



Liverpool John Moores University Access Agreement 2011-2012

Purpose

The agreement is between The Office of Fair Access (OFFA), a regulatory body established in the Higher Education Act 2004, and LJMU. The purpose of the agreement is to demonstrate how the University, in charging increased fees, will continue to safeguard and promote its current high levels of fair access, in particular for students from the lowest income groups.

This access agreement covers the academic year 2011-2012 only. In light of the proposed changes announced by the Government to both tuition fees and student support from 2012 onwards the University is currently in the process of reviewing its future arrangements.

Context

For over 180 years LJMU has remained true to its original mission of creating and supporting opportunities for participation in higher education by under-represented groups. LJMU's longstanding and successful track record is evidenced by its performance against the Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE) benchmarks in which it outperforms sector benchmarks.

The University values the diversity of its student population and is committed to providing equality of opportunity and avoiding unfair discrimination on any grounds. Recognising that its success depends on an ability to attract a wide range of students and to respond to a variety of educational backgrounds and life experiences, widening access to higher education is firmly embedded within the culture of the University and reflected in its mission.

As part of the University's widening access strategy LJMU has collaborated with the Further Education sector to provide access to HE for students whom, for a variety of reasons, prefer to study more locally. Through its partners, a range of HE provision is delivered including LJMU franchised degree programmes, foundation programmes, foundation degrees and the validation of partner-owned degrees. To

aid access much of the provision is flexible and also focused on sector-led vocational areas. Fees charged and the bursary support offered by FE partners is available from individual institutions or covered within separate Access Agreements.

Fee limits

For the academic year 2011-12 LJMU will charge a fee of £3,375 (subject to parliamentary approval) per year to each student studying a full-time undergraduate programme, including Foundation degree programmes. For a student on a placement year the tuition fee will be £665.

The annual fee for a student studying a Postgraduate Certificate of Education programme is also £3,375 (subject to parliamentary approval) regardless of whether this is undertaken immediately following a degree or at a later stage.

Part-time fees will be set at a rate pro-rata to 75% of the equivalent full-time fee for each programme, as determined by the number of credits studied.

Bursaries, scholarships and financial support

LJMU is committed to ensuring that all students that are able to participate in higher education can do so regardless of their financial circumstances. In deciding how the University will utilise its additional fee income to financially support under-represented groups in higher education, LJMU has made the decision to focus on students that fall within the lowest income groups.

Bursaries for students entering higher education in 2011/2012

For new students entering higher education in 2011/12 only those with a household income under £25,000 will be eligible for a bursary. The bursary payable is £500 which is £172 more than the minimum level of £338 required by the Government. These students should also be eligible for a Maintenance Grant.

Bursaries for new students that entered higher education in 2008/2009, 2009/10 and 2010/11

For new students that entered higher education in 2008/2009, 2009/10 and 2010/11 the University will continue to pay bursaries based on two household income thresholds up to £50,020.

New students entering higher education in 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11 whose household income is £25,000 or under are eligible for a bursary of £1,075. This is £737 more than the minimum level of £338 required by the Government. These students will also be eligible for a Maintenance Grant.

New students entering higher education in both 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11 whose household income is between £25,001 and £50,020 will be eligible for a bursary of £430. This is £430 more than required by the Government as there is no statutory requirement for a bursary to be given to these students.

Bursaries for students that entered higher education pre-2008

New students that entered higher education pre-2008 whose household income is £18,360 or under are eligible for a bursary of £1,075. This is £737 more than the minimum level of £338 required by the Government. These students should also be eligible for a Maintenance Grant.

New students that entered higher education pre-2008 whose household income is between £18,361 and £39,333 per annum will be eligible for a bursary of £430. This is £430 more than required by the Government as there is no statutory requirement for a bursary to be given to these students.

Additional eligibility information for all students

All bursaries will be paid either via the Banking Automated Clearing System (BACS) direct to the student's nominated bank account or by cheque. Eligible students will receive the bursary during semester two after their attendance is confirmed through the Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) census data and the attendance confirmation report to the Student Loan Company. Students will be reassessed for eligibility for a bursary each year.

Bursaries will be paid to full-time home, undergraduate students as defined by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). They will also be available to PGCE students that meet the "home student" residency requirements. A home student will usually meet the residence requirements for living costs and includes students from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland but excludes the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and EU fees only students. The bursaries will not be available to students funded by the NHS as they have their fees paid by the NHS.

LJMU will also enhance its Hardship Fund by £0.15 million in 2011/12. The Hardship Fund will be directed at students who are most in need and will be closely monitored and reviewed if necessary. The University remains committed to ensuring that all students that are able to participate in higher education can do so regardless of their financial circumstances.

Scholarships

LJMU has also invested its fee income in a variety of scholarships. These are in addition to the wide range of scholarships and prizes already available at LJMU that recognise excellence in areas such as academic studies or sporting achievement. A student will be eligible for a maximum of one scholarship irrespective of whether or not they have received a bursary. The scholarships will be available to undergraduate, full-time, home and EU students only.

"LJMU DPA" Scholarship – £1,000 per annum with a maximum of 100 scholarships available each year. Eligible students must have at least three A grades at A2 level or equivalent qualification (360 UCAS points). ("DPA" is the shorthand version of the University's "Dream–Plan–Achieve" brand line).

“LJMU Achievers” Scholarship – £1,000 per annum with a maximum of 100 scholarships available each year. Eligible students must be able to demonstrate an area of commitment, achievement and excellence above that of their peers in areas such as volunteering, sports, arts and citizenship.

“LJMU Vice Chancellor’s Award” – a highly prestigious scholarship of £10,000 per annum, awarded annually by the Vice Chancellor to the most outstanding, academically-gifted students. Students must achieve a minimum of three A grades at A2 level or equivalent (360 UCAS points) and be able to demonstrate an area of commitment, achievement and excellence above that of their peers in areas such as volunteering, sports, arts and citizenship. There will be a maximum of six scholarships each year.

Existing financial support

A range of bursaries and scholarships currently exists within LJMU – some for recruitment, others for retention. The LJMU Development and Alumni Relations Office will continue to work on raising increased funds for these initiatives. Details of existing scholarships and bursaries are advertised on the University web pages and on notice boards at appropriate times of the academic year. They will also be sign-posted in pre-enrolment material.

Provision of information to students

LJMU has a dedicated Student Advice and Wellbeing team that provides advice and support to students on funding their higher education. Staff from the Student Recruitment and Widening Access and the Student Advice and Wellbeing team carry out outreach work targeted at schools and colleges to educate students on how to fund their higher education.

Outreach work

LJMU has a long-established and successful history of outreach activity designed to raise aspirations and attainment and encourage students from under-represented groups to apply to higher education.

Initiatives and investment in outreach

The additional income is being used to fund the following initiatives:

- Specific resource and activity to engage with prospective learners at an earlier stage in the decision making process (years 10 and 11)
- Specific resource and activity to engage with prospective learners from widening participation schools which have little or no experience of students participating in higher education through visits and workshops. This is concentrated on local schools within the region.
- To further develop LJMU’s engagement with prospective learners that have chosen a vocational route as a pathway to higher education qualifications.

- To initiate specific programmes of activity to increase participation from BME groups via school/college and local community outreach work.
- To develop community outreach activity directed at mature students, a key and important market for LJMU.
- To initiate specific programmes of activity to increase participation from students with a disability via school/college and local community outreach work.
- Targeted support for students that have been in the care of their Local Authority, Foyer residents and Looked After Children (LAC). This includes money advice and student funding, providing accommodation for the summer vacation if a student chooses to stay in Liverpool, providing a mentor to help students settle into University life as well as a personal tutor for academic advice and support. LJMU also has a dedicated member of staff for LAC in order that they know where to go for advice and guidance. Financially, LJMU offers an additional bursary of a minimum of £1,000 per year to help care leavers with their living costs. The University has achieved the Frank Buttle Trust quality mark which is given to universities that demonstrate they are able to offer a high level of support to those that have been in care.

Milestones

As identified, LJMU will be seeking to maintain its widening participation success and ensure that its participation rates are not adversely affected by its fee structure.

LJMU will therefore look to maintain current levels of participation from the lowest income group, identified by students that are eligible for a full maintenance grant and LJMU bursary (currently circa 40% of students).

LJMU will also continue to measure its success in attracting students with a disability. Based on 2009/10 data, 8% of LJMU's home students declared a disability and the University will be looking to maintain this percentage.

Based on 2009/10 data, LJMU will seek to maintain its current 9.5% participation from students from BME backgrounds.

Monitoring arrangements

LJMU will monitor progress in improving access by utilising, analysing and reporting on the outcomes of the University's recruitment process and the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA) student record.

LJMU will undertake its own evaluation of projects and initiatives identified in this access agreement. For example, the University will monitor and evaluate the number of beneficiaries reached on specific projects, and feedback from students, colleges, and community groups.

As a minimum, an annual assessment of the University's progress will be reported in the following ways:

- A formal report via the Senior Management Group of the University to the LJMU Board of Governors
- The University's annual monitoring return to HEFCE and OFFA in relation to both its Access Agreement and its Widening Participation Strategic Assessment

12 November 2010

Please note that this Access Agreement is subject to approval by OFFA