

University of Exeter
Access Agreement 2012/13

The University of Exeter intends to charge Home/EU undergraduates £9000 per annum in order to better enable the University to direct resources at widening participation, fair access and improving the student experience. The University has a long tradition of working at the forefront of the widening participation agenda, particularly in terms of engaging young people in rural communities, as opposed to large urban population centres. It is important that students, irrespective of their background, are not deterred by higher fees and are encouraged to continue their studies at the University of Exeter or another institute of higher education. The Government's support arrangements, together with the University's own proposed arrangements for partial fee waivers and bursaries will provide much better support for students from poorer backgrounds than at present.

In support of its ongoing efforts to enhance the student experience, the University of Exeter will be delivering more than £300 million worth of new and upgraded facilities in time for the start of the 2012 academic year, including a new student services centre, new learning and teaching spaces (including new seminar rooms and a 400 seat lecture theatre), laboratories, IT and library facilities, student accommodation, performance space and research facilities. The University is already working with the Students' Guild to identify priorities for further investment in the student experience from 2012/13 onwards via an innovative Guild-University budgeting group.

Section 1: Level of fees and fee income above £6,000

Summary:

- *Tuition fees across all undergraduate courses will be charged at £9000 per annum for all Home/EU students*
- *Intention to apply annual increases to this fee, in line with the amount set by Government each year.*

1.1 For Home/EU students commencing courses after 1 September 2012 the University of Exeter intends to set tuition fees across all undergraduate courses at the rate of £9000 per annum. For the 2012/13 academic year, it is expected that the University will recruit approximately 3800 undergraduate students¹. The only exceptions to these fees will be:

- BSc Medical Imaging (Diagnostic Radiography), for which the annual fee will be covered by an NHS Bursary (assuming continuing NHS funding);
- Students spending a whole year studying at a European University under the Socrates/Erasmus programme, who will be exempted from all tuition fees (assumes continuing funding from HEFCE for this activity in 2012/13);
- Home/EU students undertaking a full-year placement either in industry or at a foreign university not covered by Socrates or Erasmus, who will be liable for fees of £1500 per year;
- Home/EU students undertaking a four-year undergraduate masters programme, who will be liable for fees of £4500 in their fourth year, subject to satisfactory academic achievement;
- B Medicine/B Surgery and Dentistry students at the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry, where tuition fees for some years of study may be met by the Department of Health (Year 5 for BMBS, Years 2-4 for BDS). If this funding is withdrawn, these students will be eligible for the full fee for each year of undergraduate study.

¹ 3800 students is the expected October 2012 intake for Home/EU undergraduates

1.2 Prices and charges will be publicised and made readily available to prospective applicants, as outlined in section 6 below.

1.3 It is the University's intention to apply annual increases to this fee, in line with the amount set by the Government each year. Financial support for students will also rise annually from 2012/13, to reflect this increase.

Section 2: Expenditure on additional access and retention measures

Summary:

- *The University intends to allocate 31% of all additional fee income over £6000 (gross) for Home/EU undergraduates in 2012/13 to additional access measures*
- *Combined with existing commitments to students who commenced their studies prior to 2012, this should provide a total of c£6.65million for additional access measures in 2012/13*
- *82% of this money for additional access measures will provide financial support for those students most in need*
- *18% of this money for additional access measures will be used to expand the range of outreach activity undertaken by the University.*

Assessment of the University of Exeter's access and retention record

2.1 The University of Exeter's retention² rates are very high, both in absolute and relative terms. For the academic year 2008/9 the University's retention rate was 92.6% which is 5.6% above the University's HESA student retention benchmark. It is expected that the University's performance on this indicator will be at least maintained from 2012/13 onwards.

2.2 The University also performs well in recruiting students who are eligible for the Disability Support Allowance (DSA). In 2009/10, 6.3% of the student population was in receipt of the DSA and internal analysis of students with a declared disability also indicates a rising proportion of students with a disability at the University. The HESA benchmark for the University is 3.6% of students in receipt of the DSA so the University is currently well ahead of this benchmark. However, the University is committed to improving its record of attracting students with disabilities and will seek continual improvement against this benchmark through investment in outreach activity and facilities.

2.3 The University was recently awarded the Frank Buttle Quality Mark for its Commitment to Care Leavers. While the University's record of admitting students from care backgrounds needs improvement (8 such students enrolled in 2009), the University is committed to increasing the number of care leavers at the University through a targeted plan of outreach activity and financial support.

2.4 The University's performance on a number of other widening participation measures has been worsening over recent years, which may be as a result of the rise in typical entry requirements for the majority of courses offered at the University. The table below sets out the University's absolute performance on three widening participation measures as well as the relative performance against the rest of the sector (as described by the HESA benchmarks). These widening participation measures are used by Government and its agencies to assess the performance of universities with regard to widening participation.

² 'Retention' refers to the number of students projected to successfully complete their degree – see HESA definition at http://www.hesa.ac.uk/dox/performanceIndicators/0910/t5_0910.xls

2.5 The University of Exeter has historically performed below these location-adjusted HESA WP benchmarks, which relate to students from state schools, students from low participation neighbourhoods and students from lower socio-economic groups. The following information is taken from the 2009/10 HESA performance indicators published in March 2011. The table below sets out the University's performance against the HESA WP performance indicators and the variance from the location-adjusted benchmark.

Performance Indicator	University of Exeter Performance	Benchmark	Location Adjusted Benchmark	Variance from Location-Adjusted Benchmark
State School	68.1%	75.8%	73.8%	-5.7%
Low Participation Neighbourhoods	3.8%	6.1%	5.2%	-1.4%
Low SEC 4-7	15.5%	19.7%	18.8%	-3.3%
Disability	6.3%	3.6%	N/A	N/A
Retention	92.6%	87%	N/A	N/A

2.6 The University is an internationally diverse institution with a growing international student and staff population. However, it is important not to disregard other widening participation measures such as the recruitment of Home/EU BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) students. While there is no HESA performance indicator for this group, the University recognises that more needs to be done in seeking to establish a more diverse student body amongst its Home/EU students, particularly with regard to the recruitment of Black and Afro-Caribbean students.

Use of contextual data

2.7 In trying to make progress towards each of these performance indicators, the University has adopted a contextualised admissions process, utilising information about an applicant's school/college. The educational performance of an applicant's school or college is considered as part of the holistic assessment of an applicant's potential to succeed at the University and may lead to a lower offer being made³. This approach is supported by internal evidence on the degree performance of applicants from 'aspirational' schools/colleges, who tend to outperform their similarly-qualified peers from higher achieving schools/colleges. The University also considers an applicant's experience of being in care as part of its contextualised admissions process, in accordance with the recently-awarded Frank Buttle Quality Mark for Commitment to Care Leavers.

2.8 The University's performance in attracting applications and admitting students from 'aspirational' schools/colleges in 2009 and 2010 is presented in the table below:

Year	Proportion of Applicants	Proportion of Offer Holders	Proportion of Firm Acceptances	Proportion of Entrants
2009	17%	15%	16%	14%
2010	15%	14%	15%	14%

Proposed expenditure

2.9 The University acknowledges the distance it needs to travel to make progress towards the nationally-defined HESA WP benchmarks, and to improve the proportion of students it

³ A school or college is defined as 'aspirational' if it is ranked in the bottom 40 per cent of schools and colleges for which data is available in relation to the average score per A level entry, the average score per A level entrant or the average UCAS tariff per student.

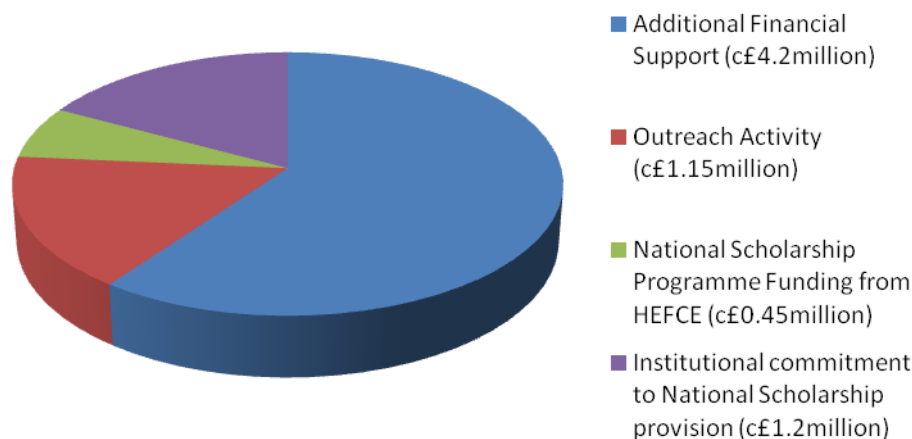
admits from 'aspirational' schools/colleges. It is therefore appropriate that a substantial proportion of the additional fee income from 2012/13 is spent on additional access measures. The University intends to allocate 31% of all additional fee income over £6000 (gross) for Home/EU undergraduates in 2012/13. This totals approximately £3.55million. An additional c£3.1million will be allocated as an ongoing proportion of the additional fee income from students who commenced their studies before 2012, as agreed in previous Access Agreements⁴. This equates to a total of c£6.65million assuming an intake of 3800 Home/EU undergraduates in 2012, as shown below:

Additional Fee Income over £6000 (gross) in 2012/13	£11,400,000
31% of Additional Fee Income over £6000 (gross) in 2012/13	c£3,550,000
Ongoing commitment to access measures for students commencing studies before 2012	c£3,100,000
Total for 2012/13	c£6,650,000

2.10As well as the provision of 'National Scholarship' partial fee waivers (described in section 3 below) for those most in need, internal surveys conducted by the Student Funding Team at the University of Exeter demonstrate that the current bursary provision is critical to students' capacity to continue their studies at the University. In 2010, in response to the statement 'the award you received was fundamental in allowing you to continue your studies at the University', 82.9% (Yr1), 85.3% (Yr2) and 78.5% (Yrs 3 and 4) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. A significant proportion of the expenditure on additional access measures will therefore need to be retained as financial support and/or partial fee waivers. It is proposed that 82% (c£5.5million) of the expenditure on additional access measures is allocated for financial support and/or partial fee waivers for students in 2012/13, as described in section 3. This will include the University's commitment to match-fund the National Scholarship Programme, as detailed in the provisional allocations published by HEFCE in March 2011 (£453,000 for the University of Exeter).

2.11The University welcomes OFFA's suggestion that greater investment is made in sustained and well-targeted outreach programmes that raise aspirations towards higher education and selective institutions such as the University of Exeter. The University wishes to expand its provision of such activity and therefore proposes that 18% (c£1.15million) of expenditure on additional access measures is allocated in this area, also detailed in section 3. The University's proposed financial support package, along with the fact that only one cohort of students will be paying higher fees means that expenditure on financial support is disproportionately high in 2012/13. In 2013/14 and 2014/15 the expenditure on financial support will decrease (as a proportion of additional gross fee income), leaving more scope for investment in outreach activity.

⁴ A continuing proportion (21%) of additional fee income will be invested in 'access measures' according to the Access Agreements covering the 2010 and 2011 cohorts.



Section 3: Additional access measures

Summary:

- Targeting for WP outreach activity will be tightly focused on students attending ‘aspirational’ schools/colleges
- The University is committed to retaining regional Aimhigher networks as far as possible/appropriate
- ‘National Scholarship’ partial fee waivers will be offered to all Home/EU students with a declared household income of less than £25,000 per annum, for all years of undergraduate study. For students with a household income below £16,000 per annum, £1000 of this scholarship can be taken as an accommodation bursary if the student wishes.
- The Access to Exeter Bursary scheme will be expanded to provide financial support to all students with a declared household income up to £42,600 per annum.
- Earmarked funds of c£50k to provide outreach activity to encourage more students with disabilities to consider applying to the University of Exeter.
- Earmarked funds of c£100k to provide outreach activity and financial support to students from care backgrounds.

Outreach

3.1 Targeting for WP outreach activity will be much more tightly focused on students attending ‘aspirational’ schools/colleges, as defined in section 2 above. As well as students, the University’s outreach efforts will also focus on parents and teachers, in recognition of the important role they play in shaping young people’s decisions about higher education. Where appropriate, the University will build on existing partnership arrangements with schools/colleges, providing a range of support activities to raise students’ aspirations to higher education and the University of Exeter more specifically. In expanding the range of targeted outreach activities set out below, it will be necessary to allocate additional funds to staffing within the Outreach and Student Recruitment teams.

3.2 The University will expand the scope of its existing compact schemes⁵, which it currently runs in partnership with the Sutton Trust (Sutton Trust Academic Routes – STAR) and HEFCE

⁵ A compact scheme is an intensive, sustained intervention which facilitates progression to the host university (or partner university) by guaranteeing certain conditions (such as an alternative offer) for students who complete the programme.

(Realising Opportunities – RO – see 3.10). Funding from both these partners will cease in 2012 so as well as expanding the provision to more 'aspirational' schools/colleges, the University will have to replace lost funding for these initiatives. Both programmes have embedded evaluation strategies to rigorously assess the impact of the activity, as well as value for money. The programmes represent sustained interventions for students in Year 11 (STAR) or Year 12 (RO) through to their application/entry to university. The models are based on examples of best practice across the sector and as such are critical to the success of the University's attempts to recruit a greater proportion of under-represented students.

- 3.3 The University will engage in collaborative outreach as far as is possible (and appropriate) with institutions across the South West and further afield. The University is keen to continue the regional Aimhigher 'Uni-Taster' summer school programme after Aimhigher funding is withdrawn in 2011. If agreement can be reached with our regional partners to continue the programme, this will mean greater investment by the University in delivering the event, as well as sustaining the network that facilitates the programme. The summer schools, which are based around the Sutton Trust's successful model, have recently been shown to improve progression to HE from under-represented groups in a study by HEFCE.⁶
- 3.4 At an operational level, there is a commitment to retain the established Aimhigher Partnership network to ensure that a coherent, collaborative approach to outreach work in the region is retained.
- 3.5 The University will also seek to engage in collaborative projects with selective higher education institutions in the South West and beyond to try and encourage greater geographic as well as social mobility. Discussions in this area have already commenced for 2012/13 and beyond. The University will also try to address issues concerning fair access to the professions and discussions are already underway with potential partner organisations regarding fair access to a range of professions.
- 3.6 The University's use of school/college performance as part of its contextual admissions process is time-consuming and complex. It is anticipated that money from additional fee income will be invested to support work on this on an ongoing basis.
- 3.7 Having analysed the demography of applicants and entrants to the University, it is clear that the number of 'aspirational' schools/colleges within the normal geographic range of applicants is relatively small, diminishing the University's capacity to improve recruitment from these schools/colleges. Funds will therefore be allocated to outreach officers who will operate outside the University's typical geographic range, targeting activity at areas of the country with high concentrations of 'aspirational' schools/colleges.
- 3.8 While the University's record in attracting students with disabilities is very good, there is a strong commitment to make the University even more accessible and attractive to students with disabilities. The University will therefore commit approximately £50k to an outreach programme designed to highlight the range of support available to students with disabilities and encourage them to consider applying to the University of Exeter and higher education more generally.
- 3.9 The University will continue to invest and expand the outreach work it undertakes with young people in care as part of its Commitment to Care Leavers. It will also provide financial support for care leavers under the age of 25 who have spent a minimum period of three

⁶ Aimhigher Summer Schools – Participants and Progression to Higher Education (2010).

months in local authority care, as per the Care Leavers' Act. This support (totalling approximately £100k in 2012/13) will include a full fee waiver for all years of study and financial support for accommodation outside university term dates.

Realising Opportunities

3.10 The University of Exeter is a member of Realising Opportunities (RO), a unique collaboration of 12 research intensive universities working together to promote fair access and social mobility of students from under-represented groups.

3.11 The Realising Opportunities programme provides support for students through interventions designed to raise aspirations and enable them to demonstrate their potential for success at a research intensive university. These interventions are offered both at their local participating university, and nationally, so that the student can tailor the programme to meet their own needs and interests. The programme includes a national conference which is a compulsory element for all participating students.

3.12 Each student is supported through the programme by a student e-mentor. The mentor, an undergraduate student from one of the 12 universities, provides ongoing support and encouragement. Successful completion of RO, which includes a robust academic element, will lead to students receiving an alternative offer through UCAS from the University of Exeter.

3.13 The RO Strategy Group has unanimously agreed that the 12 participating institutions will each commit £35,000 to the scheme in 2012-13. This commitment will ensure that the momentum of the programme is maintained, will enable the recruitment of a third cohort of students, and will build up the evidence base for evaluating the impact of the project.

3.14 In addition to the £35,000 commitment to support the RO central management, significant institutional resource will be committed to provide support and activities for RO students, including a residential programme and other information, advice and guidance (IAG) activities.

Student retention and success

3.15 Retention rates, as set out in section 2 are very high for the University of Exeter as a whole. However, in order to ensure that students from under-represented groups are adequately supported through their time at the University, it is proposed that a peer-mentoring scheme be established to support such students when they arrive at the University.

3.16 This additional outreach activity represents a significant increase compared with the University's current provision and also a substantially greater financial investment. Outreach activity from additional fee income totalled just c£130,000 in 2009/10, compared to a planned expenditure of c£1.15million in 2012/13. This funding will be weighted almost exclusively at pre-entry outreach, although a small proportion (approximately £25k) will be allocated to post-entry retention activity such as the peer-mentoring programme. As stated in section 2, as new cohorts commence their studies in 2013/14 and 2014/15, the proportion (and amount) of additional fee income allocated to outreach activity will increase.

Financial support for students

3.17 Financial support will be available to all Home/EU students at the University of Exeter and eligibility will be judged on the basis of financial criteria obtained via Student Finance England, where students are assessed to determine their entitlement to maintenance grants and loans.

3.18 The University intends to match-fund the Government's National Scholarship Programme (NSP) by offering 'National Scholarship' partial fee waivers to all Home/EU students with a household income below £25,000 per annum, for all years of undergraduate study⁷. Awards will be made according to the following criteria:

Household income	Partial Fee Waiver
Less than £16,000	£3000*
£16,000 - £20,000	£2000
£20,000 - £25,000	£1000

*Students can choose to take £1,000 of this award as a bursary towards accommodation costs on or off campus.

3.19 The University currently recruits approximately 450 Home/EU students each year with a declared household income below £16,000, 110 Home/EU students with a declared household income between £16,000 and £20,000 and 120 Home/EU students with a declared household income between £20,000 and £25,000. Given the scale of financial support offered to these students, as declared in this Access Agreement, the University will greatly exceed the requirements set out under the NSP in terms of scale and volume – assuming a continuing (or rising) number of students at the University with a household income below £25,000. In the provisional allocations published by HEFCE in March 2011, the University is expected to support a total of 302 students under the NSP in 2012/13.

3.20 In addition to the National Scholarship partial fee waiver set out above, it is intended that the current Access to Exeter bursary is extended, given the overwhelming support for the existing provision amongst current recipients. The University currently recruits approximately 680 Home/EU students each year with a declared household income below £25,000, 210 Home/EU students with a declared household income of between £25,000 and £35,000 and 135 Home/EU students with a declared household income of between £35,000 and £42,600. This will ensure that no Home/EU undergraduates are worse off in cash terms with regard to financial support from the University, and many will be better off. This will entitle Home/EU students to the following support, for each year of undergraduate study, even if they are eligible for a National Scholarship partial fee waiver⁸:

Household income	Bursary Amount
Less than £25,000	£1500
£25,000 - £35,000	£1000
£35,000 - £42,600	£500

3.21 In 2012/13 the University will also maintain all bursary commitments to Home/EU students who commenced their studies prior to 2012 and are eligible for the UK Access to Exeter Bursary according to the conditions agreed in the University's previous Access Agreements.

⁷ For those instances where tuition fees are not £9000 (ie fourth years of an undergraduate masters programme or an undergraduate placement year) the 'National Scholarship' partial fee waiver will be awarded proportionally. Students with a household income below £16,000 will be given the option of taking one third of this amount as a bursary towards accommodation costs on or off campus.

⁸ For eligible students commencing their studies in 2012/13, they will be awarded a full bursary for each year of undergraduate study, irrespective of the level of tuition fee they are paying, or where they are studying.

3.22 Different arrangements are in place to meet the special circumstances of prospective students at the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry (PCMD) which is managed jointly by the Universities of Exeter and Plymouth and where students are enrolled either at the University of Exeter, or the University of Plymouth. The two universities will be offering different financial support packages, and it is intended that no Home/EU student be treated less favourably as a result of their allocation to one or other university. When considering bursary applications, PCMD will take account of the different support arrangements offered by each of the universities, and seek to ensure that the package of support offered matches the most generous that would be available for the specific needs of the student, irrespective of the student's home institution.

Section 4: Targets and Milestones

Summary:

- *The University will have five yearly targets for six key widening participation criteria*
- *The University will focus on 'aspirational' schools in its drive to widen participation*
- *The University will seek to increase student participation in its STAR and RO compact schemes by 66%.*

4.1 The University has undertaken extensive in-house research into 'Educational Disadvantage' based on an internally-derived measure of relative school/college performance (see section 2). On the basis of this research, the University has developed a new widening participation target for entrants from 'aspirational' schools/colleges. Over five years, this target represents a 43% improvement against a current performance (for 2010 intake) of 14%. This is an ambitious and challenging target, but one that the University hopes it can achieve by targeting its outreach activity at schools and colleges defined as 'aspirational' - and by continuing an admissions policy that takes account of an applicant's educational background during the admissions process. The target is especially challenging given the analysis of where 'aspirational' schools/colleges are geographically located, meaning the University will need to break into new markets in order to achieve its targets. While the University strives to reach this target for the academic year 2017/18, it would expect to see progress against this target in the intervening years. Targets for each entering cohort have therefore been established for each of the intervening years.

4.2 The University will continue to monitor its performance against the HESA WP benchmarks and would expect to make progress toward these as a consequence of the drive to improve recruitment from 'aspirational' schools/colleges. It should be noted that while targets exist for each of the HESA WP indicators, the University will only use information about the performance of an applicant's school/college as part of its holistic assessment of an application. The University does not, and will not discriminate according to school type.

4.3 Annual targets have also been established to monitor the University's progress in recruiting a greater number/proportion of students from care backgrounds and students with disabilities. The University's complete set of targets are set out below:

Performance Indicator	2013 Entry Target	2014 Entry Target	2015 Entry Target	2016 Entry Target	2017 Entry Target
'Aspirational' school/college	15%	16%	17%	18.5%	20%
State School	69%	70%	71%	71.5%	72%
Low Participation Neighbourhood	4.0%	4.4%	4.8%	5.25%	5.75%
NS-SEC 4-7	16.0%	16.5%	17.0%	17.5%	18.0%
Disability	6.5%	6.7%	7.0%	7.2%	7.5%
Care Leavers	10 students	13 students	16 students	20 students	24 students

4.4 In working towards the targets set out above, the University will seek an improvement in the proportion of applications received from students attending 'aspirational' schools and colleges. As discussed in section 3, WP outreach activity will be tightly focused on 'aspirational' schools and colleges and in the first few years of the new fee regime, the University would expect to see an increase in the volume of applications from such schools/colleges, as it works towards the targets set out above. The University has therefore established application targets (set out below), working from a base of 15% of applications received from applicants at 'aspirational' schools/colleges in 2010:

Year of entry	Proportion of applications from 'aspirational' schools/colleges	Additional applications required⁹
2013	16%	256
2014	17%	512
2015	19%	1024

4.5 The University will also target new schools/colleges and seek to increase the number of students accessing the outreach activity on offer. In particular, the University will seek to increase the number of students engaged in the two compact schemes (STAR and RO) by 66% in 2012/13. Currently, there are 180 students engaged in both schemes across all cohorts and it is intended that this will rise to 300 by 2012/13.

4.6 The targets identified in this section of the Access Agreement are all based on the University's performance in attracting under-represented groups of students in the pre-2012 funding era. While this is the only information that can be drawn upon in establishing these targets, it should be remembered that the sector is entering a new, unprecedented period of higher fees and the consequences of such a move on the aspirations of those most at risk of not continuing to higher education are yet to be realised. If, alongside a falling number of 18 year olds coming through the education system (this demographic change principally occurring in lower socio-economic groups), there is a disproportionately large fall in the number of under-represented students applying to higher education, the targets set out above will have to be re-visited.

⁹ Based on the 2009/10 admissions cycle in which the University of Exeter received 25,603 Home/EU undergraduate applications

Section 5: Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

Summary:

- *The University will monitor applicant trends and report to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group on a monthly basis*
- *The University will monitor the number of bursaries and partial fee waivers awarded on an annual basis.*

- 5.1 The success of the University in achieving its targets, as described in this Access Agreement, will be the responsibility of the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Education, supported by the Director of Academic Services as the corresponding officer.
- 5.2 The University, through the Strategic Planning Office and the Admissions Office, will monitor the composition of the student body and report on a monthly basis to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group information on applications/offers/acceptances (and ultimately entrants) from students attending 'aspirational' schools and colleges as well as care leavers.
- 5.3 Evaluation will be embedded in all activities undertaken by the University to widen participation and ensure fair access, in accordance with the University's Evaluation Strategy, detailed in the Widening Participation Strategic Assessment (WPSA). Such evaluation will be particularly important in the proposed expansion of the University's compact schemes to ensure that such activity is having a measurable impact on the destinations of under-represented students.
- 5.4 Other key outputs which will be measured on an annual basis include the number of bursaries and partial fee waivers awarded and the proportion of eligible students who receive an award. The total value of all the awards made will also be measured.

Section 6: Provision of information to prospective students

Summary:

- *Provision of IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) will be expanded beyond normal channels to include the UCAS and Student Loans Company website and new Key Information Sets (KIS).*
- 6.1 The University recognises the importance of providing clear information to all potential applicants, particularly in an environment where higher tuition fees could have an impact on students' decisions to progress to higher education. In the process of developing the proposals for financial support outlined in section 3, the University has given consideration to the means by which information on the availability of support should be communicated to prospective students.
- 6.2 Fee income will continue to be used to support additional staff posts in the Student Funding Team in order to ensure the effective distribution of financial advice and information. In order to develop a more proactive approach, and to offer individual financial advice to those who might be most deterred from considering HE, the University will also continue to support a post in the Students' Guild, which will support the outreach programme for target schools/colleges.
- 6.3 In respect of tuition fee levels and financial support available, the University proposes to communicate with students in a number of ways:
- Through printed and web-based information sources (printed/online prospectus, UCAS website, Student Loans Company website, student funding leaflets etc). It is expected

that this information will be available in July 2011, after OFFA has considered all Access Agreements and approved fee levels as appropriate

- Through provision of new Key Information Sets (KIS) which are currently being piloted by HEFCE to improve the IAG provision for potential undergraduates
- Through finance workshops and advice surgeries in target schools and colleges in the South West (and additionally in other target areas such as the Midlands). This will necessarily have to take place later in the cycle for 2012 applicants but will commence as soon as fee levels are agreed
- Through presentations and resources for teachers available on the web
- Through new and innovative communication channels including social media websites, podcasts and online tutorials
- Through presentations and advice surgeries at open days and other recruitment events during the normal cycle of pre-application events and post-offer events.

Annex A: Access agreements for 2012-13: OFFA template for mainstream ITT providers (HEIs and FECs)

Name of institution	University of Exeter
---------------------	----------------------

Please complete this template, and the Excel return at Annex B, and return to us using the HEFCE extranet by 30 March 2012.

Where your arrangements are the same as for other courses, we would encourage you to cross-refer to your main agreement wherever possible, rather than seeking to replicate information from that main document here.

Part one: Introduction to your agreement

A. Your current position in relation to access and, where appropriate, retention

The University of Exeter only offers ITT courses at postgraduate level, where many of the traditional ways of identifying 'disadvantage' are less, or no longer, relevant (for example home postcode, school type/performance). However, challenges still exist in recruiting a suitably diverse ITT postgraduate intake. In considering the nature of our intake, we are governed by the requirement set for entry by the TDA. The University performs well in recruiting male PGCE students on the Primary ITT programme - they made up 20% of the total intake in 2009-10 compared to the sector average of 18%¹. However, PGCE students from Black or minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds made up just 4% of the total intake in 2009-10 compared to a sector average of 13%. The University strives to improve its performance on these measures in future years.

Retention rates for the postgraduate ITT programmes are consistently very good with 92% of students successfully completing their studies in 2010. While this retention rate is lower than the University's overall undergraduate retention rates, it is higher than the retention rates for PGCE programmes nationally, as confirmed by the TDA.

Part two: Fee limits, spend on access and financial support for ITT trainees

B. Fees you are proposing to charge for your ITT courses

We propose tuition fees of £9000 for all Home/EU postgraduate ITT courses - at both Primary and Secondary level.

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

The University has been allocated a total of 528 postgraduate ITT places by the Teaching Development Agency (TDA) – 212 at primary level and 316 at secondary level for 2012/13. With £9000 fees for all Home/EU students in 2012/13, this would mean a

¹ All sector averages are taken from the TDA's published data for the postgraduate mainstream sector.

total additional fee income of £1,584,000 above £6000. The University intends to allocate 10% of this additional fee income for 'access measures' to support its efforts to diversify its PGCE intake (see section A) and enhance retention rates. This totals £158,400 for 'access measures'.

D. Financial support for trainees

The University recognises that students from low-income households are the most likely to require financial support for their PGCE studies. The University will therefore offer a £500 bursary for all Home/EU students whose household income is below £25,000, as assessed by Student Finance England. Based on 2011 entry data, 212 students out of a total of 545 entrants (c40%) had a declared household income of less than £25,000. Assuming a similar proportion of students will enrol in 2012/13, this would mean providing a £500 bursary for c210 students – meaning total expenditure of c£105,000 on financial support for trainees.

Part three: outreach and retention

E. Outreach and retention work

This section should be read in conjunction with the University's main Access Agreement for 2012/13 as many of the outreach activities cited in this document could include a teaching focus. Although the University only offers Initial Teacher Training at postgraduate level, many of our undergraduates progress to PGCE study (24% of the 2011/12 cohort have previously studied at Exeter). Any efforts to widen participation at undergraduate level should therefore have a corresponding effect on recruitment to our PGCE programmes.

In addition, the University proposes additional outreach activity to further diversify its intake, particularly in relation to the groups highlighted in part one: male PGCE primary students and BME students on all PGCE programmes. Much of this work will build on outreach work that currently takes place. The balance of the allocation for 'access measures', after financial support has been taken out is £53,400. This will be allocated as follows:

- £16,500 to pay for a proportion of (an) academic member(s) of staff's time to co-ordinate and deliver outreach activity across the Graduate School of Education.
- £10,000 to supplement current activity to improve the diversity of intake and employability.
- £26,900 to support a PGCE-specific Hardship Fund for PGCE students with a household income below £42,600. This money may be allocated for living support or to assist with the costs of travel/accommodation for placements.

Our experience of managing the Access to Learning Fund has shown that with the changing bursary arrangements for PGCE students, a higher proportion of PGCE students are requiring support from this fund. With wide-ranging differences in the size of bursaries offered to PGCE students studying different subjects/entering with different

degree classifications, it seems prudent to reserve a significant amount to money to support low income students who find themselves less able to fund their studies with their TDA bursary.

Part four: Targets, milestones and monitoring

F. Targets and milestones

In line with the University of Exeter's main Access Agreement for 2012/13, the University will establish annual targets for the next five years in the following areas:

	Current (2009/10) Performance	2013 entry	2014 entry	2015 entry	2016 entry	2017 entry
Male Primary PGCE entrants	20%	22%	23%	24%	25%	26%
BME PGCE entrants	4%	4.5%	5%	5.5%	6%	6.5%
Retention	92%	92.5%	93%	93.5%	94%	94.5%

At Exeter, we have a good record compared to the rest of the sector in relation to male recruitment to PGCE primary programmes and retention. However, we seek continual improvement in both of these measures. Our figures for BME compare less well and although the number of students is small, we feel a 63% increase in the proportion of BME PGCE students by 2017 represents a significant challenge. This is particularly true, given the fact that BME (non-White) communities represent just 4.2% of the Devon population.²

G. Your monitoring arrangements

The University will monitor its fulfilment of the ITT aspect of the 2012/13 Access Agreement in line with the main Agreement.

Part five: Information to students

H. Provision of information to trainees

In line with the University of Exeter's main Access Agreement 2012/13, the University will ensure that all information relating to tuition fees and financial support is made available to applicants at the earliest opportunity, following approval of this Agreement with the Office for Fair Access. Explicit information will appear on the University's PGCE webpages, as well as all appropriate external sites such as the GTTR. In addition, all applicants who have already applied for entry in 2012/13 will be contacted with definitive information about the tuition fee and financial support provision.

² Source: <http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/HTMLDocs/Local%20Profiles%20V5.0/Localprofiles.html>