



Revised Access Agreement for 2011-12

Introduction

- 1 The Conservatoire for Dance and Drama exists to train artists who will match the world's best and, on entering their professions, shape the future of dance, drama and circus arts. Established in 2001, the Conservatoire is a Higher Education Institution with a unique structure, comprising eight schools. All of these are small, specialist institutions with international reputations for high quality delivery in their respective fields:

Bristol Old Vic Theatre School – www.oldvic.ac.uk
Central School of Ballet – www.centralschoolofballet.co.uk
The Circus Space – www.thecircusspace.co.uk
London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts – www.lamda.org.uk
London Contemporary Dance School - www.theplace.org.uk
Northern School of Contemporary Dance – www.nscd.ac.uk
Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance – www.rambertschool.org.uk
Royal Academy of Dramatic Art – www.rada.ac.uk
- 2 Each school has an established record of training its students to a professional standard with an excellent success rate in the number of its students gaining employment in dance, drama or circus. The unrivalled quality of teaching enables the most talented students to benefit from vocational training. Each of the Conservatoire schools is a separate and distinct institution that employs its own teaching staff and remains legally autonomous. At the same time, students are registered jointly with the Conservatoire and the individual school. Within the Conservatoire there is a balance between the art forms of dance and drama, classical and contemporary styles, as well as one of the only courses for circus arts within higher education.
- 3 The Conservatoire's mission is to:

advance the art forms of dance, drama and circus arts by preparing students for sustainable careers as artists and to be leaders in their art forms; it aims to attract the most talented students, who are selected for training irrespective of background, and to sustain its affiliate schools' excellence and leadership in training and research.
- 4 This Access Agreement sets out the Conservatoire's plans for charging additional fees from September 2011. It is a revised scheme from that published in 2007. The additional fee income generated is spent on learning and teaching which helps the Conservatoire maintain its standard of teaching and the quality of its resources which compete with other arts conservatoires around the world.
- 5 The Conservatoire is committed to ensuring that talented students can benefit from high-level vocational training irrespective of their background or financial circumstances. The Conservatoire also allocates a proportion of its income to providing bursaries to students from lower-income backgrounds and for the provision of a additional student financial support scheme for those students not eligible for statutory support. Over the lifetime of the bursary scheme so far, approximately three quarters of all bursary recipients have received the full bursary.

- 6 The revised agreement assumes that students already on Conservatoire courses and in receipt of bursaries will continue to receive the same bursaries as they would have done under the 2007 access agreement.

Fee limits

- 7 The Conservatoire's access agreement revisions are predicated on the assumption that fees will be £3,375 (2010-11 rate: £3,290) in 2011-12, that these fees will be subject to inflationary increases in future years, and the Conservatoire will charge the standard increased fee rate for that year for all students.

Amounts to be spent on access measures

- 8 By charging £3,375, the Conservatoire estimates that it will raise £1,922,410 of additional income in 2011-12. Based on anticipated spend on bursaries and access measures in 2011-12, the Conservatoire will allocate at least £407,300 (or 21.2%) of the additional income raised to access measures. One significant change from previous access agreements is that this funding will be spent on a combination of bursaries and additional widening participation activity.

Bursaries

- 9 Since its first Access Agreement published in 2006, the Conservatoire has offered cash bursaries available to UK resident undergraduate students attending any affiliate school who meet the requirements for the scheme. These are called 'Conservatoire bursaries' and apply only to UK resident students new to higher education (ie those who have not previously completed a course of study at another institution). This scheme is in addition to any bursaries or other support offered by affiliate schools.

10 Conservatoire bursaries

In summary, the Conservatoire proposes to offer bursaries of £1,000 per year to students from the lowest-income backgrounds. The minimum bursary any eligible student will receive will be £100.

- 11 Students on existing programmes who started their courses between 2006 and 2010 will receive the current bursary rates of £1,700 per year for students from the lowest-income backgrounds plus a final year bursary of £400.

12 Assessment

Students' eligibility for bursaries will be assessed through the Higher Education Bursary Scheme for Students (HEBSS) mechanism, as in the current year. The Conservatoire provides HEBSS with the criteria and students are then assessed on the basis of their applications for maintenance support.

- 13 Students with incomes assessed as being £25,000 or less will continue to receive a full Conservatoire bursary. The upper limit for receipt of bursaries remains the same as in the 2006/07 Access Agreement, plus inflation (ie £39,333).

Qualifying income	Standard Bursary
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£25,000 or less	£1,000
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£39,333 (upper limit)	£100
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- 14 Between the minimum and maximum bursaries, the Conservatoire will continue allocate bursaries based on student income and the bursaries will fall into 10 bands (rising by £100 per band). Detailed information about the income bands will be published by the Conservatoire on its website and made available in hard copy on request.

Additional Student Financial Support

The Conservatoire will continue to allocate a proportion of its additional resource to support students in particular need. This will be assessed by its schools on an individual basis. Depending on the future of the Access Agreement and arrangements in the light of the Browne Review, the Conservatoire will increase its spend on this activity from £24,000 per year to around £40,000 but this would be from 2012 onwards and subject to a further Access Agreement or the scheme's replacement. This will also cover the gradual diminution of the government's Access to Learning Fund and be available to students not eligible for ALF support.

15 Example of the cost for students entering training in 2011-12

This example assumes that the fees increase by 2.5%, the bursary increases by 2.5% and the HE Maintenance Grant remains at 2010-11 levels. Student loans are based on the 2010-11 rates then increase by 2.5% for the next two years.

Student on a three year BA/BA (Hons) programme	2011-12 £	2012-13 £	2013-14 £	Total £
Fees (to be repaid through loan payments, not up front)	£3,375	£3,460	£3,545	£10,380

The maintenance support available is as follows:

Higher Education Maintenance Grant	2,906	2,906	2,906	8,718
Conservatoire bursary	1,000	1,025	1,050	3,075
Total cash maintenance support receivable	£3,906	£3,931	£3,956	£11,793

In addition, students may borrow up to £6,928 through the Student Loan Company to support their living expenses. This loan will be repayable once the student has completed his or her programme. For the student example above, this would mean the following:

Bursaries and grants	3,906	3,931	3,956	11,793
Student loan (for a student living in London eligible for maximum loan)	6,928	7,100	7,277	21,305
Total maintenance support available	£10,834	£11,031	£11,233	£33,098

16 Repayment

Based on the current guidance issued by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, students will start to repay their loans from the April after they complete their course. Students will have to earn at least £15,000 before they must make repayments. If there is any balance on the loan remaining after 25 years (from the April that repayments become due), this will be written off. The government expects the average repayment period to be around 13 years. Note: this information is correct at the time of publication, but might be adjusted by the Department of Business.

Information for prospective students

- 17 The Conservatoire is keen to ensure that prospective students fully understand its proposed fees and the maintenance bursaries it can offer to support students. The Conservatoire will continue to ensure that all prospective students understand clearly the proposed fee rates, what the aggregate cost of their course will be, what bursary support is available and what they must do to secure such support.
- 18 Each year the Conservatoire has produced an information leaflet *Fees and bursaries at the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama*. This is either sent to individual students with the prospectus or referenced in the prospectus and available to download from the Conservatoire's website. It is available on request direct from the Conservatoire and students or parents are welcome to speak to Conservatoire staff for advice and guidance. Further information, including updated details about changes to the income band levels, is regularly published on the Conservatoire's website. Financial support is clearly signposted on the website (www.cdd.ac.uk/student-info/financial-support/). The information provided includes:
- clear information about the fees charged to UK and EU students;
 - examples of the aggregated cost of fees for students on one, two and three year programmes of study;
 - a description of the Conservatoire bursary scheme, with levels of support according to family income and instructions for assessment through the HEBSS scheme;
 - information about additional hardship support available from the Conservatoire;
 - information about any government-funded support for students (formerly the Education Maintenance Allowance);
 - brief contacts and addresses for further information about other student support.
- 19 **Review of information**
- The Conservatoire will review the information provided as part of its monitoring arrangements.

Widening participation activity

- 20 The Conservatoire recruits students on the basis of talent and potential to benefit from vocational training in dance, drama and circus arts. Affiliates seek students who they believe will, once trained, be able to have successful careers as artists or technicians. Outreach work, aimed at locating, nurturing and supporting talented people, is central to what the Conservatoire schools do.
- 21 The Conservatoire schools engage in a range of outreach activities which range from participating in career days to running government-funded training programmes aimed at offering subsidised pre-vocational training to young people. Outreach activities fit within the following headings:
- short courses/summer schools;
 - student performance tours to primary and secondary schools;
 - subsidised classes for children and young people;
 - specific projects with primary and secondary schools;
 - promotional activity (for example careers fairs);
 - workshops and masterclasses;
 - youth performance groups or companies;
 - reduced interview and application fees;
 - other funded projects (for example Music and Dance Scheme projects);
 - work with the validating university.

- 22 The Conservatoire has decided that rather than provide a final year bursary of £400 to all students, it will focus this expenditure on additional widening participation measures. Again, this is subject to the approval of a new Access Agreement or equivalent from 2012. On current estimates, by not allocating a final year bursary to students, around £40,000 could be reallocated to support widening participation activities from 2013-14. These activities will focus on roadshows and careers fairs to reach students from under-represented groups and areas; scholarships to enable students to attend Conservatoire Easter and summer schools and supporting enhanced WP capacity by funding staff time. For 2011-12, the Conservatoire proposes to allocate £10,000 to these additional WP activities.
- 23 Specific activities will focus on delivering the outcomes identified in the Conservatoire's Widening Participation Strategic Assessment.

Milestones

- 24 The Conservatoire's milestones for the period 2011-12 are as follows:

Milestone 1: to deliver at least two further specialist career fairs, focusing at one on circus arts and technical theatre training;

Milestone 2: to complete an analysis of bursary data for the past three years to establish a clear pattern of participation by different groups and enable targets to be set from 2012 to be agreed by the Widening Participation Group.

Milestone 3: to aim for at least 45% of UK students who are new to higher education and thus eligible to participate in the bursary scheme will actually receive a bursary (ie 45% of students to have family income backgrounds of £39,333 or less);

Milestone 4: to aim to ensure that in 2011-12 75% of students are from state schools and to aim to improve performance against the published benchmark (using the HESA performance indicator monitoring, table 1a and 1b).

Other action: once guidance is released, to devise a new Access Agreement or equivalent outlining the targets for widening participation for the coming three years.

Institutional monitoring arrangements

- 25 The Conservatoire's monitoring plans are to:
- collect and analyse data about recipients of bursaries (equality data including gender, ethnicity, age, disability and, where possible, school attended);
 - report annually to the Principals' Management Group about the outcome of such analysis;
 - annually review progress against the milestones;
 - review the provision of information to prospective students;
 - annually review the operation of the bursary scheme and the allocation of funds to the scheme;
 - report to OFFA, as required.

8 January 2011