

COVENTRY UNIVERSITY ACCESS AGREEMENT for 2012/13

Commercial in Confidence until approved

Summary:

1. Coventry University has predominantly a young, full-time student body studying at its Coventry and London campuses. There is no intention of changing this characteristic in the Corporate Plan to 2015, approved in July 2010 by the Board of Governors after consultation across the University. Accordingly, we have selected metrics and KPIs which are based on our record of participation and achievement by young, full-time, first degree entrants.
2. We estimate that c.30% - 40% of our full-time entrants in 2012/13 will qualify for the new, full Maintenance Grant and up to 70% for either the Full or Partial maintenance grant. We have used these percentages when apportioning the expenditure under this Agreement.
3. The University has extensive part-time, mature provision through its Employer Engagement programme. These students currently number c.7,000 by headcount and c.2,600 by FTE (HESES 2010). They are taught entirely on employer premises. The planned increase in this contract to July 2012 will bring the total FTE up to 3,000. In this Access Agreement we have included 2,000 FTE as continuation for this Programme; and put 678FTE against sub-degree provision which is part of our planned innovation and diversification from 2012/13 onwards. However, we understand that part-time provision from 2012 is still subject to legislation and regulation.
4. Discussions of the fees to be set, and the priorities for this Access Agreement, have taken place in our Senior Management Team meetings (which have included the President of our Students' Union and the Vice-President Academic Affairs), and in the Board of Governors' meetings from January through April 2011 (where again the Students' Union has been represented by the President and Vice-President).
5. We have undertaken market research on fee levels through an external company with Year 12 students and their parents in the geographic areas from which we predominantly recruit, and according to a sampling framework which matches the socioeconomic distribution in our current student body. The results have informed the setting of our fees.
6. We have decided to use a variable fees approach based on cost of provision. Some 60% of our provision is in HEFCE Bands B and C. The weighted average of our current provision is c. £8,000. Under this Access Agreement the comparable weighted average fee for new entry, full-time students is £7,497 which drops to £6,528 when the part-time provision is added to the calculation. Accordingly, we believe that a figure of £300 of the additional fee income per the 4232 FTE above £6k is very reasonable for this Access Agreement. This equates to a total of £1,269,600.
7. Our £1,269,600 Access funding will be spent on a balance of outreach, retention and employability measures as follows:
 - £588,000 on matching the NSP 1 to 1 as required
 - £95,000 for continuation of AimHigher activities in **2011/12** shown to have effective impact
 - £95,000 for continuation of AimHigher activities in **2012/13** shown to have effective impact
 - £105,000 for our Mathematics Centre
 - £173,600 for our Centre for Academic Writing
 - £162,000 on increased support for employability pre-graduation

- £51,000 to support the implementation of post-graduation on-line certificate courses for recent leavers without a graduate-level job five-to-six months after completing their course.
8. The objectives for the activities funded under this Agreement will be to:
- Maintain broadly our current socioeconomic and ethnic profile of full-time young students
 - Sustain the current level of progression between Years One and Two for full-time, young entrants
 - Improve the % of full-time, young entrants who achieve Degrees (known as the 'projected outcomes' metric)
 - Improve the % of our young, full-time graduates in 'Positive Destinations' six months after completing their courses.

The targets and milestones selected reflect these objectives.

Section One: Fee Limits and Fee Income above £6000

- 1.1 For the academic year 2012/13 we intend to charge fees for full time undergraduates at four points above £6k and, for the vast majority of our part-time students, at two points below. We have approached the setting of our fees on a cost basis, having contracted Tribal in December 2010 to undertake a detailed analysis of the income and costs of a stratified sample of 25% of our courses. We have then brigaded our courses into these cost points, ranging down from the most costly (£9k); through laboratory/studio based (£8.3k); to a mixture of lab/studio and classroom (£7.9k); and finally classroom only (£7.5k). The assumption, yet to be tested through actual applications, is that the distribution will follow the current pattern (i.e. 14% at 9k, 18% at 8.3k, 31% at 7.9k and 37% at 7.5k). Below £6k, we have one sub-degree fee of £4.8k, and one fee for students taught on employer premises of £4.6k. **When these numbers are included the weighted average we will be charging new entrants in 2012/13 is £6,528.**
- 1.2 The very few part-time students on day-release who sit alongside full-time students in exactly the same classes will be charged pro-rata the full time fee in 2012/13. At present these fees are paid for by their employers but it is not yet clear whether this will continue in future (which could make these students 'off-quota'), or whether their employers will now encourage them to take out loans as part-time students within our quota. The only subject area where this occurs in any numbers is Built Environment (164 FTE in HESES 2010 return). All other part-time courses will be charged pro-rata at £4,800 or £4,600 as set out above in 1.1.
- 1.3 None of our franchised courses will, on current discussions with our partner FE Colleges and other providers, have fees above £6,000 in 2012/13 for individual students.
- 1.4 We will apply real terms annual increases to our fee points each year as permitted by the Government.

Section Two: Assessment of our Access and Retention Record

2.1 Evaluation of our record on access shows that we have consistently achieved and maintained an excellent position, giving the opportunity of a university education to many full-time students from disadvantaged backgrounds or from schools and colleges where contextual data suggests that academic outcomes are below the national average (e.g. in several Coventry City schools). In particular:

- Over the last 5 years, Coventry University has in absolute terms admitted an average of 97% of state school pupils, and exceeded its location-adjusted benchmarks for state school entrants by 3.6%. (HESA Performance Indicators T1a: participation of underrepresented groups in higher education: young, full-time, first degree entrants)
- Over the last 5 years, Coventry University has admitted, on average in absolute terms, 39.4% of students from the lowest socioeconomic groups, and exceeded its location-adjusted benchmark for entrants from the lowest socio-economic groups by 3.1%. (HESA Performance indicators T1a: participation of under-represented groups in higher education: young full-time first degree entrants.)
- Coventry University lies 12th in England in the proportion of its T grant that is due to its Widening Participation premium and TESS (of those receiving more than £1m). Source HEFCE publication March 2011/07: Recurrent Grant Tables for 2011/12

- Coventry students' ethnic composition for the last three years (2007/8 to 2009/10) has been 34.4%; 37.6%; and 37.3% respectively. As shown in the Tables below, this more than mirrors that of Coventry City and the surrounding sub-region, is better than that of neighbouring HEIs in the West and East Midlands, and is considerably better than the national profile for HEIs.

Table showing Ethnic Minorities, as a percentage of the resident population

Area	% Minority	Source
City of Coventry	20.20	2007 Government estimate
City of Coventry	16.02	2001 Census output
West Midlands (County)	20.01	2001 Census output
Warwickshire	4.40	2001 Census output
West Midlands (Region)	11.20	2001 Census output

Table showing Ethnic Minorities, as percentage of UK-domiciled full-time first degree entrants with a known ethnicity

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Coventry University (%)	34.4%	37.6%	37.3%
<i>West Midland HEIs (%)</i>	<i>30.1%</i>	<i>31.1%</i>	<i>30.8%</i>
<i>East Midland HEIs (%)</i>	<i>22.0%</i>	<i>22.9%</i>	<i>22.6%</i>
UK HEIs (%)	20.4%	21.3%	21.2%

- 33% of Coventry's entrants are from FE Colleges and we have strongly supported progression from vocationally-oriented qualifications at 16 and 18 yrs not least through the Coventry and Warwickshire Lifelong Learning Partnership which we have led.
- We have had 50 schools and colleges in our Phoenix Partnership over the last 5 years, with whom a collaborative programme of aspiration-raising, mentoring and other outreach activities has been developed and delivered. Many of these activities have been funded by AimHigher and have now been evaluated for impact. Best practice initiatives include the Pathfinder Mentoring Programme.
- The University is a sponsor and active partner for two Academies in the most deprived areas of Coventry City and North Warwickshire respectively, and has representation on the Boards of several Trust Schools in Coventry
- The University has actively supported the City 16-19 consortia in the development of vocational curricula, and progression routes from them, including the Advanced Diploma.
- The University is a key member of the City's 'Overcoming Barriers to Learning Programme' which focuses on effective measures to improve the life chances of particularly disadvantaged groups.
- The University is a member of Coventry City's 14 -25 years Partnership which fosters collaboration between all public sectors, the voluntary sector and other key stakeholders.

2.2 Coventry University also has a good record on entrants from low-participation neighbourhoods (HESA T1a). However, in 2006/07 HESA changed from POLAR1 to POLAR2 with a consequent revision of the areas considered to have 'low participation'. POLAR1 defined wards which had participation at less than two-thirds of the UK average as 'low participation neighbourhoods' (calculated during the late 1990s); whereas POLAR2 defined such neighbourhoods as those with the lowest quintile of participation (calculated during the early 2000s).

The following two Tables highlight the impact of the change. POLAR1 data showed Coventry University regularly outperforming its benchmarks and the UK averages, whilst POLAR2 data has seen Coventry University below these figures even though the profile of its intake has not changed significantly. The 2006/07 data has been presented for both methodologies showing the impact of this technical shift in definition on a single set of entrants.

Although Coventry sits just below its benchmark and location adjusted benchmark on POLAR2, it does, at 11% in 2009/10, still exceed the UK average figure of 10.3% (as it also did in 2006/7 and 2007/8).

Table 1: Young full-time first degree entrants from low-participation neighbourhoods (POLAR1)

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Coventry University (%)	19	19.6	17.5	19.3
Benchmark (%)	17	16.4	16.7	17
Location adjusted benchmark (%)	18	17.3	17.7	18.1
UK (%)	14	14	14	14.7

Table 2: Young full-time first degree entrants from low-participation neighbourhoods (POLAR2)

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Coventry University (%)	9.8	10.4	9.6	11
Benchmark (%)	10.7	11.1	11.8	12
Location adjusted benchmark (%)	12.3	11.7	12.4	12.3
UK (%)	9	9.7	10.1	10.3

We do not see the profile of entrants changing radically in the next five years. If anything, our focus on digital media and STEM courses means we are likely to attract more students from the south of Warwickshire (where there is a significant cluster of Games and IT companies) and London, and from the M40/M4 and M1 corridors where there are employers with shortages of STEM graduates e.g. in aerospace engineering. These areas do not generally qualify as low-participation under POLAR2. We therefore do not regard the apparent drop in our position on

recruitment from low-participation neighbourhoods as a cause for concern, nor as a target to be rectified.

2.3 Our record on HEFCE-defined non-completion has improved steadily over the last few years. It has now reached the point where we do not feel it is sensible to set further improvement targets on this measure, as this would reduce the offers made to students in the most under-represented categories who are at the greatest risk of dropping out in-year. This would be counter to the Government's agenda of social inclusion and social mobility, and would negate our commitment to partners in the City of Coventry with whom we collaborate on improving the life chances of vulnerable young people (see bullet points in 2.1 above). We are therefore focusing our 'improvement' targets on the HESA T5 metric (see 2.5 below).

2.4 Analysis of the UK average figures (HESA T3a) suggests that we should aim to sustain the improvements we have recently made in the retention/progression rates between the first and second year of study, having done better than benchmark from 2006/7 onwards. On 2008/9 data (latest available), our non-continuation rate was 7.4% which was better than benchmark of 8.2%.

2.5 Analysis of Projected Outcomes, HESA table T5, suggests that we could improve the proportion of full-time undergraduate entrants who successfully gain a Degree. The latest data shows us at 69.1% against a benchmark of 73% and a UK figure of 79%. Accordingly, we are incorporating targets against this measure in this Access Agreement, albeit recognising the complexity of the way this PI is calculated by HESA.

2.6 Our conclusion is that we are a university with a consistently high proportion of under-represented groups, and a student body which is socially inclusive. From the HEBSS data on current students, we estimate that c.30% - 40% of our entrants in 2012 will be eligible for full Maintenance Grants, and up to 70% in total for full or partial Maintenance Grants.

For this Access Agreement, our average fee in 2012/13 will be £7,497 and £6,528 when part-time provision is included. We accordingly intend to spend £300 of the fees charged above £6k on on-going and additional outreach, retention and employment measures as defined in the document. This equates to £1,269,600.

2.7 The objectives for the activities funded under this Agreement will be to:

- Maintain broadly (i.e. at least at benchmark levels) our current socioeconomic and ethnic profile of full-time young students
- Sustain the current level of progression between Years One and Two for full-time, young entrants
- Improve the % of entrants who achieve Degrees (known as the 'projected outcomes' T5 HESA metric)
- Improve the % of our graduates in 'Positive Destinations' six months after graduation

Section Three: Balancing our Expenditure

3.1 Outreach.

We wish to continue those activities with the 50 schools and colleges in our collaborative Phoenix Partnership, currently funded by AimHigher or the Lifelong Learning Network, that have been shown to have sustained impact on aspiration and application to Higher Education. These activities include: pupil mentoring; a programme of school-based and campus-based 'expert' activities tailored to each school and college; access to our specialist facilities; and regular updating events for teachers and

college lecturers. They will cost £95k to sustain in both 2011/12 and 2012/13 and will help us to meet our objective of maintaining broadly our current socioeconomic profile.

3.2 Retention.

We wish to include in our Access expenditure a proportion of the costs of our Maths Centre which has been funded by several external sources including the HEFCE CETL funds. These sources are ending and we propose carrying the costs in 2011/12 before using the Access funding to pick up 70% of them from 2012/13 onwards. The Maths Centre has had excellent external evaluations from HEFCE. It reaches 5000 students on campus each year using a variety of media and face-to-face sessions. It is open to all students who find they are struggling with any aspect of numeracy (however basic), mathematics or statistics on their course. Given the large number of courses with technical content that we offer, and the variability of the quality of maths teaching in schools and colleges from which our students are drawn, we believe that this remedial resource is essential in securing retention and progression for many of our students. The cost we will carry in 2011/12 is estimated to be £150k and therefore the expenditure we wish to put against our Access Agreement for 2012/13 is 70% of £150k, i.e. £105k, representing the 70% of our students likely to be on full or partial maintenance grants.

Similarly, we wish to include in this Access Agreement a 70% proportion of the costs of the Centre for Academic Writing (CAW). This Centre provides regular small group /workshop sessions on a range of techniques from effective revision to correct referencing, as well as one-to-one tutorial assistance to c.1,400 students who encounter difficulty with the demands of academic essay-writing, papers, or project reports, compared to the written work they did at school or college especially when progressing from vocational (rather than A2) courses in 16-18 education. The cost of CAW in 2011/12 is budgeted at £248k, giving a 70% figure of £173,600 under this Access Agreement for 2012/13.

In addition, to secure the improvements in progression that we seek, we will maintain the increased spend we have committed in 2011/12 to:

- Number of academic posts to reduce seminar and studio class sizes so that more individual attention can be given to participants. SSR improved from 18:1 in 2008/9 to 16:1 in 2009/10.
- Increased personal tutorial time for students for review of academic progress, and guidance and advice on employment aspirations.
- Increased contact hours per week in 2012/13 to a minimum of 14 hours.

3.3 Employability

In the challenging environment of the current Recession, which has hit the West Midlands particularly hard, we have experienced a drop in the 'positive destination' metric of the DLHE return as shown in the Table below.

Destinations of full-time UK domiciled, first degree graduates and leavers by type of destination (% Positive Destination) 2008/09 and previous years.

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Coventry University	61.1	62.0	67.5	64.2	59.9

We therefore wish to focus on improving the employability of those 70% on Maintenance Grants who typically lack the social capital through their schooling or family background to secure advantage in the increasingly competitive graduate job market.

Under this Access Agreement we are accordingly committing to the following expenditure:

- Increasing the provision we make to ensure there are Employability Tutors and a sector specialist Employability Unit in each Faculty and School to work with students from their first term. In 2012/13 we will be spending an additional £231,500 to meet this objective compared to the 2009/10 figure. Applying the 70% proportion, we wish to claim £162k under this Agreement.
- Implementing a Postgraduate Certificate in Career Development, following a successful pilot in 2010/11, for those recent graduates who have not succeeded in finding graduate-level employment five-to-six months after completing their course. The costs are estimated as follows:
 - i. Development of online material and interactive support for the four sector-specific programmes @£8 000 of learning technologist time in each case = £32 000
 - ii. Provision on online tutoring associated with these programmes: 100 hours each @£40 per hour = £16 000
 - iii. Course management costs: 0.5 FTE post Grade 8 = £25 000 including on costs

Total cost £73, 000. Applying the 70% proportion gives a figure of £51k to be included under this Agreement.

3.4 Financial support for students

We will match the National Scholarships 1 to 1 as required and will count this expenditure towards this Agreement. The Scholarships will only be available to students on courses with fees above £6k. Coventry University has been awarded 196 National Scholarships at a total value of £588,000. It will match by continuing these scholarships into Year 2 to support our objective of improving progression between years. In addition to qualifying by virtue of residual income below £25k, we will target the National Scholarships on the 50 schools and colleges in our collaborative Phoenix Partnership which are likely, by virtue of geography, to be the continuing source of students from the most financially disadvantaged backgrounds. We have experimented with such a Scholarship scheme in the past and have evaluated it with our partners. The composition of the National Scholarships in 2012/13 will be: £2k fee waiver plus £500 as cash and £500 as a credit for university accommodation and other services.

We will continue to award other scholarships which fall outside the remit of this Access Agreement, in particular scholarships for sporting excellence.

As we are yet to receive a definitive statement outlining our core grant allocation for 2012/13 we have assumed that the institution will receive only a small amount of recurrent teaching grant funding for new system students. However, if our modelling assumptions prove to be incorrect and HEFCE decide to support high cost provision (formerly price band B subject areas) generously, we would review our fee waiver contribution to see if we could support further growth in STEM and other high cost subjects.

Section Four: Targets and Milestones

We propose to use the following targets and interim milestones. They relate to the objectives set out in the Summary and use HESA data as the baseline measure.

4.1 Outreach.

Within the collaborative framework of our Phoenix Partnership, we have chosen the KPIs with the most evidenced impact. These are set out in the Table below:

Activity	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Talks in school/College (variety topics)	150	175	175	175	175	175
Coventry University student mentors	49	55	55	55	60	60
Mentored pupils	78	88	88	88	96	96
Campus 'Expert Sessions'	25	25	25	25	25	25
Year 12 attendees at introduction to HE events	420	475	475	500	500	500
Tailored visits for Partner School /College groups (number attending)	3,470	3,500	3,500	3,530	3,530	3,530

4.2 Socially inclusive student body.

We propose to use, on an annual basis, the HESA data from T1 : *young full-time undergraduates from under-represented groups*. Market research conducted to date suggests that the new fee and loan regime will cause a major drop in applications from young people in the least advantaged groups in our region. Bearing this in mind, and our excellent record, we have proposed steady state targets that are 5% above the 2009/10 UK sector average.

We propose to continue to review, annually, the ethnic composition of the undergraduate full time student body and monitor it against regional and national profiles. However, our market research suggests that families in some minority ethnic communities in our region will not be prepared to allow their sons (and particularly not their daughters) to enter into the proposed SFE loan-and-interest regime. In view of this we have proposed ethnicity related targets that demonstrate excellent performance in comparison to our neighbouring HEIs.

4.3 Retention and Progression

We will aim to maintain the recent improvements in our retention for full time young first degree entrants as a KPI for this Agreement. We will use the HESA Table T3a *Non-continuation following the year of entry* to give the comparator benchmark and UK average. This is calculated annually.

2012/13 – 2013/14: 7.3% or UK % if higher

2013/13 – 2014/15: 7.2% or UK % if higher

2014/15 – 2015/16: 7.1% or UK % if higher

2015/16 – 2016/17: 7% or UK % if higher

2016/17 – 2017/18: 7% or UK % if higher

4.4 Projected outcomes.

We are setting stretching improvement targets based on our performance in HESA Table T5(i) as follows:

2012/13: 71% or benchmark if lower

2013/14: 73% or benchmark if lower

2014/15: 75% or benchmark if lower

2015/16: 77% or UK average if lower

2016/17: 79% or UK average if lower

4.5 Employability

The DLHE data is the best national source for trend analysis and benchmark comparisons. The 2012 entry cohort will be surveyed in the Spring of 2016. At this point we would target a 5% improvement on graduates entering 'positive destinations' compared to the graduates of 2008/9 – the latest cohort data that we have. This would give us a target of 65% on the definitions currently used (SOC 2000 Group as defined by Elias and Purcell in their report "SOC (HE) A Classification of Occupations for studying the Graduate Labour Market".

However, we are aware that 2016 is a considerable distance off, and that the definitions of what counts as a 'graduate-level' job are likely to have changed in the meantime making direct comparisons difficult.

We therefore propose to use as proxy, interim milestones the % of the 2012 entry cohort who undertake some form of work experience, internship or placement (excluding part-time jobs) or volunteer in a setting which relates directly to their career aim (e.g. volunteering in schools for those thinking of taking up teaching or in community settings for those considering a career in adult, youth or child services.) Most such activity occurs during summer vacations or in the second and third years of study. We will therefore conduct a survey of students respectively in their second and third years in 2011/12 to give us a baseline against which to measure progress for the 2012 cohort.

Section Five: Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

5.1 For all the measures that rely on HESA statistics and comparisons we will use the published results as the basis of annual monitoring. There will be an Annual Report compiled by the Planning Unit, that is considered by the Senior Management Team (comprising Deans, the Director of HR, the Director of Marketing and Communications, and the Vice-Chancellor's Group), and the wider university through the elected Academic Board. It will also be presented to the Board of Governors. There is student representation on both the Academic Board and the Board of Governors. The Head of the Planning Unit is the senior officer responsible; he reports to the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor Planning, and through him to the Vice-Chancellor.

5.2 For data that need to be collected, analysed and evaluated within the university, the following senior staff are responsible:

- For all data submitted to HESA and the DLHE return, and their respective analyses, the Planning Unit officers reporting to the Head of Planning
- For metrics relating to the collaborative Phoenix partnership: the Director of the Recruitment and Admissions Office who reports to the DVC Academic and through him to the Vice-Chancellor. The data on mentoring and all school/college outreach activity will be collected by the Recruitment and Admissions Office.
- For data relating to the NSP, the Head of the Student Funding Office
- For metrics relating to work experience/placements/internships, the Head of Careers who also reports to the DVC Academic. The data will be collected by the 0.5 new appointment included as part of this Access Agreement.

Section Six: Provision of Information to Prospective Students

6.1 We are committed to providing the required information on fees and financial support in a clear and up-to-date manner as set out in the OFFA Guidance Document paras. 101 and 102. This includes making information available to UCAS and the SLC in a timely manner for them to populate their applicant-facing web services.

6.2 We are including the information on our website and in our prospectuses and will also make it as clear as possible on Open Days for 2012 entrants through presentations and in literature available on the day. We have tested the clarity of the Prospectus with students (and potential parents) as recommended. We have already undertaken a briefing session with our collaborative partner schools and colleges in the Phoenix Partnership and will continue to respond to requests from them for additional sessions.

6.3 Undergraduate admissions and recruitment procedures conform to recognised national standards and best practice as set out by SPA (Supporting Professionalism in Admissions). We try to ensure that our information is correct, relevant and easily accessible via a range of sources, formats and media including course details and profiles on the UCAS website.

