

UNIVERSITY OF HULL: ACCESS AGREEMENT 2012/13

Introduction

The University of Hull intends to charge a tuition fee in excess of £6000 for full time undergraduate entrants in 2012/13¹. In the changed funding environment the University needs to generate from tuition fees, income sufficient to ensure financial sustainability and deliver an excellent student experience. The University is mindful of the need to sustain, and where possible, improve access and student retention. This Access Agreement sets out our intentions and ambitions.

Using the HESA Performance Indicators we have carefully reviewed University performance over a ten year period. This shows the University to have performed consistently ahead of the sector average across a wide range of access and retention measures for full time students. However, we are not complacent and we recognise that current expenditure on bursaries might be more effectively targeted. This agreement therefore reflects:

- Increased emphasis on outreach rather than bursary provision;
- Targeted activity directed at performance now closer to the sector average (primarily retention);
- Enhanced monitoring and evaluation of outcomes.

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

1.1 Tuition fees for new entrants in 2012-13

Standard fee

The University intends to charge a standard full time Home/EU undergraduate tuition fee of £9000 during the 2012/13 transitional year².

Full time undergraduates	£9000
Foundation Degree Honours top up (from 2014/15)	£9000

Non Standard fees

As part of our commitment to access we shall continue to charge a lower fee for Foundation Degree programmes which disproportionately attract students from under-represented groups.

Foundation Degrees	£7000
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To protect access, particularly to STEM subjects, and to provide an access route for under-represented groups we shall continue to charge a lower fee for Foundation 'Year Zero' students.

¹ Applies to UK/EU students excluding NHS or TDA funded provision

² Includes the fee for Hull York Medical School (HYMS) MBBS, operated jointly with the University of York.

We wish also to continue to encourage students to take advantage of placement years both for reasons of enhancing employability and seeking to sustain modern language provision. We shall therefore charge a reduced fee for placements and year abroad introducing fee waivers for low income groups.

The following provision is not included in the financial calculations of additional income:

Foundation 'Year Zero'	£6000
Year abroad/placements (from 2014/15)	£4500

1.2 Estimated number of entrants at each fee level, including fees at £6,000 or below

See Annex E table 2 for details and commentary. Broadly the University anticipates up to a 10% reduction of intake in the transitional year 2012/13. Without successful interventions this proportion might be higher amongst under-represented groups and our expenditure on outreach and publicity is increased in 2011/12.

1.3 Real terms rises in fees for 2013-14 onward

All fees will rise annually in line with maximum increases set by the Government.

2. Expenditure on additional access and retention measures

2.1 Estimated spend on additional access and retention measures

Our estimate is: £ 4.7m (22% of fee income above £6k) in 2012/13.

2.2 Assessment of access and retention

The University has a sound record, when compared to the national average and benchmarks, across a broad range of access indicators. Over the eight years for which data are available, the University has performed consistently strongly for: recruitment from state schools, low participation neighbourhoods, mature students, students in receipt of disabled students allowance and part time students. Our emphasis in this Agreement is concentrated on securing and developing our performance. One performance indicator, relating to specified social class, has declined in the latest data set such that our performance aligns more closely with the sector average. It is not yet fully understood whether this is a temporary fluctuation, or reflects a changed behaviour pattern during a period of intense competition for places.

The University retention record is also strong: beating benchmark and sector average for seven out of the eight years for progression after year of entry (Table 3a HESA PIs all FT 1st Degree) and the sector average for six out of eight years for completion (HESA PIs Table 5 FT Students Projected Outcome of being awarded a degree). We are conscious that the data suggest, although still a sound record against the sector we are now trending downwards again we are seeking fully to understand whether this is transitional or an established trend. Retention receives increased focus in our action plans. Employability has also been a strong performance measure with the University for many years outperforming the sector. This is now trending downwards and our retention measures include an emphasis on factors that contribute to employability.

3. Additional access measures

3.1 Outreach

Focus/priorities

As described above our access record is strong and we shall continue our broad range of activity working with specific schools in aspiration and attainment raising. We shall also be continuing to work collaboratively ensuring that the work of Aimhigher is continued as far as possible, sponsorship of an Academy and working through our Federation of Colleges and other networks (see below).

A major focus prior to and during 2012/13 will be explaining to potential students and parents the new fee structures and available student support. Notwithstanding the extensive support packages available for low income groups, this may not readily be recognised and it will be necessary to increase communication, information, advice and guidance (see section 6 below).

It is also possible that in the new fee environment students, particularly from under-represented groups, might be deterred from participation by direct costs associated with study. The National Scholarship Programme is a partial response to this issue but we consider that we should do more to help meet the potential concerns of these groups (see below section 3.3).

As evidenced above, the University has a good track record for access by under-represented groups. In terms of students from certain minority ethnic backgrounds the student population reflects our hinterland, but we have a strategic intent to be more ambitious recognising this is likely to be 'slow burn'.

Collaborative working

Collaborative working is given a high priority in our approach to access. For example:

- *Aimhigher* – as lead HEI for Aimhigher Humber, and hosting the key worker in Aimhigher York/North Yorkshire, the University recognises its increased responsibilities for widening participation within the region as the programme ends. We shall transfer-in both full-time Aimhigher Humber staff to improve our long-term outreach and enhance our IAG, monitoring and evaluation. An additional £280,000 is being spent by the University to support this move and replace Aimhigher subsidy of certain outreach activity.
- *Hull Children's University* – working in partnership delivering the provision of aspiration raising learning modules supported by local employers and University student mentors to pupils in primary schools located in the most disadvantaged areas of Hull.
- *Excellence Hub* – with the universities of Leeds, York, Hull and Sheffield this partnership targets high achieving students from currently under-represented groups from across the region to encourage and facilitate progression of the "most able, least likely" group of students.

Links with Schools and Colleges

Led at Pro Vice Chancellor level, with supporting administrative team, we intend to continue our extensive and longstanding work with schools and colleges particularly in our locality. Examples include:

- *Northern Academy* - the University is a lead sponsor of the Northern Academy in Hull due to open in September 2012. The Academy is located in an area of historically low attainment and low participation in HE.
- *University Technical College* - the University is directly involved as a sponsor of a proposed UTC in Hull for which a bid has recently been submitted.
- *Federation of Colleges* – led by the University this comprises seven colleges/institutions situated in areas of rural, urban or coastal deprivation and delivering Higher Education validated by the University. It has assumed roles formerly performed by the Yorkshire and Humberside East Lifelong Learning Network. The University has also mentored a member of the Federation through a process of merger with an under-performing college in the North Yorkshire area.
- *Associate Institutions Network (AIN)* – a pre-HE partnership with schools and colleges, focusing on: helping address social and economic challenges; encouraging learner progression to HE; and collaborative debate on pertinent educational policy and practice, including teacher training and continuing professional development. We intend to encourage into partnership additional primary and secondary schools based in areas of significant deprivation and offer a comprehensive programme of long term outreach activities.
- *North Yorkshire Coast* – our Scarborough campus provides a focal point for close partnership working along the North Yorkshire Coast. We will continue to take a lead in engagement with schools and colleges in Scarborough town and along the coastal strip for targeted aspiration raising and widening participation activities.

3.2 Student retention and success

Focus

Our focus will be on delivering a programme of measures that builds upon our strong record of support for under-represented groups (the financial summary annexed to this agreement relates to the cost of activity targeted at under-represented groups).. These include:

Personalisation programme - meeting the needs of individual students particularly those from under-represented groups by investing in academic and support posts to give more contact time.

Professionalising services - post entry support services crucial to academic success and retention for example, the Study Advice Service, Student Union Advice Service and Student Services will be enhanced and strengthened to provide access when needed and increasingly to adopt a pro-active approach. We will also examine introducing screening on entry and increases in our hardship provision.

Employability initiative - a wide range of measures which include piloting a Careers Adviser post aimed at pre-entry careers advice, incentivising placements by providing fee support for under-represented groups, increasing the availability of internships building upon previously externally funded initiatives.

Back on Course - engaging from 2011/12 with the HEFCE funded *Back on Course* initiative seeking to re-engage students who have withdrawn from their programme of study.

Academic enhancement - a series of learning and teaching support initiatives driven from our Learning and Teaching Support Unit focussing on curriculum reform designed to promote employability, study skills and citizenship.

Financial management skills - a series of interventions including within academic departments aimed at students with a propensity towards non-completion.

Social integration - as an aide to retention we intend to expand our 'buddying' scheme which currently applies only to international students. Potentially this will be particularly advantageous to under-represented groups who need additional support to integrate into the academic community.

Student data - a step change in the provision and use of management information to track, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions with under-represented students is in progress.

3.3 Financial support for students

National Scholarship Programme (NSP) matching

The indicative NSP allocation for 2012/13 is 177 scholarships totalling £531k. The University is committed to matching the total funding and subsequent allocations in the 2013 and 2014 academic years. The individual scholarships of £3000 will be allocated to eligible first year students who come from families with a household income of less than £25,000 per annum. The University is still considering the final details of possible further eligibility criteria particularly in the academic years 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 before maximum funding through this allocation method is available in 2014/15. Further details of these criteria will be available after modelling exercises and applicant focus groups have been completed by the middle of June 2011.

Fee Waivers

The University considers it appropriate to offer fee waivers and has committed 50% of the NSP and the University matched funding allocation to providing student fee waivers. This will constitute 50% of the individual £3000 scholarship awards provided to eligible students.

Additional Financial support

The remaining 50% of the scholarships will be available for students to set against upfront costs of their university education. It is part of our planning assumptions that in a higher fee environment upfront costs will become significant, particularly for under-represented groups, and enabling financial support to aid retention in a difficult financial climate will be our priority. These funds will be available to students as a credit allocated in their first year to set against a flexible range of goods and services to support retention. These may include university accommodation, travel support, university catering, books and learning materials, academic visits and fields trips.

4. Targets and Milestones

These are detailed in Annex B Table 5.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

This agreement will be monitored and evaluated annually. However, care will be taken not to react to the artificial circumstance of the transitional years. The University considers it would be unwise to reach significant conclusions during the first two years of the new fee structure.

The responsible officer at institutional level is the Pro Vice Chancellor (Engagement) assisted by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Learning and Teaching). Deans have responsibility at Faculty level.

The lead body is the Senior Management Team.

6. Provision of information to prospective students

The University will continue to provide detailed information on HE study across its outreach initiatives and website, including promoting diversity, welcoming students with disabilities, recognising non A-level qualifications, and/or prior and experiential learning.

In addition, as part of helping to mitigate perceived barriers to HE participation, the University will significantly enhance the Information Advice and Guidance component of its outreach work ensuring accurate financial and employment information is available in schools and colleges across the Humber and North Yorkshire coastal area for potential learners and their advisors.

We anticipate increased expenditure on information provision particularly during 2011/12 and 2012/13.

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Footnote

The views and opinions of current students have significantly informed the development of our access and retention strategies and drafting of this Agreement. Students have been

consulted through their Student Union sabbatical officers including via formal (consultative committees), semi formal (working breakfast), and informal consultative mechanisms with a wider range of students. We have also consulted with pre-entry Year 12/13 students.

This agreement seeks to adhere to the spirit of the OFFA guidance reflecting both the existing performance of the University and our ambitions to maintain and enhance access and retention. However, this document has been prepared in the context of a rapidly changing and uncertain environment. The University is currently drafting a new strategic plan to be adopted from July 2011. Issues may need to be revisited in light of any agreed significant changes of strategic direction. The University will contact OFFA to discuss any proposed revisions.

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

Name of institution	University of Hull
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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 University of Hull is the only Higher Education teacher training provider located in the Hull and Yorkshire coast region. Teacher Education is located within the Faculty of Education and is based in two departments; the Centre for Educational Studies situated on the Hull Campus, and the Scarborough School of Education at the Scarborough Campus.

Our ITT schools partnerships extend from Lincolnshire in the south to Cleveland in the North, and from the East Coast to York and Doncaster in the west of the Yorkshire region. Both rural and suburban schools are used for placements as well as schools serving areas of extreme deprivation. In Hull two thirds of

the City's "Super Output Areas" were in the most deprived 20 percent in England with over a quarter in the most deprived two percent. This social deprivation is mirrored in parts of the towns of Scarborough and north eastern coastal region and some areas of North Lincolnshire.

This regional context means that we are in a unique position in being able to train teachers to work with children and young people in schools facing the challenges of deprivation as well as those within schools whose pupil profile offers a different set of challenges. The rural location of many schools in North and East Yorkshire also presents different challenges in terms of access to remote locations and the diverse needs of these small village schools.

In addition, about 1 in 12 people living in the region are from ethnic groups other than white British. However, the majority of these are residents of West Yorkshire in cities such as Sheffield, Leeds and Bradford which do not fall within our Partnership and recruitment area. The University recruits a high proportion of students and trainees from within our partnership region, hence there are fewer opportunities to recruit from ethnic minorities.

Within this context the University of Hull's 2012-13 Access Agreement for ITT provision aims to:

- Introduce a more focused approach to ensuring good quality trainees from BME backgrounds are aware of, and aspire to, enter the University's ITT programmes.
- Highlight the University's intentions to ensure access and retention support activities outlined in our existing agreement for 2012/13 are equally applicable to TDA students and those undertaking undergraduate HEFCE programmes.
- Align with the Government's new ITT strategy which targets financial incentives towards trainees with good degrees in shortage subjects

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.

Statement

The University intends to charge fees of £9000 p.a. to new full time entrants to undergraduate and postgraduate ITT courses.

It should be noted that two programmes have been excluded from this Access Agreement as the fee charged to new entrants will be less than £6000 per learner. (Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector AND Education and Learning/Learning and Teaching Top-Up to BA)

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 anticipate spending 22% of our income over £6000 per fee from undergraduate entrants (in line with our previous new-regime target for 2012/13) and 10% of our income over £6000 per fee from postgraduate entrants.

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.

All eligible **undergraduate** Initial Teacher Trainees with RHI of less than £25,000 entering in 2012 will receive a one year Bursary package worth £3000 in line with our arrangements for all eligible undergraduates entering HEFCE programmes.

As bursaries are available from TDA for qualifying students no University awards will be made to **postgraduate** 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).

A statistical analysis of under-represented groups in undergraduate/postgraduate; primary/secondary; Hull/Scarborough provision suggests the University meets/exceeds benchmarks for attracting applications/recruiting entrants from all but one under-represented group. Attracting high quality BME applicants remains a challenge as a low proportion of those living in the region are from minority ethnic groups and the majority of these are residents of South and West Yorkshire which fall outside our immediate recruitment zone.

The University plans to introduce a programme which increases the awareness of, and increases applications from, potential BME trainees comprising:

- Action Research during 2012/13 to identify barriers, successes and additional measures to consider to aid recruitment and improve the student experience once on course.
- Staff development sessions led by BME specialists for Faculty ITT tutors to enhance expertise in recruitment and selection of BME students.
- Enhanced marketing approach nationally to BME target groups.
- Introduction of peer group buddies and champions to work with current and prospective trainees.

In addition, outreach and retention work outlined in the existing 2012/13 Access Agreement will cover potential/new ITT students where applicable.

Part four: Targets, milestones and monitoring

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.

The University wishes to apply all its existing 2012/13 access agreement milestones and targets to ITT trainees.

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.

Nothing further to add

Part five: Information to students

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.

Nothing further to add.