University of Leicester

OFFA Access Agreement 2012-13

1. Introduction

The University of Leicester is a leading teaching and research University with a strong track record of social inclusion. In 2008 when awarding Leicester the title University of the Year, the Times Higher Education panel of judges commended the University for our commitment to widening participation:

"Its continued commitment to, and real success in, widening access to students from non-traditional groups made it the stand-out choice in a very tough competition. On access Leicester is unique among its research intensive peers – it exceeds its benchmark for widening participation."

Our HEFCE Widening Participation Strategic Assessment demonstrates how we manage our commitment to widening participation, and illustrates the breadth and depth of this commitment ensuring that all can benefit from our activities.

Our performance against HESA Widening Participation performance indicators provides evidence of our success in achieving our aims and objectives.

We believe we are a University with "average proportion[s] of under-represented students" – ie we sit broadly on our benchmarks (indeed one of the very few research intensive universities who can make this claim) and have above average student retention. OFFA guidance suggests that a university of this kind should commit around 22.5% of new income through this agreement. We propose 26.3% in steady state.

This Access Agreement outlines:

- Our intentions for setting fees for students entering in 2012.

- Our proposed scholarship scheme to support the brightest and best students in realising their opportunity to study with us – regardless of background or circumstance.

- Our assessment of our Widening Participation performance, including both entry and retention of non-traditional students.

- Our commitment to an expanded range of outreach and student recruitment initiatives, including:

  — collaborative initiatives and admissions policies which lead to fair access to this and other research intensive universities.

  — collaborative work with local schools and other local HE providers to provide a coherent and comprehensive programme of aspiration and attainment raising activities for a targeted cohort of students across the city and county.

  — increased staffing for effective information, advice and guidance, communications, planning and evaluation of our WP outreach.

- Our commitment to retaining the most vulnerable students through robust and effective financial, advisory and academic support.

- Specific, measurable targets on admissions and retention, to consolidate our position as the most socially inclusive of the Times University Guide's top 20 universities, and to continue our already high levels of student retention.

- Milestones for the delivery of a range of individual and collaborative initiatives, working with appropriate partners regionally and nationally, and embedding the strongest and most effective elements of recent Aim Higher and TDA funded activities.

- How we intend to communicate our fees, scholarships and other student support to prospective students, applicants, parents and advisers.

2. Tuition fee levels

The University of Leicester proposes a basic graduate contribution level of £9,000 across all full-time undergraduate programmes. A comprehensive programme of scholarships (fee waivers and targeted student support) will accompany the introduction of this fee.

Based on modelling our scholarship proposals on the 2009 and 2010 intakes our predictions are that fewer than 50% of all students would pay the full fee, and that the average fee paid by students (and therefore call on the Exchequer) will be around £8,000.

3. Scholarships

3.1 Scholarships for the financially disadvantaged

Targeted fee waivers and financial support will be offered to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The University will fully embrace the National Scholarship Programme and will more than match the Government financing with our own generous support package (the steady state figure will be up to £2 University spend, per £1 government spend). This will enable the University to offer more scholarships (in the first instance) and to offer these for the full duration of the recipient's studies. The University will offer Scholarships of £3,000 to the most disadvantaged students, made up of £1,000 cash, and £2,000 fee waiver.

3.2 Scholarships for the academically brightest and best

Academic scholarships, consisting of £2,000 or £1,250 fee waivers, will be offered to students achieving specific set A-level grades (or equivalents).

We have conducted two rounds of extensive in-depth market research with 2012 cohort students – using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The results clearly indicates that scholarships of this type have greater resonance, and greater likely impact, than means tested bursaries – including amongst those from lower socio-economic groups.

Our modelling on past intakes suggest that a very significant proportion of these will go to students from OFFA countable groups, including students from families with incomes below £42,000, students from NS-SEC 4-7 and students from the lowest two Polar 2 quintiles. We have built these estimated proportions into the OFFA countable elements of our non-NSP fee waiver expenditure.

3.3 Scholarship administration, advice and support

The University will invest further in advice and support, to administer the above scheme, and to provide advice to prospective students. We plan a further investment of £60,000 to support the current scholarship administration and provide advice and support to prospective students. This is in addition to the £57,000 committed under the current Access Agreement.

4. Assessing our Widening Participation performance

A summary of our performance in the HESA PIs can be found in appendix 1.

4.1 Intake

Our young full-time first degree intake from state schools in 2009 was 88.8%, from NS-SEC groups 4-7, 25.4% and from low participation neighbourhoods, 7.5%. These figures have been steady for a number of years, despite significant rises in entrance grades achieved by our intake.

Whether comparing these with national averages, our peer institutions (Russell Group and 1994 Group), or with our own benchmarks, these figures are strong. The state school intake is above national average, in excess of our benchmark. Our NS-SEC 4-7 intake and our intake from low participation neighbourhoods meet benchmarks and are amongst the highest in our peer group.

We are the only university in the Times top 20 to meet benchmarks on state school intake and intake from NS-SEC 4-7.

This demonstrates that Leicester is performing strongly against all possible comparators, and is making a significant contribution to improving WP nationally. **We feel that amongst our peers, we have the least distance to travel in meeting our WP objectives.**

Our mature student intake overall is within benchmark. We recognise that there is work to be done to attract mature students from low-participation areas, though we expect this to be extremely challenging with the changes in funding arrangements.

4.2   Retention

Our retention is also strong. Non-continuation rates overall, and specifically amongst students from low participation neighbourhoods, remain low and in excess of our benchmarks. This reflects the ongoing development of our pastoral care and learner support methods, and indicates again that by any standards, we have the least distance to travel in achieving success in widening participation.

Again we recognise some issues relating to retention amongst particular groups of mature students, though this is an area where the University has made improvements in recent years through our strong student support services. We hope to continue these improvements through a combination of the retention measures outlined in this document, and changes to admissions policies discussed in our Widening Participation Strategic Assessment.

4.3   Summary assessment of our Widening Participation performance

The University is rightly proud of its record in this area, and regards our performance regarding both widening participation at entry and in retention as strong. We also rightly recognise that for the sector to move forward in widening participation and fair access, we need to play our part in improving our record further. The financial commitments made are appropriate for a university that meets its benchmarks, but aspires to continued improvement.

5.   Widening Participation outreach

Our plans are to continue with the activities that we know work well. While evaluation of the impact of individual events, and multiple events is not straightforward, the evidence we do have points to the fact that we are engaging with the right groups of students, that rates of participation in HE amongst our local students are improving, and that as a University we are being successful in our own intakes.

National research undertaken by a wide range of organisations (including OFFA and HEFCE) point towards the following types of activities as being the most likely to deliver tangible results.

5.1   Information, Advice and Guidance and Student Recruitment

When conducting our outreach and student recruitment activities, we have widening participation at the centre of our planning. This means that while we undertake information, advice, guidance and recruitment activities in a wide range of schools and colleges, we specifically target schools and colleges locally where there is a larger cohort of non-traditional students to ensure they receive the strongest possible support. Strong working relationships with local schools enables us to attract students from non-traditional backgrounds who are less likely to travel away from home to university. We will be investing more in staffing and activity for this area of activity, having recently appointed an additional Schools Liaison Officer, with a focus on delivering increased and improved information, advice and guidance on subject choices, applying to university, and finance and funding in target schools. Further expansion of this work in the form of staffing and activity will take place in 2012-13 and again in 2013-14.

5.2   Building relationships with enquirers, applicants and with younger age groups

Key to our recent success has been robust systems for communicating with enquirers and applicants. We are investing further in this area with a view to developing more robust communications with students who have accessed our widening participation activities – such as providing information regarding key subject choices at the relevant times. We plan to appoint one further member of staff to the schools liaison team to work specifically on communications and relationship management to support this.

5.3   Realising Opportunities

The University of Leicester 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.

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.

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 Leicester.

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.

5.4   Beyond Aim Higher

The University is committed to continuing all staffing and activities that have been supported through Aim Higher in recent years.

This will include the delivery of University Experience Days, Summer Schools, and a range of Masterclasses and other IAG activities for younger age groups.

Local Collaboration

The three local Leicester and Leicestershire HEI's (The University of Leicester, Loughborough University and De Montfort University) are working together and are in discussions with representatives from the two local authorities (Leicester City and Leicestershire), and leaders from local schools and colleges to form a partnership which will co-ordinate a programme of engagements for identified, targeted cohorts of year 7-11 pupils from local schools and colleges.

In addition we are discussing with relevant partners, how best to continue the monitoring and evaluation work for Leicester and Leicestershire that has been provided at regional level through Aim Higher in the East Midlands.

Student Associates Scheme

As the Student Associate Scheme comes to an end, we are embedding other arrangements for placing students in Schools through our own University Ambassador Scheme. We see this as one of the most effective ways of linking with local schools and prospective students. We target the schools with the largest cohorts of non-traditional students, and we hope the collaborative consortium approach we are taking above will enable us to expand and develop this work.

Summer Schools

We are committed to continuing a range of summer schools. This will be at least the same level as has been previously offered with support from Aim Higher, and has been offered for students on the Realising Opportunities programme. We have secured philanthropic support from Santander for three years of summer schools for younger ages, and will add our own funds to ensure a broad range of opportunities for students of various ages.

5.5   Other collaborations

Higher Education Officers Association (HELOA)

We work with HELOA both regionally and nationally, to engage with those in schools, colleges and careers services advising prospective students, to offer support and training to staff in HE liaison roles, and to share best practice on HE liaison issues. Specifically in the Midlands region, we support the delivery an annual conference for Teachers and Advisers, and an annual training conference for HE liaison staff (hosted and co-ordinated by this University in 2010).

Colleges-University of Leicester Network (CULN)

Comprising 19 Further Education Colleges and three Higher Education Institutions across the East and West Midlands, the Colleges-University of Leicester Network (CULN) has provided a forum to optimise collaboration between Further and Higher Education Institutions for the benefit of staff and learners for over 10 years.

In support of learners entering Leicester through the network, the University will fund 150 scholarships of £1,000 each to be awarded by the member colleges to deserving students progressing to the University. The recipients will be selected by the colleges and will be students for whom the additional support will make the most difference; focusing on financially disadvantaged students and/or those with specific additional educational or practical needs.

5.6   Med-Reach – enhancing access to the Medical Profession

Med-Reach is a new initiative, led by current Leicester Medical students, working in collaboration with the University to provide a range of aspiration and attainment raising activities for students with the potential to succeed in a career in Medicine. The scheme will link together the expertise and facilities of the Medical School, with the capacity of the University to support effective targeting and school links, and the ability of our current students to act as highly motivational role models through a range of events and activities.

It is intended that these activities will further enhance the Medical School's already impressive record of attracting and admitting large numbers of students from under-represented groups and significantly widening access to their profession.

5.7   Increased staffing for improved departmental planning and delivery of WP

We do see room for improvement in the way that the central offices responsible for Widening Participation work with our academic departments. We will deliver a more coherent range of activities, engaging with a wider range of subjects, and we recognise the need for more robust evaluation of the very wide range of departmental activities that are undertaken by the university, very often unconnected with the core widening participation work.

We are currently piloting a new approach to widening participation staffing and management with one of our academic Colleges – we have in place a central member of staff, but with a College-wide remit for planning, monitoring and evaluation of departmental outreach activities. If successful we will roll this out to the remaining three colleges during 2012-13.

5.8   Our financial commitment

The University plans an investment of £581K in staffing and direct event costs for additional outreach in 2012-13, and £631K in 2013-14 and beyond (in 2011-12 this is expected to be £332K). This is over and above the £200K which has been committed to (and spent) under the current Access Agreement. The full expenditure stated above is dependent on there being no further unanticipated reductions in funding (such as reduced student numbers or further reduced HEFCE teaching funding).

6.   Supporting Student Retention

As outlined above, our retention is strong. In order to support this in the future, we plan three specific areas of support.

6.1   Scholarships for the financially disadvantaged

Outlined above, this scholarship will include an annual £1,000 cash bursary in addition to the £2,000 fee waiver. For the first year of study this will be provided through the National Scholarship Programme. In subsequent years it will be provided through University funds. This is aimed at supporting the most financially needy students with their living costs throughout their studies.

6.2   Increased support through the discretionary Access to learning fund.

We will increase our Access to Learning fund by a further £200K to provide an additional safety net for students who find themselves in financial difficulty during their studies. This is in addition to the £100K already committed to the fund by the University (including £70K under the current Access Agreement).

6.3   Increased financial advisory support

The University will appoint one further financial adviser at a cost of £50K (in addition to the two additional advice and support staff committed to under the current Access Agreement at a cost of £78K).

6.4   Increased investment into the Academic Tutor support system

Critical to strong student retention is support from personal tutors, who lead and guide each student through their studies. Feedback through the National Student Survey evidences the importance of this, and we regard investment in this area as the key academic development at the University to support strong retention.

A sum of £400k has been earmarked from the additional fee income, specifically to increase staffing in this area, to increase the staff/student ratio, to increase contact time, support, training and evaluation, and to further improve student retention.

6.5   Student retention working group

A further £300K per annum will be allocated to a working group on student retention to distribute to a range of measures that they determine as the most effective activities to support retention amongst target groups. There may, for example, be a case for further expenditure on hardship funds.

7.   Targets and Milestones

7.1   HEFCE WP PIs

Targets have been set in the appendices which relate to a range of standard measures contained within the HEFCE performance indicators. These provide robust and consistent baseline data which can be compared across a number of years.

Young entrants

The University has a very representative intake and strong retention (as measured by our meeting our WP entry and retention benchmarks). Our aim is to maintain this excellent performance, and in certain instances improve this performance further.

We are concerned, however, that the sector as a whole may see a marked reduction in the levels of participation amongst some of these target groups. In setting our targets we must draw OFFA's attention to the fact that should the sector as a whole suffer significant changes as a result of the new fees regime, a reassessment of these targets is likely to be required.

We are also concerned that less successful research intensive universities, as part of their agreement to command higher fees, may instigate recruitment practices that specifically target Leicester's diverse market. We will keep this situation under review and alert OFFA if this becomes problematic.

Mature entrants

The University partially meets its current benchmarks in attracting full-time mature students (including those from low-participation neighbourhoods). We have concerns about the likelihood of retaining current levels of entry under the new financial arrangements, but recognise our role in supporting these aspirations and in supporting stronger rates of retention. Our targets in this area are, therefore, to improve our performance in both recruitment and retention of Mature Students year on year from 2012 (or maintain these, where performance is currently strong). As with the young entrant targets, it may be necessary to reassess these as soon as it is clear what the overall effect of the new financial arrangements on student recruitment of mature students has been.

7.2   Widening Participation Activities

Given the state of change in the sector, the end of Aim Higher, and the uncertainties surrounding collaborative arrangements, it is highly problematic setting interim targets and milestones. Our activity here at the University aims to support widening participation to this University and beyond. The University's Performance Indicators provide the best assessment of our success in widening participation at this University. Measures of success for raising attainment and participation locally and regionally are dependent on successful collaboration with other HEIs and relevant stakeholders.

Our milestones outlined in Annex C therefore relate to a range of individual and collaborative initiatives that will support the delivery of our overarching aims to deliver widening participation.

Local collaboration

To secure agreement during 2011-12 for a local Leicester/Leicestershire partnership between the three HEIs, the local authority, local schools, colleges and other appropriate agencies to deliver aspiration raising and widening participation activities to the local area, and to monitor progression to HE in the region.

Realising Opportunities

To complete the pilot phase of the initiative with the other partner Universities by 2013, and to roll out an appropriate, enlarged version of the programme here at Leicester from 2012, to treble the participants on the scheme at Leicester from 35 to 100 students.

Summer Schools

To deliver two summer schools in support of young students from 2012, for a minimum of 40 students per year. These will be funded by ourselves and through philanthropic giving, and are in addition to specific departmental activities (in many cases funded through external sources), such as the annual Space School.

Aspiration and attainment raising events

To embed the current AimHigher programme offered by this University, with the following in 2012-13: at least 10 University experience days (years 9/10), 10 Masterclasses (Year 12), and a further 10 in-school interventions. These activities and interventions will impact on well over 1,000 pupils.

Students in Schools

By 2013, to replace the Student Associate Scheme with a range of embedded opportunities for current undergraduates to be placed in schools and support the aspirations and learning of young people in a range of targeted schools. This will build towards 200 undergraduate student placements.

7.3   Monitoring and evaluation

The Universities Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee and the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee (Senior Management Team) will receive regular reports to monitor performance against the specific milestones outlined in this agreement.

Monitoring and evaluation of activities will be undertaken by the Student Recruitment Team, lead by Jonathan Tinnacher (Head of Student Recruitment). The senior member of staff responsible for overseeing the delivery is the Chair of the Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee, Professor Mark Thompson (Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor).

8.   Information provision to prospective students

The University has extensive plans for providing information to students about our fees, scholarships and other student support. We have in place market leading Customer Relationship Management processes, and are able to send direct, targeted information to the many thousands of students who have already enquired about undergraduate study with us.

We have created clear, unambiguous information on our web-site announcing the overarching principles of our proposals for fee levels, university scholarships and the national scholarship programme. This is supported by printed information for enquirers, visitors and schools, (targeted at parents and teachers as well as prospective students).

In the coming months we will work through the complex detail in order to produce the detailed guidance for students once this agreement is validated by OFFA.

We will also make clear each student's entitlement (in so far as they can be known) in our communication with applicants at the point an offer of a place is made.

Appendix 1: HESA Performance Indicator Summary

The summary below is not a complete list of all performance indicators, but includes a good selection of Undergraduate full-time benchmarks to give a broad and fair indication of the University of Leicester's success in delivering widening participation and retention across a mix of young and mature student groups over a range of indicators.

Performance Indicator		2008/09		2009/10	
		%	Benchmark	%	Benchmark
Widening Participation					
Table 1b	Participation of under-represented groups in higher education: young full-time undergraduate entrants				
	From state schools or colleges	89.4	Met	88.8	Met
	From NS-SEC classes 4, 5, 6 & 7	26.4	Met	25.4	Met
	From low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR2 method)	6.7	Met	7.5	Met
Table 2a	Participation of under-represented groups in higher education: mature full-time undergraduate entrants	First degree entrants with no previous HE & from low participation neighbourhoods	8.3	Met	6.3	Met
	All undergraduate entrants with no previous HE & from low participation neighbourhoods	9.5	Met	7.5	Not met
Table 7	Participation of students in higher education who are in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA): all undergraduates	Full-time first degree in receipt of DSA	4.0	Met	4.7	Met
	Full-time all undergraduate in receipt of DSA	4.0	Met	4.6	Met

Completion Rates and Outcomes						
Table 3a	Non-continuation following year of entry: full-time first degree entrants	Young entrants no longer in HE	4.6	Met	5.0	Met
		Mature entrants no longer in HE	14.0	Met	18.9	Not met
		All entrants no longer in HE	5.5	Met	6.3	Met
Table 3b	Non-continuation following year of entry: young full-time first degree entrants	Young entrants from low participation neighbourhoods no longer in HE	5.9	Met	4.3	Met
		Young entrants from other neighbourhoods no longer in HE	4.5	Met	5.0	Met
Table 3c	Non-continuation following year of entry: mature full-time first degree entrants	With previous HE qualification and no longer in HE	11.3	Met	15.7	Not met
		With no previous HE qualification and no longer in HE	15.7	Met	19.9	Met
Table 5	Projected learning outcomes: full-time students starting first degree courses	Degree	86.2	Met	85.9	Met
		Neither award nor transfer	7.4	Met	7.3	Met
		Other award	0.0	Met	0.0	Met
		Transfer	6.4	Met	6.6	Met

Table 5 - Milestones and targets

Table 5a - Statistical milestones and targets relating to your applicants, entrants or student body (e.g. HESA, UCAS or internal targets)

Please select milestone/target type from the drop down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones/targets (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximium)
				2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
State School (HESA Table T1b)		2009	88.8	89	89	90	90	90	
NS-SEC (HESA Table T1b)		2009	25.4	26	26	27	27	27	
LPN (HESA Table T1b)		2009	7.5	8	8	8	8	8	
Mature	First degree entrants with no previous HE and from low participation neighbourhoods	2009	6.3	6	7	7	7	8	
Mature	All UG entrants with no previous HE & from low participation neighbourhoods	2009	7.5	7	8	8	8	9	
Disabled	Full-time first degree in receipt of DSA	2009	4.7	5	5	5	5	5	
Disabled	Full-time all UG in receipt of DSA	2009	4.6	5	5	5	5	5	
Non continuation: Young (HESA Table T3a)		2009	5	5	5	4	4	4	
Non continuation: Mature (HESA Table T3a)		2009	18.9	18	17	16	15	14	
Non continuation: LPN (HESA Table T3b)	Young entrants from LPNs no longer in HE	2009	4.3	5	5	4	4	4	
Completion/Non continuation (other - please give details in the next column)	Mature first degree with no previous HE and no longer in HE	2009	19.9	19	18	17	16	15	

Table 5b - Other milestones and targets

Alongside applicant and entrant targets, we encourage you to provide targets around your outreach work (including collaborative outreach work where appropriate) or other initiatives to illustrate your progress towards increasing access. These should be measurable outcomes-based targets and should focus on the number of pupils reached by a particular activity/programme, or number of schools worked with, and what the outcomes were, rather than simply recording the nature/number of activities.

Please select milestone/target type from the drop down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones/targets (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximium)
				2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Leicester/Leicestershire			N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	To secure agreement during 2011-12 for a local Leicester/Leicestershire partnership between the three HEIs, the local authority, local schools, colleges and other appropriate agencies to deliver aspiration raising and widening participation activities to the local area, and to monitor progression to HE in the region.
Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Realising Opportunities - participants per cohort at the University of Leicester	2011-12	35	35	70	105	105	105	The cohort starting in 2011-12 (for entry to university in 2013) will the the final cohort of the pilot phase agreed. The current intention is to double the scheme for the fourth or fifth cohort, and triple it beyond that. This is dependent on funding commitment from all 12 member insititutions - which in turn are dependent on the outcomes from the pilot phase.
Outreach / WP activity (summer schools)	Summer School beneficiaries (year 10/11)	2010-11	55	40	40	40	TBC	TBC	This year (2011) we have secured funds for additional places from various end-of-programme sources (e.g. Aim Higher). We are committed to delivering summer schools for 40 students for the next three years - though our aspiration is to deliver additional places. These are in addition to the Realising Opportunities summer schools, which form part of the above scheme.
Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Aspiration and attainment raising activities in/with schools (such as MasterClasses, University Experience Days etc). Number of student beneficiaries	2010-11	1,000 (estmated)	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	Precise student numbers are not available, given that these events have been delivered in partnership with Aim Higher, locally and regionally, as well as by the University. The estimates given are for hard-targeted activity delivered by the central widening participation team. A great deal of additional targetted and non-targetted activitiy takes place across the University.
Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Students in Schools initiatives. Undergraduates placed in target WP schools.	2010-11	118	120	150	180	200	200	

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

Name of institution	University of Leicester

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

Please use this section to set out any specific issues or aims for your access agreement work in respect of ITT that aren't already set out in your existing agreement for 2012-13. This section doesn't have to be long; however, it will help us to understand what your access agreement is setting out to achieve in respect of ITT. You may wish to consider whether there are separate issues for undergraduate and postgraduate ITT.

You may also wish to cross-refer to the issues or aims stated in your main agreement, if appropriate.

The University of Leicester offers exclusively Postgraduate ITT – through its primary and secondary PGCE programmes. We support the aims of the TDA in seeking to remove barriers to teacher training for the best quality candidates from under-represented groups.

Diversity of Intake
It is worthy of note that the University's BME intake in 2009/10 (the most recent year for which national data is available) was significantly higher than the national average. In the case of secondary PGCE our BME intake was some 72% above the national average.

We have also analysed the intake by NS-SEC and Polar 2 LPNs. While there is no comparable national data available for PGCE programmes, it is worth noting that the figures match closely those for the undergraduate student population as a whole – and this is an area where the University currently meets all HEFCE benchmarks for younger entrants.

Finally regarding intake, we can see that there is no significant difference between the gender balance of our programmes (both primary and secondary) when compared to the national average, but the University does have a lower proportion of Mature students than might be expected.

Retention

As regards retention, our overall retention from 2006/7 through to 2009/10 has remained ahead of the figures for the sector overall. The trend has seen retention improve from 91% in 2006/7 to 96% in 2010/11 (our most recent figures).

Our aims

With this analysis in mind, our aims will be to retain our excellent record for retention and for the diversity of our intake. We will seek to support improvements in the recruitment of mature entrants and our bursary programme will be used to underpin this. We will also seek to increase the intake of male students into our Primary PGCE, and our work to give current undergraduate students opportunities to gain experience in schools will support this.

Finally, in addition to our PGCE programmes, we currently support Teach First at the University through designated staffing in our School of Education. We are currently developing a much closer relationship with Teach First to support recruitment to the programme – in recognition of the role that this particular programme plays in raising the aspirations and attainment of future generations. We will provide more detail on this developing relationship in our next OFFA agreement.

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

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

Your access agreement should set out the tuition fees you intend to charge new entrants to a) undergraduate and b) postgraduate ITT in 2012-13. There is no requirement or expectation that your fee for undergraduate or postgraduate ITT should be the same as for your other courses – this is a matter for you to decide.

We will charge £9,000 for students on our postgraduate ITT courses.

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

Taking into account any new access agreement investment relating to ITT, as well as your existing agreement, what is your estimated spend on access measures as a proportion of your income over £6,000 per fee?

As a broad guideline, for undergraduate ITT, our starting expectation is the same as that set out in our original guidance on how to produce an access agreement for 2012-13 (see OFFA 2011/01, paragraph 39). For postgraduate ITT, we would expect you to recycle a minimum of around 10 per cent of your fee income over £6,000 on access or retention measures. (Note: we will be taking a holistic view when considering whether your proposed spend is in line with our expectations. In other words, we do not necessarily require you to ring-fence set amounts for undergraduate or postgraduate initial teacher training. You simply need to make sure that the overall levels of spend – including ITT – are in line with our expectations.)

It is difficult to disaggregate expenditure relating to support for ITT access from our main outreach activities described in our main Access Agreement. Section E describes how our students in schools initiatives support both undergraduate outreach and support for widening participation to teaching – as such, the expenditure on this that is already committed in our access agreement, should be seen as supporting WP in ITT. This commitment is in the region of £50K, but as it is already included in the main OFFA agreement, it is not duplicated in the financial return here.

We will spend up to £30K on bursaries (detailed below).

In addition, in excess of £90K is being spent in support of the Teach First programme at Leicester. As previously mentioned we recognise the role of Teach First in aspiration and attainment raising and are strongly supportive of the programme. We therefore include this expenditure for information – though again, it does not feature in the financial return.

Retention is extremely strong in ITT at the university and it is not proposed that additional funds be allocated to this for 2012/13.

D. Financial support for trainees

In this section you should set out:

- *what you plan to spend on targeted fee waivers, bursaries and in-kind support for a) undergraduate and b) postgraduate trainees in 2012-13*

- *the amounts of support and the eligibility criteria for new entrants.*

You may wish to state whether the financial support for these trainees is the same or differs from your existing agreement.

We propose to spend up to £30K in 2012/13 on up to six £5,000 bursaries for students graduating from our own part-time BA Educational Studies programme and progressing to PGCE.

The BA Educational Studies programme builds on from our Foundation Degree in Educational Studies, a programme explicitly aimed at widening participation to teaching. These students find the step to full-time studies for the PGCE financially challenging, and we seek to remove a large financial barrier by awarding a £5,000 cash bursary to all such students.

It is not possible at this stage to determine the expenditure precisely as the entry figures from this route vary considerably from year to year, but this is expected to be between 3 and 6 students, and so we estimate between £15 and £30K.

It will also not be possible to determine until after the awards are made and students are registered whether these students are within OFFA countable groups, but all, by definition, will be mature entrants, and are, as such a target group for the TDA.

Part three: outreach and retention

E. Outreach and retention work

If you are proposing to introduce additional outreach or retention work in respect of ITT, over and above the outreach/retention work you have committed to in your existing 2012-13 access agreement, please include details here.

Alternatively, please indicate where your outreach or retention work in respect of ITT is already covered by your main agreement.

For the purposes of an access agreement, outreach work includes any activity that involves raising aspirations and attainment among potential applicants from under-represented groups and encouraging them to apply to higher education. This includes outreach directed at young or mature students aspiring to full or part-time study. We particularly encourage sustained, co-ordinated activities that work with pupils and other potential applicants over a number of years.

By retention, we mean the additional (new) retention measures you commit to put in place to improve student retention and success (ensuring that trainees from under-represented groups access the full benefits of higher education).

Recruitment activities: Our Access Agreement 2012/13 outlines the work we do offering current students the opportunity to gain experience in schools. This work is targeted towards schools with a high WP cohort – and so contributes towards our outreach. Having a substantial WP cohort within our own undergraduate population, we are also able to target our own WP students to take part in these schemes – and so support our aim to attract a broad range of students into teaching, including PGCE and Teach First here at Leicester. The work is not costed separately in the Access Agreement, but it is estimated that the expenditure on these schemes is in the region of £50K. We are well on the way to exceeding our aim of having 200 student placements.

Teach First: As stated in the introduction, we support Teach First through academic (1.75 FTE Grade 8) and administrative staffing, totalling in excess of £90,000, and we are currently developing closer links with them to support recruitment to the programme.

East Midlands Science Learning Centre: While not formally part of our financial commitment to OFFA, it is worth noting that the University of Leicester hosts the East Midlands Science Learning Centre. This is a significant operation which seeks to propose more effective teaching of science, to reconnect science teaching with innovations in science and to help those involved in science education translate these innovations and developments into practical delivery that works in classrooms. It is a strong example of how the University works with schools and the education sector as a whole through extensive and effective outreach.

Part four: Targets, milestones and monitoring

F. Targets and milestones

You may choose to develop specific additional targets and milestones which assess your performance in ITT over time – particularly if ITT trainees make up a significant proportion of your overall student body.

Alternatively, you may have targets and milestones in your existing 2012-13 access agreement which you now also wish to apply to undergraduate and/or postgraduate ITT trainees.

These targets may be statistical – based on how representative your entrants are and/or your retention performance – and might include annual or interim milestones to help you monitor whether you are making progress.

You may wish to include criteria around the numbers of trainees in receipt of a full or partial maintenance grant, as financial data will need to be collected to determine bursary support and the data will also be accessible through the Student Loans Company for HEBSS subscribers. You may also wish to consider the TDA guidance at Annex C which gives information on specific groups that are underrepresented in the teaching profession.

In this section, please state whether you intend to develop additional targets and milestones, or the extent to which you intend to use targets and milestones in your existing agreement which you now wish to extend to apply to undergraduate and/or postgraduate ITT trainees. Where you have new or amended milestones and targets, you should set these out in your Excel template (Annex B) at Table 6.

As stated in paragraph A, our aims will be to retain our excellent record for retention and for the diversity of our intake, to support improvements in the recruitment of mature entrants and to increase the intake of male students into our Primary PGCE.

There are difficulties in setting specific numerical targets for the diversity of the intake, as the numbers are small and the intakes from key groups (BME, males in to primary teaching, and mature entrants) fluctuate significantly when measured in percentage terms. Never-the-less, we will monitor these closely from year to year, and report to OFFA the progress we are making with attracting students from these groups.

In terms of retention, we aim to ensure that our retention remains above 90%.

G. Your monitoring arrangements

In your existing 2012-13 access agreement, you set out how you intended to monitor your fulfilment of your agreement. If you wish to add anything further, following the inclusion of ITT in your agreement, you may do so here.

Part five: Information to students

H. Provision of information to trainees

As set out in our initial guidance for 2012-13 access agreements (OFFA 2011/01), you must publish clear, accessible and timely information for applicants and trainees on the fees you will charge and any financial support you will offer. This information should make it clear exactly what level of financial support you are offering trainees in each year of their studies. As well as providing clear and up-to-date information through your own information channels (websites, prospectuses etc), you also committed to provide such timely information to UCAS and SLC as they reasonably require to populate their applicant-facing web services. We will assume that this commitment extends to GTTR, where appropriate.

If you wish to add anything further, following the inclusion of ITT in your agreement, you may do so here.

Our website already indicates our intentions around fee levels, and the TDA bursary support available to PGCE applicants.

We will publicise our new bursary provision for PGCE entrants within one month of this agreement being accepted by OFFA.

Initial teacher training fees and financial support template 2012-13 - mainstream ITT providers

Institution name: University of Leicester
Institution code: 10007796

Table 6 - Targets and milestones

Table 6a - Statistical milestones and targets relating to your ITT applicants, entrants or student body (e.g. HESA, GTTR or internal targets)

Course type	Please select milestone/target type from the drop down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones/targets (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximium)
					2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
Postgraduate	Completion / Non-continuation	Retain high completion rates	2010/11 2009/10 2008/09 2007/08 2006/07	96 91 93 92 91	91-96	91-96	91-96	91-96	91-96	The target set will keep the University ahead of the sector average - and the aspiration would, of course, be to exceed the bottom figure significantly.

Table 6b - Other milestones and targets relating to ITT students

Alongside applicant and entrant targets, you may wish to provide targets around your outreach work (including collaborative outreach work where appropriate) or other initiatives to illustrate your progress towards increasing access. These should be measurable outcomes based targets and should focus on the number of pupils reached by a particular activity/programme, or number of schools worked with, and what the outcomes were, rather than simply recording the nature/number of activities.

Course Type	Please select milestone/target type from the drop down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones/targets (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximium)
					2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	