

CASTLE COLLEGE NOTTINGHAM



ACCESS AGREEMENT PROPOSAL

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Castle College Nottingham

Access Agreement Proposal

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 1 June 2006, Broxtowe College and The People's College merged to become Castle College Nottingham.
- 1.2 The merged college has a wide catchment area, but is particularly active within the City of Nottingham itself, together with the west side of the conurbation.
- 1.3 Castle College plans a £35million investment in new buildings to improve and update its current facilities.
- 1.4 The College's vision is 'to be a leading strategic partner in Nottingham for the delivery of high quality learning which meets the skills needs of the economy'. The mission is 'to unlock potential, raise aspirations and deliver excellence'.

2.0 Access Agreement: Fees and Bursaries

- 2.1 The College will charge £3,070 for all full time undergraduate provision in 2007, this being the £3000 minimum for 2006 plus the inflationary element of 2.33%. Subsequent years, up to 2010, will rise by the agreed rate of inflation.
- 2.2 This policy relates to the College's directly funded higher education provision, franchise provision will follow the Access Agreement of the relevant university.
- 2.3 The College is committed to providing a £307 bursary to all full time undergraduate students on a full maintenance grant. This bursary will be paid in two equal instalments; the first in November and the second in January.
- 2.4 A further bursary of £256 will be paid to all full time undergraduate students, residing within Nottinghamshire at the time of application, and who will be in receipt of a full maintenance grant
- 2.5 Both bursaries will be increased in line with inflation.

3.0 Access Agreement: Financial Information

- 3.1 The College is committed to providing clear and accessible information to all prospective students, including exactly how much they will have to pay and the financial support which will be in place for the duration of their period of study.
- 3.2 Plans have already been agreed for the College to consolidate its admissions system and establish a central procedure. This enables trained staff to consistently and effectively apply standards which will provide quality of opportunity for all individuals to gain admission to a course suited to their ability and aspirations. The College is seeking to ensure that reliable and consistent information is supplied to applicants on how they will be assessed for entry to the courses, taking into account the increasing diversity of applicants, qualifications and pathways into higher education. This process should ensure that comprehensive financial information is supplied to potential students making enquiries about the College's HE courses.
- 3.3 The provision of information to potential students and their parent/sponsors will include:
 - 3.3.1 Dedicated web pages on tuition fees and related financial information including course fees (together with the fact that tuition fees may be subject to annual inflationary rises and what that might mean) together with frequently asked

- questions and key contacts. Additional web suites include www.aimhigher.ac.uk and www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport
- 3.3.2 Related information will be available in the College prospectus and on the College website. Hard copy literature containing the same information is also available especially through Connexions, Aimhigher, schools and colleges with the aim of targeting particular groups of widening participation students and their parents.
 - 3.3.3 Tailored training for all relevant admission staff on HE student finance.
 - 3.3.4 The College employs a dedicated Higher Education Administrator based in its Student Support Service Section. This member of staff is available to provide financial advice to prospective higher education students.
 - 3.3.5 During student induction, the Higher Education Administrator delivers an input on student finances.

4.0 Access Agreement Outreach Activity

- 4.1 The College currently engages in a range of activities supported by Aimhigher, targeting mainly full time students in the 16-19 age range. The target group are students in local schools and students on further education programmes with the College.

Raising awareness amongst staff in local comprehensives together with encouraging student champions are also part of the initiative.

The College plans to reinforce and extend this activity by offering a range of taster workshops to raise aspirations.

An extension of strategies already being developed in the College including improved pastoral support, peer buddying and academic tutoring to enable all students, including those from non traditional backgrounds, to feel that Castle College is a college which will nurture their potential and encourage success. This support will be targeted through analysis of non completion rates. These will be monitored to measure impact and will include widening participation data. There will be dissemination events to share good practice around the College.

4.2 Disabled Applicants

The College aims to raise participation for disabled students by the application of our policy for support, which is geared toward taking positive steps to seek and identify need at the application stage and agreeing, at this point, a means of satisfying that need. Intended provision includes:

- Alternative format for available printed materials e.g. Braille, large print.
- Enquiry Centre which includes facilities for enquirers with disabilities e.g. wheelchair access, text phone, confidential interview room.
- Provision of a special leaflet on dyslexia.

5.0 Access Agreement: Milestones

- 5.1 Year on year maintenance at, or above, HE participation benchmark performance regarding social class, ethnic make up, low participation and neighbourhood background (e.g. 2004/5 - 38% from under privileged areas).
- 5.2 Take up of bursaries and retention rates of students with bursaries, monitored annually in relation to estimates.
- 5.3 Expansion of visits to college by prospective students.
- 5.4 Expansion of attendance at regional and local promotional HE events.

6 Access Agreements: Monitoring

The College will monitor compliance with this agreement through the Head of Higher Level Studies using data supplied by both the College MIS systems and by the programme delivery teams. Much of this will be gained through the annual course review.