

City College Brighton and Hove Access Agreement 2016-2017

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1. Coverage of the Access Agreement

This access agreement sets out the tuition fees and financial support arrangements for full time students UK and EU students entering Higher Education courses at City College Brighton and Hove (CCBH) that are funded through the direct contract with HEFCE from 1st September 2016. It describes the proportion of tuition fee income to be spent on access and student success measures and how this income will safeguard and maintain fair access. The College is working towards the strategic aims of the National Strategy for Access and Student Success in Higher Education 2014 in seeking changes which focus on access, retention, student success and progression to further study or to/within employment.

Programmes include;

Undergraduate Bachelor Degrees (Honours),

Foundation Degrees and Post Graduate Certificates in Education (PGCE).

Existing students will remain on existing fee arrangements.

2. The College

City College Brighton and Hove is a medium sized college with over 300 full-time Equivalent (FTE) students on prescribed Higher Education (HE) programmes. All CCBH higher education courses leading to degree title are awarded by the University of Brighton. The College has offered degree level awards for approximately 12 years, providing local and regional opportunities for higher level study. CCBH is recognised as an Ofsted 'Good,' provider, following inspection in June 2011. In addition, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), which independently reports on the quality and standards of degree provision, has consistently recognised the College as providing high quality HE programmes. Similarly in partnership with our partner university through their institutional and programme level review the quality is maintained and enhanced.

The College seeks to provide opportunities for students who might otherwise not progress to Higher Education, or for whom the traditional university experience is not suitable or desired. We recognise that social mobility is a key Government priority and in-keeping with this our activities are directly focussed on contributing positively to 'a society becoming less stratified by socioeconomic classes. We are committed to widening participation, ensuring that students from disadvantaged backgrounds can access higher education, get the support they need to succeed in their studies and progress to further study and highly skilled employment. In line with HEFCE targeting guidance 2 and for the purposes of this agreement, we understand widening participation as: lower socio-economic groups; learners from areas of deprivation where participation is low; learners with a disability; care leavers and 'looked after' children; ethnic minorities and other groups under-represented in higher education.

CCBH aims to ensure that all actual or potential learners have an equitable educational experience, regardless of: age, socio-economic background, disability; family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, and/or any other irrelevant criteria. CCBH seeks to serve individuals, communities and employers by providing excellent learning opportunities that enhance social development and contribute to economic success. Our college seeks to transform lives by inspiring learners to achieve their potential in a supportive learning environment; we work to add value to the social, economic and physical well-being of the community we serve.

3. Strategic approach to access and widening participation

Our broader Student Success strategy is currently in development. We are aware of OFFA's findings around the effect on access resulting from direct financial support including fee waivers and bursaries, and recognise that there is further work to be done to determine impact in specific initiatives. We will therefore

keep our plans under regular review going forward, however within the specific remit of this Access Agreement and with the support of the Student Union we will continue to include direct financial support for disabled students, care leavers and for those in local areas of low participation since we are clear that this will positively impact on success of these groups of students and potential students.

We remain convinced of the importance of outreach activities and as part of our wider remit already include significant activity. Given that our widening participation is focussed on Student Success, we believe our focus should continue to develop around the whole student experience. Retention and high levels of student attainment together with progression to graduate employment are critical to our work. Consequently, we will continue to explore mechanisms to enhance our support infrastructure, ensuring that we target resources coherently and effectively. To this end we employ a full-time Widening Participation and Development Officer who will develop, implement and evaluate our widening participation activities. We will continue to give teaching staff remission in order that they can provide academic support in a responsive and timely way.

4. Fee Income

We recognise that the higher education sector remains subject to continuous change. We will consequently keep fees and performance under continuous review. We will evaluate and establish our eligibility criteria on annually and ensure that this is clearly communicated to students and all other stakeholders. We will ensure that students receive appropriate advice and guidance.

For 2016/2017 we intend to charge new home and EU students entering Higher Education programmes at CCBH up to a maximum fee of £7500 in an academic year for full time undergraduate programmes. Part-time fees will be pro-rata up to the maximum full-time fee.

5. The target areas

- a) Low participation data (Participation of Low Area classification – POLAR3)
- b) Students in receipt of DSA or may be academically disadvantaged by periods of ill health.
- c) Care leavers and students who have experience of engagement with the Social Services

6. Access agreement financial commitment

OFFA countable expenditure will be distributed as follows:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a) Access expenditure (as % HFI) | 3.6% |
| b) Student success expenditure (as % HFI) | 7.1% |
| c) Progression expenditure (as % HFI) | 3.6% |
| d) Expenditure on financial support (as % HFI) | 11.9% |

7. Financial support for students 2016/2017

1. £1,000 cash bursary for students who enter with an advanced apprenticeship or a National Vocational Qualification at level 3. This in their first year of study and will be paid in 2 sums of £500 on 1st December and 1st March subject to engagement demonstrated by attendance.
2. Residual income of below £25,000 per year - £1,000 Residual income of below £42,600 per year - £500 This will be paid in 2 sums of £500/£250 on 1st December and 1st March subject to engagement demonstrated by attendance
3. A Hardship Fund will be created to support any student in dire financial need. All eligibility will be based on an assessment of household income and outgoings. Normally to be eligible to apply for a hardship award the applicants will have a residual income of under £25,000 per annum.

8. Provision of Information

The College provides clear and accurate information about fees and financial support. The web site lists fees in categorised tabular form and a detailed fees policy document is available to view on line and download. The College website meets the requirements of the Key Information Set and UNISTATS. All appropriate full and part-time course pages display the interactive KIS widget and content updates have been made to add the full programme specification for all programmes with module level details including learning outcomes and assessment requirements.

9. Increased outreach

1. Taster days – open to school/college students from year 10 upwards to experience further and/or higher education by shadowing a current student for a day. This will be advertised regionally as well as through the schools networks with which the College is involved.
2. Visits to schools and colleges – a wide offer that seeks repeat visits to schools and colleges each year to encourage higher education participation in general and college courses in particular.
3. The College has open advice days where experienced college staff can advise about post 16 studies and how choices made for year 12 studies can fit with higher education to support a vocational ambition.
4. Assistance with UCAS applications – for students studying at level 3 in the College and applicants who do not currently have an education base.
5. Raising the aspirations and access of mature and part-time students has become a pressing national concern. We will develop Bridging Courses across the programmes that will build on and value the life and professional experiences of both mature learners and entrants with non-traditional qualifications. These courses will support the transition to academic study and enable students to make a positive start to their course. We will also work more closely with employers to raise awareness of the business impact of higher level skills development, and with employees to communicate the career benefits.

10. Supporting Student Retention and Success

In addition to a wide range of mechanisms to support retention, including; 'staff open door policies that gives students access to tutors as is necessary. The college is working to develop an employer led mentoring scheme where students are matched to local and regional employers with a view to such measures seek to target high retention figures, by supporting students in adjusting to the demands of higher level study.

11. On Course Retention and Success

1. Curriculum tutorial support through a personal tutorial system to support retention and progression.
2. Academic skills tutorials in order to develop strategies to enhance grades and course completion to develop the autonomous learner.
3. Provide a series of group sessions linked in with career management thus ensuring career and employability objectives are fully developed and progression options are highlighted.
4. A focus on employability skills, to enhance CVs and applications making students competitive in the employment market.
5. Employer/Industry/guest speaker's talks and industrial visits.
6. The development of a work-based mentoring scheme in order to motivate and support students.
7. Continual support via confidential one-to-one appointments, providing timely guidance and referral opportunities.
8. Financial support via a variety of bursaries and grants (e.g. support for FE students to complete studies and progress to HE: Transport and Childcare)

9. Assistance with funding applications Progression Planning to Further Study or/to/within Employment.
10. Group and one-to-one support for all students, whether moving onto Higher Education from FE or Apprenticeships, or from HE to Post Graduate study options.

The College has a well-established support service which supports students with diverse range of learning needs, additional social needs, looked after children/care leavers, and students from disadvantaged backgrounds as well as those who have identified barriers to their learning. The HE Teaching Team provides opportunities for all students on HE programmes of study and those transitioning, regardless of experience or knowledge, to learn about different approaches and techniques to improve achievement and reach their full potential. This may be to enhance essential study skills, improve grades or gain strategies to improve their wellbeing such as handling stress and improving confidence. The Student Support and staff team recognise the importance of individual empowerment and the promotion of preventative strategies as the foundation for sustaining good mental health. This activity is to raise awareness of the skills needed for academic success and adjust to HE study. We continue to develop and strengthen our links to increase access to this student group.

The Student Support team provides specialist support to students with social and emotional needs, health conditions and learning differences such as dyslexia to facilitate higher education study. Support aims to meet student individual requirements and entitlement whilst enabling the development of skills and confidence to demonstrate their abilities and maximise potential.

12. Targets and Milestones

The College's specific targets and milestones for 2016-17 are outlined in Annex B. Internal College data sources are used to set targets and milestones as HESA widening participation performance indicators do not cover further education colleges. The College is aligning internal data reporting with HESA criteria to establish comparable data, which can be aligned to HESA widening participation, retention and completion performance indicators. This data will be used to generate targets for future Access Agreements. Other targets outlined in Annex B set out the desired outcomes of outreach and retention initiatives to improve the recruitment, retention and success of students from under-represented priority groups.

Targets and milestones covering the following areas are included in the attached resource template:

1. Low participation data (Participation of Low Area classification – POLAR3)
2. Students in receipt of DSA
3. Care leavers and students who have experience of engagement with the Social Services
4. Retention and success data

13. Student Voice and Consultation

This Access Agreement has been formulated in consultation with the Student Union

Progress towards achievement on the Access Agreement targets and activities are reported to this committee for review. Student participation in the deliberative committee structure provides not only a rich contribution to the shared goal of continuous enhancement, but clearly also provides immediate feedback on a range of topics. Student feedback is systematically gathered through module reviews and staff student liaison meetings are established providing valuable feedback to inform reviews and future developments.

14. Monitoring and Evaluation

The principal responsibility for monitoring and evaluating widening participation activity lies with the recently founded Higher Education Strategic Group chaired by the Vice Principal of the College. Key members of this group will have responsibility for the activity within their respective areas. Student group data including equality and diversity impact measurements will be considered in addition to the specific

targets identified as part of this Access Agreement throughout the quality assurance cycle. Specific anticipated evaluation related to this 2016-17 Access Agreement will be centred on the following criteria:

1. Analysis of key data (postcode) to determine the impact of this Access agreement
2. Specific tracking of all first year students who are identified to be vulnerable.
3. Specific tracking of all students who access the funds associated with this agreement.

Regular progress reports will be produced for the governors of the College.

Further specific monitoring and evaluation activity will continue to be undertaken to support the College's main widening participation activities. The annual College Self Evaluation Document will create a vehicle for a through critical analysis of key performance indicators and a range of data linked to student group.

Table 7a - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body											
Reference number	Please select target type from the drop-down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
						2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	
T16a_01	Other statistic - Location (please give details in the next column)	We are seeking to encourage more of our FE students at the college to participate in HE, very many live in areas in the lowest centile of the POLAR 3 scores - as such we will be seeking to work with these areas to develop the programmes that meet their interests.	No	2014-15	7	10%	15%	17%	20%	22%	We seek to achieve these targets by extending the range of programme to meet the needs of students who are less likely to engage with our current offer.
T16a_02	Other statistic - Disabled (please give details in the next column)	The college has been very successful in working to encourage Disabled groups to participate in HE we are seeking to continue this work into the forthcoming years.	No	2014-15	9	11%	13%	15%	17%	17%	
T16a_03	Other statistic - Care-leavers (please give details in the next column)	Brighon has a disproportionate number of young care leavers, many of whom are studying FE courses at the college. There are few who progress to HE either at the college or more widely.	No	2014-15	2	5%	7%	10%	15%	15%	
Table 7b - Other milestones and targets.											
Reference Number	Please select target type from the drop-down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
						2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	
Optional commentary on milestones. This box is character-limited to 1000 characters; however, we are happy for you to upload additional 'supporting information' as a separate Word/pdf document.											
The targets indicated above represent a % of the total number of students on HE courses at the College - we already have significant numbers of students within these categories however we recognise that there are several areas within our local area and region which have some of the lowest levels of participation in HE at 18yrs in the UK. We will be seeking to work with these areas with a view to broadening our range of provision to meet the needs of these areas more fully.											