

ACCESS AGREEMENT FOR: CORNWALL SCITT

1. Introduction

1.1 Cornwall SCITT provides a full-time, one year postgraduate teacher training programme for those wishing to teach at secondary level. We currently offer 52 places across six subject areas: English, mathematics, science, modern languages, design technology and music. Successful trainees gain QTS and PGCE, validated through Open University Validation Services; many go on to teach in local schools. We have always encouraged applicants from a wide variety of academic and socio-economic backgrounds and have demonstrated commitment to lifelong learning, offering flexible support and appropriate advice and guidance wherever possible within the parameters of the course.

2. Length of agreement

2.1 This agreement is for five years from the academic year 2006/07. However, we have committed to return to OFFA by May 2008 to seek approval for our monitoring criteria which we intend to develop as we begin to collect relevant data.

3. Fee limits

3.1 We intend to charge a fee of £3000 for the full-time postgraduate course from the 2006/07 academic year. This fee limit will rise with inflation in line with annually published Government regulations.

4. Bursary Support

4.1 We will offer a bursary of £300 to any student who is in receipt of full state maintenance grant of £2700 (figures represent the position for 2006 and will be subject to inflationary rises.)

4.2 Bursary payments will be made in three instalments of £100 per term.

4.3 We anticipate 60% of applicants will be able to benefit from these bursaries and intend to put aside sums of between £10,000 - £12,000 to fund the scheme.

4.4 In addition to this, we will establish a new discretionary fund to alleviate proven hardship of any trainees, including our EU students, during the course and to ensure equality of access for all. We will keep a contingency fund in the region of £7,000 - £10,000 per year for this purpose. Access to this discretionary fund will means tested.

5. Publicising fees and financial support

5.1 We will use the following methods to ensure that prospective applicants are as clear as possible about the fees charged and the amount of student support they may be entitled to:

5.2 The Cornwall SCITT website, www.cornwallscitt.org contains a section on finance, including fee and support information and this will be updated regularly. Support information will include institutional support and support available via the Government through the maintenance grant, tuition fee loan, student loan and teaching bursaries.

5.3 A leaflet summarising the information above will be produced and sent to all prospective applicants as an insert into our current prospectus and made available in all outreach activities and given to applicants on interview days.

5.4 A letter will be sent to all applicants to explain the Cornwall SCITT access agreement.

5.5 This information will be clearly explained verbally during the interview process, supported by the written leaflet, to ensure that applicants are fully informed before they make a decision on whether to accept a place.

6. Outreach

6.1 Current outreach activities undertaken by staff at Cornwall SCITT include presentations at careers events in schools, FE and HE institutions, an open evening event for all members of the public and an annual taster course currently funded by the Training and Development Agency. We will seek to identify areas of under-representation in our student cohort when compared to the HE sector from which we recruit. If we identify an area of significant under-representation, we will seek to address this by considering whether there may be further effective outreach activities which could be directed at such groups.

7. Institutional targets and milestones

7.1 We do not currently collect data which would be suitable to determine a baseline for targets and milestones around low income or socio-economic groups. However, we will wish to monitor the numbers of students participating in our institution who are in receipt of full or partial state support. We may also wish to develop targets around other under-represented groups if identified.

7.2 We will seek to maintain or increase the proportion of students in our target groups, but will only be able to set meaningful targets once data is available. Therefore, we commit to return to OFFA to revise this agreement by May 2008, with a view to an amended agreement taking effect from the 2008/09 academic year.

8. Monitoring Arrangements

8.1 The finance sub- committee of Cornwall SCITT will monitor the progress of the access agreement on a termly basis and report to the full steering group. The programme manager of the course will then include a written account in the annual monitoring report which is submitted to our validating HEI and the steering group of Cornwall SCITT in December of each year. This written section of the report will also form the basis of our annual monitoring report to OFFA.

8.2 Initial monitoring will be concerned with participation rates and the development of data on lower income and any identified under-represented groups. As specific baselines, targets and milestones are determined we will look to monitor against these.