

Westminster Kingsway College HE Access Agreement

Institution: **Westminster Kingsway College**

Contact for Access Agreement: **Frances White**

Post Held: **Vice-Principal (Curriculum and Quality)**

Telephone Number: **020 7802 8984**

Email: **frances.white@westking.ac.uk**

Senior Management responsibility for Access agreement:

Frances White, as above

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A. FEE LIMITS

The fees outlined below cover all directly funded full-time Higher Education (HE) courses at Westminster Kingsway College. Fees for part-time courses are available from the College and are published annually on its web site and in information leaflets for students and their sponsors or employers.

- The maximum fee limits for all **Foundation degree** courses undertaken by full time study, which are directly funded from the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE), will be **£2000 p.a.** for a full academic year for those commencing their programme in 2007/08 and 2008/09; **£2,500 p.a.** for those commencing their programme in 2009/10 and 2010/11; and **£3,000 p.a.** for those commencing their programme in 2011/12.

- The maximum fee limits for all **top-up degree** courses undertaken by full time study, which are directly funded from the HEFCE, will be **£2000 p.a.** for a full academic year for those commencing their programme in 2007/08 and 2008/09; **£2,500 p.a.** for those commencing their programme in 2009/10 and 2010/11; and **£3,000 p.a.** for those commencing their programme in 2011/12. Students who progress directly to a top-up course following a Foundation degree course at the college will be charged the fee which had pertained to their Foundation degree programme.

The fees outlined above will be introduced in the academic year 2007/08 and will apply equally to United Kingdom students and to students who are nationals of any other state of the European Union.

Fee levels will rise in line with inflation and will be rounded.

B. AMOUNT OF ADDITIONAL INCOME TO BE SPENT ON ACCESS MEASURES

The college will create an Access Measures Fund with 30% of the additional annual income derived from top-up fees and will use this fund to provide bursaries and other access measures. This fund is estimated at £57,000 in 2007/8 and £102,000 in 2008/9, rising to £671,000 in 2011/12. 25% of the fund will be devoted to enhancing access measures, including (see E3 below) work with employers to improve progression to HE by those in employment without previous HE experience.

The remainder of the additional annual income will be invested in the infrastructure for HE provision in the college (as outlined in F below).

C. BURSARIES

The college provides no bursaries of any kind currently. Wef 2007/08 any HE learner qualifying for the full maintenance or special support grant and paying the maximum fee will receive a bursary of 25% of the fee paid (i.e. £500 in 2007/08 rising to £750 in 2011/12) towards the cost of fees and other expenses.

Other students assessed as eligible for maintenance or special support grants may also apply for bursaries. In such cases bursaries will be calculated in relation to the fee actually paid and the amount of maintenance grant awarded. It is estimated that 35% of full-time learners each year will qualify for a bursary.

Bursaries will be administered in three equal instalments in December, March and May, and will therefore provide general financial support, as well as an incentive to help with retention, achievement and progression through the course.

As a condition of the bursary all students must participate in at least one widening participation activity per year e.g. assisting at open evenings or visiting Level 3 vocational classes to promote the benefits of HE study. Further conditions of the bursary are an attendance rate of 90% or above, completion of all work set and satisfactory progress; these are verified through course teams and registers before payments are made.

The bursary scheme award levels will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Additional Support

In addition to any bursary, HE students are able to apply for support through the Access to Learning Fund. Currently (2005/06) approximately 20 learners are eligible for support from this fund, while 95 are in receipt of student loans.

D. PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO STUDENTS

The college has a dedicated Higher Education section on its web site and produces a leaflet about each HE programme annually. Through both of these methods, prospective students are able to find out information about the college.

Information will be provided via these means about fees; bursaries; other forms of financial support and budgeting advice. Information will also be available about access to further information and advice.

The college will use some of the infrastructure fund (see section F below) to identify a Course Information and Finance Adviser (CIFA) with particular responsibility for HE learners. During their induction period, students will receive a presentation from the CIFA (HE) covering all aspects of student finance.

HE applicants will be advised in writing about the fee level that will apply to them and about the financial support and bursaries available.

E. OUTREACH WORK

1. Aimhigher

The college is a member of the Central London Partnership for Aimhigher, and targets funds to raise the aspirations of students on programmes at Levels 2 and 3 within the college itself and in its partner London boroughs. Aimhigher activities include visits to this and other HE institutions, revision and master classes, visits from industrial speakers and team-building events. Learners applying to HE receive a variety of forms of support with their applications from tutors and members of the college's Student Services staff. Outreach activity with college-based learners on vocational Level 3 programmes will be enhanced through the use of the new Access Measures Fund, and HE learners in receipt of bursaries will be expected to support the targeting of progression advice towards these Level 3 learners.

2. Access to HE

The college has an extensive programme of Access to HE courses, whose students also benefit from Aimhigher activities such as visits to HE institutions, participation in master classes and direct support for their applications to HE.

Access to HE programmes include those leading to degrees in academic subjects and those leading to degrees in the college's major vocational HE specialisms: business, information technology and public administration; creative industries; hospitality, catering, leisure and tourism. The new Access Measures Fund will be used to support students following vocational Access programmes to make a suitable choice of programme for HE study.

3. Working with Employers

The college has focused its HE offer around three areas of significance for the Greater London economy: business, information technology and public administration; creative industries; hospitality, catering, leisure and tourism. Foundation degrees in these subjects are linked to honours degrees at WKC or at one of its partner universities. The college will use some of the Access Measures Fund to work with employers to encourage the take-up of Foundation degrees by employees who have no previous experience of HE, and will enhance the development of vocational Access to HE programmes where appropriate.

F. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The college will use the majority of the additional income derived from fees to make improvements to the pastoral support of HE learners, for example through the appointment of a Course Information and Financial Adviser with special responsibility for HE learners and through the appointment of a part-time HE activities officer with particular responsibility for leading a programme of extra-curricular activities for HE learners.

There will also be improvements in academic support, for example through the creation of a support service to assist HE learners with ESOL, basic skills and study skills needs and through the enhanced development of learning and support mechanisms through the college's virtual learning environment.

G. MILESTONES

The college currently recruits 30% of its HE learners from black and minority ethnic groups and has a widening participation rate of 40% within its HE provision. Despite the introduction of variable fees the college aims to keep the proportions of students from BME groups and from WP areas at the current levels.

The college will aim to support 35% of full-time learners each year with a means-tested bursary.

The college aims to improve the annual in-year retention rate among HE learners to 88% by 2008/09 (82% in 2004/05, with variation between courses ranging from 66% to 94%).

The college aims to increase the proportion of Foundation degree learners in employment by 10 percentage points per year between 2007/08 and 2009/10.

H. INSTITUTIONAL MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The college will undertake an annual monitoring process of this Access Agreement to confirm compliance and progress towards the objectives and milestones it has set. Monitoring reports will be presented annually to the college's Governing Body.