

Westminster Kingsway College HE Access Agreement

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A. FEE LIMITS

The fees outlined below cover all directly funded full-time Higher Education (HE) courses at Westminster Kingsway College. Fees for part time courses are available from the College and are published annually on its web site and in information leaflets for students and their sponsors or employers.

- The maximum fee limits for all Foundation degree courses undertaken by full time study, which are directly funded from the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE), will be £2700 p.a. for a full academic year for those commencing their programme in 2011/12.
- The maximum fee limits for all top-up degree courses undertaken by full time study, which are directly funded from the HEFCE, will be £2700 p.a. for a full academic year for those commencing their programme in 2011/12. Students who progress directly to a top-up course following a Foundation degree course at the college will be charged the fee which had pertained to their Foundation degree programme

The fees outlined above will be introduced in the academic year 2010/11 and will apply equally to United Kingdom students and to students who are nationals of any other state of the European Union.

B. AMOUNT OF ADDITIONAL INCOME TO BE SPENT ON ACCESS MEASURES

The college will create an Access Measures Fund with 30% of the additional annual income derived from top-up fees and will use this fund to provide bursaries and other access measures.

25% of the fund will be devoted to enhancing access measures, including (see E3 below) work with employers to improve progression to HE by those in employment without previous HE experience.

The remainder of the additional annual income will be invested in the infrastructure for HE provision in the college (as outlined in F below).

C. BURSARIES

The maximum fee charged at HE level within the college is £2700. The college will have a discretionary award available to those full time students paying the maximum fee. The award will be means tested in an individual basis.

It is estimated that 35% of full-time learners each year will qualify for a bursary.

Bursaries will be administered in three equal instalments in December, March and May, and will therefore provide general financial support, as well as an incentive to help with retention, achievement and progression through the course.

As a condition of the bursary all students must participate in at least one widening participation activity per year e.g. assisting at open evenings or visiting Level 3 vocational classes to promote the benefits of HE study.

Further conditions of the bursary are an attendance rate of 90% or above, completion of all work set and satisfactory progress; these are verified through course teams and registers before payments are made.

D. PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO STUDENTS

The college has a dedicated Higher Education section on its web site and produces a leaflet about each HE programme annually. Through both of these methods, prospective students are able to find out information about the college.

Information will be provided via these means about fees; bursaries; other forms of financial support and budgeting advice. Information will also be available about access to further information and advice.

The college has recruited a Course Information and Finance Adviser (CIFA) with particular responsibility for HE learners. During their induction period, students receive a presentation from the CIFA (HE) covering all aspects of student finance.

HE applicants will be advised in writing about the fee level that will apply to them and about the financial support and bursaries available.

E. OUTREACH WORK

1. Progression into HE

The college works with a network of educational and business partners in Central London to raise the aspirations of students on programmes at Levels 2 and 3, both within the college itself, and in its partner London boroughs.

Progression activities include visits to this and other HE institutions, revision and master classes, visits from industrial speakers and team-building events. Learners applying to HE receive a variety of forms of support with their applications from tutors and members of the college's Student Services team. Outreach activity with college-based learners on vocational Level 3 programmes has been enhanced through a range of practical activities and HE learners in receipt of bursaries are expected to support the targeting of progression advice towards these Level 3 learners.

2. Access to HE

The college has an extensive programme of Access to HE courses, whose students also benefit from progression activities such as visits to HE institutions, participation in master classes and direct support for their applications to HE.

Access to HE programmes include those leading to degrees in academic subjects and those leading to degrees in the college's major vocational HE specialisms: business, information technology and public administration; hospitality, catering, leisure and tourism. The Student Support Fund is used to support students following vocational Access programmes to make a suitable choice of programme for HE study.

3. Working with Employers

The college has focused its HE offer around key areas of significance for the Greater London economy: business, information technology and public administration; hospitality, catering, leisure and tourism. Foundation degrees in these subjects are linked to honours degrees at WKC or at one of its partner universities. The college also works with employers to encourage the take-up of Foundation degrees by employees who have no previous experience of HE, and will enhance the development of vocational Access to HE programmes where appropriate.

F. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The college will use the majority of the additional income derived from fees to make improvements to the pastoral support of HE learners, this has included the appointment of a Course Information and Financial Adviser with special responsibility for HE learners and a student activities officer with particular responsibility for leading a programme of extra-curricular activities for HE learners.

There will also continue to be improvements in academic support, for example through the creation of a support service to assist HE learners with ESOL, basic skills and study skills needs and through the enhanced development of learning and support mechanisms through the college's virtual learning environment.

G. MILESTONES

The college currently recruits 30% of its HE learners from black and minority ethnic groups and has a widening participation rate of 40% within its HE provision. Despite the introduction of variable fees the college aims to keep the proportions of students from BME groups and from WP areas at the current levels.

The college will aim to support 35% of full-time learners each year with a means-tested bursary. The college will look to maintain the current levels of retention of HE learners. The college will also continue to increase the proportion of Foundation degree learners in employment by 10 percentage points per year.

H. INSTITUTIONAL MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The college will undertake an annual monitoring process of this Access Agreement to confirm compliance and progress towards the objectives and milestones it has set. Monitoring reports are presented annually to the college's Governing Body.