



Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University

# **A Commitment to Inclusion**

**An Agreement with the Office for  
Fair Access (OFFA)**

**2016-2017**

## **ACCESS AGREEMENT 2016/17**

### **Introduction**

The Manchester Metropolitan University is committed to supporting the entry to higher education to applicants from low income families and supporting their progression and success. MMU is committing approximately 23.6% of additional fee income to assist individual students from disadvantaged backgrounds to achieve their potential (based on steady state investment in 2019/20).

In the 2015/16 agreement we implemented a redistribution of this expenditure, with a shift away from direct financial support in favour of increased investment in student success activities, particularly retention and employability. We have taken the decision to maintain this expenditure profile for another year whilst we assess the impact during 2015/16. We will also use this time to further evaluate the initiatives we make through this agreement to ensure we are making the best use of the significant financial investment.

This Access Agreement commits the University to continue and enhance our outreach commitments developed in recent years, with a particular emphasis on collaborative working and sustaining the partnerships developed through the National Networks for Collaborative Outreach. We aim to provide target schools and colleges in the sub-region of Greater Manchester and around our Crewe campus with a clear and comprehensive package of engagement activities to support progression to HE.

This agreement is written in the context of an uncertain future of HEFCEs Student Opportunity funding, which currently represents a significant income stream to MMU (over £8M for 2015/16). This funding supports the recruitment, retention and success of WP students, which represent a large percentage of the student body. Any significant reduction in funding will necessitate resource from this agreement being used to ensure continuation of existing work in this area. Therefore whilst indicative figures are given for outreach and student success expenditure, the actual expenditure in these areas may alter as we react to any future funding changes.

### **1. Fees and limits and fee income**

#### **1.1 Full-time Students**

£9,000 will be charged for ALL full time undergraduate programmes and PGCE programmes, with the exception of the following:

£6,000 will be charged for the Foundation Year.

For Home/EU students on a sandwich degree or language course where there is a mandatory year out, there will be a reduced placement fee of £680 for the year.

Where Home/EU students undertake an optional approved Erasmus (study or work) or Worldwide study exchange placement of 10 weeks or more on exchange AND spend less than 10 weeks in attendance at MMU, they will be charged 15% of the respective full time tuition fee. Students who spend more than 10 weeks in attendance at MMU will be charged the full fee.

## 1.2 Part-time students

In 2016/17 MMU will charge part-time students pro-rata the full time fees outlined in section 1.1, based on the number of credits studied within an academic year.

In accordance with fees regulations, no individual part-time student covered by this agreement will be charged more than £6,750 in an academic year.

The above fees (both full-time and part-time) may be increased in line with the annual inflationary increases set by the Government.

## 2. Expenditure on additional access and retention measures

- 2.1. In 2015/16 MMU introduced a new Student Support Package which is equally split across each year of study, which we believe to be the most effective way of providing support. Alongside this the University created a 'Hardship Fund' to ensure that a flexible source of finance is available to support those students who have financial difficulties. We wish to assess the impact of this new scheme before making any further changes and therefore the level of support will be maintained for students starting in 2016/17.

In 2016/17 MMU will be investing 20.5% of additional fee income in Access measures, consisting of the following:

MMU financial support (including bursaries)	£9.37M
Outreach activity	£1.155M
Additional retention and employability activity	£2.1M

This represents 74% on financial support, a reduction from the 88% predicted for 14/15. We are also allocating some of this financial support to the creation of a Hardship fund which will ensure MMU is able to provide continued flexible support to students when they need it most. This will operate alongside any funding provided through HEFCE's Student Opportunity funding. In 2016/17 the investment in Student Success (including progression) will represent around 17% of OFFA countable expenditure (compared to 5.9% in 14/15). We believe this balance reflects the institutional priorities identified within this agreement.

By 2019/20, expenditure on access measures will have risen to around 23.6% of additional fee income.

2.2. MMU has a relatively high proportion of students from under-represented groups, well above the national average (as demonstrated below). The investment of 23.6% of additional fee income by 2019/20 will ensure the progress and achievements made since its first Access Agreement in 2006-07 are built upon in the coming years.

i. Access and Widening Participation

MMU demonstrates high absolute performance in both access and widening participation and, particularly against national benchmarks, is considerably higher than the sector average. The percentage of pupils coming from the lowest participation neighbourhoods has increased significantly, although the figure is higher when looking at POLAR 2 data than for the more current POLAR 3 dataset.

Participation of Young Full time Undergraduates - HESA Table T1b								
	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
<b>State School Pupils</b>								
MMU	94.6%	95.4%	96.0%	95.4%	96.1%	95.0%	96.1%	96.6%
UK Average	88.3%	88.5%	89.0%	89.4%	89.2%	89.3%	89.5%	89.9%
<b>LPN (POLAR 2)</b>								
MMU	14.7%	14.5%	15.9%	15.5%	15.5%	16.7%	18.8%	18.6%
UK Average	9.4%	10.2%	10.5%	10.7%	10.9%	10.9%	11.7%	11.7%
<b>LPN (POLAR 3)</b>								
MMU				13.9%	13.8%	14.5%	16.2%	16.4%
UK Average				10.1%	10.4%	10.5%	11.1%	11.1%

The figures above relate to our young full time undergraduates and show the improvements made in widening participation in recent years. However, a significant proportion of our full time undergraduates are mature students (17.8% in 2013/14). The figures below show that our improved performance in relation to WP has also extended to our mature student population.

Participation of mature full-time undergraduate entrants with no previous HE - HESA Table T2a								
	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
<b>LPN (POLAR 2)</b>								
MMU	17.6%	17.1%	16.4%	16.8%	17.4%	20.6%	21.2%	20.2%
UK Average	10.6%	11.6%	11.6%	11.9%	11.7%	11.6%	12.3%	12.6%
<b>LPN (POLAR 3)</b>								
MMU				12.6%	14.1%	18.2%	18.2%	17.5%
UK Average				10.6%	10.9%	10.9%	11.6%	11.9%

A high percentage of MMU's students come from low income households. The table below shows the percentage of Year 1 students on full state support, as well as the percentage with incomes below the upper income threshold for maintenance grants:

<b>Students with household income below:</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
£25,000	47%
£42,611	60%

Source: HE Bursary portal, 9th March 2015.

We believe the data above provides evidence that the policies we have adopted since the introduction of higher fees in 2012/13 have had a positive impact on our recruitment of WP students. This has been achieved against a background of increased entry tariff for MMU courses. Student financial bursaries have been an important element of the support we have provided during this time and therefore we will continue to invest in them unless and until we are persuaded by the evidence that they are not effective. We will also work to improve the evidence base on the impact this form of support has on target learners.

Care Leavers are a priority group for Outreach activity and also receive additional financial support through the MMU Care Leaver Bursary, worth an additional £1,000 per year. The bursary is for full time students who have Care Leaver status with their local authority and the numbers have increased in recent years.

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Number of Care Leaver Bursaries awarded</b>
2012/13	49
2013/14	57

We will monitor the success and progression of these students as they continue their studies at MMU.

## ii. Retention

<b>Non-continuation following year of entry: Full-time first degree entrants - HESA Tables T3a and T3b</b>								
<b>Year of entry</b>	<b>2005/6</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2007/8</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
<b>Young entrants</b>								
MMU	10.3%	11.0%	10.7%	9.8%	12.8%	12.3%	9.1%	7.4%
UK Average	7.1%	7.4%	7.2%	6.5%	7.2%	6.3%	5.7%	5.7%
<b>Mature entrants</b>								
MMU	14.2%	16.3%	15.3%	17.3%	15.7%	15.9%	11.5%	10.5%
UK Average	14.3%	14.8%	14.0%	12.9%	13.3%	11.6%	10.5%	11.9%
<b>Young LPN (POLAR 2)</b>								
MMU	12.3%	11.8%	11.6%	12.8%	14.4%	15.8%	11.9%	8.8%
UK Average	9.7%	9.8%	9.6%	8.7%	9.9%	8.9%	8.0%	8.0%
<b>Young LPN (POLAR 3)</b>								
MMU				13.0%	14.5%	15.1%	11.4%	8.7%
UK Average				8.6%	9.8%	8.8%	7.9%	7.7%

Action on retention and timely progression continues to be a major priority for MMU. The above HESA data clearly shows the progress that has been made in recent years, both in relation to all students and particularly WP students. We see this as a reflection of the increased emphasis and investment made in this area. It is to be welcomed that the improved retention has been particularly marked in relation to mature students, with non-continuation now below the National average.

We will continue to prioritise student success in the coming years, as highlighted in this agreement, and we expect to see this improvement sustained over the coming years.

iii. Employability

The Employability, Employment and Enterprise (E3) Strategy outlines MMU's approach to improving outcomes for our students in the coming years, setting challenging targets and outlining the initiatives which will be implemented to achieve these. Whilst the targets relate to all students, the analysis below of our data shows the breakdown of current performance by POLAR quintile.

Young participation quintile (1=low, 5=high)	Professional/Managerial employment or further study			
	2013 survey (Graduated 2011/12)		2014 Survey (Graduated 2012/13)	
	Number	%	Number	%
1	256	52%	328	57%
2	418	59%	443	60%
3	432	54%	484	57%
4	493	58%	556	60%
5	634	63%	703	64%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2233</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>2514</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>% from quintile 1 and 2</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>59%</b>

The above figures relate to home, FT first degree entrants at MMU, and show that the outcomes for those from the 40% lowest participation neighbourhoods (quintiles 1 and 2 combined) is only marginally different from the overall institutional figure. We will continue to monitor these figures to ensure the improved performance we expect to see in future years, through the implementation of the strategy, impacts equally on target students.

iv. Part-time Students

Access and Widening Participation

Part-time undergraduate entrants		MMU	UK ave.
Percentage with no previous HE and from LPN (POLAR3)	2013/14	4.9%	8.4%

## Retention

<b>Non-continuation two years following year of entry: part-time first degree entrants</b>		<b>MMU</b>	<b>UK ave.</b>
Entrants aged 30 and under	2011/12	23.9%	35.0%
Entrants aged over 30	2011/12	20.5%	33.3%

MMU's part-time student population has a very different profile compared to full-time. This is largely because of the type of part-time courses that we offer. Because of this, and the fact that the numbers within the target groups are modest, (the above figure for those with no previous HE and from LPN represents only 35 learners) a meaningful analysis of the statistics is difficult and potentially unreliable.

Additional work will be undertaken to determine the most effective way to encourage and support these students and trends will be monitored to determine the effectiveness of interventions introduced.

The University also continues to work with employers to develop new programmes and more flexible modes of delivery to enable greater participation by those seeking to follow a part-time route.

### **3. Additional access measures**

#### **3.1 Outreach**

Outreach will continue to form a vital part of the University's activity. Our targeted and long-term outreach programme is designed to raise the awareness and aspirations of under-represented groups and to counter any barriers created by the cost of Higher Education.

MMU's programme of outreach work has developed over recent years and provides sustained interventions, with a particular focus around key transition points. We will continue to develop our targeted outreach programme with schools and colleges that have high numbers of students from under-represented groups

The programme includes:

- Primary: aspiration-raising activities in targeted primary schools in areas of high deprivation, including campus visits and workshops delivered by current students, as well as activities to support the transition to secondary education;
- Secondary: a progressive framework of engagement and activities for targeted secondary schools, including campus visits, curriculum enrichment, summer schools and mentoring, to provide targeted pupils with sustained interventions across all school years;

- Post 16: a programme of engagement that will include information, advice and guidance and a targeted provision for learners in target schools and colleges including:
  - one-to-one support before and during the application process;
  - provision of bespoke information, advice and guidance to help support decision making;
  - access to specialist advice and guidance about student finance from our 'Money Doctors';
  - direct access to a specialist team of 'Progression' advisors at key points of transition;
  - work with teachers and advisors to provide relevant CPD activities to better equip them to support students considering progression to HE

Through our new Brooks building in Hulme, which opened in 2014 and houses the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Health, Psychology and Social Care, we are providing a comprehensive programme of school and community engagement to promote the benefits of Higher Education. This work will be further developed with a significant focus on making the campus a part of, and a resource for, the local community.

Whilst the Outreach programme is primarily focused on Greater Manchester and targeted areas around MMU's Crewe campus, we will look for opportunities to work with under-represented groups in other areas, through close engagement with neighbouring outreach networks.

### 3.2. Collaborative working between institutions

MMU is committed to working in partnership with other HE providers to raise aspirations to HE. MMU is the lead institution for GM Higher, one of the HEFCE funded National Networks for Collaborative Outreach. Through this Network we will promote our existing outreach activities and contribute to the development of a collaborative programme of HE awareness-raising activities for state schools in Greater Manchester. We will use the Network as an opportunity to share best practice, grow the evidence base for what works and identify cold spots within our region. We are committed to working with our partner institutions to identify ways of sustaining the Network beyond the funding provided by HEFCE.

Through our campus in Crewe, MMU is working with other HEIs to deliver events for young people from the Cheshire, Warrington, Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Stoke areas. This activity is coordinated through the Higher Horizons network (led by Keele University), and offers jointly organised campus visits to target schools across the region as well as targeted events for young people in Care. Staff and students from the partner institutions collaborate on the delivery of events to provide schools with a taste of HE offered in the region. The programme is jointly evaluated and forms an integral part of the individual universities outreach programme.



The University is committed to working collaboratively with other HEIs through HELOA (Higher Education Liaison Officers Association) to ensure widening participation and recruitment activities provide accurate, up to date and impartial information on student finance, applying to university, and the benefits of Higher Education to enable potential students to make the right decision for them. Relevant staff actively engage with HELOA to develop their knowledge and understanding of current issues in HE as well as share best practice across the sector. MMU is also a member of NEON (National Educational Opportunities Network) and, jointly with the University of Manchester, runs the NEON working group focussing on supporting disabled learners. The University is committed to working collaboratively at a local, regional and National level and will constructively work with partners to develop these collaborations in the coming years.

MMU is the lead partner in the North West Consortium of Routes into Languages which is a Consortium of eight universities (Manchester, Salford, UCLAN, Edge Hill, Lancaster, Liverpool and Chester with MMU as the lead partner) working to widen participation in Languages. This Consortium has worked closely with the MMU WP team to run events to promote languages in the region, including lesser-taught languages such as Arabic, Urdu and Chinese which reach out to some of our Minority Ethnic Communities. They also work with teachers in the region to provide CPD in relation to language teaching and to provide mentoring to pupils in lower participatory neighbourhoods using students from the Consortium.

MMU are partners in two new University Technology Colleges, one in Crewe (specialising in Engineering and Design) and the other in Warrington (Engineering and Energy). Both will open in September 2016, providing new and innovative routes into Higher Education for young learners.

MMU has secured government funding to deliver a new Institute of Physics accredited degree with opt-in Qualified Teacher Status. This is a National Pilot aimed at increasing the numbers of Physics graduates progressing into teaching careers.

Working with the Institute of Mathematics & its Applications (IMA), MMU has established 5 user consortia across the region to ensure optimised utilisation of the Large Maths Outreach and Careers Kits purchased as part of the HE STEM Programme. MMU continues to participate in the Institute of Physics Schools Outreach Support network which is a community of practice dedicated to sharing good practice in Physics outreach and thereby enhancing impact through the IoP Teacher Support Project. The University is also supporting public presentations on engineering and physics through The Institution of Mechanical Engineers, The Institution of Engineering and Technology and The Institute of Physics.

Recruitment onto MMU's FdSci Chemical Sciences Distance Learning programme is running ahead of schedule, buoyed by its accreditation as the academic input to the Higher Apprenticeship framework (Life Sciences & Chemical Science Professionals (England)). This Level 3-5 programme is an

alternative route (for technical employees) to gain recognised Professional Scientist status (and is endorsed by the Royal Society of Chemistry and Society of Biology). The collaboration with Cogent, critical to the success of this delivery, continues with plans to extend provision to Level 6 and thereby provide a new route to a full degree level qualification.

### 3.3. Student retention and success

As part of our commitment to prioritise activity that will have a beneficial impact upon retention and employability, we implemented a number of major projects and initiatives over recent years, which have been part of a whole-University approach to the student experience, student retention and success.

#### 3.3.1. Retention and Progression

- i. Numerous studies, as well as feedback from our staff, has shown that ‘a sense of belonging’ is important to ensuring student success. Students who have a network of friends who can provide support when they experience problems are likely to do better. Likewise, uncertainty about the course and what to expect can create a lasting anxiety which will make it harder for students to succeed.

The Student Induction Project, led by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Students, has implemented a range of new initiatives to help support our students from the time they receive their unconditional offer to attend MMU, through the first few critical weeks of their first term. These initiatives include:

- Peer Mentoring – This scheme was piloted in 2014 and is designed to provide support to new students through the summer and into the first few weeks of term. Following evaluation of the pilot, the programme is being made available across the Institution.
- ‘Step in’ Summer Events – These days provide new students an opportunity to engage with the institution before they start their induction. The programme includes events targeted at learners with young families, team-building activities, and sessions focussed on enhancing academic study skills. Whilst open to all new students, the programme is of particular benefit to those from widening participation backgrounds. These events culminate with ‘Welcome Sunday’ which provides a fun and engaging programme of activities to welcome the new students to MMU at the start of induction week.
- Enhanced Student Induction – Recognised as a key phase of building a sense of belonging in new students, a series of improvements have been made to our student induction programme. This includes the development of an ‘induction self-assessment tool’ used by programme leaders to identify local improvements to their students’ induction. MMU has also introduced a Part Time jobs fair and an event showcasing language opportunities, study and placement options, international cultures and entertainment.

- Residential Advisors (RAs) - RAs are second year, third year and postgraduate students who live in halls and support new students through the transition from home into their accommodation and University life. RAs provide student support and create a community within halls, through a positive intervention programme, in conjunction and support of wider health and wellbeing campaigns, to enhance the student residential life experience. Following a successful pilot, the roles are being extended across university accommodation.
- ii. Through the MMU Writing project, additional English language support is available to all students to support their academic writing and target students are encouraged to make use of this support. A complimentary Numeracy project provides support through Numeracy Cafes and workshops delivered by suitably qualified undergraduates ('data buddies'), who also provide in class support. This provides useful experience for the data buddy, and also provides an opportunity for students to learn practical numeracy skills in a more comfortable environment.
  - iii. The University has created additional posts in each Faculty to augment student-facing support. These posts work alongside Student Support Officers and support the learner journey by providing easily accessible course-related advice and targeted interventions to improve retention and success. These roles are being evaluated for the impact they have on student success, and the outcomes of this evaluation will inform the future development of these roles.
  - iv. Poor attendance is known to be a significant indicator of a student being 'at risk' of failing/dropping out. The Student Engagement Monitoring project aims to identify, as early as possible, those students who appear to be disengaging so that we can work with them to put them back on track. As part of this project a student attendance monitoring system has been developed and implemented, providing valuable data on those students not attending. This will enable early interventions to be put in place to support the most vulnerable students. As the project is rolled out across the institution we expect to be able to improve student retention and progression.
  - v. The University's Strategy for Learning, Teaching and Assessment makes explicit the need to ensure the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all. This notion of inclusive curriculum goes beyond previously used definitions that refer only or mainly to disabled students, aiming to more accurately serve the diverse student base at MMU. The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching are now taking forward initiatives to embed and enhance provision across the institution. The MMU Inclusive Curriculum project aims to 'join-up' and embed those dispersed pockets of support that already exist at MMU in order to improve the learning experience for all students; utilising the Higher Education Academy (HEA) Self-Evaluation Framework as a basis for reviewing MMU current practice. Guidance for academic staff draws together internal and external good practice for inclusive, accessible and differentiated approaches to teaching and learning;

- vi. PAL (Peer Assisted learning) is being rolled out across faculties, supported by expert training of students who become PALs, targeted at units where progression or attainment is lower. This expect this approach to have benefits for retention and progression, as well as developing the employability skills of those employed as PALs.
- vii. During the period covered by this Agreement, we will seek to develop and refine our approach in the new context, in the following ways:
  - review the processes which contribute to the student lifecycle and revise any which impact the target groups adversely. We will draw on MMU, HEA and HEFCE data that highlights any differential performance of different student groups;
  - ensure that as part of our current reviews of course approval and monitoring processes, and of the further development of our “course health check” process, we make optimum use of scrutiny of their performance in relation to the target groups covered by this Agreement.
- viii. As we discover more about the reasons for non-continuation and the factors that influence this, it is important we are providing CPD to staff to assist them in supporting their students. We will therefore introduce additional staff development activity to support the retention of ‘at risk’ students as this need is identified.
- ix. We believe our strategy to be fit for purpose and will set a target to minimise differences in the retention rate of students in the target group compared to the retention of those who are not. Should particular issues emerge from our monitoring of the target groups, we will consider what specific additional support would be appropriate.

### 3.3.2. Employability

MMU has introduced the E3 (Employability, Employment, Enterprise) Strategy, under the direction of the DVC Student Success, which identifies a range of initiatives and measures to improve the employment outcomes for all our students. The University has increased the resource available to improve the opportunities and support for students entering the graduate labour market, and we will monitor the impact of this on the target groups. Specific investment in time and resource will include the following areas:

- i. Research demonstrates that as many as 30% of major employers offer graduate jobs to students who have undertaken placements with them. Increased resource for placement teams in Faculties will enable us to increase the number of placement and work based learning opportunities for students, and increase the amount of support available to students to ensure the experience is a success.

- ii. MMU will implement a curriculum framework for all undergraduate courses that encompasses employability, internationalisation, sustainability, enterprise and entrepreneurship, alongside a comprehensive extra-curricular programme that complements and enhances the credit-bearing learning experience.
- iii. Support will be provided for target group students to access both study and work experience opportunities abroad as this can be a great way of helping students to develop personally and academically, and can raise aspirations and improve confidence, and therefore job prospects. MMU's Internationalisation Strategy identifies ways to facilitate a greater range of target group students to gain international experience.
- iv. The University has created the MMU Intern Scheme to offer employment opportunities within the University to our recent graduates. The scheme offers many of our graduates the opportunity to gain highly valuable experience of working either within a specific university department or across multiple departments. In addition, the GradMatch internship scheme offers internships for graduates with local companies, and we also promote summer Internships for students. In total we aim to provide more than 100 internships each year.
- v. As around 66% of our graduates choose to stay in the North West it is important that we maximise employment opportunities for them in this region. As SMEs represent 95% of all employers in the UK, we will develop a specific plan to increase employment with SMEs for MMU students and graduates.
- vi. We will implement a graduate Recruitment Agency so that we can direct employers straight to our students and graduates, and offer targeted support, thus maximising their chances of entering professional/managerial employment.
- vii. The University will provide an on-campus part-time jobs bureau, Jobs4Students, plus run an annual part-time employment fair to support students in finding work whilst they are studying, to both aid retention and deliver quality work experience to improve graduate job prospects.
- viii. We will re-launch our 'Mentormatch' on-line career mentoring programme, which will have a particular emphasis on matching widening participation students with employers from professions they would like to enter.

### 3.3.3 Support for Vulnerable students

Care Leavers and those from a care background are a priority group for outreach activities and are provided with additional support to help them progress into and through MMU. This support includes financial support (through the Care Leaver bursary) as well as access to student ambassador opportunities to enhance employability skills.

We are aware that there are other groups who also have particular needs, particularly young carers, and so we will look to support these pupils by

prioritising them for schools outreach activities, providing additional targeted events, and working with our existing students from these groups to determine the support which they would find most helpful. MMU is currently funding a project under the 'Growing Ideas for Change' initiative to develop a framework for supporting vulnerable students into and through MMU and the outcomes of this project will inform the specifics of the support developed in this area.

#### 3.3.4 Support for Disabled Learners

As has been outlined above, disabled learners are a key target group for our widening participation activities, both through Outreach and the support we provide when they progress to MMU. We are therefore keen to ensure the changes in Disabled Students Allowance do not have a detrimental impact on our students. A Disabled Students' Allowances steering group has been established, Chaired by the Director of Student Support Services, and this will evaluate the impact of the planned changes, oversee and lead a number of task and finish groups to address the challenges, and ensure systems are in place to measure the impact of the changes. Any additional interventions or expenditure which are OFFA countable will be incorporated in future Agreements and monitoring returns.

### 3.4 Financial support for students

#### 3.4.1 MMU Student Support Package

We believe that providing financial support to students from low income backgrounds remains an important element of a balanced Access Agreement, but that this support needs to be based on simple eligibility criteria to make it easily understood by potential students. We also believe it needs to be evenly spread across the years of study to support the student through their whole time at university as part of a comprehensive retention policy. As previously mentioned, we have recently reduced the percentage of additional fee income devoted to direct financial support in favour of greater investment in retention and employability.

The Support Package will be available to all Home undergraduate students paying £9,000 fees, and Home Foundation Year students paying fees of £6,000 per year, with a disclosed household income of £25,000 or less, with the exception of those whose course of study is externally funded (e.g. through the NHS).

For eligible full-time students the Student Support Package will consist of:

- Undergraduates: £1,000 for each year of study where their tuition fee is at least £6000 (or pro-rata for part-time students)
- Foundation Year: £1,000 for each year of study where their tuition fee is £6000

Part-time Home students studying at least 25% intensity (30 credits) and with a disclosed student income of £25,000 or less will be eligible for a proportion of the Student Support Package based on the intensity of their study. This will be available in each year of study.

The vast majority of PGCE students will be eligible for bursaries from the National College for Teaching and Leadership and therefore there are no plans to offer additional financial support for these students.

The aim of our financial support is to help students reduce their costs where they need it most. Students will be able to receive their support in a number of ways according to what suits their circumstances best. Awards will be made up of a combination of:

- Discounted University accommodation
- Other discounted University services' using the 'Met Card'

MMU issues a Met Card to all new full time undergraduate students which can be used to purchase a wide range of University services from printing, catering services, purchase of class materials from University outlets or purchases through approved external suppliers (such as approved book stores). Students eligible for the Student Support Package can elect to have it credited to their Met Card. The University intends to widen the scope of the other services provided. The Met Card can also be used towards tuition fees. (Further details can be found at [www.mmu.ac.uk/metcard](http://www.mmu.ac.uk/metcard)).

Part-time students will receive any bursaries via a fee waiver.

#### 3.4.2 Hardship fund

We recognise that for some students there will be times when they need some additional financial support to get through a challenging time. We see being able to respond appropriately to such need as an essential element of our retention support. We therefore provide a discretionary fund of £250k per year which operates alongside the Access to Learning fund to support target students.

#### 3.4.3 Care Leaver Bursary

MMU also recognises the unique challenges faced by Care Leavers and the barriers they have to overcome to progress to university. We will therefore pay an additional bursary of £1,000 per year to Care Leavers (as defined by the Leaving Care Act) who are on full-time courses.

#### 3.4.4 Fee Waivers for Sandwich placements

To encourage more WP students to take work placements we will also provide 200 fee waivers of up to £680 for sandwich placement years for Home students

with a disclosed household income of £25,000 or less (additional criteria may apply to restrict the number of awards to 200).

#### **4. Targets and Milestones**

4.1 MMU will target the following groups for the initiatives under this Access Agreement.

- students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods;
- students from lower household incomes;
- students from a care background.
- students who are young carers

4.2 Outreach remains a key commitment within this agreement and we will deliver a programme for target primary, secondary and post-16 institutions which supports and motivates target learners through their education journey. Most of the targets set for this area in previous Agreements have already been met or exceeded, and in considering the guidance from OFFA we have reduced the number of purely numerical targets to instead focus on the outcomes of the activities.

We are committed to working in partnership with other HE providers through the NNCO project and will, through this partnership work, expect to increase the number of pupils and the number of schools engaged through the Outreach programme. We have therefore set the following targets in this area:

- i. To engage 100 schools in the GM Higher targeted outreach programme by 2020 (baseline 84 schools in 2013/14)
- ii. 90% of Pupils attending a campus visit to indicate they have a better idea of what they would need to do if they wanted to go to university (baseline 85% in 2013/14)
- iii. To ensure MMU Outreach provision is targeted at under-represented groups and pupils from low participation areas (through monitoring percentage from POLAR 3 Quintiles 1 or 2)
- iv. To monitor the percentage of pupils taking part in targeted campus visits, mentoring and summer schools who subsequently progress to HE (through involvement in HEAT tracking system)

4.3 Access and Recruitment

In the 2012/13 agreement MMU anticipated that participation would drop nationally in the first two years following the introduction of tuition fees and made a commitment to arresting that fall and restoring participation levels of target groups to current levels over the next five years.



As has been demonstrated we have made significant progress since then and the targets previously set for participation have been exceeded. We have therefore introduced a new target for recruitment:

- i. to achieve a participation rate of Young Full time Undergraduates (HESA Table T1b) of 17.5% from Lower Participation Neighbourhoods (POLAR 3), by 2020.
- ii. to increase the number of Care Leavers at MMU to 75 by 2020 (based on numbers having Care Leaver status with their Local Authority and receiving the MMU Care Leaver bursary).

#### 4.4 Student retention and success

- i. To reduce the non-continuation rate for WP students at MMU to 7.5% by 2020 (as measured by HESA Table T3b – POLAR 3 data).

#### 4.5 Employability

- i. To increase the percentage of full-time, UK, first degree graduates from LPN (POLAR 3 quintiles 1 or 2) entering professional/managerial employment or further study to 68% by 2020 (compared to the institutional target of 70% for all students).
- ii. To increase positive response to 'As a result of my course I believe my career prospects have improved' to 78% in 2020 (from 68% in 2013).
- iii. Increase the numbers of target students (family incomes below £25,000 pa) taking part in sandwich years (taking 2013/14 as a baseline).

#### 4.6 Financial support for students

MMU will monitor the recruitment, retention and success of students in receipt of means tested financial support in comparison with those who are not. MMU will also survey students to determine their opinions on the impact financial support has on them.

#### 4.7 Equality and Diversity

MMU has a Student Equality Objective to ensure equality of student experience by identifying any areas where satisfaction levels for students from protected characteristics fall below average and devising appropriate action plans. This is reported through the Equality and Diversity Annual Report.

## **5 Monitoring and evaluation arrangements**

- 5.1 The measures set out in this Agreement and the progress against targets and milestones will be monitored by the Student Experience Committee on behalf of Academic Board. It will use the targets set out in paragraph 4 above and will be assessed using the four levels of evaluation set out in HEFCE Circular Letter 24/10: basic monitoring; assessment of targeting; measurement of outcomes; and assessment of value for money.
- 5.2 The senior person and bodies responsible for delivery of our Agreement are Professor Karen Moore (Registrar) and the Academic Board.
- 5.3 The membership of both Student Experience Committee and Academic Board includes student representatives.

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

- 6.1 MMU is committed to providing information to students on the schemes outlined in this Agreement.
- 6.2 MMU will use a variety of vehicles including;
  - Student Finance presentations at Open/Visit Days;
  - Student Finance Talks/workshops for students (and parents) at schools and colleges;
  - workshops for mature students;
  - front line advice on entitlement via 'phone, email, social media and 'web-chat';
  - the MMU Student Finance Guide;
  - Applicant newsletters;
  - School and College newsletter
  - the MMU Parent/Carer Guide;
  - the advice team of the Students' Union
  - the Key Information Set (KIS)

## **7 Consulting with students**

Students are at the heart of the University and their opinions are sought and valued on a wide range of policies within the institution. Through the Students' Union they are represented on all MMU's major committees including Academic Board and the Board of Governors. A review of the relationship between the University and the Students' Union was conducted in 2012, jointly by senior staff of the two organisations. The purpose of the review was to consider how the relationship might be strengthened and a more overt partnership created. A number of recommendations were made, which have since been endorsed by the University and the Students' Union. This will further enhance the effectiveness of the relationship between the two organisations.

The Students' Union was consulted during the formulation of the very first Access Agreement and has remained involved in the process since then. For this current agreement, they have been represented on the Access Agreement Group which has developed and proposed this Agreement as well as the committees which have approved it. They have also been consulted and involved in the development of the student support package as outlined in this Agreement, in particular with relation to the creation of a hardship fund and spreading support evenly over the years of study. In addition, the University and the Students' Union were among the first to work in partnership to reduce additional course related variable costs by treating them as part of the tuition fee payment. This will ensure there is no financial disadvantage to students from a low income background and enable effective budgeting of students at a pre enrolment stage. It has been agreed that many of these costs will be transferred to the University, and a proportion related to target students will be reported in future monitoring reports. Where additional costs are retained, students and prospective students will be provided with full and timely information about them.

The Students' Union will remain involved in the process of monitoring the implementation of the agreement which will be done through the Access Agreement Group. They are working in partnership with the University to carry out a survey and focus groups with current students to determine the impact the financial support package has had on them across the student life cycle. The outputs from this research will inform future development of the support offered in future years. Feedback from the Students' Union Advice Centre will also be sought as part of the evaluation and they will be consulted on any future developments or changes.

## **8 Equality and Diversity**

The University is committed under the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duties to have due regard to the impact of any significant changes which may impact upon students. This is managed through our equality impact assessment (EIA) process.

Work is underway at MMU to review current practice in inclusive design and delivery of the curriculum and will develop an institutional framework for inclusive practice. This project aims to embed evaluation and monitoring of inclusive curriculum design within the quality enhancement processes at MMU. It will also deliver good practice resources for supporting inclusive practice in the curriculum and the professional development of academic staff. An 'Inclusive curriculum' refers to all of the good practice around learning that is designed, planned and delivered to enable everyone to access it, regardless of student educational, dispositional, circumstantial, or cultural background.

The University will carry out an equality impact assessment to determine if the introduction of the new fees regime in 2012/13 has had any disproportionate effect on the students from particular equality groupings (looking at age, ethnicity, gender and disability). This will focus on students from the 40% most

under-represented areas (based on Low Participation Neighbourhoods). In the event of any significant disproportionate effects being observed the University will develop additional targeted Outreach activities (in consultation with current students) to mitigate the changes observed. At this point additional targets will be introduced to future Access Agreements.

The Institution's Equality and Diversity (E&D) Strategy has enabled greater alignment with the University's corporate plan and strategy. The strategy is supported by a set of objectives that address the key strategic issues covering three broad themes: Student Experience, Staff Experience and Community Activity. Any relevant objectives have been incorporated into future Access Agreements ensuring synergy between the Widening Participation and Equality and Diversity agendas.

The University is committed to ensuring the equality of student experience by identifying any areas where satisfaction levels for students from protected characteristics (PC) fall below average and devising appropriate action plans. This is monitored through the internal student satisfaction survey, which is analysed to identify any statistically significant variations for PCs. Work is currently underway through the student enrolment process to collect two additional PC's (i.e. religion/belief and sexual orientation). This information will ensure that the University maintains inclusivity and identifies any future E&D objectives. Any actions or outcomes relevant to OFFA target groups will be incorporated into future monitoring reports.

E&D data is published through the E&D Annual Reports, which highlights trend and sector benchmarking data and can be downloaded from: <http://www.mmu.ac.uk/equality-and-diversity/>

The University invests in continuous improvement standards to maintain and go beyond its E&D responsibilities such as:

- The Disability Standard – The Business Disability Forum (BDF) rigorously assess ten criteria to track disability competence and confidence. MMU achieved a Silver status (overall score 87% only 3% away from Gold). MMU is the only University to have achieved this award and were named 'Best Public Sector Organisation' by the BDF in 2013.
- Investors in People – MMU is an iIP Gold Champion organisation and Award finalist. The University has been selected to pilot the new iIP framework, which is not due to be launched nationally until August 2015.

**Table 7 - Targets and milestones**

Institution name: Manchester Metropolitan University

Institution UKPRN: 10004180

**Table 7a** - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body

Reference number	Please select target type from the drop-down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (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)
						2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	
T16a_01	HESA T1b - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (Young, full-time, undergraduate entrants)	To achieve a participation rate of Young Full time Undergraduates (HESA Table T1b) of 17.5% from Lower Participation Neighbourhoods (POLAR 3), by 2020.	No	2013-14	16.4%	16.7%	16.9%	17.1%	17.3%	17.5%	
T16a_02	HESA T3b - No longer in HE after 1 year & in low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR 3) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	To reduce the non-continuation for young FT UGs from LPNs to 7.5% by 2020 (as measured by HESA Table T3b – POLAR 3 data)	No	2012-13	8.7%	8.3%	8.1%	7.9%	7.7%	7.5%	
T16a_03	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	To increase the percentage of full-time, UK, first degree graduates from LPN (POLAR 3 quintiles 1 or 2) entering professional/managerial employment or further study to 68% by 2020.	No	2013-14	56%	60%	62%	64%	66%	68%	Based on institutional analysis of DLHE data (the year relates to the year of the survey, the year after graduation)
T16a_04	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	To increase positive response in the National Student Survey to the statement 'As a result of my course I believe my career prospects have improved' to 78% in 2020 (from 68% in 2013)	No	2013-14	68%	70%	72%	74%	76%	78%	
T16a_05	Other statistic - Care-leavers (please give details in the next column)	To increase the number of Care Leavers at MMU to 75 by 2020, from 57 in 2013/14 (based on number of students receiving the MMU Care Leaver Bursary)	No	2013-14	57	60	63	66	70	75	
T16a_06	Other statistic - Low-income backgrounds (please give details in the next column)	Increase the numbers of students from low income backgrounds (household income of £25,000 or less) taking a sandwich year	No	2013-14	155	Monitor and publish figure	Monitor and publish figure	Monitor and publish figure	Monitor and publish figure	Monitor and publish figure	

**Notes**

Alongside applicant and entrant targets, we encourage you to provide targets around outreach and student success work (including collaborative work where appropriate) or other initiatives to illustrate your progress towards increasing access, student success and progression. These should be measurable outcomes-based targets and should focus on the number of beneficiaries reached by a particular activity/programme or the number of schools worked with, and what the outcomes were, rather than simply recording the nature/number of activities.

**Table 7b** - Other milestones and targets.

Reference Number	Please select target type from the drop-down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (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)
						2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	
T16b_01	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	To engage 100 schools in the GM Higher targeted outreach programme by 2020	Yes	2013-14	84	90	94	96	98	100	
T16b_02	Operational targets	90% of Pupils attending a campus visit to indicate they have a better idea of what they would need to do if they wanted to go to university	No	2013-14	85	86	87	88	89	90	
T16b_03	Operational targets	To ensure MMU Outreach provision is targeted at under-represented groups and pupils from low participation areas (through monitoring percentage from POLAR 3 Quintiles 1 or 2)	No	2014-15	Monitor and publish %	Monitor and publish %	Monitor and publish %	Monitor and publish %	Monitor and publish %	Monitor and publish %	
T16b_04	Other (please give details in the next column)	To monitor the percentage of pupils taking part in intensive interventions (mentoring and summer schools) who subsequently progress to HE (through involvement in HEAT tracking system)	No	2014-15	Monitor and publish	Monitor and publish	Monitor and publish	Monitor and publish	Monitor and publish	Monitor and publish	HEAT to be used for the first time in 2014/15, with results to follow in future years
T16b_05	Other (please give details in the next column)	Monitor the recruitment, retention and success of students in receipt of means tested financial support in comparison with those who are not and publish annual figures	No	2014-15	Monitor and publish	Monitor and publish	Monitor and publish	Monitor and publish	Monitor and publish	Monitor and publish	

**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.