

## University of Bath Revised Access Agreement for 2014-15

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### **Introduction**

The University of Bath has set a series of principles to underpin its Access Agreement, they are to:

- work closely with schools and colleges to raise aspirations and attainment;
- work in partnership with Further Education Colleges and other strategic partners to facilitate access;
- provide financial support for those in greatest need;
- provide support for students from under-represented groups to enhance retention.

Within the parameters of these principles and our equality and diversity framework, the University has identified three core priorities for its Access Agreement for 2014-15:

- improve recruitment from our target groups currently under-represented in higher education;
- further develop collaborative partnerships with Further Education Colleges (FECs) and schools;
- undertake more targeted, long-term outreach as a collaborative activity with other universities.

While our Widening Participation (WP) performance indicators (PFIs) indicate that our short-term focus must be on making the University more socially inclusive, we have planned increased resources in future years to support retention of students from under-represented groups. We will continue our focus on supporting students from low income families particularly those with household incomes at or below £20,000<sup>1</sup> per annum. We will also:

- maintain and develop our contextual admissions to enhance progression routes which reflect the diverse backgrounds and qualifications our applicants offer;
- significantly extend our outreach activities in a targeted manner with school and college partners;
- extend collaborative links with the University of Oxford and our GW4 partners Cardiff, Bristol and Exeter, to deliver widening participation;
- establish a partnership to support progression to selective universities in the region;
- develop collaborative links with other universities as part of local, regional and national collaborative networks to widen participation.

### **1. Fee limits and fee income above £6,000**

#### **Fee limits**

The University intends to charge:

- a fee of £9,000 for all campus-based full-time undergraduate programmes and for the campus-based Foundation Degree Sport (Sports Performance). Assuming intake targets that are consistent with the current year, we estimate 2,488 entrants on £9,000 programmes;
- a fee of £9,000 for full-time PGCEs;
- a fee of £7,500 for all franchised Foundation Degrees offered by partner organisations. We estimate 15 entrants on £7,500 programmes;
- a fee of £1,800 for students undertaking placements during the course of a degree programme started on or after September 2012;

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<sup>1</sup> We will use 'median equivalised net income by household type (Source SILC)' from Eurostat to determine household income eligibility

- a fee of £1,350 for students undertaking an Erasmus year or overseas year of study who started their courses on or after 1 September 2012;
- placement fees for students undertaking “thin” sandwich placements and mixed years will be pro-rata over the years of placement to reflect the periods of study/placement, e.g. a normal fee will be charged for 6 months (£4,500) and then the placement fee (£900) for the remaining 6 months.

The University will apply annual increases, in line with the amount set by the Government, to all fees.

### **Fee income**

Based on the recruitment assumptions above, income above the base basic fee of £6,000 is shown as £21,383,010 in 2014-15 on Table 3 and expected to be £21,934,010 when increases in student numbers are taken into account.

## **2. Expenditure on additional access and retention measures**

In its 2012-13 Access Agreement, the University made a significant commitment to bursary support for those in most financial need in addition to increased expenditure on access measures, establishing a number of new posts and structures.

Data on our 2012-13 student intake shows that our targeted approach to student financial support successfully met our aim of giving assistance to those in most need. We were able to allocate 95% of our planned expenditure to those with a Household Residual Income (HRI) at or below £16,000 who also met one or more widening participation indicators. As stated in our 2013-14 Access Agreement we have taken the opportunity to review our household income eligibility thresholds for 2014-15 now that we have completed a full academic cycle and are in a better position to assess the impact of the strategy. We will retain our targeted approach to student support and also increase the HRI to £20,000.

The following level of expenditure indicates the level of activity that is envisaged by 2017-18:

- £4,522,400 on financial support for students
- £2,503,038 on outreach and student success

A number of posts were established in 2012-13 including a Head of Widening Participation, Student Experience Officers in each faculty, Peer Mentoring Co-ordinator, Data Co-ordinator, Progression Officer and WP Outreach Officers, together with extensive outreach activity.

Our HESA WP PFIs reveal that those in the lower SEGs (NS-SEC classes 4-7) are under-represented in our student population: 18.9% in 2010-11 compared with a benchmark of 23.2%, as are those from Polar 2 low participation neighbourhoods (4.9% compared with a benchmark of 7.1%). We are also aiming to increase the proportion of students from state schools from 73.6 to 80.0%. Therefore the immediate focus will be on these three target groups and the University has set stretching targets to contribute to an increase in the participation of these groups.

## **3. Additional access measures**

### **Outreach**

The University's existing commitments to outreach and fair access have been, and continue to be, considerable. Bath's programme of outreach activity includes expert information and advice to schools, colleges, parents and advisors on student finance issues and support for potential students in making an informed choice and a successful

application, including adults taking Access courses and those following vocational courses at Level 3. Bath has also developed innovative approaches to curriculum enrichment supporting schools and colleges in raising attainment, to enable local students from state schools to reach their full academic potential. Under the framework of our 2014-15 Access Agreement we will build on and significantly enhance this work.

While our targets are based on the HESA Performance Indicators of Socio-Economic Class, Low Participation Neighbourhood and State Schools we recognise the complexity of the intersections between class, ethnicity, gender, age and disability. All our outreach work aims to be inclusive and we also work with targeted groups where that is more effective, for example: mature students; those with vocational qualifications; care leavers; those from certain black and minority ethnic groups; students with disabilities; males or females under-represented in certain subject areas.

There are four strands to Bath's outreach and access strategy:

- targeting of under-represented groups as part of admissions;
- an extended core institutional outreach programme;
- re-focused Information Advice and Guidance provision;
- new collaborative outreach projects.

### **Access and Admissions**

The University has appointed an Admissions Progression Officer who checks all incoming applications for relevant indicators of under-representation, using the full range of UCAS contextual data sources. Applicants are flagged and monitored throughout the decision-making process, and candidates are offered alternative methods of assessment of potential where appropriate.

The Admissions Progression Officer works closely with our partner Further Education Colleges (FECs) to identify students who would not normally apply, but who would benefit from a University of Bath education. Progression routes for those with the potential to succeed at Bath are being established and managed on a case-by-case basis. The lessons learned from the early stages of this work will be passed back to partner college managers. Analysis of application and admissions data by the Admissions Progression Officer is also being used to inform our outreach and IAG activities. Our use of contextual data is in line with the National Council for Educational Excellence<sup>2</sup> recommendation that universities should use all the information available to them to identify "the best students with the greatest potential and ability to reach the highest academic achievement". Our scheme has been designed with reference to SPA guidance<sup>3</sup> on best practice in this area and will make appropriate use of the data UCAS provide.

As part of our fair access strategy, additional consideration will also be given to applicants who have successfully completed an extended outreach programme such as *On Track to Bath* or a similar programme offered by a partner university.

### **Core Institutional Outreach Programme**

The University is strongly committed to maintaining and extending its existing expertise in relation to aspiration and attainment-raising activities. In 2012 the University established a Widening Participation Office to co-ordinate an outreach programme designed to identify and nurture the academic talent of under-represented young people within our region.

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<sup>2</sup> National Council for Educational Excellence: Recommendations, Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008  
[www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DCSF-00803-2008](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DCSF-00803-2008)

<sup>3</sup> [www.spa.ac.uk/contextual-data/principles-contextual-data.html](http://www.spa.ac.uk/contextual-data/principles-contextual-data.html)

In the primary years, activities and events are largely inclusive and are frequently offered in partnership with other providers. Progressively, through the secondary and tertiary years, initiatives target those whose levels of attainment suggest clear potential for admission to a selective institution, but whose achievements may be enhanced through specific intervention and support. Given that many reports<sup>4</sup> have found that prior attainment is a significant factor in application and retention rates in HE, the University is committed to subject enrichment activity, particularly in relation to science and technology subjects based on sustained action<sup>5</sup>, delivered over a number of years.

The focus on raising attainment requires increased engagement of academic staff and additional resource has been allocated to support and develop these activities. Staff will also gain recognition for their contribution through our career progression system.

Working in collaboration with identified local schools and colleges we negotiate tailor-made programmes of activity to support their particular needs. A general programme of events such as taster days and summer schools is offered to a wider range of schools and colleges. Through *On Track to Bath*, our targeted attainment-raising programme for Year 12–13 students, we support progression to Bath and other selective universities.

Maths is a key area for development, as the Teaching and Learning Research Programme<sup>6</sup> determined, and a specific tutoring initiative is in development, offered in partnership with local FECs, to support Level 3 students in further education to achieve the grades required for entry to selective universities.

In addition to these plans, the Department of Sports Development and Recreation, Institute of Contemporary Interdisciplinary Arts, and especially the Students' Union will continue to develop and extend their work with schools and colleges in liaison with the Widening Participation Office (WPO). They will further develop campus visits and will contribute to the core outreach programme engaging with activities such as taster days and summer schools.

We will continue to deliver and develop our programme of summer schools, as it has been reported<sup>7</sup> that summer schools are particularly effective in raising the aspirations of students. Application and entry rates to selective universities for pupils that have been on Sutton Trust summer schools are considerably higher than those for students in comparator groups with similar attainment, and participants at Aimhigher summer schools had application rates to HE in general that were twice the national average.

### **Online Support**

We will be creating a range of online Open Educational Resources designed to support attainment-raising outreach activities, develop academic study skills and enhance work placement experience.

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<sup>4</sup> Staying the Course: the retention of students in higher education, National Audit Office, 2007

[www.nao.org.uk/publications/0607/retention\\_of\\_students\\_in\\_he.aspx](http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/0607/retention_of_students_in_he.aspx)

Widening participation in higher education, National Audit Office, 2008

[www.nao.org.uk/publications/0708/widening\\_participation\\_in\\_high.aspx](http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/0708/widening_participation_in_high.aspx)

Report to the National Council for Educational Excellence. Increasing higher education participation amongst disadvantaged young people and schools in poor communities, The Sutton Trust, October 2008

<sup>5</sup> Universities UK, *op cit.*, Sir Martin Harris, *op cit.*

<sup>6</sup> Widening participation in higher education. A Commentary by the Teaching and Learning Research Programme, TLRP, 2008

[www.tlrp.org/pub/documents/HEcomm.pdf](http://www.tlrp.org/pub/documents/HEcomm.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> What more can be done to widen access to highly selective universities?, Sir Martin Harris, 2010

[www.offa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Sir-Martin-Harris-Fair-Access-report-web-version.pdf](http://www.offa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Sir-Martin-Harris-Fair-Access-report-web-version.pdf)

## **Collaborative Work**

The University already has extensive experience of working with, and leading, significant regional collaborative networks. Bath will maintain key aspects of this approach whilst ensuring that those participating in its outreach and access initiatives are more clearly identified as having the potential to benefit from the HE provision that we, and other highly selective Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), offer. In the medium-term, outreach activity will be focused on collaborative work with other universities: the GW4 Cardiff, Bristol, Exeter, and Oxford. The University has developed a very positive partnership with the Universities of Bristol and Exeter with regard to summer school provision. A decision was made at an early stage for all three institutions to commit to joint summer schools ensuring no gap between Aimhigher and subsequent delivery models. Promotion of the opportunities at the three institutions is collaborative, with joint marketing materials sent to schools and colleges across the South West. Further collaborative elements include summer school 'reunions' and mutual campus visits. Plans are also being developed for a collaborative approach to supporting teachers and advisers including a joint conference for advisers and development of resources and activities to provide information, advice and guidance (IAG) to young people with the potential to progress to selective universities.

Bath continues its collaborative activities with the University of Oxford, with reciprocal visits to Oxford for participants on our pre-16 outreach programme and visits to Bath for Oxford 'Young Ambassadors'. As plans evolve for increased collaboration, opportunities will be developed for able learners from the South West to experience the Oxford learning environment.

In 2013-14 we intend to launch a new partnership with the universities of Oxford, Reading, Southampton and Cardiff. Under the working title of Universities Outreach Programme, this collaborative partnership will offer students who currently participate in sustained outreach activity in a partner university, opportunities to benefit from other activities run within partner institutions. Students will also participate in a joint admissions conference. Admissions staff in partner universities will recognise UOP partnership activity, and may use this information to provide further context to the application. This partnership aims to encourage students to consider higher education courses beyond their local area, and to make informed decisions about the university course which is most appropriate for them.

We will increase the scope of our activity by working collaboratively with selected third sector organisations. For example, the University works in partnership with the Villiers Park Educational Trust and has made a significant investment in its Swindon Scholars Programme. This programme supports schools and colleges in targeted areas of disadvantage where progression to HE is significantly below the national average. Participation is tightly targeted both in terms of the background characteristics of the learners and their ability. Students undertake an innovative enrichment programme, to which the University contributes master-class expertise as well as financial support.

A targeted programme of aspiration and attainment-raising activity for pre-16 students in selected Bath and North East Somerset schools will continue in collaboration with Bath Spa University. This initiative focusses on supporting schools in raising attainment at GCSE in the core subjects of Mathematics, Science, English, Modern Foreign Languages, History and Geography, drawing on the complementary subject specialisms of the two universities. In 2014-15 we intend to offer this programme to seven schools and estimate it will reach approximately 800 students.

Building on the established core GCSE subjects tutoring initiative in targeted B&NES schools, we intend to extend our partnership working with Bath Spa University in 2014-15. We will collaborate on a fully evaluated awareness and aspiration-raising outreach

programme to the main primary schools that feed into the seven B&NES schools in our pre-16 programme.

We continue our commitment to the Bath Education Trust which was formed with Bath Spa University, the City of Bath College and Rotork, an industrial partner, to offer school students from three partner schools access to a wide range of courses and enrichment activities including access to 'On Track to Bath' and our enhanced IAG offer for target groups.

The University of Bath will collaborate with eight other universities in the South West region to fund, maintain and develop the careers support websites Lifepilot ([www.life-pilot.co.uk](http://www.life-pilot.co.uk)) and Career Pilot ([www.careerpilot.org.uk](http://www.careerpilot.org.uk)) managed by the Western Vocational Progression Consortium (WVPC), chaired by the University of Bath. Partners will support the development of the websites through an IAG Steering Group; design impact measures to gauge the effect on applications to SW Universities; develop strategies to embed the websites into outreach activities and explore funding opportunities for the development of additional resources to support schools in providing IAG about progression to HE.

HEIs in the South West are committed to continuing and strengthening their collaborative WP partnerships to ensure that young people and adults across the region have access to activities that promote successful progression to HE. A co-operative organisational structure has been agreed, with individual universities leading on key areas. As joint lead for the HEIs in the South West Disability Strand we will continue to co-ordinate a programme of awareness-raising activities for staff and students in schools and colleges.

### **Initial Teacher Training**

We plan to offer a number of outreach activities designed to increase participation in Initial Teacher Training (ITT) of those from social classes 4-7, from a black or minority ethnic background, and of men applying for middle years courses. These will be developed in collaboration with our partners in the Positive Action Training Hub (PATH) consortium of ITT providers in the South West. These will be centred on 'Careers in Teaching' information workshops over a period of three years. A minimum of six workshops will be funded and organised by the University of Bath. Using a combination of on-campus and off-campus locations in specific geographical areas we will aim to attract: career change adults and University of Bath undergraduates who are: first in family (FIF) to take an undergraduate degree; from NS-SEC classes 4-7; from a black and minority ethnic background; and male applicants for middle years English and Science pathways.

### **Student success and retention**

The University has a strong retention record, however, it has been shown that students from non-traditional backgrounds, for example with vocational qualifications, describe the transition into HE as complex and difficult, and need to be able to draw on support to overcome the difficulties they perceive in the HE context<sup>8</sup>, as well as to ensure they gain maximum benefit from their student experience. The University's Student Services continues to extend to all students from non-traditional backgrounds a proactive offer of support both pre-arrival and throughout their student experience. Our success in recruiting and retaining students with disabilities along with more effective promotion of support systems has led to a substantial increase in the numbers of students accessing our services. In response to this we are strengthening our student support provision in this area with three new posts. As part of our strategy to raise pre-entry attainment, and support student retention and success, we are developing a new initiative to facilitate smooth and successful transition to HE. To this end, we have identified members of academic staff in each department to act as Transition Mentors. They work closely with the students and

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<sup>8</sup> TLRP, *op cit.*

support them once they arrive at the University. These Mentors link with the extensive peer mentoring schemes in the University, facilitated by the recently appointed Student Experience Officers (SEOs).

Drawing on research with current students strategies are being developed to enhance and extend the concept of induction from pre-arrival through to the first year student experience, to better support the transition and inclusion of all students, including those from non-traditional backgrounds. Additional support will be provided by departmental Transition Mentors, Faculty-based SEOs working with Student Services, the WPO, and the Students' Union. They will proactively work with students from non-traditional backgrounds, helping them to identify and meet their academic learning, personal development and employment-related goals, as well as ensuring they understand how to access and benefit from the full range of support and facilities available at the University.

Consultations with staff and students have clearly shown the need for additional learning support for those from under-represented groups. We plan to strengthen our provision in this area to improve our support for academic and study skills and increase tutorial provision.

Peer-assisted learning (PAL) and peer mentoring (PM) have been established through the Students' Union, developed in close partnership with academic departments. Both PAL and PM are regarded as playing an important role in helping students' social and academic integration into university. According to Tinto (2006)<sup>9</sup> students will withdraw from HE if they are not successfully integrated, both socially and academically. Research at Stirling University has found that students who participate in PM schemes show lower levels of transitional stress than those who do not: "Those within the peer mentoring university were three times less likely to think of dropping out of university, were coping better with the transition to university and were better adapted to university life: an important predictor in intention to leave"<sup>10</sup>

### **Employability**

We recognise that the final measure of success for a student is progression into a satisfying graduate-level destination of their choice, and that this poses particular challenges for students from non-traditional backgrounds.

Employability continues to be a University priority for 2014-15 and the particular needs of students from non-traditional backgrounds for support in finding appropriate placements and work experience is a key focus. The University of Bath has an outstanding record for graduate employability. A major factor in this is the work placement during the degree programme which about half of Bath's undergraduates undertake. However, data analysis from our Careers Advisory Service<sup>11</sup> suggests that students from lower socio-economic groups would benefit from additional support and we will undertake further analysis and qualitative research to explore the issues and evaluate strategies for increasing and enhancing engagement. Fee waivers to cover placement costs will be offered to students from non-traditional backgrounds. Along with SEOs, Faculty-based Placement Officers will work closely with students to encourage them to take up placements and also engage with employers to identify suitable placements and internships, ensuring that the diverse skills of under-represented groups are recognised and valued. A range of online resources will be

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<sup>9</sup> Tinto, V., 2006, Taking Student Retention Seriously [www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/fsd/c2006/docs/takingretentionseriously.pdf](http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/fsd/c2006/docs/takingretentionseriously.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Phillips, R., Research to Investigate Peer Mentoring in UK Higher Education [www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/hlst/documents/LINK\\_Newsletter/Link\\_15.pdf](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/hlst/documents/LINK_Newsletter/Link_15.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> The Graduate Employment Market 2011-12 and the Destinations of Bath Graduates (2010-11)

developed to support students applying for placements and to provide a framework for reflecting on and benefiting from the experience.

The University's Careers Advisory Service will continue to provide dedicated support for students from non-traditional backgrounds.

The University achieved the Buttle Trust Quality Mark in 2012 and offers a full programme of outreach and retention activities to ensure that care leavers have the pre and post-entry support that is needed for successful progression to HE.

### **Financial support for students**

In our 2012-13 Access Agreement we focused the greatest part of our financial support expenditure on fee waivers. However, national reports and consultations with local students' organisations led us to reconsider our position. In our original plans we refined our support system to include a combination of fee waivers and bursaries. The recent changes to NSP provision have enabled us to provide all our financial support in the form of cost of living bursaries to support low income families. We have reviewed our household income and other eligibility thresholds and will increase the number of students we are able to support through raising the Household Residual Income to £20,000 in 2014-15.

### **Bursaries**

The University will award National Scholarships or University of Bath awards to students on our full-time undergraduate and Foundation Degree campus-based programmes from households with incomes at or below £20,000<sup>12</sup> who also fall into one or more of the following categories: from low participation neighbourhoods; from a poorly-performing school; a care leaver; in receipt of a means-tested benefit. National Scholarships will be awarded to students with the best qualifications on entry.

### **Bursaries**

Eligible students on full-time, campus-based, undergraduate programmes and Foundation Degree campus-based programmes, who meet the criteria above will be offered a £3,000 bursary in each year of study, including any unpaid placement or study abroad period (pro-rata for part year placement periods).

We will also continue to maintain a significant Discretionary Student Support Fund to provide additional bursary provision for our campus-based undergraduate students and our campus-based Foundation Degree students who experience a change in financial circumstances during their course of study, or who need to repeat a year due to extenuating personal circumstances. Early estimates indicate that between 50 - 70 students a year may qualify for support from the discretionary fund, indicating that a substantial figure in the region of £200,000 is required to maintain this provision.

The Bursary Scheme will also assist students from lower income families studying franchised Foundation Degrees with bursaries of £3,000 per annum awarded to eligible students, spread over the course of study for part-time students. This bursary support will be reported in our annual report.

### **Postgraduate Students**

We plan to offer awards totalling £180,000 to students from widening participation target groups wishing to undertake Postgraduate Taught degrees<sup>13</sup> at the University. We do not

<sup>12</sup> We will use median equivalised net income by household type (Source SILC) from Eurostat to determine household income eligibility.

<sup>13</sup> The postgraduate fee schedule is based on differential fees related to the programme that students intend to study - see <http://www.bath.ac.uk/study/pg/fees/taughtfees/>

wish to restrict this to progression for our current undergraduates but rather open up opportunities for academically able students across the sector who could benefit from our offer.

### **ITT Students**

In order to support ITT students from our identified target groups the University will offer 10 Bath ITT Bursaries of £4,000 to students who meet the eligibility criteria listed below: household income below £25,000 plus one or more of the following: first in family to take an undergraduate degree; social classes 4-7 based on parental occupation; from a black or minority ethnic background; men applying for middle years English and Science pathways.

## **4. Targets and milestones**

We aim to meet the challenging targets that we set in 2012-13, which relate to the student populations defined in specific HESA performance indicators<sup>14</sup>, but we do not expect to see immediate positive results in the short term. We are re-aligning our Foundation Degree provision, moving from franchised to licensed degrees which will result in a reduction in the number of students from our WP target groups registered at the university. In addition as the core of our outreach strategy is based on longer term initiatives to raise attainment we do not expect to see immediate results from those programmes.

In order to improve recruitment from our target under-represented groups in HE, the University will:

- increase the proportion of students from NS-SEC classes 4-7 from 18.9% in 2010-11 to 23% in 2016-17;
- interim milestone: in 2014-15, 21% of new entrants from NS-SEC classes 4-7;
- increase the proportion of students from Polar 2 low participating neighbourhoods from 4.9% in 2010-11 to 8% in 2016-17;
- interim milestone: in 2014-15, 6.0% of new entrants from Polar 2 low participating neighbourhoods;
- increase the percentage of full-time undergraduate entrants from state schools from 73.6% in 2010-11 to 80% in 2016-17;
- interim milestone: in 2014-15, 77% of new full-time undergraduate entrants from state schools.

### **Applications**

In order to improve recruitment from our target under-represented groups in HE, the University will:

- aim to increase our applicant pool sufficient to meet our entrant targets for the relevant under-represented groups, using validated contextual data where appropriate, and increasing the number of entrants with vocational qualifications and students on Access to Higher Education courses.

### **Outreach**

In order to further develop collaborative partnerships with FECs and schools, the University will:

- maintain, develop and increase our core institutional outreach programme based on on-going attainment-raising activity with 15-30 schools, including identified primaries. The project will support 45-50 student tutors and 1200 learners engaging in a programme of subject enrichment and attainment-raising activity.

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<sup>14</sup> [http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=2072&Itemid=141](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2072&Itemid=141)

In addition to this intensive programme, the University will support:

- aspiration-raising events and campus visits to benefit 600 learners annually;
- 45-60 HE information and funding events for target groups annually;
- 2-10 events with parents of target learners.

In order to undertake more targeted, long-term outreach activity as a collaborative activity with other universities, the University will also:

- deliver our new outreach programme with peer selecting universities and/or charitable organisations, supporting new aspiration and attainment raising work to complement but extend the core outreach;
- encourage local participation in HE in collaboration with a local university and local FECs;
- work with partners to design, develop and deliver a programme of aspiration and awareness-raising to support the progression of learners with disabilities both to Bath and to other HEIs, including presentations to learners, parents, teachers and advisors.

### **Student success and retention**

As the University of Bath currently performs strongly in terms of retention, the University will:

- ensure the percentage of young full-time entrants from Polar 2 low participation neighbourhoods no longer in HE remains below 5%;
- maintain our retention rates for disadvantaged students, care leavers, and minority ethnic students at the same levels as those for the general population, i.e. above 95% for the year after entry, and maintain our retention rates for disabled students at above 90% for the year after entry.

## **5. Equality and Diversity**

Our Access Agreement requires approval from our SMT, the Vice Chancellor's Group, which includes the Chair of the Equality and Diversity Committee. The Head of WP is a member of the Equality and Diversity Committee and will provide regular updates to the committee to ensure synergy with WP initiatives. To further integrate and embed activity regular briefings of the Equality and Diversity Network will take place. Equality and Diversity will be an annual agenda item for discussion by the WP Strategy Group (WPSG) to inform future strategy and activity and Equality and Diversity data will be included in the reports to WPSG. Our Access Agreement has been analysed using the University's Equality Analysis framework, and demonstrates that our WP strategy is designed to have a positive impact on protected groups defined by the Equality Act 2010. Our Access Agreement has also been incorporated as a strategy to support the implementation of the University's Statement of Equality Objectives.

## **6. Provision of information to prospective students**

Clear guidance on fees, fee waivers and bursaries will continue to be provided for students. This will take the form of information on the University website, and in documentation relating to courses. We will also provide targeted email information to applicants about funding opportunities and our Admissions and Funding Advisor undertakes a significant programme of finance-related IAG within the region. In addition, a detailed fees schedule will be published annually by the University's Student Finance Office on its web pages: [www.bath.ac.uk/study/ug/funding](http://www.bath.ac.uk/study/ug/funding).

The University will continue to develop the 'Information, Advice and Guidance' section within the study website. This section is being developed for potential applicants, their parents and advisors. The specific needs of under-represented groups will be taken into account in

particular those from families without a tradition of higher education study; mature students; those with vocational qualifications; care leavers; those from certain black and minority ethnic groups; students with disabilities; males and females under-represented in certain subject areas. This will be continuously developed and added to over time. The 'Information, Advice and Guidance' section can be found at: [www.bath.ac.uk/study/iag](http://www.bath.ac.uk/study/iag).

## **7. Consultation and engagement with students**

The Students' Union plays a key role in both policy development and delivery of activities. The Students' Union is represented on the WP Strategy Group and is consulted separately about specific policy issues such as student finance through regular meetings with the Head of Widening Participation. The Union also has a key role in the delivery of outreach and retention activities, which are being embedded into core University programmes. A Student Staff Forum will be established to enable student tutors, mentors and ambassadors to contribute to the development of WP initiatives including activities and training. Finally, the University will continue the Student Experience Forum with the Students' Union, so that we can ensure that we are responsive to students' priorities.

## **8. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements**

We will continue to monitor the above targets on an annual basis, as part of the re-submission of the Access Agreement. Evaluation of our core and collaborative outreach, using quantitative and qualitative methods, will be conducted both internally and potentially as a combined research project with our HEI partners.

Recognising that successful widening participation at Bath will require new approaches and a sustained strategic overview, the University will continue to support the WP Research Group, established in 2012, to explore, evaluate and monitor local strategies, work with partners where this can help to develop our expertise (e.g. Bristol's Widening Participation Research Cluster<sup>15</sup>) and undertake funded research in widening access to increase our capacity in this area.

Our evaluation plan has four main elements: collection of learner data to monitor engagement of our target groups; evaluation of activities to assess their immediate effectiveness; tracking students taking part in sustained activities to assess longer term impact; and small scale qualitative projects with learners in key year groups to provide in-depth understanding of the barriers and to inform future outreach activities.

The Widening Participation Research Group will identify a number of participatory action research projects designed to explore and address areas representing significant barriers to widening participation, fair access and student success.

In order to better assess the long term impact of our outreach activity and the success of our collaborative activities such as the Universities Outreach Partnership we have subscribed to the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) service.

Measures of effectiveness in relation to supporting the retention and achievement of students from non-traditional backgrounds will continue to include completion rates, academic achievement, participation in extra-curricular activities and development, progression to graduate-level employment and/or postgraduate study, and whether they

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<sup>15</sup> [www.bristol.ac.uk/academicregistry/raa/wpur-office/wprc/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academicregistry/raa/wpur-office/wprc/)

would recommend this institution to other students from non-traditional backgrounds. A mix of quantitative and qualitative measures are being developed, monitored and reviewed throughout the individual student's experience, so that individual adjustments can be made, as well as broader lessons learned. This will include specific investigations such as: the evaluation of activities to enhance induction and first year experience; degree attainment for Black and Minority Ethnic Groups; and the impact of placements on degree attainment and employment destination.

New data collection systems designed to increase our understanding of participation patterns at Faculty and departmental level were established in 2012, and will be monitored, both to check our progress against targets, and also to inform the development of subject-based outreach strategies.

We will closely monitor the participation and retention rates of mature students (over 21, and over 25); those with vocational qualifications; care leavers; those from black and minority ethnic groups; and students with disabilities to evaluate the effectiveness of our outreach and admissions strategies in reaching these groups.

We will also monitor and research the situation with regard to the progression of non-traditional students to postgraduate degrees. Research for the HEA found that while social class alone was not a significant factor in the decision to continue beyond a first degree other factors were: "family experience of higher education had an important effect on the respondents' decisions. This was further conflated with some ethnic groups."<sup>16</sup> Over time this could result in a new social divide which would be detrimental to our aim for a diverse student population. Research in this area will focus on identifying strategies to encourage wider participation.

The strategy for WP will reside with the WP Strategy Group chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching. The Widening Participation Office, led by the Head of WP, will be responsible for co-ordinating outreach activity across the University.

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<sup>16</sup> Stuart, M; Lido, C; Shell, M; Solomon, L; Akroyd, K; (2008) Widening participation to post graduate study: Decisions, deterrents and creating success. Higher Education Academy

**OFFA Access Agreement 2014/15 - Annexes B & C**

Institution name: University of Bath  
 Institution UKPRN: 10007850

**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)**

Number	Please select milestone/target type from the drop down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	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 maximum)
						2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	
1	NS-SEC (HESA Table T1b)	Increase proportion of students from NS-SEC classes 4-7 from 18.9% to 20% in 2016/17	No	2010/11	18.9%	19%	20%	21%	22%	23%	23.5%	
2	LPN (HESA Table T1b)	Increase proportion of students from POLAR 2 low participating neighbourhoods, from 4.9% to 8%	No	2010/11	4.9%	5%	5.5%	6%	7%	8%	8.5%	
3	Non continuation: LPN (HESA Table T3b)	Ensure % of young full-time entrants from low participation neighbourhoods no longer in HE remains below 5%	No	2008/09	2.7%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	5%	2008/09 was a particularly good year for retention. We are consistently below our benchmark but 4.5% is more realistic than 2.8% based on our trend analysis.
4	State School (location adjusted) (HESA Table T1b)	Increase % of full-time undergraduate entrants from state schools to 80%	No	2010/11	73.6	74.5	76%	77%	78.5%	80%	81%	
5	Disabled	students with disabilities to 4.0% (Table 7)	No	2009/10	3.9%	3.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		numerical targets no longer included
6	Postgraduate ITT: Black and minority ethnic groups		No	2011/12	6%	8%	9%	11%				
7	ITT: Gender (e.g. male primary teachers)	Middle years	No	2011/12	6	7	8	9				
8	ITT: Socio-economic (e.g. NS-SEC, please give details in the next column)	We plan to collect this data internally to provide a more robust baseline	No	2011/12								

**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.

Number	Please select milestone/target type from the drop down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	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 maximum)	
						2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18		
1	Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Develop collaborative links with peer selecting HEIs to deliver outreach activities - target expressed as number of HEIs involved	No	2010/11	0	3	7	7	7	7	7	7	Strategy refined to build collaborative WP partnerships with Oxford and the GW4 Bristol, Exeter and Cardiff as well as a new collaboration, the Universities Outreach Programme (UOP) to deliver summer schools and other outreach activity.
2	Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Develop and extend relationship with local HEI and schools to encourage local participation. Target expressed as number schools	No	2010/11	0	5	7	7	7	7	7	7	Collaboration with Bath Spa University and selected BANES schools to raise attainment in the complementary subject specialisms of the two institutions. Increased collaboration with Bath Spa University to provide activities for primary schools.
3	Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Build relationships with 15-30 primary and secondary schools and colleges to deliver core programme of targeted outreach activity particularly curriculum enhancement to raise attainment- target expressed as number of schools/colleges involved	No	2010/11	0	15	30	30	30	30	30	30	Intention to build significantly on curriculum enhancement from 2013-14 to support schools and colleges to raise attainment. Working agreements and bespoke action plans for schools underway.

4	Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Build relationships with charitable organisations to support new aspiration/attainment raising activity - target expressed as number of organisations involved	No	2010/11	0	1	2	2	2	2	2	Work with third sector organisations, Villiers Park and Into Science, that can provide additional expertise and access to specific target groups.
5	Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Develop and extend partnerships with Further Education Colleges to facilitate non-traditional entry routes and develop a tutoring initiative - target expressed as number of FECs involved	No	2010/11	0	6	6	6	6	6	6	Tutoring initiative established along with new residential summer school for FECs particularly for mathematics.
6	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Offer aspiration raising events and campus visits - target expressed as number of participants	No	2010/11	500	510	600	600	600	600	600	
7	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	HE information and funding events for target groups - target expressed as number of events supported	No	2010/11	45	45	60	60	60	60	60	
8	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Offer achievement raising events such as summer schools and subject enrichment programmes for target schools and colleges - target expressed as number of participants	No	2010/11	500	300	300	300	300	300	300	Whilst we will have a smaller number of participants overall, the activity will be more intense and focused with the same individuals participating in multiple events. Joint summer school programme continues with Exeter and Bristol Universities. Visits and exchanges are underway with Oxford University.
9	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Develop in-class tutoring provision between HE students and learners in targeted schools - target expressed as number of tutors	No	2010/11	25	35	40	45	50	50	50	
10	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Offer events involving parents of target learners	No	2010/11	0	2	4	8	10	10	10	
11	Postgraduate ITT: Black and minority ethnic groups	This is a particular issue for ITT providers in the region therefore we plan to build on existing collaborative partnerships through PATH (Positive Action Training Hub) to address this.	No				6	6	6	6	6	Workshops funded and organised by the University of Bath.
12	Mission targets		No									Promote a more socially inclusive and diverse student population
13	Management targets		No									Policy and strategy will be led by the Pro-vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching
14	Management targets		No									Policy and strategy will be discussed, developed and disseminated through the Widening Participation Strategy Group chaired by the PVC.
15	Management targets		No									The Widening Participation Office will coordinate outreach and retention activity across the university, working closely with Faculties and Academic Departments.
16	Lifelong learning		No									Maintain and develop strong links with our partner colleges to encourage progression to the university from mature students.
17	Student support services		No									Faculty-based Student Experience Officers work with staff and students to provide under-represented groups with support in academic and social integration.
18	Contextual data		No									The contextual admissions initiative will be maintained and developed in 14/15. An Admissions Progression Officer has been appointed to consider applications with indicators of under representation. Applications are monitored through the decision-making process. Progression routes are being developed for applicants with non-traditional profiles.
19	Other (please give details in the next column)	leavers to progress to the University and provide appropriate support once recruited.	No				13.14					Maintain our commitment to Buttle Trust Quality Mark to demonstrate pre and post entry support.
20	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Develop and deliver On Track to Bath intensive attainment-raising programme for Yrs 12-13	No	2014/15				60	100	100	120	
21	Student support services	Increase support for students from WP target groups to take up placement opportunities	No			7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	2%	Decrease differential between students from NSEC 4-7 and those from NSEC 1-3 entering graduate level occupations.
22	Student support services	Support for students with disabilities and mental health problems will be strengthened	No		540	700	720	730	750	770	780	Increase number of students supported by disability and mental health advisers
23	Student support services	A new approach to academic and study skills development will be developed to enhance support for students particularly those from our WP target groups	No				20%	21%	22%	23%	24%	Monitor take up of study support opportunities to ensure that they reach target groups of NSEC 4-7, LPNs, Mature, BAME, Care Leavers, those with vocational qualifications, those in receipt of DSA who should comprise at least 24% of participants.

24	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Co-ordinate collaboration in the South West to support IAG Websites Careerpilot and Lifepilot	Yes					10	10	10	10	10	Number of universities willing to support continuation of the website through financial contributions and provision of complementary activity
25	Other (please give details in the next column)	Coordinate the Universities South West Disability Network to enhance HE staff awareness by: convening planning meetings; maintaining JISC mailing list, organising conferences and events to share and develop practice good practice in outreach, transition and student success.	No					3	3	3	3	3	Number of USW meetings or events
26	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Develop and coordinate network of disability practitioners from target schools and colleges to identify and address gaps in transition to HE.	No					3	3	3	3	3	Number of newsletters
27	Other (please give details in the next column)	Develop and coordinate network of disability practitioners from target schools and colleges to identify and address gaps in transition to HE.	No					3	3	3	3	3	Staff Development events for disability support practitioners

Optional commentary on milestones. This box is character-limited to 1000 characters; however, we are happy for you to upload additional 'supporting information' as a separate Word/pdf document.