

UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON

ACCESS AGREEMENT

2009/10 Entrants

(Submitted September 2008)

1. Fee Limits

For 2009/10 the University will charge a tuition fee of £3,225 per year for home/EU students on its full-time and sandwich undergraduate degree and PGCE programmes (with the exception of Foundation Degrees).

The fee of £3,225 is expected to rise with inflation.

Subject to the approval of the Board of Governors, the proposed fee for full-time HND and Foundation Degree programmes in 2009/10 will be £1650 p.a.

2. Bursaries and other Financial Support

Arrangements for payment of minimum standard bursaries

The University anticipates that over 50% of its student entrants in 2009/10 will qualify for the maximum Higher Education maintenance grant. These students will receive a Start Right Bursary award from the University which will include the national minimum standard bursary payment. The University is utilizing the national Higher Education Bursaries and Scholarship Scheme (HEBSS) for the assessment and payment of its Start Right Bursaries, which include the payment of the national minimum standard bursary via the Student Loans Company.

The University is fully committed to increasing the amount of minimum standard bursary paid on its behalf by the SLC by the same inflation factor applicable to the undergraduate course fee.

Additional 'University of Wolverhampton' Student Financial Support Schemes

For UK entrants from 2009/10 the University will provide the following package of additional financial support. 2006, 2007 and 2008 entrants will continue to be eligible for bursaries described in our earlier Access Agreements. The proposals below relate only to 2009 entrants. All figures in our financial return relate to UK students only.

Start-Right Bursary Scheme

Where the fee charged for a course is £3,225 (except for PGCE) this scheme offers additional financial support to those whose "family" income assessments for HE Grant purposes are below £35,000 p.a.

Family Income Assessment

Start Right Bursary

£25,000 p.a. or less

£500 p.a. (including minimum standard bursary)

£25,001 to £35,000

£300 p.a.

The maximum Start Right Bursary payable to PGCE students will be the standard minimum bursary. This is in recognition of the fact that all PGCE students receive a non-means tested HE maintenance grant plus additional state bursaries on top of the help provided by the University.

3. Outreach Activity

The University has a long-term commitment to access and widening participation and has consistently surpassed its benchmarks in national HEFCE performance indicators for the recruitment of full-time undergraduate entrants from poor socio/economic groups and ethnic minorities (see Section 6 – Milestones and Objectives).

The University is extending its aspiration building activities during the period covered by this Access Agreement through the introduction of a new Collaborative Framework for schools and colleges and the restructuring of its Education Partnerships Division. Schools and colleges can choose from three different levels of engagement with the University:

First level: Aspiration raising; introduction to University life; master classes; tasters.

Second level: HE modules taught in schools; vocational equivalents – especially in areas corresponding to the new Diplomas.

Third level: Discrete and bespoke curriculum development, with a focus on diploma developments, driven by local need and context; bespoke CPD for staff; resource creation to support delivery.

The attached table, included under Milestones and Objectives, is illustrative of the range, reach and nature of activity within the Collaborative Framework.

4. Provision of Information to Students (and their advisers)

A comprehensive and ongoing communications strategy is in place which targets advisers as well as prospective and current students. It sets out to utilise a broad range of communication vehicles to provide pro-active, customised advice, information and guidance in a variety of settings.

In addition to ensuring a supply of printed and 'real-time' electronic sources of information, the Wolverhampton strategy puts great emphasis on the need to provide year-on-year personalised briefings via conferences, seminars, advice clinics and bespoke presentations geared to specific local audiences.

Website: A key vehicle for disseminating the latest information as quickly as possible. The University's website provides enquirers with easy access to information about the University's bursary schemes, the national loan and grant schemes and a range of additional financial information including fees, payment arrangements, discount, state benefits, additional scholarships available etc.

Prospectus: Expected to remain as a key vehicle for imparting course information to prospective students it also continues as a major reference resource for intermediary advisors (Careers Advisors, Connexions Staff, teachers etc). The prospectus contains a substantial Advice and Guidance section including dedicated 'Money Pages'. Given the lengthy production time frame for the prospectus, and the need to refer prospective students to the latest information on fees and bursaries etc. the prospectus money section is used primarily to direct readers to the source of real

time information on the University's website plus contact numbers allowing personalised access to the University's team of expert advisers.

Specialised Student Finance Publications: A series of 'Money Matters' leaflets is produced at strategic points throughout the year disseminated in enquirer packs sent out by the University's 'call centre' style Central Despatch Unit; via the Schools & Colleges Liaison service (during visits, presentations and activities within regional feeder institutions); the University's Higher Education Shop (which handles some 20,000 visitors per year); and the University's series of corporate Open Days in June, August, September and November.

Briefings for Advisers: The University offers a series of half-day conferences for groups such as regional Connexions personal advisers, teaching staff in schools with responsibility for careers guidance and student services staff in local colleges of further education. Questions and answer sessions are run by the University's expert education guidance officers and all delegates receive conference packs containing briefing notes, references to our website information resource, and copies of our specialist financial publications. Head teachers, heads of year, etc. are offered the opportunity to book bespoke presentations to help inform school governors, parents and other teaching staff.

Briefings for the General Public: Pre-advertised day, evening and weekend advice clinics are organised via the University's HE Shop facility. These will augment the financial presentations already offered in the context of Open Days, the School/College adviser visit schedule, and the well established and heavily used HE Shop individual appointment and 'drop-in' system.

University Staff Briefings: It is vitally important that all University staff give out accurate information about the national and local situation. The University organises briefings for both academic and non-academic support staff and utilise the University's electronic newsletter and website finance pages to keep staff information up-to-date. Finance briefings feature in the induction programmes for all newly appointed academic staff.

5. Monitoring Arrangements

The take up of the Start Right bursary will be clear from finance records, but focus groups of new entrants will be used to assess the significance of the finance support package on entry to higher education decision making.

Procedures are in place to monitor the effectiveness of specific Outreach activities (i.e. via participant evaluation questionnaires and focus groups) and feedback is incorporated into regular activity reports presented to the University's Executive.

The effectiveness of key elements of the University's strategy for providing financial information to students and their advisers will also be monitored via user evaluation return postcards (as currently used to obtain general feedback on the prospectus), monitoring of usage of specific web pages, event evaluation questionnaires, and so on. Procedures are in place to ensure, where possible, the currency of financial information published.

Overall monitoring of the University's performance in attracting applications from, and recruiting, under-represented groups will continue to be via a combination of published HESA data (measuring performance against benchmarks) and

UCAS/institutional data on applicant profiles analysed by ethnicity, socio/economic and occupational groups, postcode and previous institution. This data will provide the major measure of progress towards the Milestone/Objective of maintaining a performance significantly above benchmark for social inclusion, despite the possible deterrent effect of top-up fees.

Annual reports on the schemes covered by the Access Agreement, including a review of progress made towards the targets set out above, will be made to Academic Board and Board of Governors. The reports will be drawn up by the Student Affairs Committee, chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs), which will include Students' Union representation.

The challenge for the University of Wolverhampton is to maintain its existing excellent widening participation profiles and its recruitment of students from disadvantaged groups, under new market conditions.

UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON ACCESS AGREEMENT – MILESTONES & OBJECTIVES

Definition	Source	Base Year	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Objectives compared with base year
<u>Entrant Profile</u> <u>(Successful Applicants)</u> % of young first year full-time under-graduates (Base Year figure reflects projection of known HESA data) % from NS-SEC socio/econ groups 4, 5, 6, 7 % from low participation neighbourhoods	HEFCE PIs	51 (Benchmark : 37) (Location Adjusted : 41)	50 (Bmk: 39) (Loc Adj: 42)	52 (Bmk: 40) (Loc Adj: 43)	<i>50</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>50</i>	To maintain performance above benchmark
<u>Applicant Profile</u> % of total applicants with known classifications % from NS-SEC socio/econ groups 4, 5, 6, 7 % from Ethnic Minority Groups	UCAS	26	26	30 (old method) 19 (new method)	<i>30</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>30</i>	To steadily increase, then maintain, participation rates via Outreach
		36	37	49*	<i>36</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>36</i>	Hold steady
		34	34	37	<i>34</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>34</i>	Maintain profile

Figures in bold are actual (as in HESA and UCAS data); figures in italic are projected.

*A much higher percentage of 'not knows' was recorded for 2006/07, which may explain the significant increase

UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON – COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Designated year group (where appropriate)

Title of Activity	Description	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Campus visit	Short or long tour of University campus facilities	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Student Life workshop	Finding out what it's like being a student at university – short visit			√	√	√	√	√
Subject taster	Experience learning a designated subject at university – short visit or part of longer taster programme				√	√	√	√
Subject support	Member of University staff or student teaches agreed part of curriculum to students at school	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Subject talk	Visiting lecturer or student describes learning a subject not taught at school. Undertaken at University or school partner			√	√	√	√	√
Student life workshop and campus tour	What it's like being a student and tour of campus facilities				√	√	√	√
Life workshop, campus tour and subject taster	What it's like being a student, tour of campus and taste of designated subjects				√	√	√	√
Applying to University	Explanation of UCAS process and Personal Statements						√	√
Making Higher Choices	How to choose a course and University					√	√	√
Hopes and Fears	Exploring hopes and fears about going to university						√	√
Student Finance	Explanation of tuition fees, bursaries and financial support – living on a budget					√	√	√
Wolverhampton University	Description of studying at the University of Wolverhampton – support, facilities and what the experience is like					√	√	√
Parents' evenings, meetings and Open Days	University input on HE subjects, choices and financial issues	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Careers events with pupils and/or parents	University input on local, regional and national graduate careers opportunities			√	√	√	√	√
Careers information for staff	Information and guidance to schools staff on local, regional and national graduate careers opportunities							
Mentoring	One to one University student mentoring/support							

Type of Activity	Description	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Masterclasses	Specialised teaching in designated subjects					√	√	√
GCSE Revision	Intensive revision classes in identified areas of curriculum					√		
A Level revision	Intensive revision classes in identified areas of curriculum						√	√
Residential and Non-residential Summer Schools	Access to generic and specialist summer school provision for 'Making Choices' partnership students			√		√	√	
Access to HE modules	Attendance by school pupils on designated HE programmes						√	√
HE modules in school	Students study HE modules taught by school staff						√	√
'Making Choices' Annual Conference	School/FE/HE partnership staff conference on curriculum and staff development issues							
Making Choices Open Day	Dedicated Open Day for staff and students of 'Making Choices' partner institutions							
Pathways Programme	Access to University of Wolverhampton courses/awards for partner school staff							
E-Portfolio	Access to University of Wolverhampton 'Pebble pad' e-portfolio to support pedagogy, reflective practice and informal individual and group student learning							
University Research Networks	Access to University Research Networks on designated areas of curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment							
Curriculum development	Specific support to partnership members on curriculum developments e.g. Specialised Vocational Diplomas, Level 3 Extended Projects							
'Making Choices' Subject Forums	Access to subject forums taking forward staff and curriculum development in specified subjects e.g health and Social Care, ICT, Construction, Art and Design							
Progression Agreements	Identified progression routes for students to University awards							
Project/Research submissions	Joint submissions for external funding to support Making Choices research and innovation							