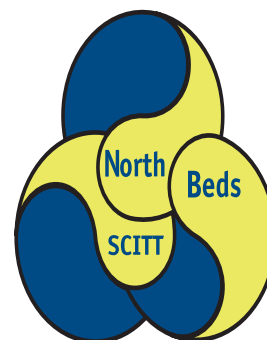


ACCESS AGREEMENT FOR: NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

(The North Bedfordshire SCITT Consortium)

January 2006



1. INTRODUCTION

The North Bedfordshire Training Partnership (which includes the North Bedfordshire SCITT Consortium) has a proven track record in the delivery of high quality, school-centered, Initial Teacher Training meeting the wide range of needs of our diverse local community and offering a variety of training routes into the teaching profession.

The Partnership strives to ensure fair and equal access to our ITT courses for all those who wish to, and are able to, benefit from this level of study – meeting, year on year, our targets for recruiting from under represented groups.

The North Bedfordshire Training Partnership has decided to introduce variable tuition fees from September 2006. Thus, this 'Access Agreement' details the terms of the variable tuition fees charged by the Training Partnership to Post Graduate trainee teachers from September 2006 and how the Partnership plans to support individuals to achieve their potential in teacher training.

2. FEE LIMITS

2.1. Courses covered by the agreement

This agreement applies to the PGCE courses for which the Partnership receives funding directly from the Training and Development Agency. This agreement does not apply to our employment based teacher trainees or to our Overseas Trained Teachers programme.

2.2. Students included within the agreement

All students who are eligible to pay EU tuition fees are included in this agreement. If the Partnership recruits any students who are classified as overseas students, they will pay a separate tuition fee, which is to be determined on an individual basis.

2.3. Agreement renewal

This agreement, which lasts initially lasts for 5 years, will, however, be reviewed annually from 2006.

2.4. Tuition fees

From September 2006, North Bedfordshire Training Partnership will charge tuition fees of **£3000** to trainees on full time PGCE programmes.

3. BURSARY SCHEME

North Bedfordshire Training Partnership is fully committed to widening participation and is engaged in numerous activities in this area. In order to ensure that a wider range of suitably qualified trainees will have access to our PGCE courses, the Partnership will offer a new bursary scheme to complement the provision already identified by the TDA.

We aim to ensure that the impact of top up fees is minimized and that all students in need of financial support benefit from this scheme. There will be: -

- a 'standard' bursary of £300 – to be paid to all trainees at the rate of £100 at the end of each term.
- an additional, discretionary, means tested bursary of up to £500 for any student in need of financial assistance (using the thresholds we used with the 'Access to Learning' Fund and using the full SLC service).

This Bursary scheme is additional to the package of financial support available to trainee teachers from the TDA.

4. PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO STUDENTS

Clear information about the tuition fees that apply to our PGCE courses - and full details of our bursary schemes and other support - will be readily accessible from February 2006: -

- in our prospectus
- on our website
- in our advertising and publicity
- at our information evenings and 'drop in' sessions
- at interview.

Finally, prior to accepting a place on a course with the Partnership, all prospective PGCE trainees will be advised - in writing - of the aggregate amount of fees that will be charged for the completion of their chosen course.

5. OUTREACH WORK

The partnership will formalize and further develop with funding its existing practices working with the local network of Training Schools and Specialist Colleges – contacting key community groups - to make available a wide range of opportunities for potential trainees to gain valuable experience within schools prior to making an application.

The North Bedfordshire Training Partnership will also continue to develop and fund its current practice of: -

- holding local information and recruitment evenings within local schools
- targeted newspaper advertising
(aimed at different ethnic and under-represented groups)
- regular 'drop in' sessions in targeted local schools to encourage and support applications from the full spectrum of groups within our local community.

6. INSTITUTIONAL MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The North Bedfordshire Training Partnership undertakes to monitor compliance with the commitments made under this agreement. The following indicators will be monitored annually;

- The number of students taking up the bursaries and patterns of awards
- The retention and achievement rates for PGCE students
- The age, gender and socio-economic characteristics of the students

The Training Partnership is committed to setting explicit baselines and targets in each of the above categories by May 2008. Compliance will be ensured by ongoing monitoring using our existing quality assurance procedures and reports will be presented to the Board.

An annual monitoring report will be submitted in accordance with the requirements of the Office of fair Access.