

# UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH ACCESS AGREEMENT

The University of Portsmouth is committed to ensuring that students who can benefit from courses at the University are not prevented from attending because they face financial hardship.

This Access Agreement sets out:

1. The University's policy on tuition fees for full-time home/EU undergraduates.
2. The bursaries and other financial support available to students enrolled on University courses.
3. The approach of the University to making available information on financial support to prospective and current students.
4. A projected financial analysis, of student fee income and expenditure on bursaries and enhanced financial advice.

## 1 UNIVERSITY FEE POLICY

For 2009/10 the full time undergraduate (including teacher training courses) home and EU fee is £3,225. The tuition fee for 2010/11 will be £3,290. The £3,225 for 2009/10 will also apply to students studying on University of Portsmouth undergraduate programmes franchised to our partners (full time undergraduate students): currently Chichester College, South Downs College, Isle of Wight College and Flagship Training Ltd (HMS Collingwood).

The exceptions to this general policy are those programmes with sandwich placement years or approved years of study abroad. For the year away the fee will be £640 in 2009/10 and there will be a further inflationary increase to this fee in 2010/11.

## 2 BURSARIES AND OTHER FORMS OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

### 2.1 Income Based

We have a system of bursaries through which students coming from households in the lower range of incomes will receive an additional, non-repayable bursary from the University for the academic years 2009/10 and 2010/11:

Bursaries will be offered as follows:

- For students whose family residual income is £25,000 or below the bursary will be £900. This includes the minimum bursary (i.e. the difference between the maximum grant and the fee charged), payable to all students entitled to full state support.

- For students whose family residual income is between £25,001 and £32,000 the bursary will be £600.

For PGCE students, this support will be in addition to any other bursary support to which they may be entitled. The level of support available to students according to various household incomes is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 Support for students related to examples of household income (assessed by the Student Loans Company)**

TABLE 1a: 2009/10: continuing students (those who started courses in 2006/07 and 2007/08)

Family income bands	Government grant	University bursary	Total financial support (examples within scales)
Up to and including £18,360	£2,906	£900	£3,806
£18,361 to £25,000	£2,905-£1,773	£900	£3,805-£2,673
£25,001 to £32,000	£1,772-circa £840	£600	£2,372-circa £1,440
£32,000 to £39,333	Sliding scale from circa £839 down to £50	Not eligible	£839 - £50 (min grant)

For household incomes between £18,361 and £27,819 the grant is reduced by £1 for every complete £5.86 by which the income exceeds £18,360. For incomes between £27,820 and £39,333 the grant is reduced by £1 for every complete £9.27 by which the income exceeds £27,819.

TABLE 1b 2009/10: continuing students in 2009/10 for those who started courses in 2008/09

Family Income bands	Government Grant	University bursary	Total Financial Support
Up to and including £25,000	£2,906	£900	£3,806
£25,001 to £32,000	Sliding scale from £2,905 down to circa £1,710	£600	£3,505 (£25,001 income) £2,310 (£32,000 income)
£32,001 to £60,032	Sliding scale from circa £1,709 down to £50	Not eligible	£1,709 (£32,001 income) £50 (£60,032 income)

The distinction in state support between new and continuing students is a result of changing government policy.

For households incomes between £25,000 and £34,459 the grant is reduced by £1 for every complete £5.86 by which the income exceeds £25,000. For incomes between £34,460 and £60,032 the grant is reduced by £1 for every complete £20.59 by which the income exceeds £34,459.

TABLE 1c 2009/10 & 2010/11: all students starting from 2009/10

Family Income bands	Government Grant	University bursary	Total Financial Support
Up to and including £25,000	£2,906	£900	£3,806
£25,001 to £32,000	Sliding scale from £2,905 down to circa £1,506	£600	£3,805 (£25,001 income) £2,106 (£32,000 income)
£32,001 to £50,020	Sliding scale from circa £1,505 down to £50	Not eligible	£1,505 (£32,001 income) £50 (£50,020 income)

For households incomes between £25,000 and £34,000 the grant is reduced by £1 for every complete £5 by which the income exceeds £25,000. For incomes between £34,001 and £50,020 the grant is reduced by £1 for every complete £15.17 by which the income exceeds £34,000.

## 2.2 Local students

For students who enter the University in 2009/10 from colleges and schools in the state sector who have sixth forms who are within the University's travel to learn area, we will provide an additional bursary of £300 per annum.

The institutions are:

On the Isle of Wight - Carisbrooke High School, Cowes High School, the Isle of Wight College, Medina High School, Ryde High School and Sandown High School

On the mainland – South Downs College, Oaklands Roman Catholic School, Havant College, Fareham College, Highbury College, Bay House School, Portsmouth College and St Vincent's College.

This offer will be extended to students progressing from the University's own FE courses. This bursary will continue for students progressing with their study with the University in 2011/12.

## 2.3 In addition, the University has established its own hardship fund to enable financial assistance to be given to those who demonstrate need during their period of registration at the University. We anticipate that those groups of students who

narrowly fail to qualify for either bursary are most likely to face financial pressures, and the hardship fund provides a flexible way of considering their needs. This fund will be £500,000 for 2009/10. Part-time undergraduate students paying fees of at least £1,200 are also eligible to benefit from this fund on demonstration of need.

2.4 The University has established a Care Leavers-Foyer-Sheltered Accommodation Bursary. This will be £1,500 per annum in 2009/10.

2.5 The five-year cost obligations of the above are set out below in Table 2:

**Table 2 Costs of proposed bursary scheme**

	2009/10 £,000	2010/11 £,000	2011/12 £,000	2012/13 £,000	2013/14 £,000
University bursary scheme	3,429	3,429	3,429	3,429	3,429
Extension to hardship funds	700	700	700	700	700
Local bursary	310	310	310	310	310
Total	4,439	4,439	4,439	4,439	4,439

2.6 Students on franchised full-time undergraduate courses offered by our Further Education College partners will be offered the same level of support as students studying in the University.

2.7 The University applies this bursary policy to all students ordinarily resident in the UK and Northern Ireland on HEFCE funded courses, paying the £3,225 fee in 2009/10. Students from other EU states will only be eligible to claim the £600 additional bursary in 2009/10 and 2010/11, as detailed in paragraph 2.1 above, if they are on HEFCE funded courses. They will not be eligible for the full amount unless there are changes in legislation advised to us.

### **3 FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS**

#### **3.1 Providing Information**

Students who are considering entering HE must be aware at an early stage of the financial commitment involved and of ways of planning ahead. We consistently aim to ensure that prospective students and their parents have clear, reliable and current information on all financial aspects of studying successfully at this level. The University already provides information on finance to students and their advisors through all its education liaison and outreach activities, including the *UP for It* programme, aimed at pupils in years 5 to 13.

The means of communication which we use include:

- The undergraduate prospectus

- The Student Finance Centre webpages with distinct sites for prospective and current students [www.port.ac.uk/money](http://www.port.ac.uk/money) and [www.port.ac.uk/moneydoctors](http://www.port.ac.uk/moneydoctors). This includes an interactive support calculator/budget planner/expenditure tracker to enable parents and students to estimate their support entitlement based on their household income and prepare a budget plan prior to commencement of their university course.
- Information stand at annual UCAS fair in Portsmouth and staging of the “confused clinic”
- Specialist finance talks and information stands at all University preview days and Department Open Days
- The Guide for Parents
- A selection of information and guidance resources targeting specific categories of students ( e.g. lone parents, couples with dependents etc.)
- Bursary postcards and posters. These are sent to and displayed in relevant institutions
- Care Leavers/Foyer/Sheltered Accommodation leaflet and focus groups
- “Its UP 2 U”, a mini prospectus and options guide for years 7 to 11
- Workshop sessions and activities including the budget game run at, for example, Careers fairs, taster days and within local schools and colleges for years 7 to 13
- Regular presentations at financial workshops in local schools, colleges and other local organisations, for example The Foyer
- Promotion and inclusion in the Aimhigher Local Bursaries Guide
- The “Guide to the First Year” finance booklet
- Information stand at Clearing, Parents events, “secure-a-home”, Student Registration and Freshers Fair at the start of term

### **3.2 Information on total costs of tuition**

We will ensure that, prior to commencing any course, all students are made fully aware of the tuition and any other academic costs which they will need to incur in order successfully to complete their chosen course.

## **4 EXPENDITURE ON ADDITIONAL ACCESS MEASURES**

The table below (Table 3) outlines the assumptions concerning the amount of fee income to be spent on access measures each year, for the first five years of this access agreement. The University understands that both fees and therefore expenditures contained within the agreement are subject to annual inflation at a rate determined nationally. However, for ease of comparison all figures post 2009/10 are at 2009/10 prices.

**Table 3 Expenditure on additional access measures as a percentage of total fee income, 2009-2014**

	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
	<b>£,000</b>	<b>£,000</b>	<b>£,000</b>	<b>£,000</b>	<b>£,000</b>
Total additional fee income	22,355	22,355	22,355	22,355	22,355
Bursaries	4,439	4,439	4,439	4,439	4,439
Additional outreach work <sup>1</sup>	858	858	858	858	858
Enhanced financial guidance and information <sup>2</sup>	516	516	516	516	516
Post entry support <sup>1</sup>	580	580	580	580	580
Bursaries administration	206	206	206	206	206
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>6,599</b>	<b>6,599</b>	<b>6,599</b>	<b>6,599</b>	<b>6,599</b>
<b>Expenditure as % of fees</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>30%</b>

### <sup>1</sup>Additional Outreach Work and Post Entry Support

The University's Outreach activities are fully detailed in the June 2009 Widening Participation Strategic Assessment (WPSA).

The costs identified above are those identified within the central Education Liaison Team and associated activities and take no account of wide range of activities embedded either within academic departments or other support departments (detailed in the WPSA).

The University has a large dedicated education liaison and WP team which concentrates on pre-entry advice and guidance and general promotional activity to raise aspirations and increase attainment and student recruitment. The team visits schools to engage potential students in the benefits of higher education and to advise them on their choice of courses. The team concentrates its efforts on children in Key Stages 2 - 4.

In 2003 the highly successful, energetic *UP for It* membership scheme for 11-16 year olds was established. The club, which is free to join, aims to raise aspirations, break down perceptions and encourage pupils, particularly those from areas of social and economic deprivation to see higher education as an attractive and accessible option. Many of the outreach activities are targeted at schools in Portsmouth and its sub-region which have below average educational attainment, as measured by GSCE/GNVQ results.

Costs of Post entry support include both the University's Academic Skills Unit and the Maths Skills Unit (Maths Café).

## **<sup>2</sup>Enhanced financial guidance and information**

This refers primarily to the cost of running the University's Student Finance Centre, which provides expert support and guidance to all students and have responsibility for administering the University's own and other hardship funds, including facilities to provide short-term loans. This means students can receive immediate reassurance of the financial support that they are to receive.

## **5 PERFORMANCE MILESTONES AND MONITORING THE AGREEMENT**

The University will measure its performance in terms of encouraging access by reference to the following parameters:

### **5.1 Expenditure from additional fee income**

We will adopt as a minimum target 25% of the additional fee income to be spent on bursaries aimed at improving access and widening participation outreach activities, together with the provision of enhanced post-entry support and enhanced financial guidance and information.

### **5.2 Widening participation and retention milestones**

Over the life of the agreement, we will aim:

- to exceed HEFCE's annually published location-adjusted benchmark for young full-time undergraduate entrants from NS-SEC classes 4, 5, 6 and 7 and to achieve the location-adjusted benchmark for low participation neighbourhoods
- to continue to exceed HEFCE's annually published location-adjusted benchmark for mature full-time undergraduate entrants with no previous experience of HE and from low participation neighbourhoods
- to continue to have a lower than benchmark non-continuation rate following year of entry for young full-time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods and for mature full-time first degree entrants

### **5.3 Monitoring the Access Agreement**

In 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09 the financial targets were comfortably exceeded. Increases to limits for eligibility from 2008/09 mean we are confident we will continue to exceed this minimum target in 2009/10 and beyond.

2007/08 data indicates that we have exceeded the milestones relating to widening participation and retention.

The Board of Governors has ultimate responsibility for monitoring the Access Agreement. The University's Student Academic and General Affairs Committee receives an annual report on the Access Agreement. A remedial action plan will be required in the event of a shortfall in performance against the targets.

## **SUMMARY**

**The University is committed to ensuring that the changed financial basis of higher education does not frustrate student's ambitions to undertake higher education. The University firmly believes that the measures set out above will ensure that the University's record of encouraging wider participation will be enhanced.**