us.

School Visits

20. The University's Outreach team also organise a number of large scale events for pupils in years 7-11, known as the RAISE Programme (Raising Aspirations in Secondary Education). The 2009/10 programme brought 1522 students onto campus, providing a first contact with University life. They participated in the various initiatives, including: Year 7 Christmas Science lectures; Year 9 Physics Big Quiz; Year 10 Biology Big Quiz; Year 10 Birmingham Science Festival; and Year 11 History Quest Day.

21. In addition, we run a programme of school visits to campus tailored to specific disciplines, and are usually for groups of around 50 pupils from years 9-11. We hosted 64 such visits involving 2500 students in 2009/10.

22. For our school visits we carry out additional participant monitoring to ensure schools are targeting appropriate students. This shows that for 09/10:

- 51% of students on school visits are from white backgrounds, 39% were from non white backgrounds and 10% did not provide the information.

- Use of the Aimhigher database for visits analysing collected postcodes shows that the average Index of Multiple Deprivation score for our school visits was 71%;
- 72% of schools visits were from Birmingham and Solihull, 28% from the wider West Midlands and beyond.
- 49% stated parents had no history of HE.

Proposed Contribution Band

23. We are proud of our strong access and retention record that is outlined above, and which has been highly commended by both HEFCE and the QAA for being progressive and sector-leading. On the basis of this assessment, we feel the combination of our performance compared to our peers and the scale and impact of our outreach activities places us in a position to propose a contribution level of **29%** of our Additional Fee Income, or £870 per student per annum. This will be invested into our access and retention measures.
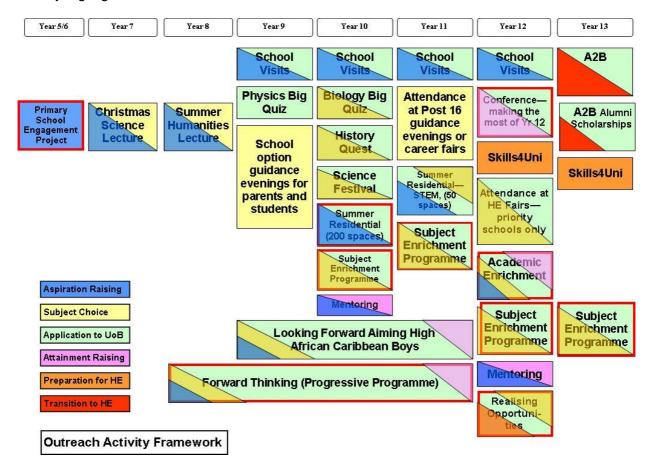

Expenditure on Access and Retention Measures

24. This Access Agreement proposes an increase on our current expenditure to around £15.2m by 2016/17, which will include additional investment on outreach and retention activities of around £4.2m per annum more than under our current Access Agreement. The remaining increase will be in our progressive financial aid package, which will be phased in over the next five years to replace our current Birmingham Grant and Scholarship scheme. We estimate that this package will offer generous, flexible support to over 350 Home state school students eligible to receive Free School Meals; a further 1800 students from homes with residual household incomes of less than £16,190; and around a further 2500 students from homes that have residual household incomes of up to £42,600. In total, around 4,650 students, or around 30% of our undergraduate population are likely to benefit from this awards package by 2016/17.

25. In particular, we are proposing to substantially increase our investment in the following activities, which are outlined in more detail in the following section. Together, we believe that this range of activities ensures a spread of interventions throughout the educational career of a child from year 7 to year 13; offers a 'ladder of engagement', starting with low engagement visits to campus, and extending into intensive courses that lead to University admissions; and takes full account of our aim to compensate for the removal of funding from Aimhigher, and the funding constraints placed on Schools. Therefore, we will:

- Expand our flagship A2B programme beyond the West Midlands;
- Fund the continuation of the most effective Aimhigher activities and network supporting regional activities;
- Develop the Realising Opportunities Programme once the pilot has been completed and evaluated;
- Expand the 'Forward Thinking' progressive programmes with Gifted and Talented WP students;
- Invest in our Internship programme and introduce a series of 'Access to the Professions' days for students, careers advisors and heads of sixth form;
- Expand our monitoring and evaluation capability through the development of a WP Research Institute housed in our School of Education and, for example, by improving student tracking by linking databases;
- Expand our capacity to fully implement contextual admissions.

Additional Access Measures

26. Over the next five years, we will focus the additional investment outlined above on our proven progressive and intensive outreach programmes to strengthen our position in the top quartile of

English Russell Group universities. Our existing framework is outlined below, with new areas of activity highlighted in red:

Outreach Activity Framework

| Year 5/6 | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 | Year 12 | Year 13 |

Legend:
- Aspiration Raising
- Subject Choice
- Application to UoB
- Attainment Raising
- Preparation for HE
- Transition to HE

Elements shown: Primary School Engagement Project, Christmas Science Lecture, Summer Humanities Lecture, School Visits, Physics Big Quiz, Biology Big Quiz, History Quest, Science Festival, School option guidance evenings for parents and students, Attendance at Post 16 guidance evenings or career fairs, Summer Residential (200 spaces), Summer Residential—STEM, (50 spaces), Subject Enrichment Programme, Mentoring, Looking Forward Aiming High African Caribbean Boys, Forward Thinking (Progressive Programme), Conference—making the most of Yr 12, Skills4Uni, Attendance at HE Fairs—priority schools only, Academic Enrichment, Subject Enrichment Programme, Mentoring, Realising Opportunities, A2B, A2B Alumni Scholarships, Skills4Uni, Subject Enrichment Programme.

Geographic expansion of Access 2 Birmingham

27. The current A2B scheme is recognised as a jewel in the University's crown and has a demonstrable track record of success. In order to continue our progression towards the target previously set in our current agreement of admitting 5% of our UG home intake through this route as the University increases the minimum entry grades for admission, we will extend the geographical scope of the scheme to include those neighbouring regions areas which are not within easy distance of a selecting institution. We intend that this extension will lead to further increases in the number of applications from, and our intake of, A2B students. We have therefore set a target of 46% of the students we work with in our intensive post-16 outreach programmes applying to us, and, specifically, an intake of 6% from A2B in 2016/17.

Aimhigher

28. The University of Birmingham has formed a collaborative partnership with Aston University, Birmingham City University, and University College Birmingham to take forward the legacy of the Birmingham and Solihull Aimhigher (AH) partnership. Established in 2004, the partnership of five HEIs, two local authorities and 118 local schools, academies and FE/6th Form Colleges in Birmingham and Solihull has proved very successful in developing an extensive provision of widening access activities, including collaborative provision of mentoring, masterclasses, summer schools and IAG activities. The new partnership will seek to take forward this work, focusing upon pre-16 education within a new organisational model which draws upon the experience and successful initiatives of the AH partnership. The University of Birmingham will jointly fund this 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 Birmingham's own extensive programme of widening access and fair access measures outlined elsewhere in this agreement.

29. In addition to supporting the coordinating collaborative function we will be:

- Integrating 2 outreach posts formerly supported through Aimhigher funding into the core Outreach team
- Continuing to deliver our Primary School engagement project aimed at years 5 and 6; Masterclasses for years 10 to 13; and Year 10 Residential activity for 100 learners, in addition to the Health Professions Residential already funded by the University
- An Undergraduate collaborative mentoring programme in partnership with our partner HEIs in our local collaborative partnership.

Realising Opportunities Programme

30. The Realising Opportunities Strategy Group has unanimously agreed that the 12 participating institutions will each commit £35,000 to the scheme in 2012-13. This commitment will ensure that the momentum of the programme is maintained, will enable the recruitment of a third cohort of students, and will build up the evidence base for evaluating the impact of the project. It will also support us achieving our target of 46% of the students we work with in our post-16 intensive outreach programmes applying to us.

Improving Retention

31. The University has an excellent record on retention. As noted above, over 95.5% of our full time first degree entrants are in higher education in the following academic year, and we have a projected completion rate of over 95%, compared to a benchmark of around 91%, according to the latest set of HESA Performance Indicators. The main reason for this is the high quality of our learning and teaching coupled with excellent academic support and personal tutoring in our Schools, as recognised by the QAA in their recent Institutional Audit. Our academic support is complemented by specialist student services (e.g. counselling, disability services, support for care leavers and parents), our residential wardens, our Student Funding Office who deliver a range of financial literacy courses, and the exemplary work of the Guild of Students. In this academic year, we have also brought together all our support and training for academic staff into a new Centre for Learning and Academic Development (CLAD). From August 2011, a new team within Student Support and Development will have responsibility for enhancing academic teaching, improving the student experience, and disseminating good practice. In addition, we have a variety of specialist support for students who are care leavers, parents, or who have disabilities.

32. In terms of our targets, our retention work will enable us to support an increasing number of our A2B students gain a first or 2i and we have set ourselves a target of 65% of this group will achieve such a classification by 2016/17. In addition, we will track these students through to their post-graduation activities and have set a target of 78% gaining a graduate-level job by 2016/17.

Peer Mentoring

33. In addition, and in order to rationalise the range of peer mentoring programmes that is currently operating across campus, a significant investment will support an integrated university-wide mentoring and buddying scheme. This investment will support all training, management and review costs.

Enhanced Academic Support Tutoring

34. We intend to invest in an enhanced academic tutoring system, based on existing best practice within the University Students will have regular (usually weekly) meetings in small groups with an academic tutor to work on specific problems, texts and issues arising from their curriculum. This will be contextualised to specific disciplines, but all tutorials provide the opportunity for

students to receive feedback, enhance their learning capabilities, and develop transferable skills and the confidence to employ them. The tutorial system provides early indications if a student is experiencing difficulties and appropriate information, advice and guidance from the range of University support services. Tutorials also identify academic potential and talent and signpost students to further opportunities to develop their skills, interests, and engagement in the life of the University and the wider community.

Improving Students' Transition to HE

35. Allied to this tutorial system all students will be offered, at the half-way point in their first year, an individual transition review. This will consist of a substantial individual review meeting by their personal tutor to discuss detailed reports from their academic tutor, module tutors, feedback on assessments and other indications of academic progress. The personal and student will agree an academic needs analysis, which will then be addressed as needed through a range of support programmes for academic writing, language tuition, numeracy, maths and statistics, as well as university online study skills and personal development resources. The Guild of Students, Careers Centre and Student Support Services will also take an active part in transition review days in the University's Schools. This formalised early intervention process will ensure students engage actively with their own transition from schools/foundation years/FE to university, are fully aware of the opportunities available to them and that students who are struggling are identified and supported appropriately. It also provides an opportunity to restate and elaborate upon the initial information provided at Induction.

36. We are also committed to further developing our student orientation guides, Welcome Website which covers a wide range of activities that provide an introduction to life at Birmingham, our Staying Local event for new students, and a range of wellbeing and support campaigns. Additionally, we run an effective student mentors scheme and a Guide to Effective Learning website that provides a range of support on the learning experience for new students.

37. Students will be informed clearly of their rights and responsibilities as active participants in academic tutorials and transition review, and the system will be part of our robust quality assurance procedures. It is also intended to have a substantial impact on our ability to attract students from disadvantaged backgrounds as we will be able to demonstrate that we focus our transition and academic support on students as individuals rather than on students in groups defined by their background.

Employability

38. The University has recently made a £3.5m investment in its employability strategy, recognising that improving access to the professions should be a key outcome of our distinctive student experience. A range of initiatives have been defined to respond to increasing student expectations in this area, including expanding our award-winning Personal Skills Award by 25% by 2015/16, and extending our internship programme from around 40 awards currently to around 220 in 2012/13 and over 300 in 2015/16. Participants undertake unpaid or low-paid work experience opportunities linked to a professional career during their summer vacations, with the awards providing essential financial support. These students would not otherwise have been able to pursue these opportunities for financial reasons. The award, which can be up to £800, can be utilised to fund placements between from 1 week to the whole vacation period. In the past we have funded a wide variety of work experience across a range of sectors and professions including the Arts, health care (both in the UK and overseas), community development, scientific and biological research, marketing and international development opportunities.

39. Much of the investment we are committed to on employability, and in particular our expanded internship programme, is specifically aimed at improving access to the professions for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. It therefore not only supports our efforts to improve student

retention and success, but also acts as a significant part of our outreach and recruitment activity by making us more attractive to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

<u>Contextual Admissions</u>

40. The University of Birmingham has been a strong advocate of incorporating a range of contextual data in its admissions process as an aid to widening access to students with potential which has been hidden by their previous life and educational experiences. We are exploring through our Senate how we might develop further this area and utilise fully the additional information provided by UCAS from 2011/12 to develop a number of sophisticated options to enhance our existing use of the full range of contextual data that will enable us to identify and 'flag' those applicants with the greatest potential. In the first instance, however, we will ensure that our admissions policy and process is fully compliant with both the 'Good Practice Statement on Admissions Policies' and 'Principles for the use of Contextual Data' published by Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA).

Financial Support

41. We believe that in the new fees regime, funding support will have both a real and perceived importance to WP students. Therefore, our new financial aid package is both highly progressive and highly targeted. We will match the £2m from the Government's National Scholarship Programme in 2016/17 with over £8.6m of our own resource to deliver a set of awards which will not only improve the recruitment of disadvantaged students onto our programmes but will also, crucially, support their retention.

42. Our distinctive, high quality student experience has a significant residential component which enables our students to be fully embedded within an international community of scholars. We want to ensure that access to this experience is as wide as possible and, whilst recognising that cultural barriers exist for certain segments of our community, we are committed to alleviating the financial barriers which prevent our most disadvantaged students from participating to the same extent as their more advantaged peers. In that regard, we will offer our eligible students the ability to apply their financial support to the costs of living in one of our Halls of Residence in the first instance. For those eligible students who choose to live at home or who would prefer to offset their later debt, we will then offer the ability to apply the same award, or lower in the case of our top band National Scholarship for those eligible to receive Free School Meals, as a fee waiver.

<u>National Scholarships</u>

43. In 2012/13, our National Scholarships will be available to all Home state school students who fall beneath the qualifying income threshold for Free School Meals of £16,190. For those who were eligible to receive Free School Meals or who are classed as Care Leavers we will offer free accommodation in one of our Halls of Residence up to the value of £4,750 or, for those who choose to live at home or who wish to offset the deferred cost of their education, a fee waiver of £3,000. For those additional students who do not qualify for Free School Meals but who have an income of under £16,190 we will offer an award of £3,000 that can be applied to their accommodation costs or as a fee waiver. If these criteria were applied to our current student body, over 2,150 Birmingham students would be eligible for one of our National Scholarships in 2016/17, which could result in a threefold increase on the HEFCE target in that year.

<u>Chamberlain Awards</u>

44. In addition to our National Scholarships, all our Home state school students who have residual household incomes of between £16,191 and £42,600 will be eligible for financial support of between £2,000 and £250. From £16,191 to £25,000, an award of £2,000 will be available to all

eligible state school students; and from £25,001 to £42,600 we will offer awards which start at £1,750. All our state school students who have residual household incomes of below £42,600 will be guaranteed a minimum award of £250. By extending our financial support beyond the National Scholarships, we aim to alleviate the costs of Higher Education for a further 2,500 students in 2016/17.

Targets & Milestones

45. On the basis of our strong track record in outreach that places us in the upper quartile of the English universities of the Russell Group, we believe that it is important that we are judged by our relative performance in the HESA Performance Indicators. We will therefore aim to maintain our position in the top quartile of the English universities of the Russell Group for the life of this Access Agreement. In addition, we are proposing a number of internal targets which will not only satisfy OFFA guidelines but will also contribute to our monitoring of effective outreach activities:

   • Proportion of young people from our pre-16 progressive activity target group on level 3 programmes is greater than the local average for Young People from socially disadvantaged groups;
   • Proportion of young people from our pre-16 progressive activity target group applying to a FT place in HE is greater than local average for Young People from socially disadvantaged groups;
   • Percentage of students engaged in our post 16 Outreach programmes applying to the University of Birmingham;
   • Percentage of entrants via our Access to Birmingham Programme;
   • Continuation of students who entered via Access to Birmingham is comparable to overall cohort;
   • Percentage of students who entered via Access to Birmingham gaining a 2i or 1st;
   • Percentage of students who entered via Access to Birmingham gaining a graduate level job within 6 months of graduating.

46. By setting these targets we will demonstrate the impact of our outreach and retention activity at each of the key stages between 'first contact' with the target group for our pre-16 progressive activity through to their first job after graduation. By monitoring progress at each of these key points, we will be able to identify where appropriate interventions need to be made to improve our approach to our outreach and retention activities.

Monitoring & Evaluation Arrangements

47. We have an Evaluation Plan which outlines students targeted for particular activity, the data to be collected linked to its degree of intensity, tracking of students where appropriate on particular programmes, and qualitative work. Widening Participation is overseen by the University's Learning and Teaching Committee, chaired by the PVC for Education and with representation from the Guild of Students, which receives annual progress reports and approves WPSA and OFFA reporting. There is also an annual report on the A2B recruitment cycle to a committee, chaired by the PVC for Education and including Guild representation. Our evaluation is largely 'action research' to evaluate the outcomes and success of particular programmes and inform future delivery.

48. We have worked extensively with our Aimhigher area team on evaluation, making use of a partnership database for institutional activity where appropriate and contributing to and drawing on best practice. This has enabled significant progress in terms of data collection, compliance with data gathering protocols and standardisation of evaluation questionnaires. It is our intention to work collaboratively with local partner HEIs to continue with this approach post Aimhigher. Indeed, the Birmingham and Solihull Higher Education Progression Partnership is

developing a comprehensive impact and evaluation plan which will monitor student engagement in less intensive activities, track the engagement and progression of learners in intensive activity organised by the partnership, and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the partnership activity. Evaluation will include both quantitative and qualitative measures and will provide evidence to partner HEIs and schools engaged in the programme.

49. The Realising Opportunities Pilot project is currently undergoing extensive evaluation looking at the outcomes for learners and the wider impact of the partnership. This will inform the future continuation of the activity.

50. We have a comprehensive evaluation programme for our Access to Birmingham programme including monitoring of applications through to acceptance by our Outreach team and tracking students through to graduation. Progress has been made in making some of this data available to academic colleagues through our on-line data systems.

Provision of Information to Prospective Students

51. The priorities for communications to prospective students are that we provide clear, timely advice and information which is enhanced by our extensive programme of face to face communications with students in school and their advisors. Market research has been conducted with students, prospective students and their parents in the development of our messages and information channels. The University has also consulted national and university market research to determine which information is of most importance to the students and their advisors.

52. Recruitment activities for this cohort of students are already underway, and the University has consulted with the Guild of Students in the construction of this campaign with members of the Guild included on the project team. The Guild has also contributed to the Undergraduate Prospectus for all potential students. An 'early alert' online service to which enquirers can subscribe is in operation providing prospective students and their advisors with the latest Government and University information and advice about the new fees and funding arrangements.

53. Details of fees and funding arrangements will also be posted to the website and will be regularly updated as part of the Key Information Set initiative. Subscribers to our online customer relationship management system (CRM) will be provided with personalised messages about fees and funding packages and the University will provide the relevant information to UCAS and the SLC in order to populate their information channels

54. Face to face contact is recognised as one of the most influential channels of information, providing opportunities for prospective students to ask questions about the new system. To ensure that recruitment staff at the University are expert in the new arrangements, a series of briefing sessions are being provided. An FAQ document is in circulation and will be updated to augment information from the Department of Business, Industry and Skills that will ensure that all front line staff can provide detailed information to all enquiring students, parents and teachers during school visits, at recruitment events held at the University as well as in the course of their application to Birmingham. Regular contact is being maintained with BIS.

55. Advisors on each of the outreach programmes are also being briefed on the details of the new regime so that they can provide detailed and expert advice to the students who are participating in the A2B programme as well as the progressive programmes outlined in this document. Being able to provide authoritative information about the new regime will be critical in ensuring that younger students are not deterred from considering a university career in the future due to misapprehensions about the nature of the new system.

56. At the point of submitting the Access Agreement, information about Birmingham's proposed fee and support package will be available on the website, and dedicated promotional material distributed via all HE fairs, school visits and events will direct all applicants to the relevant web pages.

57. Finally, at the point at which the OFFA agreement is confirmed, the University will produce a 'Fees and Funding Booklet' that will be mailed to all enquirers, distributed at all talks, visits and events, and made available on line and to all CRM enquirers. This will include information about the fee, the financial package, and the ways in which students can earn whilst they learn, manage their money and plan for their financial futures and will form part of the communications to our WP students. It will also provide links to other authoritative information sources including the Student Loans Company, Directgov and UCAS. The priorities for communications to Prospective students are that we provide clear, timely advice and information which is enhanced by our extensive programme of face to face communications with students in school and their advisors. Market research has been conducted with students, prospective students and their parents in the development of our messages and information channels. The University has also consulted national and university market research to determine which information is of most importance to the students and their advisors.

Table 5 - Milestones and targets

Table 5a - Statistical milestones and targets relating to your applicants, entrants or student body (e.g. HESA, UCAS or internal targets)

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 maximium)
				2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
Low-income backgrounds	Proportion of young people from our pre-16 progressive activity target group on level 3 programmes is greater than local average for YP from socially disadvantaged groups	2011-12							Baseline to be established in 2011-12 as first year cohort progress post 16
Applications	Proportion of young people from our pre-16 progressive activity target group applying to a FT place in HE is greater than local average for YP from socially disadvantaged groups	2013-2014							First cohort will not apply to HE until 2013-2014. Interim milestone above.
Applications	Percentage of students engaged in our post 16 Outreach programmes applying to the University of Birmingham	2009	0.42	0.43	0.44	0.45	0.46	0.46	
Location (other measure - please give details in the next column)	Percentage of entrants via our Access to Birmingham Programme	2010	0.04	0.04	0.045	0.05	0.055	0.06	Students on our Access to Birmingham have been targeted on the basis of a basket of measures that includes the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), POLAR2 and School performance level. This is explained in more detail in the narrative, and is broadly analgous to the 'Low Participation Neighbourhood' Performance Indicator.
Non continuation: Young (HESA Table T3a)	Progression of students who entered via A2B is comparable to overall cohort	2009-2010	0.93	0.93	0.94	0.94	0.95	0.96	
Completion/Non continuation (other - please give details in the next column)	Percentage of students who entered via A2B gaining 2.1 or above	2009-10	0.6	0.62	0.63	0.64	0.65	0.65	

Completion/Non continuation (other - please give details in the next column)	Percentage of students who entered via A2B gaining a graduate level job within 6 months of graduating.	2009-2010	0.69	0.74	0.75	0.76	0.77	0.78	

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 maximium)
				2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Number of students engaged in on-campus widening participation actiivty	2009-2010	5000	5500	5750	6000	6000	6000	Tailored school visits, Raise Programme and Masterclass Programme
Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Volume of students engaged in Forward Thinking Progressive Programme	2010-2011	440	490	640	740	840	890	
Outreach / WP activity (summer schools)	Number of WP students engaged in summer schools	2010-2011	100	200	200	200	200	200	Baseline data is for insitutionally funded places.

Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Number of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds engaged in intensive activty 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 activty 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 activty 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)

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

Name of institution	University of Birmingham

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

The University of Birmingham offers an inspirational student experience at a selective leading global University. We are proud of our strong outreach and retention record that has been built up over a long period of time, and which places us in the vanguard of the Russell Group.

We provide a Postgraduate Diploma Higher Education qualification as part of our taught postgraduate (GT) Initial Teacher Training (ITT) provision. While it has not been made explicit in our original 12/13 Access Agreement, the University will extend all appropriate outreach and retention activities that have been described to our GT ITT community.

The estimated expenditure submitted in our original Access Agreement was based on consideration of our entire student community. The narrative and our specific examples focused on our home undergraduate population, which given the proportion of our total community that this group represents, was entirely appropriate. In the light of the announcement of the new funding arrangements for ITT students however, we would look to clarify to OFFA that existing outreach and retention expenditure projections include provision for ITT students.

More details are given in the appropriate sections below, but it is worth clarifying here that the University of Birmingham would not expect to extend financial support to our GT ITT students for three key reasons:

1) OFFA have indicated that postgraduate students funded by the TDA are not eligible for the National Scholarship Programme.
2) Postgraduate students have already received the benefit of support available at undergraduate level.
3) The majority of University of Birmingham entrants (using previous years' qualification data) would be eligible for new TDA training bursaries.

Notwithstanding their exclusion from the student support mechanisms outlined in our original Access Agreement, the student hardship fund would remain accessible by GT ITT students experiencing financial hardship.

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

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

The University of Birmingham provides postgraduate ITT provision and the fee for these programmes in 2012/13 will be £9,000.

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

The University of Birmingham does not intend to increase the OFFA spend from that which was submitted in our original 12/13 Access Agreement. As indicated below, our intended OFFA expenditure, including the incorporation of ITT students, is still within a tolerance band of the 30% of any additional income, which has been outlined by OFFA as the benchmark for an institution with a recruitment profile of that of Birmingham.

		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
UG & ITT students combined	Additional fee income	36,133,500	40,498,500	44,937,000	45,907,000
	Amount spent on OFFA	11,421,225	12,234,450	12,905,675	13,108,000
	% of additional income attributable to OFFA	**31.6%**	**30.2%**	**28.7%**	**28.6%**

As will be explained in later sections a great deal of the retention, and some of our access activities, will be available and promoted to our PG ITT students. This cohort was part of our thinking when the original agreement was constructed.

D. Financial support for trainees

The University of Birmingham does not intend to provide additional financial support for Postgraduate ITT students. Many Postgraduate ITT students will be entitled to the new training bursaries from 2012/13 and will have benefited from the UG support available when studying for their first degree.

The typical entry profile of our students indicates that over 90% of our students would be eligible for some form of TDA bursary (based on quality threshold only). In 2011 almost 98% of students were eligible

Cohort	Class I	Class II (Division I)	Class II (Division II)	Class I & II combined
2007	11.49%	56.08%	26.69%	94.26%
2008	11.07%	66.78%	17.65%	95.50%
2009	15.79%	59.36%	21.93%	97.08%
2010	11.35%	62.27%	22.70%	96.32%
2011	16.04%	60.75%	21.16%	97.95%

UoB GT ITT Population: Source Internal November snapshot data

Part three: outreach and retention

E. Outreach and retention work

In terms of retention, the University would extend all of the appropriate initiatives outlined within our original 12/13 Access Agreement to our GT ITT students. As we state in paragraphs 1 and 31 of our agreement respectively

…the exceptional quality of our students and the high quality of their teaching and learning environment ensures that we are able to retain a higher proportion of our intake than either the average of our peers or the majority of the English Higher Education sector.

…over 95.5% of our full time first degree entrants are in higher education in the following academic year, and we have a projected completion rate of over 95%, compared to a benchmark of around 91%, according to the latest set of HESA Performance Indicators. The main reason for this is the high quality of our learning and teaching coupled with excellent academic support and personal tutoring in our Schools, as recognised by the QAA in their recent Institutional Audit. Our academic support is complemented by specialist student services (e.g. counselling, disability services, support for care leavers and parents), our residential wardens, our Student Funding Office who deliver a range of financial literacy courses, and the exemplary work of the Guild of Students. In this [2011/12] academic year, we have also brought together all our support and training for academic staff into a new Centre for Learning and Academic Development (CLAD).

As of August 2011, a new team within Student Support and Development has taken ownership of responsibility for enhancing academic teaching, improving the student experience, and disseminating good practice. In addition, we have a variety of specialist support for students who are care leavers, parents, or who have disabilities. All of these support facilities are available to our PG ITT students.

It is also important to note that around 1/3 of our entire GT ITT intake are University of Birmingham alumni and will therefore have benefited from our original UG related outreach and retention activities.

	UoB graduates		Others	
Cohort	No.	%age	No.	%age
2007	117	38.61%	186	61.39%
2008	117	39.13%	182	60.87%
2009	148	41.69%	207	58.31%
2010	114	33.14%	230	66.86%
2011	105	33.23%	211	66.77%

UoB GT ITT Population: Source Internal November snapshot data

Part four: Targets, milestones and monitoring

F. Targets and milestones

The University would not look to set any additional targets or milestones beyond those which have already been articulated in our 12/13 Access Agreement (Page 10 – Under the heading of Targets & Milestones).

We would however note that, in line with the TDA guidance on the recruitment and retention of under-represented groups in the teaching profession, the University will promote the use of data to internally review our performance using local recruitment data on ethnicity and degree classifications.

Furthermore we note that the current proportion of GT ITT students, who are classified as BME, is higher than the University Home Undergraduate average and higher than the national average quoted in annex C of your guidance (12%). We feel that this is a result of the University's ability to produce and attract strong BME graduates on to our GT ITT programmes

	Asian		Black		Mixed		"Other"		Unknown		White	
Cohort	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
2007	47	15.36%	1	0.33%	5	1.63%	3	0.98%	18	5.88%	232	75.82%
2008	52	16.61%	7	2.24%	6	1.92%	1	0.32%	11	3.51%	236	75.40%
2009	50	14.08%	5	1.41%	7	1.97%	1	0.28%	12	3.38%	280	78.87%
2010	49	14.24%	5	1.45%	9	2.62%		0.00%	19	5.52%	262	76.16%
2011	50	15.82%	7	2.22%	5	1.58%		0.00%	16	5.06%	238	75.32%

UoB GT ITT Population : Source Internal November snapshot data

The University's School of Education provide high levels of personal tutorial support on ITT courses which, as OFSTED have endorsed, lead to excellent retention rates.

In terms of under represented groups it is worth noting the University's Primary Admissions policy, which will consider applicants from under-represented groups for interview without the 2.1 degree status. This does not mean that they will be automatically offered a place but allows them an opportunity to demonstrate the many other skills and experiences they can bring to our programmes

G. Your monitoring arrangements

In completing this annex we have assembled data sets relating to age, gender, onward employability, degree completion and degree attainment information. This will be monitored on an annual basis to ensure that there are no significant changes in our profile following the changes to ITT funding. The Student Access and Progression Committee, Chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education, will also monitor data related to ITT students as part of its overall monitoring remit.

Part five: Information to students

H. Provision of information to trainees

The information will be communicated through the same channels as for our UG provision See paragraph 51 page11)

"The priorities for communications to prospective students are that we provide clear, timely advice and information which is enhanced by our extensive programme of face to face communications with students in school and their advisors. Market research has been conducted with students, prospective students and their parents in the development of our messages and information channels. The University has also consulted national and university market research to determine which information is of most importance to the students and their advisors".

Initial teacher training fees and financial support template 2012-13 - mainstream ITT providers

Institution name: University of Birmingham
Institution code: 10006840

Table 6 - Targets and milestones

Table 6a - Statistical milestones and targets relating to your ITT applicants, entrants or student body (e.g. HESA, GTTR or internal targets)

Course type	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 maximium)
					2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
Postgraduate	Gender (e.g. male primary teachers)	We will not be setting additional milestones for ITT students but will be monitoring our recruitment and retention data as outlined in our original agreement								
Postgraduate	Black and minority ethnic groups	We will not be setting additional milestones for ITT students but will be monitoring our recruitment and retention data as outlined in our original agreement								
Postgraduate	Location (e.g. low participation neighbourhoods, please give detail in the next column)	We will not be setting additional milestones for ITT students but will be monitoring our recruitment and retention data as outlined in our original agreement								
Postgraduate	Socio-economic (e.g. NS-SEC, please give details in the next column)	We will not be setting additional milestones for ITT students but will be monitoring our recruitment and retention data as outlined in our original agreement								
Postgraduate	Completion / Non-continuation	We will not be setting additional milestones for ITT students but will be monitoring our recruitment and retention data as outlined in our original agreement								
Postgraduate	Low income backgrounds	We will not be setting additional milestones for ITT students but will be monitoring our recruitment and retention data as outlined in our original agreement								
Postgraduate	Disabled	We will not be setting additional milestones for ITT students but will be monitoring our recruitment and retention data as outlined in our original agreement								

Table 6b - Other milestones and targets relating to ITT students

Alongside applicant and entrant targets, you may wish 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.

				Yearly milestones/targets (numeric where possible, however you may use text)	

Course Type	Please select milestone/target type from the drop down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Baseline year	Baseline data	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximium)