

WILTSHIRE COLLEGE

ACCESS AGREEMENT 2012

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1. Context

Wiltshire College is a large general Further and Higher Education College with five main campuses across Wiltshire. The main campuses are at Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge, a land based and sport campus at Lackham (near Chippenham) and a specialist motorsport engineering campus at Castle Combe race track (also near Chippenham). Higher education courses are offered at all the campuses and reflect the specialisms that have built up at each campus. Each campus has dedicated higher education facilities including study and social areas. There are (in 2010/11) just under 1000 higher education students studying at the College.

The College had a Quality Assurance Agency Integrated Quality and Enhancement Summative Review in March 2011 and the published report will confirm confidence in the College's management of higher education, and identify several areas of good practice. The good practice that may most influence an applicant's choice would be good specialist resources, excellent tutorial support and excellent examples of work based learning.

The College has particularly strong links with employers throughout its range of courses, from further to higher education, in work based learning and courses bespoke for employers. The higher education courses are all vocational in their nature and include either work placement or commissioned employer projects. As a result of this graduate employment rates are very high; in 2009/10 79% of graduates either gaining employment or progressing to further higher education study.

The higher education portfolio of courses includes franchised and validated courses. This agreement covers courses for which the College is the registering institution (direct funded).

2. Fee limits and fee income above £6000

The table below lists the courses in scope, the fee, the duration and the expected number of new entrants in 2012.

Course	Fee	Course duration (full time)	Expected new entrants
BSc Social Work	£7500	3 years	30
BA Fashion and Textiles	£5950	3 years	18
FdSc Animal Science and Management	£5950	2 years	30
FdSc Rural Environmental Management	£5950	2 years	15
HND Business	£4500	2 years	30
HND Criminal Justice	£4500	2 years	15
FdSc in Agriculture	£5950	2 years	15

Permitted real terms fee rises. The College will increase the fee levels in the table above in line with permitted real terms fee rises as determined by the Government.

3. Expenditure on additional access and retention measures

The table below summarises the expenditure.

Activity	Cost	Cost in 2011/12 year	Cost in 2012/13 year	Cost in 2013/14 year	Cost in 2014/15 year
Continue to employ 'Aimhigher' apprentice	Salary £5200 plus on cost of 23%	£6396	£6396	£6396	£6396
Funding for transport to UCAS fairs etc	£13000	£13000	£13000	£13000	£13000
NSP matched fund contribution	Assume rises pro rata each year to 2014/15 steady state	£0	£12000	£24000	£36000
Bursaries	For each progressing student from Wiltshire College FE to Wiltshire College with a household income of less than £25000 may be eligible for discretionary bursaries as follows; HND £500, FdSc/FdA- £750, BA/BSc £1,000. Details of eligibility criteria will be published on the College website.	£0	£30000	£40000	£50000
Total		£19396	£61396	£83396	£105366

4. Additional access measures

The College has always attracted non traditional entrants into higher education in significant numbers. On the simple measure of household income 50% of our students come from household incomes of less than £25000 (see 2008/9 and 2009/10 Access Agreement returns). The College invests significantly in engaging with the local community in many ways to attract people to all of its courses and includes very close collaborative working with local schools. FE Colleges have developed support mechanisms to improve retention and achievement for their FE courses, and this experience is applied to and benefits their higher education students. The key principle is very strong tutorial and pastoral support, as confirmed by the College's IQER Summative Review. The College has annual (2007/8, 2008/9, 2009/10) retention rates (for all of its higher education provision, both direct and indirect funded) at 90% and achievement rates at 89%. The portfolio of courses is designed to encourage non traditional students to apply.

The College has identified the need to attract more of its own level 3 students to its higher education courses. Progression in 2010/11 from full time level 3 to level 4 (HE) was 33%, with 6% to the College's own Higher Education courses. Similarly progression from level 3 Apprenticeships to Higher Education at 4% presents an opportunity to attract more learners from this non- traditional area. Improving our progression statistics into higher education is the focus of the College's widening participation activities. In order to support progression a discretionary bursary, by application, will be made to students progressing from a Wiltshire College FE course to a Wiltshire College HE course for their first year only, and who come from a household with income less than £25000. The expectation is that we will recruit 30 such students in 2012/13, 40 in 2013/14 and 50 in 2014/15.

Extra fee income will be used to replace Aimhigher activities, as described below, matched funding of the National Scholarship Programme and the bursaries to progressing FE students.

The College has used Aimhigher funding to employ an Apprentice as part of the Student Support and Engagement team and to fund activities and trips to encourage level 3 College students to apply to higher education courses. These activities include funding the transport to UCAS fairs, University open days and careers events. Both of these activities will continue to be funded through 2011/12 and 2012/13.

National Scholarship Programme

The allocation that the College has received from the National Scholarship Programme (NSP) government funding is £12000 for 2012/13. The College will match fund at 100%. The College has assumed that the NSP government contribution will rise by £12000 each year to 2014/15. The College will match this at 100% each year.

The NSP packages will be of £3000, made up of a bursary as indicated in the table above and the remainder either as accommodation fees and/or fee waivers.

The NSP packages will be discretionary to a maximum of eight in 2012, available by application from students from households with an income of less than £16000, and who fit one or more of the following criteria. The criteria are listed in order of priority:

- a care leaver
- family receives a state means-tested benefit
- school that the applicant attended has performance below average
- home is in a neighbourhood with low participation in higher education, with proof of residence.

5. Targets and milestones

The College's higher education population can already be described as non-traditional compared to the sector. 43% of students are in the lower household income (2009/10) band and 38% (2009/10) are part time.

The College has therefore set targets (see annex B) to encourage more of its level 3 students (full time, part time and apprentices) to progress to higher education. We will continue activities that were previously funded through Aimhigher, and planned new activities, to achieve greater progression.

6. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

Currently the College submits its Annual monitoring Report to OFFA annually. The report is prepared by the Assistant Principal for Higher Education and is formally considered by the College Leadership Group and the Senior Management Team. This monitoring process will continue into the future.

7. Provision of information to prospective students

The College is committed to ensuring that prospective and current students have clear, accurate and easily accessible information on which to make choices. This information will be available on the College's website and in hard copy at all College campuses and by request. For 2012 as soon as the Access Agreement is agreed full information about the fee discounts will be published.

The College HE Admissions Team will ensure that in dealing with all applicants through the selection process that information about fees is communicated clearly and consistently.

The College will provide timely and accurate information to HEFCE, UCAS and the Student Loan Company/Student Finance England and any successor bodies.

