

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY

ACCESS AGREEMENT 2009/10

The University's Access Agreement for 2009/10 is based upon its agreement for 2008/09, but modified following review. The provisions of the Agreement are intended to extend educational opportunity to the maximum number of students who are likely to succeed, by providing financial assistance to those whom we judge need it most. The main modifications to the previous agreement consist of :

- increasing the number of Opportunities Scholarships (for students entering on the basis of access course qualifications rather than A-level scores) from 60 to 200;
- increasing the Student Bursary, for students entitled to means-tested financial support, from £400 to £500;
- removing the Regional Bursaries Scheme which provided a bursary of £250 pa to any student with a permanent home address within a 30-mile radius of the University.

All other OFFA-related financial provisions remain.

The purpose of these changes is to focus support more exactly on students who are educationally or socially disadvantaged.

In addition the value of and the criteria for the Creative Industries Scholarship will be raised.

Returning students will continue to receive the benefits of the Access Agreement obtaining when they started their programmes, subject to the following increases to fees and to bursaries for 2009/10:

- Tuition fees: £3225
- Bursary for students starting in 2008: £410
- Mandatory bursary for students starting in 2007: £330
- Discretionary bursary (for students in receipt of partial means-tested support) for students starting in 2007: £560.

The provisions outlined below apply to all UK students on DfES-funded programmes and on degree courses in Social Work starting in September 2009 and subsequently.

The amounts of money quoted are at 2009/10 rates unless otherwise indicated. Student Bursaries are subject to annual inflationary increase as they are based on Government income threshold levels for state support and will increase in line with

any Government announcements. The value of other bursaries and scholarships will be reviewed annually.

1. Student Bursary Scheme

Any student entitled to means-tested financial support (full or partial) as calculated by the LEA will receive £500 per annum.

2. Looked-after Children Bursary Scheme

Any student entering the University from care will receive a bursary of £1000 per annum (excluding any paid placement year). This includes all children being looked after by a local authority at the time of application. The University has achieved the Frank Buttle Trust Quality Mark.

3. Opportunities Scholarship Scheme

The University will provide up to 200 Opportunities Scholarships of £1000 per year each for students entering on the basis of access course qualifications rather than A-levels or other qualifications.

4. Academic Scholarships Scheme

The University will provide an Academic Scholarship of £1000 per annum to any student admitted on the basis of at least 280 UCAS tariff points derived from qualifications recognised for this purpose by the University. No student can receive both an Academic Scholarship and an Opportunities Scholarship.

5. Creative Industry Scholarships Scheme

The University will provide a Creative Industry Scholarship of £2000 per annum to any student admitted to a qualifying programme on the basis of at least 320 UCAS tariff points derived from qualifications recognised for this purpose by the University. No student can receive both an Academic Scholarship and a Creative Industry Scholarship or both an Opportunities Scholarship and a Creative Industry Scholarship. A list of qualifying programmes is attached.

6. Transition Support Scheme

6.1 *At the University*

In the context of this agreement, DMU already spends over £0.78m pa in student support relevant to students from underrepresented groups. This includes provision in Student Services such as disability advice and support, and includes a transitions support officer for students with disabilities as well as a transitions team and a

money and welfare advice team. Through the Library there is extensive provision from the learning support centre and library service support. Income from variable fees enables us to continue to expand such facilities. The transitions team was introduced in Student Services in 2005/06 and is now part of mainstream provision in Student Services. Working with year 13 applicants who are 'at risk' the team aims to support successful transitions from FE to HE. This support continues through the first term at university. The Transition Support Worker for students with disabilities has worked with over 250 applicants to enable more effective entry and support whilst at the university. Our distribution of the Access to Learning Funds – at c£0.8m for 2007/08 – makes a significant impact on student retention.

6.2 Partner Colleges and Schools

A key component of the University's strategy for widening participation is the University's transition support service offered to prospective DMU students in partner colleges and schools. The University wishes to make Higher Education and DMU a real option for students with little or no family participation in HE. The Transition Teams will target approximately 50 schools and colleges in the region and work with those students most at risk of dropping out of HE.

Key features include:

- Transition support from HE guidance workers to develop skills and enable smooth transition to HE through increased awareness of the different learning styles required at this level.
- On-going transition support to students in DMU's partner colleges and institutions to maintain and support DMU's profile
- The scheme combines the ethos of widening participation from non-traditional groups with the concern for ensuring the quality of student intake.
- The guidance package also addresses the concern that students from non-traditional backgrounds can be less well-prepared for university and at an increased risk of withdrawal.
- We continue to evaluate the transition support model for its wider applicability to student support – particularly those activities concerned with transition, induction and retention.
- The service is promoted via Student Advisers and WP Co-Ordinators in partner schools and colleges.

The cost of the scheme to cover student transition support over the three-year period is estimated at £100,000 pa.

7. Provision of Information to Students

The University has developed a comprehensive communication and information strategy in relation to tuition fees, bursaries and scholarships. The strategy comprises a fully integrated marketing campaign to promote the University's bursary and scholarship offering to the relevant target audiences. The main focus of this campaign is to provide clear and accessible information and guidance to prospective students, their families and teachers. The recent *Higher Expectations 2007/08* research project gathering the views of new undergraduates across the country found that DMU was rated third out of all universities for our bursary and scholarship offering. This clearly reflects the high levels of awareness of the University's offering.

The University is committed to ensuring that students are aware of, and receive, the financial support they are entitled to. To this end (where possible) support is awarded automatically and processes are simplified to encourage take up of bursaries and scholarships.

The DMU campaign includes:

- Up to date information features prominently on the DMU website; www.dmu.ac.uk and is informed by market research.
- Tailored presentations and guidance takes place in our partner schools and colleges (approx 100 partners).
- Finance presentations take place during our University open days,
- A "ready reckoner" funding calculator has been developed for students to access online to guide them on what support may be available to them.
- Applicants receive top level funding information in our Applicant Wallet 24 hours after we receive their application.
- Once an offer is made applicants are sent a detailed DMU student funding guide.
- Letters are sent to applicants eligible for scholarships and bursaries.

A key aim of the campaign is to eliminate confusion and anxiety amongst all groups but to assure less confident groups that opportunities to study with us are not constrained by new financial packages, in particular first generation students.

The University will ensure that all students are clearly informed of the aggregate cost of tuition before they start their programmes and of the support available to them.

Student Services has worked with each Faculty on financial capability. The University is an early developer of the FSA's Money Doctors scheme, and this has been heavily promoted for students. This includes information on making the most of bursaries, scholarships and any other funding requirements as well as giving advice on budgeting and debt management.

8. Administration of Bursaries and Scholarships

The University has opted in to the bursary scheme operated by the SLC, and the awards are administered and managed by the Academic Registry supported by the Finance Office.

9. Partner Institutions

All DMU students, whether studying at DMU or at a partner institution, are eligible for the above schemes. Partner institutions running DMU programmes are able to offer further bursaries and scholarships from their own funds, in addition to the schemes detailed above. DMU notifies OFFA from time to time of such additional schemes as they arise.

Partner institutions are:

1. Brooksby Melton College
2. Castle College
3. Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies
4. Derby College
5. Grantham College
6. Lambeth College
7. Leicester College
8. Liverpool Community College
9. Matthew Boulton College
10. North Warwickshire and Hinckley College
11. Oxford and Cherwell Valley College
12. Tresham Institute

10. Outreach Activity

Our outreach activities can be divided into two categories: direct recruitment activity with Year 12 and 13 students in around 120 schools and colleges in the region and nationally, and aspiration and attainment raising activity with Year 7-12 students within regional schools and colleges.

10.1 *Direct Activity*

The majority of our recruitment-related school and college liaison work is carried out by our Student Advisory Service: a team of four Student Advisors based within the Recruitment Team in the Marketing Department. A fifth Student Advisor focuses on adult learners – prospective mature, part-time and postgraduate students. They work closely alongside our Widening Participation team and activities are supported by our Events Team. This central team then works in close collaboration with Faculties – academic and admissions staff - when subject-specific input is required.

The main objective of the Student Advisory Service (SAS), working at pre-application stage, is to generate full-time, UG applications for DMU. To achieve this, the team:

- Raises the profile of DMU within partner schools and colleges through events, talks and many other interactions
- Informs students and teachers about the opportunities offered by DMU and inspires students and teachers with DMU's areas of distinctiveness and excellence
- Builds and maintains strong relationships with key staff/advisors within schools and colleges.

Once students have made an application, the Student Advisory Service hand over to Faculty teams (for conversion to enrolment) and, where applicable, to the Transitions Team in Student Services to ensure that those most at risk of not successfully engaging with HE are supported to make a successful transition to DMU (see section 7).

The Student Advisory Team currently works with around 120 partner schools and colleges across Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire and plans to extend its reach in 2008/09. Activities vary according to the stage of the application cycle but typically include:

- *Why HE?* talks for Year 12 students
- *Student Finance* talks
- *Student Life* talks, delivered by one of our Student Ambassadors
- *Personal Statements* – generic advice for all students
- *Preparing for... Clearing, Admissions Interviews* and/or *UCAS Fairs*
- *About DMU* talks
- A range of subject-specific talks on request, on and off campus, often facilitated by a member of the central team but delivered by a subject academic or Faculty marketing/admissions team member (course talks, revision workshops, placement talks, taster lectures etc)
- Inward visits including HE Experience Days (typically campus tour, student life talk, taster lecture or seminar) and subject-specific visits and workshops.

In 2008/09 it is anticipated that the Student Advisory Service will:

- Deliver around 600+ talks and workshops for Year 12 and 13 students in schools and colleges

- Collect the data of around 3,000 individual prospective students via school and college visits for follow-up support and activities
- Host around 30 inward visits on campus (approximately 1000 individual students)
- Arrange and fund school groups to attend at least four University Open Days
- Exhibit at 30+ UCAS fairs across the country and collect the data of circa 15,000 individual students
- Present to over 500 mature students studying Access to HE courses at regional colleges
- Host regular Advisor Days on campus for teachers and careers advisors
- Support the delivery of four annual University Open Days in Summer and Autumn each year, including at least two Saturdays to facilitate increased access for parents as well as students
- Arrange for students to attend specialist events on campus such as the Machinima festival and the AAD Degree Show.

In 2008, the team also launched a new **Partnerships Scheme** (replacing older compact-type agreements) with a select number of schools. This will be extended in 2009, offering enhanced HE information, advice and guidance for more regional schools and colleges.

Many of the schools and colleges with which we work are in inner city or inner town locations. Around 25% of our students are from FE colleges. All of our work is with the public sector.

In 2009 we intend to extend our school and college work beyond the regions listed above and increased the number of institutions we work with to support and advise more students (and their advisors) nationally remotely via new technology solutions and other initiatives.

All of the above is delivered with a total budget of circa £122,000 per year.

10.2 *Aspiration raising activity*

Our aspiration raising activity is led by our Widening Participation (WP) team with the Marketing Department. The main objective of the WP team is to raise the aspirations and attainment of local young people to encourage those, with the ability, to consider HE as an option for them.

We continue to work within the Aimhigher programme to provide participants each year with a number of aspiration and attainment raising activities. Under the Aimhigher brand DMU also works collaboratively with the other local FE and HE providers to offer a thorough representation and example of the FE and HE provision available with our region. Collaborative projects for further development include enhancing support for students with disabilities considering HE and support for Looked After Children, delivered by the Transitions Team in Student Services.

Much of the work of the WP team is externally funded (AimHigher, HEFCE, ESF) and as such, some activities are delivered in conjunction with the Universities of Leicester and Loughborough.

Activities typically include:

- University Experience Days attended by Year 10 students
- Week-long Gifted and Talented drawing schools
- Year 11 Study Skills events for students entering their final GCSE year
- Masterclasses - subject specific sessions/study tasters for Year 11/12 students who fall within the *Gifted and Talented* cohort.
- Tasters for Year 8 students, introducing them to the concept of HE
- Year 7 Problem Solving sessions for full year groups
- Year 9 Roadshows – Aimhigher events run collaboratively with the Universities of Leicester and Loughborough
- Plus a range of additional regular events throughout the year such as parents evenings and dyslexia support evenings and one-off events with partner schools and colleges.

All outreach work is supported and enhanced by the employment of a team of trained Student Ambassadors who work with student groups at all stages.

A budget of circa £20,000 is allocated annually by DMU to undertake this WP work plus – in 2008/09 - £45,000 Aimhigher funding.

11. Disabled Applicants

In 2006/07 4.2% full-time and 1.7% of our part-time students were registered for the Disabled Student Allowance. We aim to raise this by the application of our policy for support, which is geared towards taking positive steps to seek and identify need at the application stage and agreeing at that stage means of satisfying that need. This involves Disability Advice and Support in considerable work with applicants. Current provision includes:

- Alternative format for printed materials available, e.g. Braille, large print.
- Enquiry Centre fitted out with facilities for enquirers with disabilities, e.g. wheelchair access, hearing loop, text phone, confidential interview room.
- Provision of special leaflet on dyslexia.
- 1 to 1 support available through Disability Officer appointments and a daily 'Ask Here' drop in service offering 15-minute quick query sessions for immediate concerns.

12. Milestones

1. Year on year maintenance at or above benchmark performance levels in relation to proportions of student population with regard to social class, ethnic make-up, low-participation neighbourhood background.
2. Take-up of bursaries and retention rates of students with bursaries, monitored annually in relation to estimates.
3. Improvement in progression of 4% from 2006 to 2010.
4. Visits of school and college students will be maintained at 45 per year.
5. Annual setting and reviewing of targets and supporting activities.

6. The continuation of the current aspiration and attainment raising outreach activity and the implementation of new developments
7. Annual review by Academic Board of work of its Admissions Committee.

13. Monitoring Arrangements

Progress and success of these arrangements is subject to operational quarterly monitoring activity by a group chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor linked to a review cycle appropriate to the nature of individual milestones. This group will prepare a formal annual monitoring report for consideration by the Board of Governors and the Academic Board.

14. Contact Information

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15. Scale of Bursaries and Scholarship Support to Students

Title	Estimated Number new 09/10	Value (£) per year	Year 1 Cost (£)	Year 2 Cost	Year 3 Cost
Mandatory Bursary	1560	500	780,000	1,500,000	1,950,000
Discretionary Bursary	950	500	475,000	860,000	1,200,000
LAC Bursary	5	1000	5,000	9,000	13,000
Opportunities Scholarship	200	1000	200,000	370,000	525,000
Academic Scholarship	470	1000	470,000	860,000	1,200,000
Creative Industries Scholarship	290	2000	580,000	1,050,000	1,450,000
Transition Support			100,000	100,000	100,000
Information to students					
Totals			2,610,000	4,750,000	6,440,000

16. Fees

The University intends to charge the full annual tuition fee of £3225 in 2009/10. In following sessions the fees will be adjusted in line with annual inflation.