

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Access Agreement presented to the Office for Fair Access

Revised for 2007/08 entry and beyond

1. Overview of the University of Warwick's Widening Participation Strategy

The University of Warwick requests the consideration of our revised Access Agreement by the Office for Fair Access (OFFA). Our Agreement outlines the University's strategy for further widening participation from 2006 in relation to full-time undergraduates and PGCE students only. This revised agreement covers the four year period from 2007/08 through 2010/11 with a progress report being submitted annually. Our agreement is being adjusted in order to more effectively direct resources to meet our original access agreement targets in light of our first intake under the new fee regime.

The University is committing approximately 30% of its additional fee income to providing financial assistance via the new Warwick Undergraduate Aid Programme (WUAP) and extended outreach and information, advice and guidance to students from disadvantaged backgrounds and those under-represented in Higher Education.

We attach details of our Projected Outreach Activity (Appendix 1) and our current Widening Participation Strategy (Appendix 2) to set this submission in the context of our integrated approach to enabling and encouraging the broadest participation in a high quality and challenging University of Warwick education.

The University is seeking to ensure that, wherever possible, financial barriers to taking up the opportunity to come to Warwick are overcome by offering a substantial package of financial assistance to our students at the point of entry and throughout their academic careers.

2. Level of fees for full time Home/EU students

Following the introduction of variable fees for all full-time Home and EU undergraduates with effect from the academic year 2006/07, the University has determined that it will charge the full fee of £3,070 per annum for 2007/08 (rising with inflation as determined by the DfES on an annual basis) to Home/EU students for all full-time undergraduate courses. These fee levels will exclude 2+2 courses in the first instance, though this position will be further reviewed in the near future and may be subject to change for 2007/08 entry or in future years covered by this agreement. From 2007/08 2+2 students will be eligible for the Warwick Undergraduate Aid Programme (WUAP) in advance of any adjustments to their fees being agreed.

The University is assuming that PGCE students and graduate entry Medical students will be entitled to the full maintenance grant support of £2,765 in 2007/08 (rising with inflation as determined by the DfES) and that the existing funding streams for these student groups will continue for the duration of this 5 year plan. The University's policy regarding fees and support for these students may change should these underlying assumptions prove incorrect. The minimum statutory bursary will be provided to all PGCE students in receipt of the full maintenance grant support for each year of this agreement. The Warwick Undergraduate Aid Programme (WUAP) does not include provision for graduate entry Medical students at this stage.

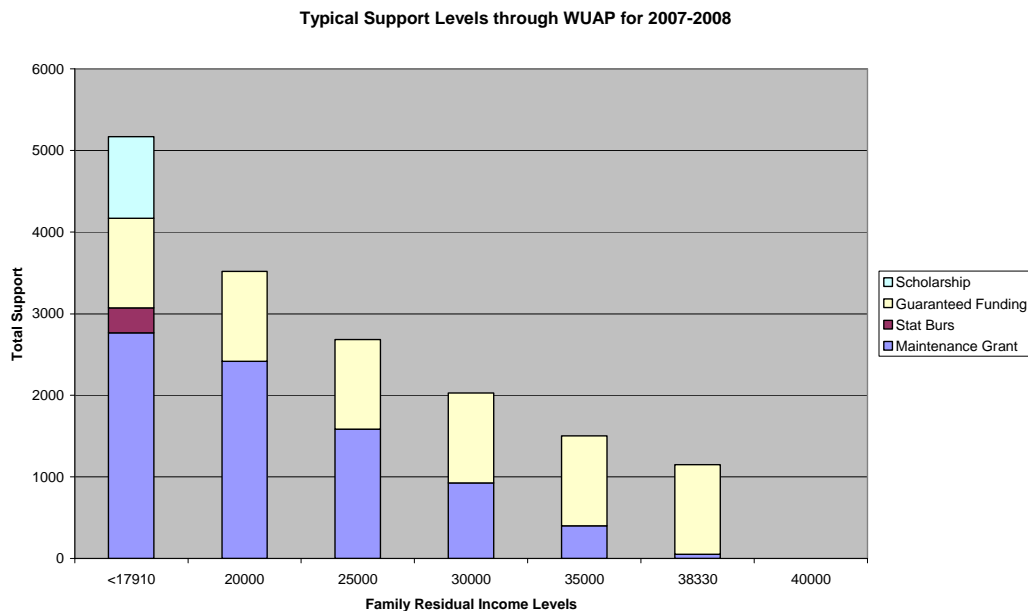
3. Additional fee income to be spent on financial assistance

The University will provide the minimum bursary of £305 from 2007/08 (rising with inflation each year as determined by the DfES) to all undergraduate home students and home PGCE students who are in receipt of the full state support of £2,765 for 2007/08 (rising with inflation each year as determined by the DfES) who enter the University in the 2006/2007 or the 2007/08 academic year. No other eligibility criteria will be applied beyond securing and retaining a place at the University. Students who applied in 2004/05 for deferred entry to 2006/07 will continue to fall outside the scope of the WUAP. These students will continue to pay fees under the old fee regime.

The University will seek to direct approximately 30% of its additional income accruing from variable fees to fund WUAP. The Programme also encompasses the University's development of philanthropic scholarships previously known as the WGA scholarships (110 of which were available in 2005/2006). 166 scholarships have been awarded through WUAP in 2006/2007 via a combination of funding from philanthropic donations and the University's additional fee income and further significant growth is expected beyond this date. A small proportion of the scholarships have additional eligibility criteria beyond financial hardship.

The University aims to provide undergraduate students (excluding PGCE students) who are in receipt of maintenance grant support from the government, around one-third of our home undergraduates each year, with significant additional funding through the provision of bursaries, scholarships via WUAP. WUAP also incorporates a novel work/study scheme to be offered in conjunction with the scholarships which assumes a commitment to approximately 5 hours of paid work per week on average during term-time for eligible students who elect to participate. The maximum bursary, scholarship and work/study benefit payable to undergraduate students from government sources and the University combined will be £5,865 and the minimum £1,150 for 2007/08 (rising each year as determined by the University) with typical averages being in the range shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1



For students to be eligible for additional support via WUAP, they must have applied for and be in receipt of government maintenance grant support in the relevant year. For the 2007/08 academic year, students must have a family income less than or equal to £38,330 to qualify for government maintenance grant support.

Our analysis of the data on the current composition of the student population demonstrates the need for the University to offer substantial financial support to undergraduate students beyond those in receipt of the maximum state support of £2,765 and with incomes less than £17,910 in 2007/08 and beyond. The University is seeking to widen access in particular for mature students, disabled students, under-represented ethnic groups, students from families with low incomes, and students from families within the lowest socio-economic groupings (4-8).

The basic assumptions and provisions of WUAP can be summarised as follows:

- (a) Support, over and above the required £305 minimum statutory bursary for undergraduate students whose family income is less than £17,910 in 2007/08, will be provided via a combination of guaranteed funding, scholarships and work/study opportunities as follows:

Warwick Undergraduate Aid Programme (WUAP)		Income Level				
		<£17,910	£20,000	£25,000	£30,000	£38,330
Support Level	Maximum	£5,865	£4,517	£3,684	£3,027	£2,150
	Minimum	£4,865	£3,517	£2,684	£2,027	£1,150
	<i>State support assumed in above</i>	£2,765	£2,417	£1,584	£927	£50

- (b) Guaranteed funding of £1,100pa will be available to all undergraduate students in receipt of any level of maintenance grant support from the Government in 2007/08 (those students whose family income is less than or equal to £38,330).
- (c) Scholarships at Warwick of £1,000pa will also be available, in addition to the guaranteed funding, to all undergraduate students in receipt of the full maintenance grant support from the government in 2007/08 of £2,765. These scholarships are supported in part by philanthropic donations to the University. A limited number of Individual Donor Scholarships (IDS) worth £2,000pa will also be available to those student's entering the University for the first time in 2007/08 whose family income includes means tested benefits, including pension credits and working tax credits, who can demonstrate exceptional need. Students can only hold one scholarship award at a time so the maximum scholarship funding for any student is £2,000pa. Scholarships are however additional to the guaranteed funding detailed in point a above.
- (d) The innovative work/study element of the scheme is non-mandatory and will provide undergraduate students within WUAP who are not eligible for scholarship funding

with the opportunity to earn a £1,000pa by undertaking an internship with the University. Students electing to take part will be expected to work for 5 hours a week on a term time only basis per annum (150 hours in total). The hours worked will be designed to fit in around a student's academic commitments and will be determined between the student and the internship provider. The internship is expected to offer work experience and training opportunities for students as part of the scheme. 150 internships will be available per intake for 2007/08 and opportunities will be allocated to students on a first come first served basis.

- (e) Support via WUAP will be paid to the students directly via BACS as maintenance support on a termly basis (with the exception of the minimum statutory bursary paid to PGCE students which will be paid in full in January each year). Guaranteed funding and scholarship payments will be made at the start of each term and work/study payments will be made in week 6 of each term once the internship has been established and is operational.
- (f) Overall the WUAP scheme will provide student financial aid of 33% (as a proportion of additional fee income) distributed as follows:
 - 21% in the form of guaranteed funding
 - 9% in the form of scholarships, and
 - 3% from work/study

Scholarships through WUAP are provided from a combination of the University's additional fee income and external philanthropic donations to the University of Warwick generated in anticipation of the 2006/07 fee changes.

The University will publish full details of the WUAP scheme and the exact level of support available to prospective applicants from December 2006 onwards for 2007/08 entry. Information will be provided in written form and via the web. This is further highlighted in section 5 below and within our Widening Participation Strategy.

4. Outreach and Inreach at Warwick: raising aspirations and attainment

The University of Warwick's approach to widening participation extends throughout the student life-cycle, from our outreach and raising aspiration activities, through our innovative teaching and learning initiatives, to our careers guidance and alumni programmes. One of Warwick's key strategic aims and objectives as set out in our Corporate Plan is to improve access to the University and to enable and encourage the broadest participation in our academic activities.

Pupils and their advisors require sound information and advice on the new fees arrangements well in advance of 2006 and subsequent intake years. An initial proportion of the funding to extend Warwick's outreach programme and information, advice and guidance in light of the new fee arrangements has therefore been invested up-front in 2004/05 and 2005/06. The total expenditure from the additional fee income on outreach and support will be over 13% of the additional fee income in 2006/07 falling to an average of approximately 5% from 2008/09. While Warwick will build further on the local activity that is currently being pursued, a significant proportion of this activity will be focused on extending our programme to pupils and schools and colleges outside our region and in developing a partnership with the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY) to ensure that those pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds have available the

activities and support they need to make the most of their potential. Additionally, we will endeavour to increase the accessibility of our outreach programme to those pupils with disabilities as well as expanding the activities particularly developed for them.

5. Provision of information, advice and guidance

The provision of information, advice and guidance is a key strand of Warwick's outreach activities and will be undertaken in a variety of ways as outlined in our Widening Participation Strategy. Clear information regarding fee levels and funding that is available is necessary at the earliest stage possible. The notification of Warwick's fee levels to students will be printed in our prospectus each year and will also appear on our online prospective applicant web pages. Additionally, course fees information will appear on the UCAS course search and this information will be highlighted in workshops and open days.

We will enhance our web information by establishing a prospective student portal which will include financial advice and guidance where prospective students can establish the level of financial aid that they are likely to receive from Warwick. This portal will also include information on the raising aspiration and attainment activities that are available at Warwick and updates on admissions related advice, linking to other relevant sites where appropriate such as Aimhigher. Extended information and workshops regarding the application and admissions process will be given in addition to that already provided at open days and existing outreach activity and priority will be given to those candidates who have little or no tradition of Higher Education in their families or who are from under-represented groups.

Acknowledging that the importance of timely and relevant financial advice and guidance will grow even further from 2006 for all our prospective and current students, the University has planned additional support staff to augment the existing Student Funding Team in order to provide individual assistance to prospective and current students and their families. A summary of the outreach activity projected to take place with the additional outreach funding is included in Appendix 1. It should be noted that the initial injection of resource for expansion was made in 2004/05, including the addition of four Recruitment Officers, and that our approach remains sufficiently flexible to enable us to adjust effectively to the changing environment.

6. Summary of milestones

The University will continue regularly to review progress towards our widening participation aims and objectives. Ongoing monitoring will address the University's impact on raising the aspirations and attainment of young people and adults, increasing diversity in our student population and ensuring that we provide our students with the appropriate support and development to aid retention. In addition to our existing monitoring processes, Warwick has set the following specific milestones as representative of our commitment to widening participation, and in particular to those groups identified as under-represented at Warwick.

There are two of the national HESA benchmarks which are applicable to Warwick's strategy. Whilst recognising the weaknesses of benchmarks, (particularly the use of the unrefined school type differentiation) they can be, nevertheless, a useful comparator when considering institutional data. Though there are many unstable aspects which could influence the baseline data or indeed the calculation of some benchmarks, the University of Warwick will aspire to:

- (a) Raise the numbers of full-time young entrants to the University from the lowest socio-economic groups during the period of 2006/07 to 2010/11 in order to reach our location-adjusted benchmark by 2007/08 and our standard benchmark by 2009/10, assuming no significant growth in home undergraduate full-time numbers at the University (noting that the University of Warwick had 17.8% in this group in 2002/03).
- (b) Raise the numbers of full-time young entrants from low participation neighbourhoods to the location-adjusted benchmark by 2007/08 and the standard benchmark by 2010/11.
- (c) Increase the numbers of full-time undergraduate entrants (both young and mature combined) from ethnic groups currently under-represented at Warwick including Black Caribbean, Black African, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi by .5% for the first three categories and .2% for the last by 2009/10.

Current Warwick data is as follows:

Under-represented ethnic groups at Warwick based on entrants for 2004	Milestone by 2009/10
Black African: 1.2% at Warwick, 2.3% UCAS national data	1.7%
Black Caribbean: .3% at Warwick, 1.1% UCAS national data	0.8%
Pakistani: .6% at Warwick vs. 2.6% UCAS national data	1.1%
Bangladeshi: .4% at Warwick, .8% UCAS national data	0.6%

- (d) Increase the total number of mature Home/EU learners registered on full-time and part-time routes combined by 5% by 2007/08 and by 6% by 2010/11, using the internal data published for 2004/05 academic year of 11.1% as a baseline (970 out of 8,713 registrations).
- (e) Increase the proportion of entrants to Warwick from those candidates with category 2, 3 and 4 disabilities (blind/partially sighted, deaf/hearing difficulty, wheelchair/mobility difficulty) who apply and to increase entrants in real terms in these categories by 100% from 10 to 20 by 2009/10. Institutional data as published in Warwick's academic statistics shows that for 2003/04 entry the proportion of applicants declaring these disabilities was 4% whereas the number of entrants was 2.4% and that in 2004/05 entry these figures were 3.4% and 2.9% respectively.

To support these milestones, financial support as part of the scholarship element of WUAP will be considered relating to our target under-represented groups. An example is the Multicultural Scholarships Programme (MSP's) for Law students which specifically offers scholarship support to students from Black Caribbean, Black African, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi origins.

In addition to milestones based on achieving diversity in the Warwick student population, the projected numbers of outreach activities and the additional information, advice and guidance to be provided is set out in Appendix 1.

7. Monitoring arrangements

The University's Access agreement, along with our Widening Participation Strategy, will be reviewed regularly and at least on an annual basis by the Senate Steering Committee, prior to consideration by the Senate and the Council. At an operational level, the delivery of Warwick's widening participation strategy and progress towards the specific milestones included in the Access Agreement will be monitored by Officers in the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office and the Centre for Lifelong Learning in conjunction with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Recruitment and the Region and the Registrar. Extensive review of admissions, intake and retention data is integrated within the University's quality assurance and equal opportunities frameworks.

Appendix 1 Projected Outreach Activity and the Provision of Additional Information, Advice and Guidance

Appendix 2 Widening Participation Strategy 2004/05 – 2006/07