

ACCESS AGREEMENT

Introduction

Goldsmiths is a College of the University of London and has an international reputation for the study of the visual and performing arts, educational studies, the humanities, and social and cognitive sciences. Goldsmiths is committed to offering its students a first-rate education which leads to qualifications that are internationally respected, through providing challenging and innovative courses, taught by staff who are at the forefront of scholarship within their disciplines. We also believe it is important to provide our students with the resources they need to support their learning and for personal development through academic and leisure activities. In order to maintain and enhance the opportunities available to our students, and to further develop the campus, infrastructure and student support facilities, we have decided to use the opportunities offered by the Education Act 2004 to raise the fees paid by our home and EU students.

The income raised from the new fees will be used to develop all aspects of the student experience and the College's mission. Several areas have been identified for investment. These include: increasing student support resources, including information technology, the library, and learning support; improving our facilities for sport and leisure; renovating or replacing key buildings on the campus; investing in enhancing and expanding the academic activities and profile of the College. The aim will be to ensure that the money raised from fees serves to enrich the quality of the student experience at Goldsmiths, and that our students leave with qualifications and experience which will be of value to them throughout their lives.

Goldsmiths is already involved in many outreach and recruitment activities which are designed to attract entrants from a wide range of educational and social backgrounds and to widen participation in higher education. The College has consistently performed strongly against its HEFCE benchmarks for participation from under-represented groups. In 2002-03, as in previous years, it significantly exceeded its location-adjusted benchmark for recruitment from state schools. There is no significant variation between the actual recruitment of the College and its HEFCE performance indicators for recruitment from low participation neighborhoods and social groups IV-VII, and the percentage of shortfall has been progressively narrowed within the last three years to within 0.4% and 2.1% respectively. The College has also been successful in recruiting students from low income backgrounds and currently 51% of our students have a household income of less than £21,000.

As Goldsmiths already has a substantial proportion of students from under-represented groups, we believe that our aim for the period of this Access Agreement should be to maintain the current levels of recruitment from those groups. Our bursary policy is directed towards this and will be supported by outreach activities, which will focus on groups we have identified as under-represented or vulnerable to the impact of variable fees.

a. Fee limits

The level of fees will be set at **£3145 per annum** for full-time undergraduate students and for those on PGCE programmes. Part-time students registered for degree courses will be charged pro-rata. The government has indicated that the level of fees may rise to reflect inflation during the term of the Access Agreement. Goldsmiths will follow government regulations in this matter.

b. Amounts of additional fee income to be spent on access measures

Goldsmiths intends to devote a minimum of 20% of the income raised from fees towards the cost of bursaries and widening participation activities.

c. Bursaries and other financial support for students

For those students who started in the 2006-07 or 2007-08 academic years we will continue to provide bursaries calculated according to the annual household income of the student and will range from £1,000 per annum for those with household incomes of £18,360 or less, to £50 for those with household incomes of £39,305.

In response to the changes to student support arrangements for full-time undergraduate and PGCE entrants in the 2008-09 academic year Goldsmiths will provide bursaries of £1000 for students with an annual household income of £19,000 or less, a bursary of £500 for students with an annual household income of £19,001 - £25,000, and a bursary of £310 for students with an annual household income of £25,001 - £40,000. Goldsmiths recognises that these thresholds may change during the course of the Access Agreement as a response to changes in the level of state support and our experience of the working of the bursary system. Students on PGCE programmes will be eligible for PGCE bursaries of up to a maximum of £500 with household incomes of £25,000 or less, to £300 for those with household incomes less than £40,000.

Although part-time students registered for degrees are not included in the terms of 2004 Education Act, we developed a part-time student bursary for fees. This is available to home and EU students receiving the maximum level of national support from student finance direct.

In order to administer the bursaries, the College has appointed a Bursaries Officer. Additional office and clerical support costs will also be involved and altogether these will amount to at least £150,000 per annum.

Prior to 2006 Goldsmiths offered bursaries to students in two forms:

- £32,700 as student residential bursaries
- £38,330 as maintenance bursaries funded from 10% of the money allocated to College through ALF. This expenditure will be kept under review to ensure that these resources are being used effectively.

In addition, and separately from the bursaries, the College has created a new range of scholarships. These are awarded on the basis of academic ability and it is likely that some will go to able students from our target groups.

d. Provision of information to students

Information will be provided to students through the appropriate channels, including the Undergraduate Prospectus, recruitment events, visits to schools and colleges, open days, departmental recruitment days and campus tour events.

The Undergraduate Prospectus is the main source of information for potential students and is available in print or on the web. However, as this has an early print date, a supplementary booklet is produced annually. It outlines the funding package and includes details on local and national provision for full-time undergraduate students, disabled students and part-time students. The Prospectus and Booklet also include a link to a special webpage which will be updated to provide additional information as it becomes available.

The webpage can now be found at the top level of the College's website. The page will be regularly updated as information is made available and will include details of the cost of study and the financial support which is available to students.

e. Outreach work

We regard our diverse student population as one of Goldsmiths major strengths. Our students come from many different backgrounds within the UK and abroad and their variety of interests and experience result in a vibrant and creative academic community.

1 What we currently do

Goldsmiths offers a range of activities designed to increase awareness about higher education and support local schools and colleges in raising attainment at 14-19. We also work with local colleges, community groups and other agencies to encourage mature students to return to study.

Widening Participation Section

The Widening Participation Section was established in September 2002 and its staff work closely with the Aspire Aimhigher Partnership for South East London and the London South Aimhigher Partnership.

Our *Open Book* initiative recruits and supports students from 'hard to reach' groups such as ex-offenders and those who have had addiction or mental health issues. *Open Book* has close links with, and is supported by Goldsmiths Students' Union.

A range of generic and subject specific awareness and aspiration and attainment raising activities are offered to schools and colleges in the South and East London areas.

A Student Ambassador Scheme has been established; we now have over 100 trained students who work on a range of activities, such as taster days and classroom placements. We have also developed a TDA-funded Student Associate scheme.

From 2007 we are increasing our provision for Gifted and Talented students as members of the Excellence Hub for the London Region.

Recruitment and Admissions

The Admissions and Recruitment Section co-ordinates and delivers a range of information and awareness raising activities for schools and colleges. These include information sessions on the application process and study options; entry requirements; completion of the UCAS form; the specific Goldsmiths offer; interview techniques; the range and content of specific courses; information about financial support; open days; taster sessions; and student-led campus tours.

Department of Professional and Community Education (PACE)

The Department offers a range of courses and programmes which are directed towards widening participation and drawing students into higher education. There are currently three access courses on offer: Social Work; Cultural Studies; Teaching; Design and Technology. Our foundation certificates and integrated degree programmes constitute a further commitment to widening participation. These include programmes in: Media; Psychology; Literature; Music; History, Theatre and Drama and Social Anthropology. Each year some 200 students participate in this provision.

The part-time degree, BA Social, Cultural and Creative Processes is designed to be accessible to widening participation students who are allowed to sample individual credit-bearing options before they register for the programme.

PACE works closely with the charity L'Ouverture, which is housed at Goldsmiths and works with young people aged 8-18 to raise aspirations through projects relating to music, drama and the media.

Academic departments

Academic departments undertake a number of visits to schools and colleges and organise a range of applicant visit days for prospective students to support them in application and induction processes. The involvement of departments is essential to the delivery of our subject specific work.

Each department has an Access and Recruitment Tutor responsible for co-ordinating widening participation activities. Their work is organized through the Widening Participation Section; termly meetings are held to share best practice.

Students' Union

In 2002, as a result of funding from the Higher Education Active Community Fund, the Students' Union launched a pilot prison visiting scheme, *Inmates*, which trains students and staff through UNLOCK, the National Association of Ex-offenders, to go into prisons as visitors to provide a link to the outside world.

Through the Students' Union, the College is also involved in the New Cross Gate New Deals for Community Scheme. Students from Goldsmiths work with young people from the local area as mentors in six creative areas – art, dance, drama, fashion, music and web design - to bring them into contact with higher education in an informal setting.

2 Aims

Goldsmiths is committed to maintaining its current widening participation and outreach activities. We believe that with the introduction of variable fees, we will have the opportunity to consolidate our current range of activities and to extend our links with schools and colleges. The main aim of our outreach activities will be to:

- raise awareness of our programmes and innovative approach to learning and teaching
- encourage applications from all who have the skills and talents to benefit, regardless of social or cultural background
- support schools and colleges in raising aspiration and attainment to increase the number of students qualified to apply to higher education
- offer information and advice about financial support for students and mechanisms and strategies to secure progression including Goldsmiths bursaries and scholarships
- provide academic development and study skills support before and after entry to ensure successful progression, retention and completion
- maintain the level of recruitment from under-represented areas in higher education

3 Target groups for Widening Participation

Goldsmiths recruits students from all social backgrounds, a wide range of ethnicities and cultures and has a majority of women students. We recognise that wider social issues continue to act as barriers to participation in higher education.

Widening Participation Students

National research has shown how a range of factors such as social class, income, family patterns of education, ethnicity and gender can affect the likelihood of participation in higher education. We have identified our target groups to take account of the key factors of social disadvantage and designed our monitoring systems to highlight our success in reaching those currently underrepresented in higher education. We describe these groups as Widening Participation Students and identify our specific target groups as:

- those without a family background of higher education, who lack information about the opportunities available to them and ways to access university study
- those who could benefit from higher education study but lack aspiration and/or support, in particular those from low participation neighbourhoods
- poorer students, their parents and teachers, who aspire to higher education but are unaware of the financial support mechanisms available
- ethnic minorities and/or men and women under-represented in certain subject areas
- young people attending local state schools and FE colleges from social backgrounds which are under-represented at Goldsmiths
- adults returning to study

f. Milestone targets

Goldsmiths already recruits strongly from state schools and amongst students from backgrounds which are typically under-represented in higher education. As a result we feel it would be appropriate for us to set milestones which aim to consolidate our current levels of recruitment from state schools, from social groups IV-VII and from low participation neighbourhoods. We feel that this is reasonable as these groups are the most vulnerable to any detrimental effects of an increase in fees. We will use our bursaries to offset the threat of economic hardship to students and encourage applications by developing our outreach and widening participation activities. In addition, the College will work with Goldsmiths Students' Union, to provide support for better levels of retention amongst all students, but particularly widening participation entrants. These milestones are based on HEFCE performance indicators.

Category	Benchmark	Performance 2002-03
From State Schools or Colleges	85.2%	90.5%
Socio-Economic Groups IV-VII	27.6%	25.5%
Low Participation Neighbourhoods/Neighborhoods	9.9%	9.5%

Milestones 2006-11

Recruitment Target Group	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
From State Schools or Colleges	90.5%	90.5%	85.2%	85.2%	85.2%
Socio-Economic Groups IV-VII	25.5%	25.5%	25.5%	25.5%	25.5%
Low Participation Neighbourhoods/Neighborhoods	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%

g. Institutional monitoring arrangements

Annual monitoring of performance in relation to the Access Agreement will be undertaken by the Academic Planning Committee and reported to the Academic Board.

The College will monitor:

- spending on bursaries
- outreach activities with schools and colleges
- progress against the Milestones