

September 2012/08

Guidance

Guidance for school centred initial teacher training providers (SCITTs) and other non-HEI providers of initial teacher training

All such institutions that wish to charge above the basic level of tuition fees in 2013-14 must submit an access agreement to OFFA by 18 October 2012

How SCITTs should produce an access agreement for 2013-14

offa

office for fair access

Alternative formats

This publication can be downloaded from the OFFA web-site (www.offa.org.uk) under 'Publications'.

For readers without access to the internet, we can also supply it on CD or in large print. Please call 0117 931 7171 for alternative format versions.

Published by the Office for Fair Access.

© OFFA 2012

The copyright for this publication is held by the Office for Fair Access (OFFA). The material may be copied or reproduced provided that the source is acknowledged and the material, wholly or in part, is not used for commercial gain. Use of the material for commercial gain requires the prior written permission of OFFA.

How SCITTs should produce an access agreement for 2013-14

To	Heads of school centred initial teacher training providers in England
Of interest to those responsible for	Producing access agreements
Reference	OFFA September 2012/ 08
Publication date	September 2012
Enquiries to	Richard Shiner Policy Adviser richard.shiner@offa.org.uk 0117 931 7467

Introduction

1. All publicly funded higher education providers that wish to charge fees above £6,000 a year for new full-time entrants, or £4,500 for part-time entrants, need to have a new access agreement for 2013-14 approved by the Director of Fair Access to Higher Education. This includes school centred initial teacher training providers (SCITTs) and other non-higher education institution (HEI) providers of initial teacher training (ITT).
2. All SCITTs and other non-HEI providers of ITT that wish to charge above the basic level of fees for part-time students in 2012-13 must also include in their 2013-14 access agreement the access and/or student retention measures for these part-time learners in 2012-13 (see paragraphs 17-21).
3. Access agreements set out how institutions will sustain or improve access to higher education for students from low income backgrounds and other under-represented groups, including through financial support, outreach and retention work, as appropriate.
4. Access agreements must be published by the provider and are also published by OFFA at www.offa.org.uk/access-agreements (see paragraph 30).
5. This document provides guidance to SCITTs and other non-HEI ITT providers that need to produce an access agreement for the academic year 2013-14. If you are not sure whether you need an access agreement, see paragraph 15.
6. We do not yet know the impact of the 2012-13 agreements so our main principle has been to change as little as possible from the guidance for 2012-13 access agreements (OFFA publication 2012/01, *How SCITTs should produce an access agreement for 2012-13*). We hope this stability will allow you to understand the impact of both the new fee and support arrangements on student behaviour and the measures you put in place under your 2012-13 agreement. If your plans have not changed since your 2012-13 access agreement, you may resubmit the same plans for 2013-14 with any appropriate updates to the document.

A note on this guidance

7. This guidance sets out our broad requirements and expectations. Where possible, our intention is to be helpful and illustrative rather than prescriptive. Where our requirements are absolute we have signalled this clearly in the text.
8. We aim to support good practice in widening participation, fair access and student retention. If you feel that in following our guidance you would be going against your aims to improve access and student retention, please contact us as soon as possible to discuss this.
9. Given that many SCITTs and other non-HEI ITT providers only have small student numbers, we do not expect you to include the same level of detail in your agreement as HEIs or further education colleges (FECs). You should, however, follow this guidance carefully to ensure that you have included everything that we require. If you have any questions, please contact Richard Shiner on 0117 931 7467, richard.shiner@offa.org.uk.
10. A glossary of definitions is included at the back of this document.

Action required

11. If you need to submit an access agreement for 2013-14, **you must email your agreement and Excel template (see Annex D which we will email to you shortly) to accessagreements@offa.org.uk by Thursday 18 October 2012**. You may submit your access agreement at any time from the date of this guidance but no later than the 18 October deadline.
12. If you do not wish to charge above the basic fee for any of your courses, please let us know by emailing accessagreements@offa.org.uk.
13. We will aim to issue decisions by the end of November 2012. However, we will issue approvals on a 'first come, first served' basis, so if you submit your agreement before 18 October, we will look to give you an earlier decision.
14. Once you have submitted your agreement, we will be happy for you to promote your proposed fees and financial support package in advance of receiving a decision. However, you must make clear that this package is subject to OFFA approval.

Who needs to produce an access agreement?

15. You will need to have an access agreement approved by OFFA if you:

- provide accredited mainstream (postgraduate and undergraduate) ITT courses leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and
- have been allocated mainstream ITT places by the Teaching Agency,¹ and
- wish to charge tuition fees for home/European Union trainees above the basic level in 2013-14 (that is, £6,000 for full-time students and £4,500 for part-time).

16. If you do not wish to charge above the basic fee for any of your courses, you do not need to submit an access agreement. You simply need to let us know by emailing accessagreements@offa.org.uk.

The situation for part-time courses

17. In spring 2012, the Government introduced legislation regulating fees for part-time students studying at an intensity of at least 25 per cent of a full-time course, starting on or after 1 September 2012. As with full-time, this excludes those studying on a course which leads to a qualification that is equivalent to or lower than one already held.

18. Under the new arrangements, institutions without an access agreement may charge up to £4,500 to part-time students in an academic year², and institutions with an access agreement may charge up to £6,750 in an academic year. You must therefore ensure that you do not charge a part-time student more than £6,750, or the level specified in your access agreement, whichever is lower, in an academic year.

19. We did not ask you to confirm your plans for part-time students in your 2012-13 access agreement because the legislation covering these students was not in place. We now need you to give us this information. So, in addition to full-time and

part-time students starting in 2013-14, your 2013-14 access agreement should also cover access and/or student retention for part-time learners in 2012-13.

20. Because 2012-13 will be the first year you have included part-time students, we recognise that any access measures and targets you choose to put in place for these students may be developmental in nature. In some cases, you may need to do further work to understand the existing make-up and characteristics of your part-time learners, and we expect these plans may develop over time.

21. Wherever possible, we have looked to create unified systems to help you consider part-time and full-time students together.

¹ Allocated either directly to the ITT provider or through School Direct.

² The definition of academic year is covered in the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011/1986) within regulation 2.

What is an access agreement?

22. Access agreements set out:

- the fees you intend to charge for your postgraduate courses leading to QTS that are subject to regulated fees
- the additional access measures you commit to put in place to sustain or improve access and, where appropriate, student retention and success (ensuring that under-represented students access the full benefits of higher education)
- the estimated cost of these measures
- targets and milestones
- your commitments to provide timely, clear and accessible information to prospective students and to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of your measures.

23. Access measures can include:

- financial support targeted at students from low income backgrounds or other disadvantaged students
- outreach
- entry and retention work (including student success and employability)
- other policies or activities that are likely to support widened participation such as the development and use of contextual data in admissions processes and targeting outreach, or the improvement of school and college links.

Type of document

24. Access agreements are statutory documents that must be published (both by OFFA and the provider). They should therefore set out the required information as clearly and concisely as possible. Most agreements may only need to be a few pages long, although agreements with significant variation between courses or multiple targets may need to be longer.

25. To help you do this, we have developed a template (Annex C, downloadable from www.offa.org.uk/publications alongside this document) setting out details of the information you need to provide to us. By using this template, you will make it easier for interested parties to read and compare multiple agreements.

26. You must also provide some financial information using the Excel template at Annex D, which will be emailed to you shortly.

How long do access agreements last?

27. Currently, a new access agreement is required for each new academic year of student entry.

28. Each agreement remains in force covering students who entered when the agreement in question was approved until those students complete their studies.

Publication of access agreements

29. Institutions are required under legislation to publish their access agreements in a manner that is conveniently accessible to trainees. We will also make access agreements available at www.offa.org.uk/access-agreements so that institutions and trainees can assess and compare agreements.

What to include in your access agreement

30. Each access agreement must include information on:
- Your current position in relation to access and retention.
 - Fee limits.
 - Amounts of fee income over the basic level to be spent on access measures.
 - Financial support for trainees.
 - Outreach and retention work (if such work is included as part of the agreement).
 - Targets and milestones.
 - Institutional monitoring arrangements.
 - Provision of information to trainees.

These elements are discussed in more detail below.

a. Your current position in relation to access and retention

31. To provide a rationale for the focus of your agreement and to help us to understand what your access agreement aims to achieve, please briefly set out an assessment of your current position in relation to access and retention.

32. Access agreements should be targeted at learners with the potential to benefit from higher education, particularly ITT, and who come from groups that are currently under-represented in teacher training. These may include learners from the following groups:

- people from lower socio-economic groups or from neighbourhoods where higher education participation is low
- people from low income backgrounds (in 2013-14, this can include family incomes up to a maximum of £42,611 – the threshold for partial state grant)
- people who have been in care
- people with disabilities
- any other under-represented groups that you have identified specific to your area.

In addition, the Teaching Agency has identified the key strategic priorities for ITT in terms of removing barriers to teacher training for the best quality candidates from under-represented groups; see Annex D of OFFA publication 2012/01, *How SCITTs should produce an access agreement for 2012-13*.

33. You should base your assessment of your current position on your own understanding of the measures and indicators that you think most accurately reflect your access and retention performance. For example, it is up to you to decide whether to invest in financial support for students, or outreach and retention work, or a combination of these.

b. Fee limits

34. Your 2013-14 access agreement should set out the tuition fees you intend to charge new entrants in 2013-14 (full-time and part-time) and in 2012-13 (part-time only).

35. In 2012-13 and 2013-14, the basic fee level for full-time courses, up to which no access agreement is required, is £6,000 a year for full-time courses and £4,500 for part-time. The maximum fee cap beyond which no institutions can charge is £9,000 a year for full-time courses and £6,750 for part-time.

36. These amounts may rise each year to maintain their value in real terms. The Government will set out any permitted rises each year in line with the regulations.

37. The fee you set for entrants will apply to them for the duration of their studies. Unless your agreement is clear that you will, or may, apply annual increases for any continuing students³ in line with the amount set by the Government each year, we will assume that you intend your fees to remain flat.

38. You may set one fee for your whole institution, or vary fees by course. If you choose to vary them, you should clearly set out the fee for each course, either in course groupings or on a course by course basis.

³ For more information on annual inflationary increases see www.offa.org.uk/guidance-notes/inflationary-increases-to-fees-and-fees-for-erasmusstudy-year-abroad-and-sandwich-placement-years/.

39. The fees that you intend to charge should be set out clearly and be accessible to the public. You must tell applicants how much their tuition will cost for the whole duration of their course before they accept a place.

40. You should not charge the new higher fees to trainees who started on a course before 1 September 2012.

Specific guidance regarding part-time fees

41. If your full-time equivalent tuition fee for part-time students is more than £6,750, please also include a statement confirming that you will not charge any part-time student more than £6,750 in an academic year, in line with the fees regulations.

42. Where you are not clear about whether you will have any part-time students paying more than the basic fee, we recommend that you include a statement in your access agreement so that you avoid having to seek OFFA approval retrospectively. This might apply, for example, where a part-time student took more modules in a year than was normal, or because they switched from full-time to part-time. You can do this by including a general commitment to spend an appropriate proportion of any income from part-time fees above the basic level on access measures. (Paragraph 44 sets out our guidelines on what you should spend on access measures.) In such circumstances we would not require any predicted data or targets from you relating to these students, but you will need to report, in your monitoring return, on any unexpected spend that occurs.

c. Amounts of fee income over the basic level to be spent on access measures

43. On the Excel spreadsheet (Annex D) please estimate:

- the amount of additional fee income (that is, fee income above the basic level, see paragraph 45) you expect to receive
- the amount you expect to spend on access measures.

44. As a broad guideline, we would expect you to recycle a minimum of around 10 per cent of your fee income over the basic level on access or retention

measures. For example, for a fee of £9,000, we would expect you to recycle around £300 on access or retention measures (i.e. 10 per cent of £3,000, that being the difference between the fee of £9,000 and the basic level of £6,000); or if you wish to charge £8,000, we would expect you to recycle around £200 per fee on access or retention measures.

d. Financial support for trainees

45. Please tell us:

- what you plan to spend on targeted fee waivers, bursaries and scholarships for trainees in 2013-14 (full-time and part-time) and 2012-13 (part-time only)
- the amounts of support
- the eligibility criteria for new entrants
- type of bursaries or other financial support on offer (see paragraph 49).

46. You should tell us, in broad terms, how your financial support schemes will be provided to your trainees and when payments or waivers will be made.

47. You may also choose to describe how it will be administered, e.g. by your institution, or through subscription to the Higher Education Bursary and Scholarship Scheme (HEBSS) operated through the Student Loans Company (SLC).

48. Financial support can be offered as:

- a cash bursary
- a fee waiver
- other in-kind support such as a voucher for institutional services e.g. books and laptops.

It is for you to decide which of these you offer to students based on your own priorities.

49. You may choose to provide greater support to trainees in receipt of a full state maintenance grant (i.e. those with residual household incomes up to £25,000), or a wider range of financial support that also provides support to trainees in receipt of partial state support (those with a residual household income up to £44,611). Note that part-time students are not able to receive state support grants but you may still choose to use these thresholds in your own eligibility criteria.

What will count as a financial support scheme?

50. The financial support outlined in your agreement must be targeted; in other words, it would not be acceptable for you to offer a flat-rate financial award to all trainees, because this would not contribute to safeguarding and promoting fair access to higher education. For the purpose of access agreements, we are only concerned with bursaries or other financial support that benefits trainees who are under-represented in ITT and higher education more generally.

51. The Teaching Agency has advised us that institutions should not take into account the training bursaries when determining whether a student is eligible for further financial support⁴. This means that you should not:

- exclude a student from bursary and scholarship schemes on the basis that they receive a Teaching Agency training bursary, because they could still be from an under-represented group. Where bursaries provided to under-represented students are means-tested, however, you may factor into means-testing calculations the value of a training bursary
- include, in your access agreement, a financial support scheme aimed solely at students without a Teaching Agency training bursary. For financial support to be 'countable' in access agreements it must be offered to students from under-represented groups, as defined by the institution. You may recruit students not in receipt of a training bursary who don't come from an under-represented group, so expenditure on these students is not 'countable' in your access agreement.

52. We are primarily concerned with additional activity and support introduced since the implementation of variable fees in 2006. While longer running schemes are not 'countable' expenditure, additional elements to such schemes funded by variable fees, would be 'countable'.

Financial support for students from Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and the rest of the EU

53. OFFA only regulates financial support for English-domiciled undergraduates studying full-time and part-time at English institutions. We are happy for you to include expenditure for non-English UK trainees. However, there is no legal obligation for you to provide financial support for non-English UK trainees.

54. Nearly all the HEI and FEC agreements that have been submitted to date have chosen to provide the same level of support to all UK trainees. However, you may wish to factor in any differences in funding for non-English UK trainees when considering your support.

55. You should include expenditure on non-English UK or other EU students in your estimates of investment in access measures in Annex D.

Minimising administrative burden

56. Most institutions (including SCITTs) offering bursaries or fee waivers use the HEBSS run by the SLC to distribute their financial support. HEBSS offers two alternative services: Information Only and Full Administration. These are managed on a 'not for profit, not for penalty' contract. For further information, please see www.heiinfo.slc.co.uk/he-services/bursaries-service.aspx.

e. Outreach and retention work

57. For undergraduate programmes we have asked HEIs and FECs to consider targeting outreach and retention at groups that are under-represented in higher education as a whole. We recognise that this may not be appropriate for postgraduate ITT because it concerns applicants that are in, or have already been through higher education.

58. However, you may wish to consider whether your cohort represents the undergraduate population from which you recruit. If, in this context, you identify an area of under-representation, you may wish to address this by implementing measures that encourage applications from trainees in under-represented groups

⁴ For more information on Teaching Agency training bursaries see <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00083-2011>

and help aid the retention of such applicants. This may include targeting some outreach at these groups to raise aspirations to teach. Such outreach could include investment in collaborative work with local HEIs, FECs or other SCITTs, where appropriate.

59. You may also wish to consider whether your new cohort of trainees is representative of the general background population from which you recruit, for example in terms of minority ethnic groups and men applying to primary ITT. Please refer to the glossary for OFFA's list of under-represented groups or to the Teaching Agency's guidance on under-represented groups.

Definition of outreach activity

60. For the purposes of an access agreement, outreach work means any activity that involves raising aspirations and attainment and encouraging high quality trainees from under-represented groups to apply to ITT and succeed in their studies, so achieving QTS.

61. Some SCITTs will already have a good idea of which groups are under-represented in their institution. However, others may need time to consider what outreach work is appropriate, based on further work required to establish data on under-representation in their institution. Where this is the case, we would be content with a broad description of outreach or a commitment to consider what outreach work, if any, might be necessary once under-represented groups have been identified. The guidance from the Teaching Agency gives further information on under-represented groups.

62. Where you decide to fund outreach activities, you should tell us, in broad terms:

- the type and extent of activities you will be undertaking
- your target groups.

63. You should also indicate whether the outreach activities listed are new or are extensions of existing schemes.

f. Targets and milestones

64. Most SCITTs have small numbers of trainees so setting targets can be difficult. In the past we have said it is acceptable for you to measure those students in receipt of full state support and we are happy for you to continue to do this. However, you may also wish to set your own targets, baselines and milestones in order to monitor whether you are making progress in improving access.

65. We are aware that SCITTs producing access agreements for the first time may not collect socio-economic or financial data on your trainees at present, so may have difficulty setting baselines against which to monitor. In such cases, we are happy for you to commit to develop data over the first 18 months of your agreement and then return to us to outline your monitoring criteria. However, if you do have data, we will expect you to include it in your agreement.

66. We are mindful that the small numbers of trainees in institutions mean that fluctuations in data could be exaggerated. The way in which targets are measured will therefore need to be considered carefully. For example, you may wish to set targets around data averaged over three years rather than on individual years, to allow for fluctuations or an untypical year.

What information do we expect to see in your targets?

67. In the first instance, we expect you to monitor your target groups. Where there are groups that are under-represented, we would expect to see a commitment to improve your performance in recruiting these under-represented students over time. It is acceptable for you to monitor the number of under-represented students rather than include targets with specific numbers because this may be difficult with small numbers of trainees.

68. If you choose to include targets then your access agreement should include descriptions and definitions of these targets. For example, you

might choose to set targets based on how representative your applicants are based on your local graduate population.

69. It is for you to decide your own criteria for measuring your progress, but we expect there to be a statistical element in at least one of your objectives.

70. We suggest including criteria around the numbers of trainees in receipt of a full or partial maintenance grant because you will need to collect such data in order to determine bursary support. This data will also be accessible through the SLC for those that choose to subscribe to the HEBSS scheme.

71. You may wish to set targets around a number of different criteria and management information, depending on what groups you are targeting (for example, targets around males into primary teaching, or minority ethnic groups).

72. We will monitor the progress you have made each year towards meeting your targets and milestones.

g. Institutional monitoring arrangements

73. In your access agreement you should include a brief description of how you intend to monitor your progress towards your milestones and your success in fulfilling the commitments set out in your agreement. For example, on an annual basis, your Management Committee could report to the Board on the progress of your access agreement, including monitoring against targets.

h. Provision of information to trainees

74. Your access agreement should:

- contain an explicit commitment to publish clear, accessible and timely information for applicants and students on the fees that you charge and any financial support that you offer, including exactly what level of financial support you are offering students in each year of their studies

- provide brief details about how you intend to provide such information to both existing and prospective students.

75. As well as providing clear and up-to-date information through your own information channels (websites, prospectuses etc), we also require an explicit commitment from you to provide such timely information to the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR) and SLC as they reasonably require, to enable them to populate their applicant-facing web services.

How to contact us if you have a query

76. We welcome early discussions with you about the development of your access agreement and are happy to comment on draft proposals. Please contact Richard Shiner on 0117 931 7467 or email richard.shiner@offa.org.uk.

How to submit your access agreement

77. If you are submitting an access agreement, please email your draft agreement and Excel template (Annex D) to accessagreements@offa.org.uk by **Thursday 18 October 2012**.

78. Access agreements may be submitted at any time from the date of this guidance but no later than the deadline of 18 October 2012.

After you have submitted your agreement

79. If you submit your agreement to us by 18 October with all the required information and there is no need for negotiation or discussion, we will aim to issue decisions by the end of November 2012.

80. However, we will issue approvals on a first come, first served basis, so if you submit your agreement before 18 October, we will look to give you an earlier decision.

81. Once you have submitted your agreement, we will be happy for you to promote your proposed fees and financial support package in advance of receiving a decision. However, you must make clear that this package is subject to OFFA approval.

82. You must publish your access agreement once it is approved. We will also publish it on our website. See paragraph 29 for more information.

Access agreements for future years

83. The higher education sector is entering a transitional period and we have been asked by the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to renew access agreements on an annual basis. We will therefore review our guidance on access agreements regularly in the first few years of the new arrangements. This will provide OFFA and providers with the opportunity to adjust agreements in the light of experience and any policy changes.

How we will assess your access agreement

The approval process

84. Once we have received your access agreement we will consider it against the requirements set out in this guidance. In particular, we will look at whether your plans for access measures are satisfactory, the amounts you are investing are appropriate and your milestones are suitable. For example we will assess whether you have included all the required information and whether you have agreed to invest an acceptable amount of your additional fee income.

85. If any of the information we require is unclear or missing we may have to clarify matters with you or ask for more information before we can reach a decision. To minimise delays, please fill in the checklist (Annex A) confirming that you have included all the necessary information.

If we do not approve your agreement

86. If we are not satisfied with your draft access agreement, we will raise our concerns with you and give you the opportunity to make amendments or provide further evidence as to why we should approve your agreement. All such conversations will take place at draft agreement stage. Formal decisions will be made only once all negotiations have been completed.

87. Our goal is to have satisfactory agreements in all cases and our negotiations aim to achieve this. However, if we are ultimately unable to reach agreement, you will have the right to take our decision to an independent review panel.

If your circumstances change after approval of your access agreement

88. Where there are significant changes to your circumstances after the submission of your agreement and you wish to change any of your commitments, you should discuss this with us at the earliest opportunity. Any changes that seek to reduce your commitments will require our approval.

89. However, please note that you must honour any financial commitments you have made to students. Whether or not these commitments change according to the fee charged will depend on how you have advertised them.

Annual monitoring reports

90. You are required to submit annual monitoring reports to us setting out how you have delivered the commitments in your agreements. In these reports, you must report on fee income, expenditure and progress against milestones and targets.

91. We expect you to honour all the commitments you make in your access agreement, recognising that the financial estimates you make are predictions and are subject to change. You might not spend the exact level laid out in your financial annex. However, we will look to understand that you have maintained the spirit of the agreement.

92. We issue guidance on the monitoring process after the end of each academic year.

Audit

93. We reserve the right to audit any aspect of the commitments set out in your access agreement.

Sanctions

94. There are sanctions open to us if in our opinion you commit a serious and wilful breach of your access agreement. For example, this could apply if you charge higher fees than you set out in your agreement, fail to provide the financial support that you promised to students or fail to deliver your commitments in relation to your outreach and retention measures. We would not however impose a sanction solely on the basis of you not meeting your targets or milestones.

95. We can:

- direct the Teaching Agency to impose a fine or suspend part of any grant until you have put matters right
- refuse to renew your access agreement, thereby preventing you from charging ITT trainees tuition fees above the standard level for a period after your access agreement has expired.

96. For further detail on sanctions please see Annex A of OFFA publication 2012/03, *How to produce an access agreement for 2013-14*.

Annex A

Checklist

All access agreements must include the information set out in the following checklist.

Does your access agreement include:

Checklist	Yes	No	N/A
1. The fee levels you are proposing to charge?			
2. Information about any targeted financial support (where applicable)?			
2a. If you answered yes to question 2, does the agreement include information on the type and level of targeted support that will be offered, as well as target groups and eligibility?			
3. Information about any outreach that will be provided?			
3a. If you answered yes to question 3, does the agreement provide a description of the outreach activities, as well as the target groups?			
4. Information about any student retention and success measures that will be implemented (where applicable)?			
5. An explicit indication about whether the expenditure included in your agreement is countable? (Expenditure is only countable if it is i) previous access agreement expenditure that you are continuing to make, or ii) expenditure on new access and student retention and success measures.)			
6. Targets and milestones, and any baseline data to support these, or a commitment to develop this information?			
7. An undertaking to monitor compliance with the agreement and progress towards milestones?			
8. An explanation of how and when you will provide information to prospective students about the financial support available at your institution and the aggregate cost of tuition?			
9. In Table 1 of the Excel template (Annex D), have you included all trainees in each year, not just entrants?			

Annex B

Glossary

Additional measures or expenditure: By 'additional' we mean measures from previous access agreements that you will continue to deliver in 2013-14, plus any new measures that are delivered from 2012-13 (including measures that you now fund which were previously funded through other means; for example, collaborative working previously funded by Aimhigher).

Basic level of fee: The level of tuition fee up to which an access agreement is not required. In 2013-14 this will be £6,000 for full-time courses and £4,500 for part-time.

BME: Black and minority ethnic

FEC: Further education college

Fee cap: The maximum regulated fee that can be charged under an access agreement. In 2013-14 this will be £9,000 for full-time courses and £6,750 for part-time.

Fair access: Equality of opportunity for all those who have the potential to benefit from higher education, irrespective of their background, schooling or income. This term is often used with reference to the most selective institutions, where entry requirements are high and the pool of applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds is relatively small.

Fair access measures: Work aimed at improving access of under-represented groups to your institution or institutions like yours (whether measured against the background population, or the background population of qualified people).

GTTR: Graduate Teacher Training Registry

HEBSS: Higher Education Bursary and Scholarship Scheme

HEI: Higher education institution

Higher level of fee: The level of tuition fee above which an access agreement is required. From 2012 this will be above £6,000 for full-time courses and £4,500 for part-time.

ITT: Initial teacher training

Outreach work: For the purposes of an access agreement, outreach work includes any activity that involves raising aspirations and attainment among potential applicants from under-represented groups and encouraging them to apply to higher education.

This includes outreach directed at young or mature students aspiring to full or part-time study. We particularly encourage sustained, co-ordinated activities that work with pupils and other potential applicants over a number of years.

Publicly funded institutions: Providers of higher education that are either directly funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) or deliver designated ITT courses accredited by the Teaching Agency.

QTS: Qualified Teacher Status

Retention and student success: Measures that ensure that students access the full benefits of HE by completing their studies and improving academic outcomes and employability.

SCITT: School centred initial teacher training provider

SLC: Student Loans Company

Student population covered by access

agreements: Home/EU undergraduates and some postgraduates (including full-time PGCE) that are charged higher fees.

Under-represented groups: Groups that are currently under-represented in higher education at the national level rather than at a particular institution or course, including:

- people from lower socio-economic groups
- people from low income backgrounds (in 2013-14, this includes family/household incomes up to £42,611)
- some ethnic groups or sub-groups
- people who have been in care
- disabled people.

Variable fees: The full-time undergraduate tuition fees payable to an institution. Variable fees were introduced by the Higher Education Act 2004. In 2012-13 and 2013-14, fee limits can be set between £0 and £9,000 for full-time courses and £0 and £6,750 for part-time.

Widening participation: Improving under-representation in higher education at a national level.

Office for Fair Access

Northavon House
Coldharbour Lane

BRISTOL

BS16 1QD

tel 0117 931 7171

fax 0117 931 7083

www.offa.org.uk