

DURHAM UNIVERSITY

ACCESS AGREEMENT WITH THE OFFICE FOR FAIR ACCESS 2014/15

Context

1. Durham is a highly selecting institution, with demanding degree programmes and a high ratio of very highly qualified applicants per place. The University works hard to identify those with the greatest merit and potential amongst applicants from all backgrounds.
2. Our approach is twofold. Firstly, through our various outreach initiatives we are generating applications from students with merit and potential from under-represented groups who might not otherwise apply to us.
3. As an example of its work in this area, over the last two years the University has developed a Supported Progression Compact Scheme, which provides a progression route for a targeted cohort of the most able, but least likely to apply students from the North East and Cumbria. Through this scheme the University is making a significant contribution towards increasing applications from state schooled students from NS-SEC categories 4-7 from a region that has one of the lowest HE participation rates in England¹.
4. The University recognises the value of highly targeted outreach activity, spends proportionally more on this than is typical across the sector, and has evidence of its effectiveness through the evaluation of outcomes. The University also recognises that the higher graduate contributions consequent on a £9,000 fee makes financial support more important than previously, and therefore includes significant additional financial support packages beyond the compulsory participation in the National Scholarship Scheme to support enrolments from its target access groups.
5. Secondly, the University adopts a holistic approach to its assessment of merit and potential, including the use of information about the context of prior academic achievement. Academic achievement and future potential are critical factors in determining which applicants receive an offer of a place. Significant resource has therefore been dedicated to developing the effective use of contextual information in admissions in order to provide selectors with sharper tools to identify merit and potential. It is noteworthy that since the University began using contextual information, the quality of student intake, as measured by average tariff scores, has risen.

¹ The North East has the lowest participation rate for young entrants to HE in England, at 29.4% compared to the England average of 34.2% (see <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/wp/ourresearch/polar/polar3data/>). The rate for the North West (which includes Cumbria) is 32.5%, which is also less than the national average.

Section 1: Fees, student numbers and fee income

6. The University intends to charge a tuition fee of £9,000 for all full-time Home/EU undergraduate new entrants in 2014/15.
7. The University does not plan to recruit part-time undergraduates, but should this position change, then it would charge a pro-rata fee up to a maximum of £6,750, representing 75% intensity.
8. The University intends to charge a tuition fee of £9,000 for all full-time PGCE entrants in 2014/15.
9. For Home/EU undergraduates undertaking a year abroad as part of their degree programme, the University will charge 15% of the maximum tuition fee, which means those entering in 2014/15 will be charged a year abroad tuition fee of £1,350 (subject to any government approved inflationary rise).
10. For Home/EU undergraduates undertaking a placement year as part of their degree programme, the University will charge 20% of the full-time fee during their placement year, which means those entering in 2014/15 will be charged a placement year tuition fee of £1,800 (subject to any government approved inflationary rise).
11. In order to maintain the value of the fees in real terms, the University will apply annual increases in line with inflation and any permitted rises each year set out by the Government.

Section 2: Access and student success measures

2.1 Assessment of the University's Access and Retention Record

12. The HESA key performance indicators (HESA KPIs) relating to the requirements of the new access agreement cover two areas:
 - Access indicators for students from under-represented groups in Higher Education
 - Non-continuation rates and projected outcomes
13. The following assessment makes use of the adjusted sector average (the HESA 'benchmark') to evaluate the relative performance of the University. The adjusted sector average is an average for the sector weighted according to the subjects of study, qualifications on entry and age on entry of the University's students. As an average, there will inevitably be institutions both above and below this 'benchmark' and it cannot therefore be taken as a target. It is nonetheless useful as a means of comparing student profiles and student retention across the sector.

State School Entrants

14. Against an adjusted sector average of 75%, the University's proportion of young, full-time first degree entrants from a state school background was 59.2% in 2011/12. This equalled the figure for 2009/10, and was 0.3 percentage points below the figure for the 2010/11. We consider this to be a creditable outcome since the admissions cycle for 2011 entry was anomalous, with comparator institutions experiencing equivalent drops of up to 1.9 percentage points. More significantly, the University's internal data show that in 2012/13 the proportion of state school students has risen by more than one percentage point. The University regards an increase in the proportion of young, full-time first degree entrants from a state school background as key to increasing proportions of a number of other under-represented groups.

Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPN)

15. At 5.5%, the proportion of new entrants to the University from Low Participation Neighbourhoods in 2011/12 was only marginally below the adjusted sector average of 5.8%, which maintained our 2010/11 performance.

Social class

16. In 2011/12 13.5 % of Durham's young home/EU entrants were from the NS-SEC 4-7 classifications, which was 5.7 percentage points below the adjusted sector average.
17. The social class indicator is a particularly challenging measure because the University does not have access to NS-SEC classification at the point of application, preventing this contextual information being used in the assessment of applications. Until recently the University has used LPN classification as a proxy measure for social class, but the strength of correlation between LPN and NS-SEC has been decreasing, following the move to the POLAR 2 dataset. Therefore, since September 2012 the University has instead adopted the more nuanced ACORN dataset to identify socio-economic status.

Mature Students

18. The proportion of full-time mature entrants who have come from a low participation neighbourhood (POLAR 3) and do not have a previous HE qualification was 23.1% in 2010/11, significantly exceeding the adjusted sector average by 10%. This is attributable in large part to the University's Foundation Centre, which targets home applicants who have few or no formal qualifications, or have experienced a break in their education.

Students in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance

19. The proportion of full-time first degree students in receipt of disabled students' allowance in 2011/12 was 4.6%, exceeding the adjusted sector average of 4.2%.

Non-continuation rates

20. Student retention is one of the University's key strengths. Less than 1.4% (2010/11) of its students do not continue with their studies beyond their first year, which is better than the adjusted sector average of 2.2%. Financial reasons account for only 3% of withdrawals; the majority are academic or personal. In absolute terms the retention rates of mature students and students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods are not as strong but in both cases above the adjusted sector average.

Projected Outcomes

21. The University outperforms the adjusted sector average on its projected first degree completion rates, with a rate of 90.7% (2012/11). If account is taken of those projected to transfer to another institution, such as Durham's cohort of Phase 1 medical students to Newcastle University, Durham's projected completion rate is 96.1%.

Conclusion

22. There is evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of the University's approach to fair access, particularly in relation to the work it has undertaken under the previous access agreements, such as the Supported Progression Compact Scheme, and the University has an enviable record in student retention. Given the University's current student profile with respect to participation from state schools and lower social classes, the University's future work will focus on expanding access to Durham from these under-represented groups, using collaboration with schools and colleges and involvement of our own current students as the key means to achieve this.

2.2 Expenditure

23. The Office for Fair Access guidance suggests that if an institution has a low or very low proportion of under-represented students, it should spend between 30 and 35 per cent of its fee income above £6,000 per fte on access commitments. The University is working towards a figure of 31% in steady state by 2015/16. Therefore, with a fee of £9,000, this will approximate to a total of £10 million per annum when all UK/home students are subject to the new fee. The £10 million will be divided between financial support packages and access outreach activity.

24. As part of the annual review of its access agreement, the University will consider the impact of its access activities, and if appropriate adjust the individual activities and the level of financial commitment.

The balance between non-financial measures and financial support

25. In its previous access agreement, the University recognised the value of highly targeted outreach activity, and spent proportionally more on this than was typical across the sector. This has been shown to be effective through the evaluation of outcomes (see section 2.3 below). Therefore the University will, through this access agreement, commit more resource to targeted outreach activity in absolute terms. It also recognises that the higher graduate contributions consequent on a £9,000 fee makes financial support more important than previously. The University therefore intends to include significant additional financial support packages beyond the compulsory participation in the National Scholarship Scheme to support enrolments from the target access groups. The University believes that offering high value financial support packages to applicants who are recruited through its outreach activity will reinforce the impact of its other access measures. Moreover, the University is collaborating in a research project to evaluate what impact bursaries have on student retention.
26. By 2015/16, when all UK/home students are subject to the new fee, the University estimates that, on the assumption that this 2014/15 agreement is renewed, it will be committing approximately £6.8million per annum to financial support packages. £1.4 million of this sum will provide bursaries for those students who progress from the Supported Progression Compact Scheme. Most of the remaining £5.3 million will be targeted at students from households where the income is below £25,000 per year.
27. At the same point, the University estimates that it will be spending £3.1 million on fair access activity, the details of which are set out below. It will also commit £100k to researching, developing and evaluating the methods it uses in assessing merit and potential in its selection processes, and to evaluating the efficacy of its widening access measures, and it has committed £100k to providing study skills support for students in the under-represented groups, particularly students progressing from the Supported Progression Compact Scheme and the University's Foundation Centre programme, as an aid to retention.

2.3 Outreach

28. In 2014/15, the University will continue to develop its programme of well-targeted and high quality outreach activities, with a focus on enhancing applications to Durham University from a specific range of backgrounds. Of particular note is the fact that the

University continues to retain former Aimhigher-funded activity which has most impact on recruitment to Durham University. The University recognises that activities such as these play a broader role in extending educational opportunities to those from non-traditional backgrounds but the specific target is to promote fair access to Durham by increasing applications from students from state schools, LPNs and NS-SEC 4-7 backgrounds who do not traditionally apply to Durham.

29. The feedback from participants has shown that activities which work best in raising aspiration and attainment are those where there is continuous, direct engagement of students and teachers with the University: in particular summer schools, teacher conferences and the Supported Progression Compact Scheme with its series of residential events.
30. The University has an increased focus on sophisticated evaluation and analysis in order to demonstrate impact. Outreach activities such as Supported Progression (see below) have been successfully running for long enough now that we are able to see a tangible impact in terms of student enrolments. We also now have the opportunity to study trends in student behaviour and achievement. By the end of the 2014 calendar year we will be able to analyse the final performance of students studying three year degree programmes who have come through our compact scheme. Not only will this shed light on how we can improve the scheme further but we also expect it to demonstrate the added value of Durham's outreach programmes.
31. Our evaluation to demonstrate impact is also benefiting from our involvement with the Sutton Trust (see paragraphs 37-40). By participating in the Sutton Trust summer school programme we have access to a greater body of research (such as that carried out by Bristol University's Widening Participation Research Cluster) as well as data from UCAS allowing us to track which other highly selective universities, if not Durham, that students who have benefited from a Durham summer school have chosen.
32. In summary, the University will continue to use additional tuition fee income to provide:
 - a dedicated team of staff working specifically on realising the aims of the fair access plan,
 - a compact scheme involving regular targeted contact with students from year 10 onwards,
 - dissemination of financial information to applicants and prospective applicants,
 - residential summer schools,
 - school and college visits,
 - the expanded Foundation Centre programme, offering a direct progression route into Durham degrees for LPN, mature, and non-traditionally qualified students ,
 - conferences and events for teachers who support higher education progression,
 - engagement with students from schools in areas of significant disadvantage in order to stimulate an interest in STEM subjects,

- activity with children and young people from Early Years Foundation Studies onwards.

The Compact Scheme

33. Our flagship access scheme remains the Supported Progression Compact Scheme, which is a series of intensive activities focussed on the most able, least likely to apply, disadvantaged students from targeted areas. It is making a significant contribution towards increasing applications from state schooled students from NS-SEC categories 4-7 from a region that has one of the lowest HE participation rates in England. Impact will be achieved both with students participating in the scheme and among their peers at school or college, as one of the intended outcomes of the scheme is removing publicly-held real and perceived barriers to accessing a Durham degree. The scheme has created an integrated portfolio of contacts with individual students starting in Year 10, continuing until Year 13 and then beyond registration at the University.
34. In the 2009/10 pilot year of the scheme, of the 62 year 12 initial participants, 49 successfully completed the summer school, of whom 41 applied to the University, 35 accepted their offer as their firm choice and 31 enrolled in October 2011. In 2010/11, of the 124 year 12 participants in the scheme, 111 successfully completed the summer school, 62 accepted Durham's offer as their firm choice for entry, with 55 enrolling in October 2012. Of the 150 year 12 participants in the most recent cohort, 131 successfully completed the summer school with 115 applications to study in Durham in October 2013 (compared to a target of 80 applications).
35. Attitude surveys are conducted at the start and end of the year 12 programme. These have also provided encouraging evidence, with the 2012/13 year 12 cohort showing a 60% increase in confidence about applying to University (notably approaching the UCAS system and completing the personal statement). There was also a 30% improvement in the belief that they could afford to go to university. When asked how strongly they felt the scheme had exceeded their expectations the average answer was 9.2 (out of 10 where 10 is strongly agree) and in all areas, including confidence, knowledge and academic attainment the participants agreed that the scheme had been beneficial.
36. In 2014/15, the University aims to consolidate its success so far by making improvements to the scheme. Most notably, we will be deploying additional resource at the year 13 stage in order to support conversion of applications to enrolments at Durham and other highly selective universities in line with the increasing targets of the scheme. We also intend to ensure a smoother transition from year 11 to year 12 and from year 12 to year 13 in order to facilitate continuous encouragement and support for students on the scheme. When the scheme reaches its full potential, it will be providing 90 entrants per year to the University from these under-represented groups.

Sutton Trust Programme

37. As a national counterpart of the compact scheme's regional focus, in August 2012 Durham University hosted a Sutton Trust summer school for year 12 students. The week long summer school is designed to give bright students from non-privileged homes an experience of a leading university. The aim is to equip students, most of whom will be the first in their families to go on to higher education, with the confidence, knowledge and insight to make high quality applications to highly selecting universities.
38. A high proportion of students from the Sutton Trust summer schools enrol at one of the participating institutions. Visiting year 12 students are supported by an enthusiastic team of Durham Student Ambassadors, led by an experienced management team.
39. Durham University is pleased to be working with the Sutton Trust and aims to continue this collaborative work in future years. So far 88 students from a total of 168 participating students have applied to Durham in the 2012/13 admissions cycle. In 2013 we expect to recruit 170 students to the programme with the intention that at least 50% of participants will enrol at a highly selective university² such as Durham.
40. In August 2014 we intend to add a second summer school to this programme, as well as creating further interactions with participating students beyond the summer school. In this way we hope to increase the number of students involved, as well as the value of the experience. In particular, we hope to raise the number of participating students to 250 with the intention of at least 125 students (50%) enrolling at a highly selective University. We will be able to track our performance through our collaboration with the Sutton Trust and data from UCAS.

Insight

41. To complement Supported Progression, and to meet the demand created by the scheme's success, an additional programme of support has been established in 2012/13 for students who apply to the Supported Progression Compact Scheme, but who do not meet all of the eligibility requirements. Durham University recognises that students who do not meet every eligibility requirement may nevertheless require additional support. This programme is open to Year 12 state schooled students in the North East and Cumbria.
42. The scheme consists of a residential programme for approximately 150 students and online communication with over 500 students. The programme delivers useful resources, information about studying at Durham University and advice on preparing applications to University. So far 545 students have signed up to receive online communication and 155 students have booked to attend our residential programme.

² Defined by an entry tariff score of 375 UCAS tariff points or more.

Guidance Information provided through Open Days

43. Durham University's campus-wide Pre-Application Open Days were established in 2011 to provide high quality opportunities to visit the University. They are open to students from all backgrounds, though one of the key intentions is to make the University more accessible to those who might not typically see Durham as an opportunity, possibly as a result of low aspiration or reduced access to high quality information, advice and guidance. As well as providing college tours and visits to academic departments, these Open Days are designed to deliver key guidance in areas including student finance, career planning and Higher Education advice for parents and carers. There is a particular focus on providing information on student finance and student support arrangements, to ensure that cost does not become a perceived barrier for students from low income backgrounds.
44. In 2012 approximately 15,000 visitors attended Durham's pre-application Open Days in both Durham City and Queen's Campus, Stockton. The 2013 Open Day programme has been expanded to increase capacity. The Open Day programme is actively marketed to state schools throughout the country.

Durham University Library and Museums

45. Outreach and engagement work is delivered by the Learning Team of the University Library and Museums. The team engages with approximately 10,000 children and young people each year via a varied range of schools workshops, project based work and weekend and holiday activities. The sessions are designed to engage the children with the collections of the University to provide an informative, fun and interactive learning opportunity. The feedback from schools is excellent and since 2009 the number of visits has increased by over 300%.
46. The overwhelming majority of participants are from state schools within the North East, although schools from outside of the region (London, Doncaster, Wigan and many schools in North Yorkshire) also visit. The age range of children and young people is equally diverse, ranging from Early Years Foundation Studies to A level. Since 2011 there has been a focus on ensuring that all children are aware that they are visiting a university and that their experience is a positive one to reinforce messages about the accessibility of Durham University.
47. The Learning Team also run a popular programme aimed at local Year 12 and 13 students. Under the terms of this programme, they are invited to attend a training session on research skills and using the facilities of the University Library. Once they have attended one of these sessions they are then welcome to use the University Library and its resources for their study throughout the year.

48. The Library will continue providing this support to local schools and seek new ways of engaging with additional children and young people via the development of new sessions, increased outreach work and identifying how best to support students at Key Stages 3-5 who want increased involvement.

Science Outreach

49. Durham University has a strong track record of supporting science in schools with the aim of stimulating interest in science at primary and secondary school level. Current activities build on our world-class scientific research and teaching, involving the local community in the excitement of science. There is a particular focus on working with schools, including engagement with primary schools. The Science Outreach team has visited one in three secondary schools and more than one on ten primary schools in the region.
50. One of the Science Outreach team's access schemes is Science into Schools. This is a series of modules offered across the Faculty of Science to third and fourth year undergraduates. A primary aim of the module is to develop a range of key skills in the student and to offer an early taste of teaching science to those interested in pursuing it as a career, or for other career pathways where public understanding of science is required. School students will meet undergraduate role models who aim to inspire them to study science at university. The students spend 40 hours on placement in a local school (typically a half-day per week over 10 weeks) working with a partner teacher. The school is provided with a knowledgeable and enthusiastic student who will offer practical assistance in the classroom and help to engage the pupils in science, especially in their own area of expertise. During the placement, from January to the end of March, the student undertakes a Special Project, the nature of which is based upon the needs of the school and the skills of the undergraduate student, and must be related to the area of expertise of the student. For the Academic year 2011-12, a total of 53 students were enrolled on the modules, forty of whom were placed in Primary Schools.
51. Durham also holds an annual Schools' Science Festival which aims to stimulate interest and encourage wider participation in science, and to support the next generation of scientists from the local area. School students from across the region who participate in the Durham University Schools' Science Festival follow a demanding programme of engineering projects including design, building and testing, and a range of hands-on science and technology activities. The Festival is designed for the target audience of Year 9 and Year 10 students. It is anticipated that the Festival will continue to develop and grow.

Sports Outreach

52. Durham University's Sports Department has established an outstanding reputation in outreach. Through this work, sport has been used to engage a wide range of disadvantaged groups, such as children in care. Sport also works closely with local schools and sports clubs to extend opportunities, with 150 registered student volunteers playing an active role at the heart of this work.

Evaluation of Long-term Outreach Work

53. Demonstrating the impact of programmes such as the Supported Progression scheme is relatively straightforward, but it is more difficult to measure the impact of longer-term outreach work such as that with Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. Nonetheless we believe there are some legitimate ways of measuring impact. For example, we will look to survey the teachers of the school groups that engage with our museums, asking about the visit's effect on the perceptions of the school children about universities. We can also investigate whether applicants to our supported progression scheme and other programmes have had any prior contact with the University to see whether any previous engagement with the University has had an impact. The time gap between Key Stage 3 and the first year of the Supported Progression Scheme (year 10) is short.

Contextual Information

54. Durham University uses contextual data in admissions and has already developed systems to use this data in its selection process to ensure that applicants with the greatest merit and potential for undergraduate study receive offers.
55. The University intends to pursue these developments further by looking at all the predictors of success at undergraduate level as a basis for selection. The University is employing the services of its Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM), which is the largest independent provider of educational monitoring systems in the world and provides specialist research and evaluation services to a wide range of organisations including universities.
56. In its use of contextual information, the University has replaced POLAR2 data with the ACORN data set as the socio-demographic indicator. This is providing more precise contextual data for the selection of both UCAS applicants and applicants for the Supported Progression Scheme.

Student retention and success

57. The University has committed a modest level of resource to ensuring that it maintains its excellent retention levels. Post-entry support measures will be targeted on study skills support for students in the under-represented groups. The University hopes that

these measures will play an indirect role in encouraging under-represented groups to apply, who may be unnecessarily concerned about their ability to cope with a demanding programme of studies.

Collaboration

58. The University will continue to work collaboratively with key partners, as well as actively developing new partnerships, including:

- Local, regional and national staff in schools and colleges
- Gifted and Talented Co-ordinators in schools and colleges
- Parents, guardians and other opinion leaders
- The Teaching Agency
- The Open College Network (through the Foundation Centre)
- The Sutton Trust (and indirectly through the Sutton Trust with the Wolfson Foundation)
- The Brightside Trust
- Buttle UK
- The Who Cares Trust
- The Russell Group (especially through the Russell Group Widening Participation Association and the Russell Group Admissions Forum)
- Supporting Professionalism in Admissions
- HELOA

59. We are committed to strengthening our collaborative work with **teachers**, which underpins the success of many of our access programmes. We have established some formal links with the Grammar Schools Heads Association and deliver events at 'regional hubs'. In addition we host a number of conferences for teachers, ranging from day events to residential subject-specific conferences. Through these we can share important information, advice and guidance, enhance teaching practice and deepen shared understanding of developments in curriculums. The links we have established through these conferences and visits to individual schools and colleges has also enabled us to develop a network of schools and colleges with which we maintain regular contact, building on face-to face interactions.

60. The **Sutton Trust** is one of the University's most important partnerships, as through them we are able to work with a number of high demand universities on issues of access. The **Sutton Trust Summer Schools group** includes Cambridge, Kings College London, University College London, Bristol, Edinburgh, Imperial College, Nottingham and St Andrews. The universities meet and communicate regularly. We work on similar programmes, facilitated by the Sutton Trust, and so are able to share good practice and

future programme developments. The inclusion of UCAS in the Sutton Trust's Summer School group ensures that we are able to track student progress easily should one of our summer school students apply to another Sutton Trust University. Our partnership with the Sutton Trust has led to the development of pilot projects that allow for collaborative working. Working on the development of e-mentoring alongside the Universities of Nottingham and Bristol has allowed us to share resources. Additionally this pilot gives us the opportunity to engage with the Brightside Trust. We are also part of the Sutton Trust's pilot for Academic Apprenticeships, which will give us an opportunity to work with Bristol, Kings College London and University College London.

61. The University joined the **Russell Group** in 2012 which has already lead to greater provision of access activities such as DUX, in which high performing pupils in Year 9 are invited to visit a Russell Group university, accompanied by a teacher or another member of staff. Durham's Head of Access has joined the Russell Group Widening Participation Association which allows for the sharing of good practice and resources with all the universities in the group working on access issues. In addition to regular meetings there are other events throughout the year that focus on developing successful common approaches to access work. As a relatively new member of this group it is hoped that over time this forum will lead to even greater collaborative working with other high demand universities. The University is also an active member of the Russell Group Admissions Forum, through which we are able to discuss and share best practice in delivering an admissions process that supports identifying the strongest students from all backgrounds, including the use of contextual information. This enhances our active engagement with the Supporting Professionalism in Admissions organisation, through which we continue to share best practice, most recently in a further review of the use of contextual information.
62. The University is currently reviewing its support for those leaving care. Whilst **care leavers** as a group have always been implicitly part of our access work the University now intends to look into more active ways that we can support care leavers gain access to universities like Durham. With this in mind we have had some discussions with Buttle UK as well as providing information for the Who Cares Trust and we intend to seek the Buttle UK Quality Mark as recognition of our commitment. Through this our links with these organisations should strengthen as we develop our access work to become yet more inclusive.

2.4 Financial Support for Students

63. The University has concluded, following consultation with its Students' Union, that the loan arrangements available through Student Finance England make fee waivers a less

attractive offer to prospective students, whereas packages that provide financial support in cash or in kind will be preferred.

64. Durham is a residential, collegiate university and participating in a college community is an integral part of the student experience. For this reason, living in college in the first year is a regulatory requirement for most students. Therefore, financial support will be targeted at facilitating this participation, by offering the support in the form of free or subsidised college accommodation, where appropriate.

Bursaries and Accommodation Subsidies for Students Progressing from the Supported Progression Compact Scheme

65. The University has a financial bursary scheme for students who progress from the Supported Progression Scheme who receive £5,500 per annum for the duration of their course. Any students progressing from the scheme who also qualify for funding from the National Scholarship Programme and/or the Durham Grant Scheme will have their combined total bursary and scholarship amount capped at £5,500. It is estimated that in 2014/15, 90 new entrants per year will be offered the bursaries, which will cost approximately £1.4 million. In their first year, students will normally be offered the bursary in the form of a subsidy for college accommodation.

Bursaries and Accommodation Subsidies for those with Household Income below £25,000

66. Through a combination of the National Scholarship Programme (NSP allocation of £374k), Durham University's matched funding for NSP (£1.3m), and the Durham Grant Scheme, the University will provide financial support packages of £2,500, either as subsidised accommodation and related institutional services or as a cash bursary, to all home³ undergraduate students entering in 2014/15, for each year of study, where the residual household income is below £25k per annum (as assessed by Student Finance England in accordance with its guidance on Assessing Financial Entitlement). Approximately 600 new students will be in this category in 2014/15.

Total Commitment for Financial Support

67. The accumulation of new arrangements through successive access agreements will reach steady state in 2015/16, at which point the University's total commitment for financial support under the various Access Agreements will be of the order of £6.8 million (excluding HEFCE's NSP allocation).

³ Classified as home domiciled by Student Finance England and classified as Home or EU fee status by Durham University

Total Countable Expenditure

68. The commitment to financial support of £6.8 million and the commitment to outreach, evaluation and retention activities of just over £3.2 million give a total commitment under the access agreement under steady state of approximately £10 million. All this expenditure is countable under the guidance provided by the Office for Fair Access. It consists of expenditure in previous access agreements that the University is continuing to make and expenditure on new access and student retention measures consistent with the guidance.

Section 3: Targets and Milestones

Access Targets

69. The University is committed to making sustained progress in increasing the proportion of students from under-represented groups.
70. The OFFA guidance suggests that, in choosing what targets and milestones to use to evaluate the effectiveness of access measures, the University might consider both the HESA Key Performance Indicators and other statistical measures. The HESA KPI where the University is furthest from its adjusted sector average is the proportion of young state school or college entrants, followed by the KPI for the proportion of entrants from socio-economic classifications NS-SEC 4-7. The University will therefore set milestones and longer-term targets for its HESA state school or college and NS-SEC performance indicators, supported by milestones and targets for its Supported Progression Compact Scheme. The University anticipates that the achievement of the Supported Progression Compact Scheme milestones will lead to consequent improvement in the HESA KPIs.
71. The University therefore reaffirms its aim, as stated in the 2013/14 Access Agreement of increasing the proportion of state school or college and NS-SEC 4-7 enrolments relative to the HESA KPI figures for 2009 entrants. The HESA measure counts students from state schools or colleges as a proportion of those who are Home/EU fee status, UK domiciled, and under 21 years of age, as a proportion of the full set; and similarly for NS-SEC 4-7. The University's benchmarks are:
- a. To increase the proportion of young entrants from state school or college as measured by the HESA KPI to 62.3% by 2017/18 and to reduce the number of percentage points below the HESA KPI adjusted sector average (the 'benchmark') to 11.7 by 2017/18.
 - b. To increase the proportion of entrants from NS-SEC 4-7 as measured by the HESA KPI to 15.2% by 2017/18 and to reduce the number of percentage points below the HESA KPI adjusted sector average (the 'benchmark') to 3 by 2017/18.

72. Proportional intermediate milestones for entrants from state schools and colleges and from NS-SEC classifications 4-7 are set for each academic year.
73. The targets relating to the Support Progression Compact Scheme are as follows:
- a. Applications to Durham from those students who participated in the Supported Progression Compact Scheme. From the 2014/15 application cycle: 105 per year
 - b. Enrolments at Durham from those students who participated in the Supported Progression Compact Scheme. From 2014 entry: 90 per year
 - c. Enrolments at other selective universities from those students who participated in the Supported Progression Compact Scheme, selective universities being defined by entry tariff score, as those with an institutional average of 375 tariff points or more. From 2014 entry: 5 per year
74. Proportional intermediate milestones in the period up to the target year have been set for each academic year.
75. The targets relating to counterpart outreach schemes to Supported Progression (e.g. Sutton Trust Summer School, Insight) are as follows:
- Minimum number of places on the schemes offered in 2014/15: 850
76. The targets relating to the number of children and young people involved in Museums educational outreach activity
- Minimum number in 2014/15: 7,300
77. Proportional intermediate milestones in the period up to the target year have been set for each academic year.
78. The University will also evaluate the effectiveness of ACORN data in identifying disadvantage and consider additional uses for this data to support fair access.

Retention Target

79. The University already has an excellent retention rate and therefore its target for non-continuation is to maintain the current excellent record in absolute terms, at 2%.

Section 4: Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

80. The University is employing the services of its School of Applied Social Sciences and its Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM) to undertake evaluation and monitoring. The Centre, which works with schools nationally, has access to very large quantities of relevant background data against which to evaluate the University's access measures. The University is also collaborating in a research project to evaluate the retention benefits of bursaries.

81. Policy in respect of widening access is developed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) through the University Executive Committee, the Education Committee and Senate, the latter two having student membership. Operational performance in respect of widening access is monitored by the same governance structures.
82. The Student Recruitment and Admissions Office has institutional responsibility for the implementation and delivery of measures to promote access to the University. Evaluation of impact is embedded in all access programmes from the outset and it is through continuous monitoring and analysis that we improve and expand our outreach work. As access programmes mature we are receiving more data which by 2014/15 will provide a comprehensive narrative of our progress in meeting our access targets.

Section 5: Equality and Diversity

83. The focus of this Access Agreement is on representation from state schools and lower socio-economic groups. Durham University is aware of its commitments in this respect and also its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not. It is recognised that BME and disabled people are statistically overrepresented within lower-socio economic groups, and as such this Access Agreement is another mechanism to help the University develop its approach to diversity and equality.
84. The University is aware that when BME students apply to us they are just as likely as comparably qualified white applicants to receive offers; however the University receives relatively low proportions of applications from this cohort of students. Consequently we have undertaken some very targeted outreach activity with schools with a higher than average proportion of BME students, which is helping our understanding of what activity is likely to deliver the greatest impact. We will review our student recruitment activities with the intention of focussing on those schools that are likely to assist in terms of increasing the numbers of BME students applying. This builds on the University's existing approach to promoting widening access through targeted activity. We have also started to analyse data to understand our performance in the context of our comparators and to monitor success rates of registered BME students.
85. Durham is committed to promoting diversity and equality. The Pro Vice Chancellor (Education) has overall responsibility for the agenda, chairing the Diversity and Equality Advisory Group (DEAG) and leading the continuing improvements in our approach across the institution. This Group reports to University Executive Committee and to University Council. Through this, diversity and equality is overseen at the highest levels within the University. The University has also developed an Equality and Diversity Strategy. Part of our Strategy includes the setting of seven key objectives, one of which

is that “we will collaborate with partners to see a continued increase in students coming to the University from our targeted under represented groups”.

86. Durham has clear HR policies, effective team working and delegated responsibility for the agenda across the University and it is making progress in key areas. Examples of the University’s commitment to equality and diversity include our Foundation Centre, joining Stonewall’s Diversity Champion programme, achievement of Two Tick accreditation and receipt of a University wide bronze Athena SWAN award, a process which was led by the Science Faculty on behalf of the University.
87. The University’s primary activity relating to mature students is the Foundation Centre. A key strand of the Foundation Centre’s activity is to help mature learners return to education and there is direct progression from the Foundation Centre onto all University degree programmes.
88. The University is committed to the principles of inclusion and encourages applicants from disabled students. Two of our students participated in the 2012 Paralympics. We have a proven track record of providing tailored support packages for individual students and arranging appropriate support. The University recently reviewed the impact of its process for making reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled applicants were increasingly aware that adjustments for their disability can be made and so they could be confident that these would be put in place. As a consequence, a revised process for making reasonable adjustments for disabled students was identified and implemented in October 2012. The Disability Support Service works proactively with students who declare a disability prior to enrolment to ensure all reasonable adjustments are anticipated, assessed and implemented in a timely manner. There is a dedicated team of specialists to support both disabled students and we aim to capture information regarding student disclosure at any point in the student lifecycle.
89. As noted in paragraph 19 above, the University also performs well in recruiting Home/EU undergraduate students who are eligible for the Disability Support Allowance (DSA), increasing to 4.6% in 2011/12 against an adjusted sector average of 4.2%. Internal analysis of students with a declared disability also indicates a rising proportion of disabled students at the University with currently over 1,200 students registered with the Disability Support Service. The University remains committed to improving its record of attracting disabled students and will seek continual improvement against this benchmark by ensuring continued investment in outreach activities and in-house support provision.
90. The University dovetails its support for disabled students with the University’s wider approach to Equality and Diversity through the membership of DEAG. Senior staff overseeing disabled student support are represented on the Group and influence the strategic direction adopted by the University in this area. A recent consequence of this

collaboration was the establishment of an Access Review Group with responsibility for enhancing the accessibility of the University's estate for disabled staff, students and visitors. The Group has budgetary responsibilities and reports to DEAG.

91. The requirement to identify and address diversity challenges within each department and college has been part of the annual planning process for some time and Durham has recently completed a review of how to begin developing key aspects of the curricula to meets the needs of a diverse student body more effectively. The approach seeks to embed diversity and equality across the institution as illustrated by the University's response to the Equality Act 2010, with the successful delivery of this Access Agreement being acknowledged as one of the key diversity priorities for the University.
92. The University views impact assessments as having an integral role in ensuring that our policies, procedures and practice operate to support our diversity objectives. We also recognise their effectiveness in ensuring fairness and improving organisational effectiveness as well as helping us meet our legislative duties. We will complete an equality impact assessment of our Access Agreement and the Supported Progression Compact Scheme in the summer of 2013.
93. The University collects, collates and publishes annual admissions statistics that include reporting on ethnicity, sex, declared disability and age group. Through this the University can monitor its admissions process to ensure that there is fairness and consistency of treatment for applicants from all backgrounds and that admissions decisions are made on academic grounds. These statistics are reported annually to Education Committee, which reports to University Senate.
94. Participation in some of our access activities is only restricted to students on the basis of school type and NS-SEC category 4-7. This focus enables our activity to be targeted towards our milestones, which in themselves reflect backgrounds which are under-represented in the University's student profile. We will ensure that protected characteristics are recognised in the design and the selection decisions for entry to these activities.

Section 6: Provision of Information to Prospective Students

95. Through its website, the University will publish clear, accessible and timely information for applicants and students on the fees that it will charge and the financial support that it will offer.
96. The University will also disseminate information via its outreach and recruitment activity.

97. Within the University's Academic Office there is a student financial support service, which will work with staff in the University's constituent colleges to ensure that all existing students have access to the financial support information that they need. The development of guidance information provided through our programme of open days is key to providing clear and accessible support.
98. The University will also provide timely information to UCAS and SLC to populate their applicant-facing web services.

Section 7: Consulting with Students

99. The foundation of all outreach work at the University is our student body, and our Colleges provide a locus for the activities in which our current students engage with our target students. Almost all access activities involve undergraduate students as guides and role models. Durham has a Student Ambassador scheme that offers a high level of training and support to enable Durham students to engage with the fair access agenda. Every fair access residential activity will involve undergraduate mentors who provide academic and pastoral support to the school students taking part. Increasingly Student Ambassadors are being included in the planning process and it is the intention to create more activities that are student-led as part of Durham's residential access activities programme. We are also developing the role of "sabbatical officer" within the Student Recruitment and Access Office, whereby four recent graduates are recruited for a year to the Access and Student Recruitment team. This provides a strong student input, as well as providing staff with recent experience of the decisions that a young person will have to make between 14 and 18 years of age.
100. Through its evaluation mechanisms the University is able to gather feedback from students participating in our access activities to inform the future development of these, so that they best meet the aims of the University and the needs of students we are working with.
101. In drafting the 2012 Access Agreement, the University consulted with Durham Students Union (DSU). DSU were consulted in detail on their preferred options for student financial support. DSU supported the University's conclusion that given the loan arrangements available through Student Finance England, fee waivers are a less attractive offer to prospective students, whereas packages that provide financial support in cash or in kind are preferable. This Access Agreement is a development of the 2012 agreement, and in making revisions to it, officers of DSU were consulted again.

OFFA Access Agreement 2014/15 - Annexes B & C

Institution name: University of Durham

Institution UKPRN: 10007143

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	State School (HESA Table T1a)	school or college entrants in the academic year as measured by the HESA KPI	No	2009/10	59.2	60	60.5	61	61.5	62	62.3	In view of the unpredictable effect of the new fee regime, the HESA KPI targets are expressed in terms both of the overall proportion of students and the distance from the HESA KPI benchmark (see next target).
2	State School (HESA Table T1a)	Percentage pts below the HESA KPI benchmark for young state school or college entrants	No	2009/10	14.8	14	13.5	13	12.5	12	11.7	
3	NS-SEC (HESA Table T1a)	Percentage proportion of NS-SEC 4-7 entrants in the academic year as measured by the HESA KPI	No	2009/10	12.8	13	13.5	14	14.5	15	15.2	This HESA KPI is particularly challenging because UCAS does not provide access to NS-SEC classification at the point of application, preventing this contextual information being used to inform the selection process. As an indicator of disadvantage, the University plans to change from using POLAR2 to using ACORN data, which is more precise and therefore it is presumed will assist in moving towards this target. Nonetheless the KPI remains problematic because the contextual information is not directly available in the selection process.
4	NS-SEC (HESA Table T1a)	Percentage pts below the HESA KPI benchmark for NS-SEC 4-7	No	2009/10	5.4	5.2	4.7	4.2	3.7	3.2	3	
5	Other (please give details in the next column)	Durham from those who participated in the Supported Progression Compact Scheme	Yes	2009/10	0	80	105	105	105	105	105	
6	Other (please give details in the next column)	Durham from those who participated in the Supported Progression Compact Scheme	Yes	2010/11	0	50	70	90	90	90	90	
7	Other (please give details in the next column)	(average institutional tariff points on entry 375+) from participants in the Supported Progression Compact Scheme	Yes	2010/11	0	2	5	5	5	5	5	
8	Non continuation: Young (HESA Table T3a)	Maintain the current excellent non-continuation rate	No	2009/10	2%	Maintain 2%	Maintain 2%	Maintain 2%	Maintain 2%	Maintain 2%	Maintain 2%	

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	Operational targets	Number of schools targeted as potential participants in the Supported Progression Scheme	Yes	2009/10	9	40	55	70	75	80	80	
2	Contextual data	Implementation of ACORN as an indicator of disadvantage to provide more precise contextual data for selection of UCAS applicants	No	2010/11	POLAR data	Start to implement	Complete					

3	Contextual data	Implementation of ACORN as an indicator of disadvantage to provide more precise contextual data for selection of Supported Progression Scheme participants	No	2010/11	POLAR data	Start to implement	Complete						
4	Contextual data	Evaluate the effectiveness of ACORN data in identifying disadvantage and consider additional uses for this data to support fair access	No					Evaluate effectiveness	Start to implement any outcomes of the evaluation	Complete			
5	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Minimum number of places offered each year to counterpart outreach schemes to Supported Progression (e.g. Sutton Trust Summer School, Insight)	Yes	2011/12	170	650	800	850	850	850	850		
6	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Minimum number of children and young people involved in Museums educational outreach activity	No	2011/12	7000	7100	7200	7300	7400	7500	7600		

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.