



Hull College

Higher Education Access Agreement

# Hull College Group Higher Education Access Agreement

## **Aims and Purpose of the Agreement**

This agreement has been prepared following the decision by the Corporation of Hull College to raise its full time undergraduate tuition fees above the standard level from 2006/7.

The agreement is based upon the College Mission and Strategic Plan for the period 2005-8 which outline a clear commitment to widening and increasing participation in Higher Education in Hull and in Yorkshire and the Humber.

The aims of the agreement are:

- To provide a financial support package for students entering higher education, making it easier for them to meet the initial costs of study
- To enable the college to invest in resources which will enhance the quality of the learning experience.

The percentage of 18 year olds entering Higher Education in Yorkshire and the Humber when this agreement was entered was only 18%, which along with the North East was the lowest in the country.

The percentage of those in the 19+ age group entering HE was 8%, only 2% higher than in the North East, placing Hull within the area of the second lowest national participation rate for England across all age groups.

This agreement aims to widen participation in Higher Education by creating a HE opportunities which raise aspirations, promote progression from FE and address financial barriers.

Hull College Higher Education Strategy is based upon its proven capacity to deliver high quality vocational education at levels two and three, using Centres of Vocational Excellence as a platform for the development of vocational higher education.

The strategy aims to deliver growth and increase participation through directly funded HEFCE places in areas highlighted as regional priorities, and where there are skills gaps and needs for higher level vocational skills. Growth of Higher Education at Hull College in the period 2002-7 has been achieved largely through the development of Foundation Degree, BA and PGCE programmes, in partnership with Hull, Huddersfield, Lincoln and Leeds Metropolitan Universities, and Yorkshire and Humber East Lifelong Learning Network.

Hull College will direct the additional income generated from tuition fees to promote participation in higher level vocational courses. This will be facilitated by direct financial support for students, and through investment in specialist, differentiated teaching and

learning resources, and strategies aimed at increasing internal progression from level three. Progression initiatives such as 'Aimhigher' activities and focussed marketing of access arrangements will be included in this investment strategy.

## **Fees levels**

From the academic year 2006/7 Hull College will charge a fee of 2,250 per academic year for to each student studying a full-time Foundation Degree a BA, or Certificate in Education.

The fee for a full-time HND or HNC will be 1,200 and will not be increased.

The fee will apply for the full duration of the course and will be subject to an annual inflationary rise.

Full Time Courses	Validating Partner	Funding	Fees Sept 08
Foundation Degrees	Leeds Met	Direct	<b>2,250</b>
BA (Hons)	Leeds Met	Direct	<b>2,250</b>
	Lincoln	Direct	<b>2,250</b>
Certificate/ Professional Graduate Certificate in Education	Leeds Met	Direct	<b>2,250</b>

Fees for part time courses will not be linked to full time fees and will be differentially priced.

The College, through its fees policy, will consider on an annual basis, the needs of learners on part-time programmes where there are skills shortages, or where the provision is particularly price – sensitive.

## **Bursaries and financial support**

Hull College's approach to student bursaries aims to widen access and participation in vocational higher education by addressing financial barriers to participation.

It will also aim to encourage progression from our own level three provision, and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Bursary support will be available in the following circumstances:

- Students progressing from a level three course the sum of £500 per year.
- Students who are eligible for full Higher Education Maintenance Grant will be entitled to claim a bursary of £750 per year.
- All FD students, except those who qualify for bursaries as described above will be eligible for a bursary of £750 per year.
- All full time Honours Degree students will be entitled to claim an annual bursary of £750.

Students will be eligible for one bursary only per year, except those students studying at level 6 having progressed from level three at Hull College, who will be entitled to make claims under two categories, up to a maximum of 1,000.

The final year (Hons) level enhanced bursary of £1,000 will be available only to those students who have progressed from FE programmes at Hull College.

### **Availability of other Financial Support**

There are some local companies and charitable organisations which provide bursaries for example Northern Dairies, which students may be eligible to apply for. Details of these are available from student services.

### **Impact of the Agreement**

Based upon the analysis of the current cohort we estimate that the agreement will be likely to advantage some 60% of those who study HE programmes at the College. Of new entrants to HE in 2004/5 some 35% progressed from level three programmes within the college.

This includes those progressing to non-prescribed higher level programmes.

Data gathered in the years 2005/06 – 2007/8 will provide a basis for refining this figure.

Through the provisions of the agreement the college aims to increase its current numbers. The continued development of new Foundation Degrees, Honours Degrees and postgraduate qualifications will provide opportunities for growth and diversification.

### **Collaborative Arrangements**

Where programmes are offered through partnerships, we will seek to minimise any potential impact of differences in fee levels.

### **Provision of information to students**

The college will employ an access and support officer to create an information pack for prospective students, parents, careers staff and employers on the financial support available to support students on Higher Education Courses at Hull College.

The College will create a 'plain speaking' guide in a range of formats which will be shared widely using direct marketing, including information events for all level three learners in the city. Events will be delivered on employer's premises and through all workforce development activities.

The college will engage in collaborative events with partners in Yorkshire and the Humber, aimed at offering clear and comprehensive information to students, families and employers about Higher Education opportunities in the Y&H Region.

## **Outreach activities**

In addition to the current outreach activities aimed at informing prospective students, their parents and employers about Higher Education Opportunities the College will offer a programme of 'HE for a day' taster activities and summer schools and targeted progression activities to level three learners in schools and colleges in the locality.

## **Impact measures**

The College undertakes to monitor the impact of the access agreement by gathering comparative data from each the cohort, creating reliable benchmarks, and reporting to the HE Committee and Academic Board.

Following the establishment of baseline data, realistic targets for increased participation and planned growth in under-represented areas will be monitored at two points throughout each academic year.

The impact of the agreement will be measured through:

- **Monitoring the increase in numbers of students progressing from levels three to four, and four to five in comparison with previous year's data.**

Of new entrants to HE in 2004/5 some 35% progressed from level three programmes.

This includes those progressing onto non-prescribed higher level programmes. Data gathered in 2005/06 - 2007/8 will provide a basis for refining this baseline figure, and will be used to assess the impact of the agreement.

- **Analysis of the profile of students enrolling on HE programmes to assess increase in applications from underrepresented groups.**

Of the students entering higher education programmes at Hull College in 2004/05 only 6% record their ethnic origin as being other than 'white British.'

Data gathered from students entering HE programmes in the period up to and including 2007/8 will be used to create a profile for target setting to address this indicator of under-representation.

- **The Student Voice** activities and processes for capturing student perceptions are used to inform planning for enhancement the quality of the student experience.

Actions arising from this, and other forms of feedback, are reported through HE Committee to Academic Board.

- **Post code analysis**

The post-codes of students who enrolled on HE programmes in 2004/5 showed that 76% of those students covered under the provisions of this agreement came from households in areas classified by the Learning and Skills Council as deprived. Data gathered for the 2004/5 cohort will be compared with data from 2005/6 to create a baseline for targeted growth in numbers of students originating from these areas in the period 2005-8.

- **Benchmarking against regions with similar patterns of under representation.**

Opportunities to benchmark against participation rates in regions with sharing socio-economic characteristics will provide an indication of success of the agreement, though it is acknowledged that the relative impact of single factors may be difficult to assess.

- **Comparing student support packages with other providers locally.**

As a partner College in a directly funded consortium it will be possible to compare the impact of the support packages offered by member colleges within the Humber Region to identify those measures which have been most successful in widening access.