

## NEWCASTLE COLLEGE

### ACCESS AGREEMENT

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a) Level of fees or fee limits

With the exception of non-EU students all of the higher education provision at Newcastle College is directly funded.

The College intends to apply the 2.33% inflationary uplift, as rounded, to its fee and bursary scheme. A fee of £2,350 will be charged for all its full-time higher education programmes from September 2007. This includes Higher National Diplomas, Foundation degrees and BA/BSC Honours degrees. The fee will apply equally to United Kingdom students and to students who are nationals of any other state of the European Union.

Refunds for withdrawn FT HE students will be applied in full (net of any bursary paid) up to 1 December and thereafter no refunds will apply and the full fee net of any bursaries due will be payable.

#### **Bursaries and other financial support for students:**

The level of tuition fee set by this institution takes account of the policy considerations which it has adopted to guide its thinking in relation to fee income. These considerations are:

- that the cost of full time higher education to students should not act as a entry barrier to those capable of benefiting from such an education and otherwise willing to engage in it;
- that income from tuition revenue should be managed to provide direct financial support for students, and to enhance their learning, and to encourage their progression and achievement.

The bursary arrangements the institution will introduce from 2007/8 are intended to support the fulfilment of these policy objectives.

All students will be entitled to a minimum bursary of £510 in year 1 of their study and in subsequent years dependent upon continuation of their study and successful completion of the previous year. In addition, students from areas of low participation in higher education, approximately 50% of the intake, will receive an additional sum of £510 per year. All bursary payments will be netted off outstanding fees where the student does not choose to take out a fee loan or finances the fees in other ways.

Bursary payments will be administered in the following way;

All full time HEFCE funded students are eligible to apply for a minimum bursary of £510 in year 1 of their study and in subsequent year's dependent upon continuation of their study and payment of any outstanding tuition fees. Students would also be expected to achieve a satisfactory attendance (minimum of 70% attendance). The College will take any extenuating circumstances into consideration.

Students whose residual household income entitles them to the full HE Maintenance Grant (approx 50% of intake) may receive an additional sum of up to £510 per year.

The table below highlights the financials for year 2007/08 within the agreement:

Year	HE Maintenance Grant Assessment	Total Bursary	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
1	£2,765	£1,020	£510	£255	£255
1	<£2,765	£510	£260	£125	£125

**1. Students receiving £1,020 per year:**

- an initial payment of £510 following census completion in the first term of study. It is anticipated that this payment will assist students in acquiring personal learning resources for their programme;
- subsequent payments of £255 and £255 in the Spring and the Summer Terms in the first year of study, to provide general financial support, and to act as an incentive to assist retention, achievement, and progression between levels of study.
- A further £510 will be paid to all eligible HE students progressing into their second and third year of study providing that they have met the requirements for progression to the next level, have satisfactory attendance and have no outstanding fees.
- £255 will be paid in the spring term and £255 in the summer term to provide an incentive to assist retention and achievement subject to satisfactory attendance and no outstanding fees.

**2. Students receiving £510 per year:**

- an initial payment of £260 following enrolment in the first year of study subject to satisfactory attendance and no outstanding fees. It is anticipated that this payment will assist students in acquiring personal learning resources for their programme;
- subsequent payments of £125 and £125 in the Spring and the Summer Terms in the first year of study, to provide general financial support, and to act as an incentive to assist retention, achievement, and progression between levels of study.

- A further £260 will be paid to all eligible HE students progressing into their second and third year of study providing that they have met the requirements for progression to the next level and have had satisfactory attendance and no fees outstanding.
- £125 will be paid in the Spring term and £125 in the Summer term to provide an incentive to assist retention and achievement.

In addition to bursary arrangements, students will also be eligible for the following financial support:

- payments under the Access to Learning Fund. Payments under this fund can provide short term repayable loans, and offer hardship funds in cases of serious financial difficulty. Guidance notes for higher education students seeking payments under this fund are available on the college website;

**Outreach activities:**

The extensive range of outreach activities will continue. These include a range of outreach activities within the local community, though the provision of short courses. Primarily this activity engages mature learners who come within widening participation and interventions categories funded through Aimhigher which is targeted at students in the 16-30 range. The target group is students studying within Tyne & Wear in sixth forms, colleges of FE including the institution's own students and work based learners.

**Information on financial support available to students:**

Financial information will be made available to all prospective students considering whether to join courses coming under this agreement. Such information will be guided by the principles of accessibility, transparency and clarity especially regarding offsetting bursaries against outstanding fees.

Information will summarise the annual and aggregate fee for the chosen course, bursary arrangements, and other sources of financial support available to students. It will also identify the sources from which students can obtain advice both within and outside the institution regarding the general financial framework applying to students undertaking full time higher education studies, so that they can establish the likely level of debt they will incur by the end of their studies. The institution is able to provide a full range of financial advice to prospective and current students through its Student Services department.

During induction all students will receive a presentation from the Student Services team which will, inter alia, cover issues associated with student finance.

All information relating to costs and means of support for students are available on the college website.

**Expenditure of access measures:**

The institution will direct additional revenue to support access measures in the following ways:

- through bursary payments to students
- through outreach activities, involving road shows, transport, and promotional materials;
- through funding to provide additional support for academic tutors in relation to assessment of students and the provision of work based learning;
- through capital spending to ensure that appropriate facilities are available.

**Institutional milestones and objectives:**

The institution has established the following milestones and objectives in relation to its higher education provision falling under this access agreement:

- recruitment targets: to meet the planned target intake
- retention targets: to achieve an annual retention rate of 85% in each year on higher education programmes.
- Progression targets: to achieve an annual internal progression rate of 20% from completers of full time FE vocational level 3 programmes , and to achieve an annual minimum internal progression rate of at least 40%.from completers of foundation degree onto honours degree programmes
- widening participation: to meet the planned target for the proportion of students coming from the widening participation categories.
- curriculum development: to respond to the identified needs of employers and students by developing new programmes and offering curriculum flexibility.

**Additional information:**

The institution will undertake annual monitoring of this access agreement to confirm compliance and progress towards the achievement of the milestones it has established. Responsibility for the monitoring report will rest with the Director of Higher Education. The report will be presented to the College Executive for approval, and following such approval be sent to the Academic Board and to the College Governors.

The annual monitoring report will be submitted to the Director of OFFA following its approval by the College Governors. The report will be

presented to the Executive at such time as to ensure that OFFA will receive the report by its July deadline.

The report will incorporate the following sections:

- financial data summarising recruitment levels, payment of bursaries, and other financial support made available to students;
- outreach activities that have been undertaken during the year; and
- progression made in meeting institutional milestones and objectives.

It is anticipated that amendments to this access agreement would not be sought from OFFA before academic year 2008/9.