

# Evaluation of the Excellence Fellowship Awards (EFA) Pilot Scheme

Kerry Marwood  
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**Research Report  
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***Evaluation of the Excellence  
Fellowship Awards (EFA)  
Pilot Scheme***

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The views expressed in this report are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education and Skills.

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**DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS**

**EVALUATION OF THE EXCELLENCE  
FELLOWSHIP AWARDS  
PILOT SCHEME**

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## Executive Summary

1. This is a summary of the final evaluation report of the Excellence Fellowship Pilot Scheme. The evaluation, undertaken by York Consulting Limited on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills, was conducted between May 2002 and March 2004.
2. The Excellence Fellowship Pilots Awards Scheme is a Department for Education and Skills initiative, launched in February 2002. The aim of the scheme is set out below.

*“Excellence Fellowships are a new way to enable teachers to spend a term away from school or FE college in higher education institutions. Teachers will use this time to undertake a project that has a direct bearing on encouraging progression to HE amongst their students. The precise detail of individual fellowships is for local decision, but they must assist the teacher in their work and contribute to increasing participation in HE, for example through improving attainment levels or raising their students’ aspirations ”.*<sup>1</sup>

3. The key objectives of the Scheme are:
  - to pilot the scheme with about 30 higher education institutions over two academic years (2002-03 and 2003-04) and to provide at least 50 awards each year;
  - to provide awards to teachers in schools and further education colleges, in Excellence in Cities (EiC) areas or Education Action Zones (EAZ), to enable them to spend time in an HEI and use their experience to disseminate as widely as possible the outcomes from the activities undertaken;
  - to raise awareness amongst teachers – and amongst pupils, students and their parents, carers and guardians – of the benefits of higher education and what it is like to study at an HEI.

## Key Findings

### Recruitment and Selection

- **By March 2003, 66 Fellows had been recruited**, with up to an additional four Fellows in place or being negotiated; whilst this has not met the target of 100, the scheme has gained momentum over the last 12 months;

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<sup>1</sup> Guidance to Schools (DfES, March 2002)

- **Initial recruitment processes focused mainly on letters to Head Teachers/Principals of schools/colleges.** In most cases these were followed up by concerted promotional efforts to target teachers more directly and existing contacts in schools/colleges were used to negotiate recruitment;
- **Recruitment has been problematic, specifically as a result of difficulties releasing staff from schools and colleges** rather than resource issues at the HEI. Key issues include difficulties in organising staff cover for teaching and other responsibilities, concerns about quality and consistency of staff cover and the perceived relevance of project aims and themes (particularly to schools). Subsequently, a long lead-in time (at least 2-3 terms) and flexibility in duration and pattern of award delivery have been essential features of the scheme;
- As a result of release issues, **most Fellows have tended to be senior staff** (85%) with less teaching time and have a unique reason why release is possible, for example they are already seconded; some Fellows (most often from colleges) have been released for staff development reasons, rather than interest in project outcomes. This has affected ownership of the Fellowship;
- Competitive selection processes have not been a key issue because of the low number of applicants. There has been occasional acceptance of low quality bids as a result.

#### **Recruitment and Selection - Good Practice**

- Involvement of Aimhigher Partnership co-ordinators in promotion, recruitment;
- Persistence and direct promotion to teachers, for example through pay packets and advertising in school/college bulletins;
- Formal application processes and interviewing of Fellows to instil the importance of the scheme and to ensure Fellows have the appropriate skills for their Fellowship;
- Negotiation of award themes with schools and colleges to ensure their ownership.

## Key Features of Awards

- **68% Fellows have been recruited from colleges.** Schools have been less involved than colleges in the scheme because they have less staff, fewer part-time staff and fewer staff with non-teaching responsibilities. In addition, schools are further removed from the widening partnership agenda and have other priorities such as ensuring teaching standards/consistency, attainment and behavioural issues;
- **Most awards are delivered on a part-time basis**, with only 17 out of the 66 Fellowships (26%) being implemented on a full-time basis; more of the later projects are full time (presumably possible because of the longer lead-in time) and more schools chose full-time awards because for them it can be easier to cover one term (often the summer term);
- **The awards have varied in cost**, depending largely on the costs of staff cover. The £20k allocated per Fellowship appears to have been adequate in all cases to fund the staff cover (or equivalent arrangement) and to make a reasonable contribution to HEI costs. However, the support and management of Fellows has in practice fallen to HEIs (rather than schools/colleges) and as a result, in some HEIs, the level of management and support for Fellows may have been affected by the limited resource available;
- **The £1000 incentive has not been necessary for recruitment**, although one HEI has successfully used it as a lever to encourage completion of the final report;
- The **themes have largely been selected by the HEI or Fellow**, although most are finalised through negotiation with all three parties. Schools and colleges have been less involved in selection and management than intended which, in some cases has affected their ownership of the Fellowship and limited their interest in the outcomes and dissemination;
- There has also been a **significant lack of involvement of EiC/EAZ** partnerships in theme selection, perhaps because their potential role in guiding the Fellowship was unclear to HEIs or because partnerships faced capacity or agenda issues. This has resulted in an **HEI and/or Fellow led process** that missed an opportunity to link projects to an external widening participation agenda;
- Fellowship activities have been a **mix of academic research and action research**, most of which have focused on barriers to progression (approximately 35 projects) or raising aspiration (approximately 11 projects);



- The **purpose of the awards has been interpreted in different ways** at a local level. The majority of the Fellowships have been conceived as ‘research projects’ rather than experiences that enable a better understanding of HEI, which is then disseminated within their school/college and with parents, carers and guardians. This is in part due to the title of the awards as ‘Fellowships’, as a result of pragmatism and as a result of HEIs driving the scheme. As such many projects only contribute indirectly to the original vision; very few have been driven by the original DfES aims.

### **Management and monitoring of awards**

- HEFCE made subtle differences to the way that DfES objectives were presented to HEIs, particularly relating to the role of schools and colleges and the ‘experiential’ nature of the awards. This has contributed to **strategy drift**. Closer communication and routine contact with HEFCE (by DFES) may have identified this at an earlier stage. In addition, despite fairly clear guidance to HEIs, at the early stages there were inconsistencies in responses to HEI queries regarding the acceptable focus and boundaries of the scheme;
- a **lack of a strategic quality assurance process** (at the national level) and variable local management and monitoring of projects has affected quality of project delivery and outcomes;
- the **lack of immediate ‘claw-back’ of funding** has reduced the overall value for money of the pilot, given the lack of recruitment;
- the **responsibility for managing and leading the scheme has been assumed by, or fallen to HEIs**, despite the intention that schools/colleges would participate in this way (probably due to misinterpretation of scheme guidance or lack of engagement by the school/college). Therefore, HEIs have in some cases provided significant levels of resource for the management and administration of the Scheme, including access to facilities, work planning, mentoring, general support, regular supervision and the development of research skills; in other cases, Fellows have operated fairly independently without a clear, shared framework for delivery;
- **the funding does not cover the intense support** provided by several HEIs, especially where the HEI has three Fellows, but this is generally not a major barrier as the goodwill to support the scheme exists;
- the **variable level of project planning and management** has affected project quality, with some stakeholder roles being unclear and some projects lacking strong purpose, methodology, reporting and dissemination.

### **Management and Monitoring by control– Good Practice (Local Level)**

- Developing project in line with national guidance
- Clear project planning, with the development of a project work plan detailing all elements of the project, including expected report type, detailed dissemination plan and expected outcomes;
- Clear division of responsibilities between HEI lead and mentor;
- Early involvement of key stakeholders in project planning;
- Regular supervision underpinned by a work-plan (not necessarily by the HEI, this could be by the school/college);
- Linking in the EFA with an MA or providing specific research support, to support the development of Fellow's research skills;
- Guidance by HEI/school or college on issues that Fellows should take into account in their project and reporting.

### **Implementation of Awards**

4. **A range of research activities have been undertaken** by Fellows, including (in approximate order of frequency):
  - interviews and questionnaires for example, with students, parents, HEI admissions, student union representatives;
  - action research, for example setting up mentoring schemes, development of website, working with parents;
  - literature/research reviews;
  - development of teaching and learning materials to support participation and progression;
  - attendance at open days and observation of admissions interviews;
  - assessment of existing practices, for example gifted and talented policies.
5. Delivery issues have included:
  - time to establish project management internally within the HEI and negotiate staff release (2-3 terms);

- variable quality of management and support;
- lack of ownership of theme by key stakeholders and thus commitment to the project;
- research issues such as reaching target group and accessing stakeholders within and external to the HEI and the 'robustness' of the methodology.

#### Implementation – Good Practice

- Sharing of practice between Fellows;
- Support of Fellows in delivery through clear planning and delivery structures while the Fellow's capacity is developed to enable them to deliver the project independently - an autonomous learner model;
- Ensuring that the Fellow is based In the HEI, to ensure networking and informal learning about HE.

6. There are **strengths and weaknesses of delivery on a full-time and part-time basis** that relate to delivery issues. It appears that full-time Fellows may get pulled back into school/college on fewer occasions (and potentially are more 'immersed' in the HEI), but part-time delivery allows longer time to secure interviews and take advantage of opportunities at different times of the year. **Where Fellowships are delivered simultaneously, there have been benefits such as peer support, cross fertilisation and easier management.**

## Reporting

7. **Only nine reports have been produced from 43 completed Fellowships.** These reports vary in style and focus. Most reports make recommendations to a combination of HEIs, schools, colleges, Government and LEAs.
8. Reporting appears to have been affected by a lack of time left at the end of the Fellowship (and thus the Fellow having to complete the report in his/her own time). It is not clear whether the HEI or the school/college should be monitoring whether the Fellow completes the report, and subsequently there is a lack of 'pressure' and guidance on the most appropriate type of report and the audience for the report. It is likely that further reports will be completed over time.
9. **The output of a 5,000 word report (as stipulated by the HEFCE guidance) is not always the most appropriate output,** particularly for material development and action research projects. This has prevented some Fellows from producing reports.

### Reporting - Good practice:

- Guidance from HEI, school or college on scope and style of report;
- Early planning to ring-fence time for reporting and an agreed date for report completion;
- Payment of bonus on completion of the report, as an incentive to finish.

### Dissemination

10. **A range of dissemination activity has taken place**, including some by Fellowships where the reports are not yet completed. Overall activities across case study Fellowships include:
  - Presentations to HEI, schools, colleges, Aimhigher Partnership/other partnerships and Sector Skills Councils;
  - Internal training for staff as a result of project findings;
  - Distribution of report to a range of stakeholders;
  - Liaison with organisations to implement findings, eg Connexions.
11. Interestingly, there is evidence of external partnership involvement at the dissemination stage, despite the lack of early involvement in themes selection and recruitment. This late engagement may enhance dissemination and subsequently the impact of the awards.
12. Dissemination of findings of action research projects has focused on embedding and improving the widening participation activities themselves. However, it appears that **written summaries of the lessons learnt are not being produced for dissemination** to colleagues or other schools and colleges.
13. Dissemination effectiveness has been affected by a lack of time and funding left at the end of the project, a lack of clarity of roles for dissemination and a lack of engagement and influence over stakeholders (including schools and colleges) to engage them in dissemination.

### Good practice - Dissemination:

- Early planning and ring-fenced funding for dissemination (where needed)
- Clear dissemination planning, clarifying roles and purpose
- Early engagement of stakeholders in the theme of the project has led to greater ownership and interest in the findings

## Benefits, Outcomes and Impact

14. The scheme has been successful in delivering a range of benefits and outcomes at a local level. These include:
- **a general strengthening of links between HEI, schools and colleges;**
  - **relationship building through involvement in specific widening participation activities;**
  - **professional and motivational benefit for the Fellow, which may build awareness and research capacity internally within schools and colleges;**
  - **development of new widening participation activities and improvement of existing projects;**
  - **increased understanding of admissions to HE and/or the HE experience by staff and learners in schools and colleges (although much of this rests with the Fellow rather than their schools/college as a whole) .**
15. Despite these benefits and outcomes, the impact of the scheme has yet to be realised, partly as a result of delayed or weak dissemination. In addition, it is likely to be difficult to measure impact in many circumstances. The projects are small scale and many will have no impact on the short term (because they are looking at 'root causes' of participation). For these projects, it will be difficult to distinguish their specific contribution to any increases in aspiration, participation or achievement. There are currently two instances where such quantifiable impact has been reported.
16. The **value for money of the scheme at a policy level is limited**. The scheme has drifted from its original aims, recruitment has been lower than planned and some of the funding distributed has not been used towards the scheme<sup>2</sup> to date. However, the value assigned to the scheme by stakeholders is a good indication of its **local success at meeting local objectives**. Most case study HEIs reported that the projects met or exceeded their expectations and supported the scheme.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

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<sup>2</sup> Funding provided for three fellowships has not been immediately clawed back, for redistribution, from HEIs where they have not recruited the target number of three Fellows (with exception of Manchester MET who returned the funding for redistribution)

17. Despite initial recruitment problems, the scheme has gained momentum and a range of projects has been delivered. **The pilot has been fairly successful, taking account of the local success alongside limited policy success.** The value for money of the pilot has been affected by low recruitment and strategy drift.
18. Strategic improvements that might be made in any subsequent national scheme include:
  - providing a clearer purpose of the scheme, its intended outcomes, the nature of the Fellowship and any anticipated links into the EIC/EAZ agenda;
  - improved quality assurance processes to ensure that Fellowships maximise their contribution to the strategic purpose of the scheme, and to ensure that activities are well planned and managed;
  - offering greater flexibility in who the 'lead' body is. This may enable projects to be more closely related to Aimhigher Partnership, school or college agenda;
  - maintaining flexibility in the pattern and duration of Fellowships and type of research;
  - building in a provision for funding to be recovered at an earlier stage from HEIS, in the event of non-recruitment.
19. At a local level the effectiveness of projects can be achieved though improved:
  - early engagement with key stakeholders (particularly schools/colleges, and widening participation partnerships) in recruiting Fellows, negotiating themes and developing a well thought out work plan;
  - stronger project planning and management;
  - clearer reporting guidance;
  - dissemination planning and implementation, including in-house dissemination of learning.
20. Although the funding appears to have been adequate for most HEIs in the pilot, it has relied on goodwill, particularly of those HEIs who recruited three Fellows and provided strong management of these Fellows. This may suggest a need for additional funding in these circumstances. However, if schools and colleges (or partnerships) were better engaged in management

and dissemination activity, this would reduce the burden on the HEI and the funding would be adequate.

21. The good practice demonstrated by many HEIs could be more effectively shared to support the general development of good practice within the scheme.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## Background

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of the evaluation of the Excellence Fellowship Awards Pilot Scheme. The evaluation, undertaken by York Consulting Limited on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills, was carried out between May 2002 and March 2004.
- 1.2 The final report builds on the findings of a series of reports that have been produced at key stages of the evaluation. Previous reports comprise Recruitment and Selection Issues (August 2002), two Mapping of Excellence Fellowship Awards reports, (February 2003 and October 2003) and the Interim Evaluation Report (December 2003).

## The Excellence Fellowship Awards Pilot Scheme

- 1.3 The Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme is a Department for Education and Skills initiative, which was launched in February 2002. The initiative grew from a desire to increase the understanding of higher education by school and college teachers and to strengthen the links between higher education institutions (HEIs), schools and further education (FE) colleges in order to improve aspiration and attainment. As a result, the scheme was launched with the following aim:

***“Excellence Fellowships are a new way to enable teachers to spend a term away from school or FE college in higher education institutions. Teachers will use this time to undertake a project that has a direct bearing on encouraging progression to HE amongst their students. The precise detail of individual Fellowships is for local decision, but they must assist the teacher in their work and contribute to increasing participation in HE, for example through improving attainment levels or raising their students’ aspirations ”.***<sup>3</sup>

- 1.4 The key objectives of the scheme are:

- to pilot the scheme with about 30 higher education institutions over two academic years (2002-03 and 2003-04);
- to provide at least 50 awards each year;

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<sup>3</sup> Guidance to Schools (DfES, March 2002)



- to provide awards to teachers in schools and further education colleges, in Excellence in Cities (EiC) areas or Education Action Zones (EAZ), to enable them to spend time in an HEI and use their experience to disseminate as widely as possible the outcomes from the activities undertaken;
- to raise awareness amongst teachers – and amongst pupils, students and their parents, carers and guardians – of the benefits of higher education and what it is like to study at a HEI;
- to evaluate the pilot scheme.

#### 1.5 Key features of the delivery of the scheme comprise:

- the Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE) manage the delivery of the scheme on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES);
- HEIs from EiC and EAZ areas were invited to respond to an invitation from HEFCE in February 2002 to participate in the scheme; 33 HEIs responded;
- each participating HEI is entitled to spend up to £60,000 on at least 3 awards over the academic years 2002-03 and 2003-04 (to meet the school/college costs for staff cover, delivery costs, reporting and dissemination costs); the HEI can retain up to £5,000 for its own administration costs and the Fellow receives a personal bonus of £1,000 from their school or college;
- the Excellence Fellowship Award (EFA) should be for the equivalent of one term's residence within an HEI (which may be full-time, part-time, or in blocks, according to local need);
- the role of the HEI is to help schools and colleges to take advantage of the scheme and work with them to develop ideas for the activities to be undertaken during the Fellowship;
- the school/college should arrange cover to allow the staff member to be released to conduct the EFA as agreed;
- the HEI, school and Fellow should produce a signed agreement outlining the main focus of the project and how it will be delivered and disseminated;
- the main output from the activity should be a report of approximately 5,000 words.

- 1.6 The scheme was launched as part of the Government's strategy to widen participation in HE. The Government has set a target that by 2010, 50% of people aged between 18 and 30 should have the opportunity to benefit from HE. To achieve this target, attainment at NVQ levels 2 and 3 needs to be improved to encourage more and better-prepared students to stay on in education at age 16, and then go on to HE. In addition, links between schools, FE and HE need to be strengthened to raise the attainment and aspiration levels of young people.
- 1.7 A number of linked initiatives are already in place to support widening participation, while maintaining standards in teaching and learning. These include:
- Excellence in Cities (EiCs) which tackles the particular problems facing children in our cities. Through a combination of initiatives<sup>4</sup>, it aims to raise the aspirations and achievements of pupils and to tackle disaffection, social exclusion, truancy and indiscipline and improve parents' confidence in cities;
  - Education Action Zones (EAZs) which allow local partnerships - schools, parents, the community, businesses and local authorities - to find radical and innovative solutions to their problems;
  - the Aimhigher Programme (formerly Excellence Challenge) which supports a range of activities including collaborative working between schools, colleges and higher education institutions in order to increase the educational attainment and aspirations of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds<sup>5</sup>.
- 1.8 Locally, HEIs have their own Widening Participation Strategies, often linked to these national initiatives. HEIs vary in their resource to participate and deliver elements of these initiatives. Some HEIs have a Widening Participation Unit, with a team of staff; for others widening participation may be an 'add-on' to an existing job role.

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<sup>4</sup> There are 7 key strands to the EiC programme: Learning Mentors; Learning Support Units; City Learning Centres; more Beacon and Specialist schools; EiC Action Zones; extended opportunities for gifted and talented pupils.

<sup>5</sup> From 2004, this programme will be brought together with the Aimhigher: Partnerships for Progression initiative to deliver coherent national outreach.

## Methodology

1.9 The Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme is a pilot scheme with few quantitative targets. Therefore the evaluation is largely qualitative and exploratory. The focus of the evaluation is based on the following core themes:

- selection process, award agreements and recruitment issues;
- award features, partners, success and constraint factors;
- costs;
- benefits and outcomes.

1.10 The methodology for the evaluation was initially planned for a two and a half year duration (from May 2002 to October 2004). As the scheme progressed, changes were made to the evaluation methodology and timing to reflect the longer lead-in period needed by HEIs and the need for DfES to complete the evaluation by March 2004. The key components of the methodology are set out in **Table 1.1** below.

1.11 It should be noted that whilst all the case study Fellows had completed or nearly completed their projects, eight were still in the process of drafting their final reports and at least two were not anticipating writing a report.

<b>Table 1.1: Summary of Evaluation Methodology</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Timing</b>
2-3 Telephone interviews with all participating HEIs over the lifetime of the project	To identify progress, recruitment and delivery issues and perceptions of the scheme	As appropriate over the lifetime of the project
Mapping of 62 award agreements	To identify quantitative progress and to draw out trends in key features of the awards	February 2003, October 2003
Review of 9 final EFA reports	To identify the style and applicability of reports to	Ongoing

**Table 1.1: Summary of Evaluation Methodology**

	the scheme	
Case studies <sup>6</sup> involving 16 face-to-face interviews with Fellows 27 interviews with HEI staff 8 interviews with lead staff in school/colleges 3 interviews with EiC or EAZ partnerships	To gain an in depth understanding of the delivery and related issues, perceived benefits and outcomes	7 case studies in October/November 2003; 8 case studies January-March 2004
Longitudinal Telephone Interviews with five of the initial seven case study Fellows	To understand the sustainability of activity and longer term outcomes/impact of the scheme	February 2004
Interview with HEFCE	To seek feedback on strategic and operational quality and success of the pilot	
Reporting	A series of reports to DfES on the progress and success of the scheme	Recruitment and Selection report (August 2002); Mapping report and Issues (February 2003); Mapping Update (October 2003) Interim report (December 2003) Final report (March 2004)

## Report Structure

1.12 The remainder of this report outlines the findings of the evaluation using the following structure:

- **Section Two:** Recruitment and Selection, which provides an analysis of the recruitment processes, constraints and suggestions for change;
- **Section Three: Key Features of Awards,** which sets out the detail of agreed awards;

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<sup>6</sup> Case studies were selected initially on the basis of their progress and subsequently geography, theme, duration, school/college and cost. One case study was selected on the basis that it had not recruited any Fellows.

- **Section Four: Management and Monitoring of Awards**, which provides an overview of the approaches and issues faced in organising the delivery of the awards;
- **Section Five: Implementation of Awards**, which considers award activities and delivery related issues;
- **Section Six: Perceived Benefit, Outcomes, Impact and Value of Awards**, based on perceptions of those involved in the 15 case studies;
- **Section Seven: Conclusions and Recommendations.**

## 2 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

### Introduction

2.1 In this Section we outline the approaches to recruitment and selection undertaken by the HEIs involved with the Excellence Fellowship Awards Pilot Scheme. We do so under the following headings:

- Processes;
- Constraints;
- Suggestions for Scheme Changes.

2.2 Throughout this section we use examples from the Case Study visits to **demonstrate some of the issues** being faced by HEIs during the recruitment and selection of Fellows and to **provide good practice examples**.

### Processes

#### Recruitment

2.3 Initial approaches to the recruitment of Fellows were undertaken through the following routes:

- **The most common approach is written contact with schools and colleges requesting proposals** from teachers (normally addressed to the Head Teacher/Principal), although other contact with schools/colleges has included the HEI sending a flyer for a notice board;
- writing to Aimhigher Partnership Co-ordinators;
- publishing an article in the HEI newsletter;
- presentation to the FE sector within the HEI area or briefing of Aimhigher Co-ordinators;
- many HEIs have used established links and contacts to approach specific schools, colleges or individuals;
- most HEIs have publicised Awards through EiC or EAZ partnerships;
- at least two HEIs have advertised nationally (with positive results).

2.4 Recruitment difficulties experienced by most HEIs subsequently influenced recruitment strategies in a number of ways:

- increased focus on “selling the scheme” by stressing issues such as:
  - the staff development opportunities that the HEI and EFA could offer;
  - the potential influence the scheme could have on retaining staff within school/college;
- multiple recruitment drives have been necessary, absorbing more resources and lead-in time than initially intended and inadvertently the process has become more HEI driven than intended;
- recruitment outside the local EiC partnership area (regional or national), for example, Oxford and Sussex;
- increased use of personal approaches to try and encourage recruitment, for example with Gifted and Talented Co-ordinators;
- different avenues of promotion that communicate directly with teachers, for example advertisements in school bulletins, leaflet in teachers pay packets;
- increased flexibility in the duration and type of awards, recognising that relevant action research may be more effective than academic research in attracting schools;
- occasional acceptance of bids outside priority areas or applications of a lower quality than hoped, due to lack of choice of applications.

2.5 Three HEIs have faced significant recruitment difficulties, and in November 2003, had yet to recruit their first Fellow. However, only one of these three HEIs (Manchester MET) has withdrawn from the initiative and the funding was reallocated on demand to Sunderland, Northumbria, Greenwich and Warwick Universities<sup>7</sup> who could offer further Fellowships – this indicates that the initial limit of three Fellows was restricting to a small number of HEIs. Six HEIs have only recruited one EFA in relation to the expected three. The **most significant barrier to recruitment is organising staff cover for teaching and their wider responsibilities**. This was experienced by HEIs targeting colleges and/or schools.

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<sup>7</sup> These HEIs expressed an interest in extra funds when HEFCE wrote to institutions.

- 2.6 It is clear that some HEIs have been more successful than others in their recruitment of Fellows, with eleven HEIs having successfully recruited their target number<sup>8</sup>. It is not clear why they were so much more successful, but this probably relates to a combination of use of existing relationships, persistence, negotiation and luck (ie. the unique circumstances of potential Fellows).
- 2.7 The case studies in **Table 2.1** provide examples of the difficulties experienced by some HEIs and how they adapted their approach to help overcome initial low interest. The case studies in **Table 2.2** provide some examples of good practice approaches to recruitment.

### **Partnership Involvement**

- 2.8 Most HEIs have established links with the Aimhigher Partnership. However, **significant direct involvement of partnerships in the recruitment and decision process is, however, relatively limited.**
- 2.9 During the early set-up stages of the scheme some HEIs and Aimhigher Partnerships identified some confusion over marketing responsibilities. Overall, it is the HEIs that have taken on the bulk of the marketing and communication with schools and colleges, though in some areas, the local partnership acts as an intermediary to channel letters to the schools and colleges. In others a place on the EFA steering group is provided to the partnership. One HEI did try and work with the Aimhigher Partnership to lead the Fellowship recruitment process to get an equal distribution of Fellows across the area. However, this only led to three applications, two of which were inappropriate.
- 2.10 It is unclear why Aimhigher partnerships did not get more involved. In one area there was a perception that pre-16 issues dominated the agenda and therefore it was assumed that Fellowships were of less relevance to the Partnership. In addition, capacity and agenda are often fairly full and at least two local EiC/EAZ areas only included a small number of schools. To overcome this latter issue, Oxford University promoted the scheme to all Aimhigher Partnership areas, as outlined in more detail in **Table 2.3** and Sussex University, through established links, recruited from Islington College, London.

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<sup>8</sup> HEIs were originally expected to recruit three Fellows



- 2.11 At least one HEI preferred to link directly with schools and colleges and saw no need for an intermediary role to be played by the Aimhigher Partnership. Manchester MET University, which has now withdrawn from the scheme, had intended all marketing/awareness-raising to be through the Aimhigher Coordinators, but received little or no response from teachers.
- 2.12 The engagement of Aimhigher Partnerships in the identification of themes, or as a core partner, is only evident in a few cases. However, although the involvement of Partnerships remains fairly low, when individual EFAs are completed, Partnerships are showing interest in the results and are being used as dissemination vehicles. Although later than anticipated, this engagement may considerably enhance the potential impact of the work.

**Table 2.1: Recruitment – Difficulties and Adapting Approach**

**University of London**

An initial mail shot to established networks and through Aimhigher Co-ordinators resulted in no response from schools or colleges. Eventually an application was received from someone who had existing links with the University through Excellence in Cities and other networks – the individual was seeking finance for an existing research idea, for which an ERSC application had been unsuccessful.

The award was provided, but it was not in one of the priority areas originally identified by the University, though subsequently another award has been provided in one of the selected areas (Maths).

The University felt that the lack of initial applications was a result of problems with staff cover in schools and that EFAs were presented as a full-time opportunity, over one term. The individual who took forward the first award worked part-time and used her spare time to conduct the research (paid for through the EFA). The Fellow cited colleagues who would like to do the scheme, but couldn't because of teaching responsibilities.

**Sheffield Hallam University**

Sheffield Hallam University first tried to recruit Fellows through letters to EIC/EAZ schools, Excellence Co-ordinators and advertising in the Sheffield Hallam newsletter. However, they received a poor response with bids of low quality and/or from teachers whose priority appeared to be to move out of teaching. In their second phase of promotion, they put adverts in school bulletins and this encouraged a better response with some interesting project ideas. As such they filled all three Fellow places. They were hoping to be able to fund a fourth EFA but they could not find the funds to cover this.

**Bristol University**

Initially the University worked in partnership with the University of West of England and sent out letters to all Heads and Principals of schools/colleges in the EIC/EAZ area. There were few applications resulting and the two they did receive both came from the same college and were channelled through by the Head of Quality and Improvement within the college who has a strong background and interest in research and wants to develop a 'research culture within the college'. The college was therefore perhaps more open to releasing staff than other colleges and schools in the area.

As a result of the small number of applications, selection was not really an issue as there were not sufficient expressions of interest. The low level of response to the initial awareness raising activity undertaken is thought to be a function of:

- Heads/Principals acting as gatekeepers or not passing on the letter;
- timing, with schools/colleges and interested teachers not being able to organise changes to timetabling in time for the start of the academic year.

In recognition of the difficulties, the University is trying a different approach this academic year by working more closely with the Aimhigher Co-ordinator to try and attract more interest from within schools.

**Table 2.2: Recruitment – Good Practice**

**Manchester University**

The University involved a number of key staff in the EFA scheme, including three lecturers from the School of Education (whose interests were directly related to widening participation and education-based research), and the Widening Participation officer.

It was recognised by the University at the outset that schools/colleges would find it hard to release staff on a full-time basis and therefore it was always intended that the scheme would be delivered flexibly and that Fellows would be recruited on a part-time basis.

Marketing and selecting EFAs involved several interrelated strands of activity:

- developing a flyer that was distributed to a named member of staff in charge of Widening Participation to all schools in the EAZ/EiC;
- writing directly to Head Teachers and Principals outlining the scheme and its aims together with a letter of application for staff;
- informal discussions with partner schools and teaching staff with whom the University has regular contact as part their role in providing initial teacher training.

The University built on their existing links with schools and colleges and indeed a number of EFA applications resulted from this line of approach (i.e. a number were teachers the University worked with on a regular basis in delivering initial teacher training).

**Oxford University**

The University developed an EFA ‘marketing’ pack which includes a letter explaining the purpose of the Fellowships (which are stated clearly), an A4 flyer advertising the Awards, an accompanying leaflet, an application form and a pre-addressed return envelope.

The HEI perceived Widening Participation to be a national issue and thus wrote to all EAZ/EiC areas and placed an advertisement in the TES. This led to 9 applications.

**Liverpool University: Involving partners and schools**

The Widening Participation Team wrote to all schools and colleges within Merseyside to inform them of the scheme. Aimhigher Co-ordinators were briefed and they raised awareness as part of their usual business and network meetings in the area.

Through this ‘two-pronged’ approach they attracted 7 firm applications and a further 5/6 expressions of interest. Applicants were then requested to write a 2 side letter of application under general headings (Outline, Plan, Method of dissemination)

In order to involve schools, Liverpool worked to identify the best release pattern with schools and it was agreed that one Fellow would work part time over two years to enable her to be released with minimal impact on the school. In addition, all themes were

**Table 2.2: Recruitment – Good Practice**

negotiated to ensure they were relevant to schools, as well as of interest to HEIs and the Fellow. For example, one Fellow is focused on engaging parents in widening participation.

**Table 2.3: Recruitment and Selection – EiC/EAZ Engagement**

**Oxford University**

The local EiC/EAZ area only includes one school that already has well-established links with the University and the University sees the widening participation agenda as a national issue for the University rather than a local one. With this in mind the University wrote to all the EiC/EAZ areas inviting applications. In addition, the University took out an advert in the TES also inviting applications.

As a result the University received only nine applications, which was very disappointing. One of the possible reasons for this poor response was that EiC/EAZ contact data provided by DfES was found to be poor<sup>9</sup> and there was also a suspicion that information did not always filter down from co-ordinators to partner schools and colleges.

**Greenwich University: Involving Partners**

The University has involved a number of external partners throughout the delivery of the Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme, including Aimhigher Partnership/EiC organisers within Greenwich Education Service. This has had a number of benefits both in terms of delivery and outcomes. In terms of delivery the involvement of the Aimhigher Partnership co-ordinator has positively assisted recruitment in the following ways:

- enabling direct marketing to teachers through facilitating the process of including information in teachers payslips;
- fostering 'buy in' from the Senior Management Team and teaching staff through well established existing relationships;
- facilitating the involvement of schools by highlighting the potential benefits to the school or college.

The inclusion of Aimhigher Partnership stakeholders has the potential for additional outcomes and impact. This is because the scheme has been devised to link to and support the aims and activities of these local players. Furthermore, as the Aimhigher Partnership Co-ordinator has been involved in the inputs to the scheme, involvement in the outputs including dissemination are established from the outset.

**Theme Identification**

2.13 The other three key ways that themes have been identified are as follows:

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<sup>9</sup> This situation has now improved

- HEI has set priorities and asked for proposals linked to these;
- the individual applying for the EFA has decided;
- schools/colleges have identified broad priorities that they would like staff to address through an EFA.

2.14 In practice there is an **equal divide between those EFA themes identified by HEIs and those by individuals applying**, with very few being identified by schools and colleges. In many cases, there has been an **element of negotiation at a three-way meeting** with the school/college, Fellow and HEI. In situations where schools have been reluctant to release staff, several HEI's have re-iterated the breadth and relevance of the widening participation agenda to schools and tried to identify themes that have had a direct relevance to the particular school. This has been successful in many cases. **Three-way ownership of the theme makes a significant contribution to the effectiveness of the project.**

2.15 It appears that where the Widening Participation Unit has managed the recruitment of Fellows, the HEI may have had more influence over the broad theme than where the Fellow has been recruited by an academic or other administrative department. However this is not always the case.

2.16 As highlighted in some of the case study examples already provided above, in some instances, the low level of response has limited the extent to which the HEI can influence the chosen theme.

### **Selection of Fellow**

2.17 Most HEIs initially had a reasonably clear understanding of the skills and experience that would most likely be needed by an Excellence Fellow. The most common requirements (in no order of priority) have been:

- seniority;
- research experience or involvement in widening participation;
- writing skills;
- support from Head Teacher/Principal (and subsequent availability);
- enthusiasm.

2.18 Although there are several examples of 'rejection' of applicants, selection of the Fellow has not been a key issue as there have been relatively few applications and the HEIs have therefore accepted those that they received. Some HEI's have chosen to formally interview Fellows despite there being no competition for places, which has instilled a sense of respect and importance into the Fellowship. On occasion where Fellows may not have met preferred criteria, they have been accepted due to the lack of demand. For example, one university said that ***"they would not have agreed the first award if they had had more choice, but they had to be pragmatic"***.

2.19 Therefore, in many cases, selection has been a task for Head Teachers and Principals (rather than the HEI) whereby Head Teachers put forward one applicant from their school/college. Some concern has been expressed that this may have occasionally prevented the most appropriate staff from being put forward for the EFA, as the Head Teacher/Principal will not want to lose the input of key staff for however short a period. One HEI reported: ***"often the teachers best suited to the Fellowship are the most committed teachers anyway who schools would be reluctant to release"***.

2.20 However, in practice this issue has not been significant, with the scheme generally attracting experienced senior staff. **Over 85% of the Fellows in the 15 case studies held a senior position** (for example, Heads of Department, Heads of Sixth Form) or they had non-teaching responsibility related to widening participation. It is reported that this is because senior staff are easier to release due to having less teaching time, they bring more experience, contacts and context to the project and may carry the influence internally and externally to ease dissemination. However, the factors underpinning selection of individuals appears to be more complex than this, with most Fellows also having a 'unique' reason why they can be released, for example:

***"I am a part time college tutor and the agreement we have come to is that I will conduct the Fellowship on my days off and the funds will be used to pay me for that";***

***"we have special measures and we are an extended school, so we perhaps have more money and flexibility than other schools. We can therefore afford to release a member of staff";***

***"I was on secondment anyway, and this came up";***

***"the college was due a review and we felt this would support that";***

***"our school was closing and therefore I could be released for CPD reasons".***

2.21 In the cases where the staff released have been less senior, they have tended to be newly qualified and/or particularly enthusiastic about their research project. This enthusiasm has been considered essential in the selection of less senior Fellows.

2.22 There are, however, some examples from our case study visits where more specific selection or checking procedures have been undertaken by the HEIs, as shown in **Table 2.4** below.

<b>Table 2.4: Selection Processes</b>
<b>Oxford University</b>
<p>Nine applications were received as a result of the letters sent to all EiCs/EAZs nationally. It was decided that all nine applications would be taken forward and therefore ‘selection’ was not so much of an issue. One of the reasons for this decision was that the applications received were all from comprehensive schools and FE colleges that were ‘targets’ for the University in terms of their widening participation agenda i.e. not the traditional application routes to Oxford. <b>However, there are core criteria that ensure that the award benefits both the applicant and the University.</b> These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the background of the school or FE college i.e. Is it a target for the University?</li> <li>• standard of the proposal;</li> <li>• ideally applicants should be involved with post-16 students i.e. potential University applicants;</li> <li>• most applicants are either experienced (Head of Department/6th Form) or very enthusiastic relatively newly qualified teachers.</li> </ul>
<b>Manchester University</b>
<p>The University has a defined application procedure, where applicants are required to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a full CV;</li> <li>• a letter of application to a maximum of 500 words that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- highlighted the applicants involvement in widening participation;</li> <li>- expressed the applicants motivation and commitment to widening participation;</li> <li>- outlined a possible research project(s);</li> </ul> </li> <li>• a letter of support from the Principal/Head (confidentiality assured – Heads encouraged to be frank about their level of support and their view of the applicants capacity to undertake the research).</li> </ul>

### **Table 2.4: Selection Processes**

This approach to application ensured that:

- the school/college was committed to supporting the EFA from the outset and this eliminated barriers in securing release of the applicant from the very beginning;
- the themes for the research were developed from the ground up and reflected an issue that was pertinent to the school/college;
- the University was provided with a reference indicating the applicant's capability from someone who knew them well.

Applications were limited and about six responses were received. Applicants were selected upon merit and on the basis of 'fit' of the topic area with other University and school/EiC initiatives. Candidates attended an informal interview. Four Fellows were selected and a further Fellow was identified to start the (2003-04) academic year. In addition, the Science and Engineering department has mirrored a similar version of the scheme and has put up £22K for a further two Fellows.

### **University of Greenwich**

The application procedure comprised:

- completing an application form comprising personal details, eligibility, education history and teaching status, work related development and training, referees, present and past employment history, disability and a supporting statement outlining skills and experience relating to the proposed research project;
- research proposal, including rationale, aims, outcomes, methodology, timescale, resources.



## Constraints

2.23 The recruitment of Fellows has been lower than originally expected by DfES and HEFCE<sup>10</sup>. The lead-in time for the scheme to get off the ground was longer than anticipated, with only 11 starting in the first Term of 2002. However, although it took some time for HEIs and their partners to develop successful approaches to recruitment and selection, there are now 62<sup>11</sup> agreements in place and a further Fellowship is under negotiation. In addition, we are aware of a further three to six Fellows who may be in place, but for whom no details have been provided.

2.24 HEIs have faced a number of constraints that account for the long lead-in time and low recruitment levels. These are summarised in **Table 2.5** below.

**Table 2.5: Recruitment Constraints**

### **Communication:**

- Time taken to communicate with schools and colleges (particularly if done via a third party such as an EiC Partnership, EAZ or Local Education Authority).

### **Engaging Schools:**

- Restriction to EAZ/EiC areas meant that there was a limited pool of schools to draw from for some HEIs – these suggested that they should be able to cast the net wider to include schools that are in deprived pockets of their area;
- Some have experienced a lack of response from schools – sometimes information has not got through to the right people or papers have “sat in Head Teachers’ in-trays”; some Head Teachers feel they cannot release staff so do not pass on the information;
- Most schools are (or were at the time of launch) more distant from the widening participation agenda than colleges, who have to demonstrate progression and build widening participation into their action plans; politically schools may be prioritising immediate issues such as behavioural issues, attendance and achievement and may see little relevance in some of the suggested themes;
- Some secondary schools feel that their young people for university have low aspirations in relation to HE;
- Existing links with schools may be weaker than with colleges, and it has been easier to exploit the stronger college and HEI relationship;
- Individual school teachers may feel guilty at breaking teaching continuity of learning for their class.

<sup>10</sup> the expectation had been an average of 3 Fellows per University would be recruited and at least 100 nationally by March 2004

<sup>11</sup> at March 2004

### **HEI Coordination:**

- Restructuring and/or illness has meant that some HEIs have had difficulty in organising and coordinating the scheme;
- Identifying a key person within the HEI to take a lead on Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme has taken time;
- Workload of HEI coordinator may have meant a lack of time available for EFA recruitment.

### **Release of Staff:**

- Unwillingness of some Head Teachers to release staff, often due to concerns regarding the quality of available supply staff;
- School timetables being set before becoming aware of Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme;
- Schools less likely to release staff at the start of Autumn Term;
- Continuing Professional Development training for Key Stage 3 teachers will mean that few of these staff could be released;
- School/college concerns that the teacher motivation for undertaking the EFA may be to gain research experience in order to move out of the school/college environment.

2.25 The **most significant issue affecting the number of applicants is the difficulty in releasing teachers** to undertake the awards. This is not only a financial issue, but also one of quality and continuity of teaching. Nearly all HEIs have experienced this and this has either resulted in delays, non-applications, or inexperienced staff applying.

2.26 Other constraints have related to the **effectiveness of marketing and contact with schools**. HEIs have generally had a better response from colleges than schools. This is likely to be a result of the more flexible availability of college staff, stronger links with colleges, and the greater existing engagement of colleges in the Widening Participation agenda. Schools may be more focused on school priorities, such as attendance, achievement and behavioural problems and consider the scheme of low relevance to their immediate issues. Indeed, several schools that were involved were those who were already involved in widening participation activities.

## Areas for Improvement

2.27 **Table 2.6** below outlines stakeholder suggestions regarding scheme flexibility and implementation by partnerships.

<b>Table 2.6: Suggested Changes</b>
<b>Overall Scheme Flexibility: DfES/HEFCE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More set up time – targeting schools 9 months ahead to avoid timetabling issues.</li> <li>• More flexibility about area that Fellows can come from – “we don’t have an EiC, so couldn’t second someone to be an EFA from the local area”; “there are schools in deprived pockets within non designated areas”.</li> <li>• Improve flexibility of duration to include ‘mini’ Fellowships and the option to continue successful Fellows.</li> <li>• National/regional marketing directed at potential teachers not at Head Teachers (whilst recognising the critical importance of support at senior level).</li> <li>• Providing opportunities for HEIs to share approaches and practice.</li> </ul>
<b>HEI/Partnership Recruitment/Selection</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early preparation/planning so more notice for school timetables etc.</li> <li>• Involvement of key stakeholders, including Aimhigher Partnership co-ordinators to add value to the recruitment and scheme focus.</li> <li>• Closer working with schools to identify themes relevant to primary schools.</li> <li>• Better marketing to access the right people for the scheme/get more interest/get a more co-ordinated approach – “schools felt this was just another initiative”.</li> <li>• The agreement should be negotiated at a senior level within the school/college to ensure that their time is ring-fenced, for example if the school/college line manager changes and is unsupportive or if there are staff changes at the HEI.</li> </ul>

### 3 KEY FEATURES OF AWARDS

#### Introduction

3.1 In this section, we outline the key features of existing awards, based on the information outlined in the Fellowship Agreements and the issues raised in the case studies and HEI telephone interviews. We set out the key features under the following themes:

- numbers and influencing factors;
- school/college involvement;
- duration and pattern of delivery;
- cost of the awards;
- key themes of the awards;
- links to widening participation strategies.

#### Numbers and Influencing Factors

3.2 **Table 3.1** overleaf provides a summary of awards that are being taken forward. In total, HEIs indicate that 66-68 awards have been started to date (although only 62 agreements are in place), with one additional Fellow due to start later in 2004. We are aware of a further three to six Fellows, although we have been provided with no detail on these. Forty three EFAs should now be completed although only nine final reports have been received<sup>12</sup>. A summary of each known Fellowship is set out in **Annex 1**.

3.3 **In the following we discuss some of the features of the awards that are taking place.** It is worth noting at this stage that many of the characteristics have **been influenced by some of the constraints** associated with recruitment and selection discussed in the preceding section. In particular:

- the high number of part-time rather than full-time Fellows has been influenced by individual preferences, but in particular the difficulties associated with providing cover for school and college staff;
- colleges are more involved than schools as there is more flexibility in releasing staff and they have existing closer links with HEIs;

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<sup>12</sup> At March 2004

- low levels of applications in many cases has meant that initial attempts to focus awards in priority areas linked to Universities' widening participation strategies was not possible;
- school/college timetables had already been set by the time the HEIs and partnerships were seeking to identify Fellows – this delayed many Fellowships from starting until September 2003.

**Table 3.1: EFAs Agreed and Anticipated – November 2003**

Term	No. HEIs with EFAs starting	Mix of FT/PT		Duration	
1: September - November 2002	11	FT:	0	1 Term:	0
		PT:	11	2 Terms:	1
		Not known:	0	3 Terms:	8
				1 Year:	2
				Not known:	0
2: January - February 2003	12	FT:	1	1 Term:	2
		PT:	10	2 Terms:	6
		Not known:	1	3 Terms:	1
				1 Year:	2
				Not known:	
3: April 2003	20	FT:	10	1 Term:	10
		PT:	10	2 Terms:	3
		Not known:		3 Terms:	4
				1 Year:	3
				Not known:	0
4: September 2003	18	FT:	5	1 Term:	4
		PT:	13	2 Terms:	1
		Not known:		3 Terms:	8
				4 Terms:	1
				1 Year:	4
				Not known:	
5. Jan – March 2004	4	FT:	2	1 Term	4
		PT:	2	2 Terms	
		Not known:		3 Terms	
				4 Terms	
Term not known	3	-		-	
Anticipated	1	-		-	

## **School/college Involvement**

- 3.4 Fellows have been drawn from both schools and colleges, however the proportion of schools is significantly less. Only 21 out of the 66 known Fellows are from schools (32%). This compares similarly with the proportion of schools involved in February 2003 (30%) and therefore may be indicative of the proportion of schools likely to participate in such a scheme.
- 3.5 The two key reasons for the lower involvement of schools than colleges are reported to be as follows:
- existing links with HEIs are stronger with colleges than with schools, making recruitment easier;
  - schools face significant pressure to ensure continuity of staff as part of quality assurance, making it more difficult to secure staff for involvement with the Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme;
  - widening participation is difficult to prioritise in school when there are often more pressing agendas such as attainment and addressing behavioural issues. In addition, understanding of widening participation may be narrower in schools and therefore EFA projects may seem less relevant. Subsequently, the schools involved may be those who are prepared to release staff for professional development reasons (but see little relevance of the project to the school) or those who are already engaged in the agenda, for example extended schools or where the HEI has worked closely with the school to identify a mutually relevant theme (normally action research). Colleges are already expected to be linked into the widening participation agenda with HEIs, and thus are easier to attract into the scheme.

## **Duration and Pattern of Delivery**

- 3.6 The trend for part-time, flexible delivery continues. Only 17 of the 62 Fellowships are being delivered full-time over one term, and most of these are later Fellowships (April 2003 onwards). A higher proportion of Fellows from schools (about 50%) are conducting their project full-time than Fellows from colleges, where only 26% are being delivered full-time.
- 3.7 Part-time EFAs are being delivered flexibly, with the majority being undertaken over two days a week for two/three terms. Flexibility is seen as a key factor for recruitment.

3.8 Seven mini Fellowships at Oxford (part-funded though matched funding) are being delivered through intensive bursts of residential activity (lasting one-four weeks) – see **Table 3.2** below.

<b>Table 3.2: Duration &amp; Pattern of Delivery</b>
<b>Oxford University</b>
<p>Whilst the University was wedded to the residential aspect of the Fellowships (there are no part-time undergraduate courses at the University and all undergraduates are residential), in order to accommodate all nine applications it was acknowledged that some flexibility was required. To this end two types of Fellowship were developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a ‘full’ Fellowship – this is where the Fellow attends a full term (8 weeks), accommodated at a college;</li> <li>• a ‘mini’ Fellowship – where a Fellow resides at a college for two to four (typically three) weeks.</li> </ul> <p>Most ‘full’ Fellowships have taken place in the Summer Term as it easier to release and cover for teachers over the exam period and college accommodation is more readily available. By the end of this year over half of the colleges at Oxford University will have participated with EFA. The mini-Fellowships have proved cost-effective – providing a focused immersion into HEI life and raising awareness of the commitment of Oxford to securing applications from a wider range of students.</p>

**Cost of the Awards**

3.9 The cost of the Fellowship awards vary from £8,900 to £20,000 (excluding the mini Fellowships at Oxford). The variation is largely due to the differing cost of staff cover. There appears to be no relationship between cost, geography and institution type. In some instances, it appears that HEIs have a set cost for each award, for example all EFAs at one HEI cost £18,333.

3.10 The division of costs between the HEI, school and Fellow is deemed to be appropriate, as the schools bear the main costs. However, there has been a blurring of what the funding is for and poor planning of expenditure, with dissemination funding not necessarily being ring-fenced by either party.

3.11 Although the funding appears to have been adequate for most HEIs in the pilot, it has relied on the goodwill of those HEIs who recruited three Fellows and provided strong management of these Fellows. This may suggest a need for additional funding in these circumstances. However, if schools and colleges (or partnerships) were better engaged in Fellow support and management, and if dissemination activity was more focused on dissemination of learning within schools and colleges, (rather than attendance at events, conferences with wider stakeholders etc) this would reduce the burden on the HEI and the funding would be adequate.

## **Key Themes**

3.12 The focus of the projects varies considerably. The Fellow or the HEI has generally identified the theme, not the school/college as intended. It appears that this is more often the Fellow, with about two thirds being Fellow-led. There has been an element of informal and formal negotiation about the theme and type of project at the agreement stage. It should be noted that often HEIs are happy to agree to projects that would never have a direct impact on their institution but are of more general interest.

3.13 Negotiation is intended to engender ownership and commitment to the theme by the HEI, Fellow and school or college. However, it is often the case that there is minimal involvement of key stakeholders at the set-up stage. School/college involvement is generally low (because often the rationale for involvement is staff CPD, not project outcomes) and the range of stakeholders involved within the HEI is often fairly narrow (generally comprising only one lead officer, not those that are related to the project in admissions or tutors in academic departments). This is sometimes appropriate because the project may not be focused on activity that will impact directly on the admissions to the HEI, but in many cases there are implications for the effectiveness of the projects:

- some projects have lacked ownership by stakeholders relevant to the findings of the research, for example a project focused on progression issues in English, did not involve the English department in set-up and struggled to get their later involvement and interest in the research findings;
- some projects have lost the added-value and guidance that other staff could have contributed at the set-up stage (eg. to avoid duplication of research and to focus the project more specifically on a real issue for that department). This has affected the level of support and relevance of some projects;



- Fellows have been unaware of political issues around the focus of the project, which have left the projects unable to progress usefully;
- lack of school/college engagement has led to the Fellow being pulled back into school/college responsibilities and/or a lack of school/college interest in implementing or disseminating findings.

**3.14** In **Table 3.3** we present two different examples in relation to the involvement of schools in themes and theme negotiations.

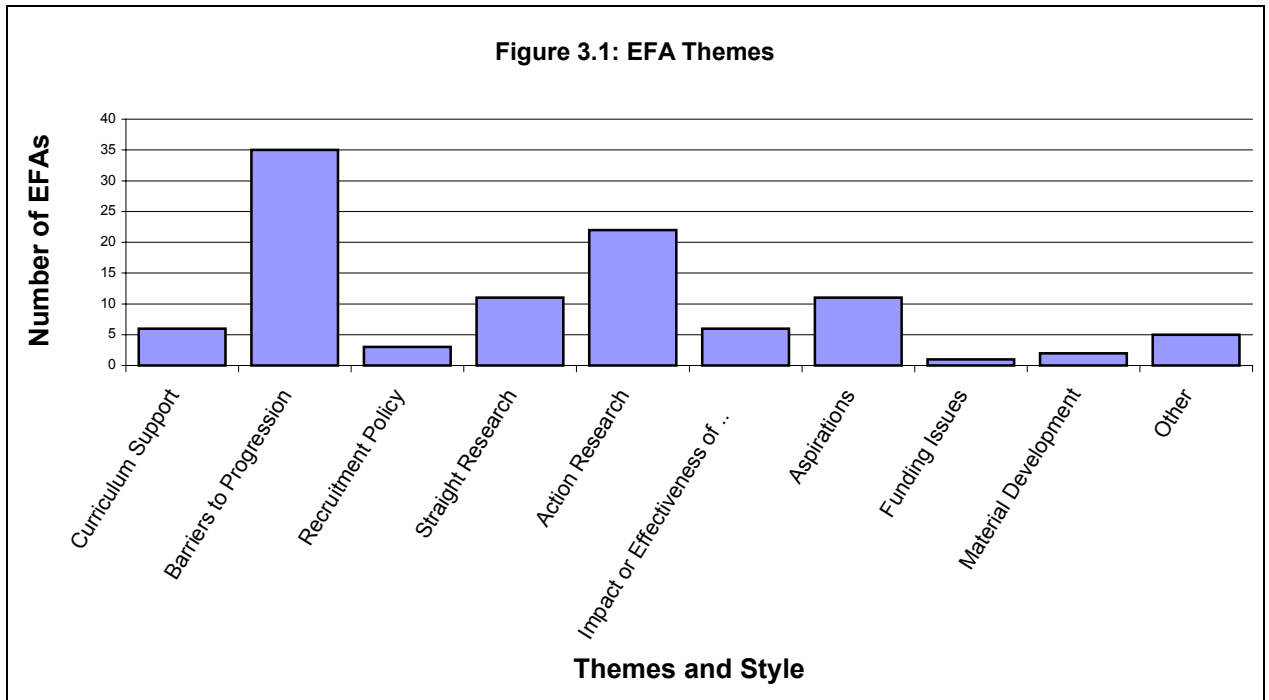
<b>Table 3.3: Themes</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Greenwich University: Involvement of schools in themes</b></p> <p>Greenwich worked closely with the schools involved to ensure that the themes were relevant to them – the Heads would not release staff unless this was the case. It was felt that action research was preferable because it had a benefit for practitioners. For example, one Fellow is investigating the critical factors in rapid school improvement’.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Liverpool University: Theme Negotiation</b></p> <p>The University identified a number of broad themes that were considered pertinent in terms of their experience of widening participation and these were included in the letter that went out to potential Fellows. Fellows were then asked to develop a piece of work that focused on that theme but based on their own interests and relevant to their school. It was considered essential to identify a topic that had three-way benefit.</p>

**3.15** It is difficult to categorise the theme of some EFAs because the activities are not detailed in the agreement or because the EFA covers a number of different of themes. **Figure 3.1** below provides our interpretation of the main foci<sup>13</sup> and research style of the EFA projects.

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<sup>13</sup> Some EFAs have been categorised as having several themes

3.16 Figure 3.1 shows that the majority of projects are focused on barriers to progression, with a significant proportion focused on aspiration. Interestingly, a large number of the projects carry an action research element, particularly later projects. This may be as a result of the growing influence of schools and colleges on the themes as part of an agreement to release staff.



3.17 **Table 3.4** below provides some examples of EFA themes from the case studies.

<b>Table 3.4: EFA Themes</b>
<b>Bristol University</b>
1) Accessibility of deaf students to University, supported by staff at University 2) Barriers to applying to University or being successful in application, supported by University of West of England staff.
<b>Oxford University</b>
Fellows were free to choose their research theme. Interestingly, whilst both the Fellows we interviewed had identified distinct areas of research, they follow a broadly similar approach:
- raising aspiration to progress to HE (general) – investigation into perceived barriers by students (and staff) preventing increased applications to Oxford (specific);

**Table 3.4: EFA Themes**

- identifying ways of overcoming perceived barriers in a local setting.

By attending on a residential basis, both Fellows were putting themselves into a similar situation that one of their students would be in if they were a successful applicant to Oxford. This idea of immersing yourself in college life is at the heart of the 'Oxford experience'.

**Manchester University**

All EFAs from Manchester University focused upon conducting a piece of pure research. The Fellow interviewed had focused his research on 'Widening Participation of Pakistani male students from Bolton in Higher Education.'

**Birmingham University**

Birmingham have a range of awards which cover recruitment, curriculum, progression, and learning styles. The focus of the award for the Fellow we interviewed is 'Aspects of non-standard entries in health degrees and barriers to HEI and to Birmingham in particular'.

**Lincoln University**

One EFA is focused on the impact that the EMA is having in Hull. One EFA is in negotiation and is likely to focus on differences in HEI/college teaching and learning styles.

**Northumbria University**

One of the EFAs considered barriers to progression for students from lower social-economic groups. This was an extension to an MA completed by the Fellow and included a particular focus on financial barriers.

**Sheffield Hallam University**

Two Fellows have focused on developing curriculum materials to enhance vocational qualifications. Both Fellowships have focused on producing materials that will enable students from non-traditional backgrounds in HE to further their qualifications.

## Type of Project

- 3.18 The type of project varies, with more projects being based around academic research than action-focused research. Although we do not have the information to make judgements about the relevance of the theme in specific cases, there appear to be a **number of projects that are seeking to identify generic barriers to HE, which may duplicate other research that is available**. In addition, some projects are not focused on raising awareness or aspiration of students in the Fellow's own school/college and there are few projects that seek to involve parents, guardians and carers.
- 3.19 The case studies indicate that projects are more often focused on action research where schools have influenced the theme or where the Widening Participation Department is driving the scheme. This appears to be because action research is of more direct relevance to school issues, it is perceived as more useful than academic research and widening participation units have an existing strategy and programme of activity within which to locate the Fellowship. Where an academic department/school is driving the project the Fellowship is often focused on academic research, such as an element of teaching and learning or barriers to progression, most likely due to departmental culture, a traditional interpretation of the term 'Fellowship' and perhaps fewer direct links with the school/college.

## Links to Widening Participation Strategies

### Internal Strategies

- 3.20 Just over half of the HEIs feel that their EFAs are linked in a generic way to the HEIs internal Widening Participation Strategy. About a third of HEIs reported that the EFA was linked to a specific element of their internal strategy. This relates directly to the level of influence that the HEI chose to exert over the selected EFA theme. Examples of this include:
- collaborative working with schools/further education element of the HEI Widening Participation (WP) strategy;
  - recruiting local students;
  - identified weaknesses in widening participation at the HEI;
  - part of an annual action plan;
  - evaluating existing widening participation activities.

- 3.21 It appears that where the theme of the EFA is closely tied to internal strategy or where the theme is suggested by the HEI, the level of HEI support to deliver and embed learning from the project is greater. This is presumably because the HEI has a greater vested interest, and in the case of academic research, often expects the report to be published as an HEI publication. In the case of action research, the expectation is that the learning is embedded to improve or extend widening participation activity.
- 3.22 Conversely, where the theme bears little relation to internal strategies or priorities, support and dissemination appears to be weaker. Generally, school/college interest in many of the projects appears surprisingly weak, perhaps because they had less initial input or their motivation has been on generic strengthening links, rather than specific outputs relating to their learners.
- 3.23 Below we provide an example of how the EF research can be embedded within the HEI.

#### **Greenwich University: Embedding EFA within Internal Strategy**

The EFA scheme is placed in the Centre for Lifelong Learning in collaboration with the school of Education and Training. In this way the EFA scheme has been linked into the University's widening participation strategy.

### **External Strategies**

- 3.24 **Links with other partners/partnerships' widening participation strategies are less obvious.** This may relate to the low level of direct involvement of Excellence in Cities and Education Action Zone partnerships, or may reflect the priority HEIs, schools and colleges gave to their own or teachers' interests. Most respondents felt that the EFAs fitted in loosely to the external agenda, rather than being a specific part of an external initiative. Specific partners/partnerships that have been cited include:
- networking/links with other HEIs;
  - links with Excellence Action Zone and Excellence in Cities Partnerships;
  - Partnership for Progression;
  - regional network of Further Education Colleges;
  - close links with local initiative supporting the delivery of higher education within Colleges.

## **4 MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF AWARDS**

### **Introduction**

4.1 In this section we use evidence from the HEI case study visits, DfES and HEFCE feedback to provide an overview of management, monitoring and support activities and respective issues. We also draw on some evidence from the HEI telephone consultations conducted in 2003. Key themes addressed are:

- Purpose and Quality Assurance (National and Local);
- Administration and Management Resource;
- Methods of Support;
- Constraints.

### **Purpose and Quality Assurance (National and Local)**

4.2 Effective management of any scheme requires clarity of purpose and quality assurance processes at both the strategic and operational level. At the outset of the scheme, DfES worked closely with HEFCE<sup>14</sup> to produce school/college and HEI guidelines on the purpose of the scheme and to develop a suggested template for a 'Fellowship Agreement'. This agreement was intended to form the core strategic monitoring system and also provide an operational tool to define and 'sign up' to the project.

4.3 Although DfES had a clear sense of vision for the scheme, this may not have been clearly and consistently communicated to HEFCE and subsequently to HEIs through the documentation and advice provided. As a result there has been some 'opaqueness' in local project aims, objectives and planned outcomes. This, in addition to the need for HEIs to find ways to make the project work, has resulted in some 'strategy drift' and a more HEI driven and delivery- led approach than anticipated. This is explored in more detail below.

4.4 The key structural and strategic factors that may have contributed to this strategy drift are:

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<sup>14</sup> HEFCE were contracted to deliver the scheme by DfES

- there were several changes in policy (by DfES & HEFCE) on operational issues in the set-up stages with HEIs, for example on the flexibility of certain elements of the scheme, which made HEIs unsure of the boundaries;
- the translation of the vision into clear aims and objectives may not have been as coherent as necessary, by DfES and/or HEFCE and subsequently to HEIs, although the funding allocation was clear. DfES guidance is **subtly more school/college driven** than the HEFCE guidance, which provides more freedom for other partners to lead, for example:

***DfES guidance for schools and colleges focuses on the scheme being 'of benefit not just to the individual teacher, but to the school or college as a whole and potentially other schools and colleges' whereas the HEFCE guidance focuses on the 'scheme being of mutual benefit to the Fellow, their school or college, pupils and students, and the host HEI'***

- the scheme came at a time when HEFCE was devolving initiatives for decision at the regional level, rather than directing them, and therefore the scheme didn't easily relate to other initiatives;
  - multiple changes in project management staff at both DfES and HEFCE may have contributed to 'vision drift';
  - there was no clear quality assurance procedure in place between DfES and HEFCE, and HEFCE and the projects. The tri-partite agreement template was a factual document on the nature of the Fellowship and did not engender school/college engagement or encourage detailed planning.
- 4.5 These structural factors meant that the scheme was initially interpreted slightly differently by individual HEIs and subsequently became more HEI driven than intended. In the early 'set up' interviews with HEIs, it was clear that there was some difference in interpretation of the core aim of the Pilot and the breadth of definition of 'widening participation'. Some HEIs considered the initiative to be about strengthening HEI links and activities with schools, colleges and learners whilst others interpreted it as an academic research project about barriers to participation, retention or achievement. The interpretation is loosely related to the driver of the project within the HEI, the latter approach being taken more often by academic departments. In practice, some colleges (and occasional schools) viewed it primarily for staff development rather than as a useful project for their organisation.

- 4.6 In addition to these clarity and communication issues, **a key influence on ‘strategy drift’ has been pragmatism** as a result of the initial recruitment and selection difficulties faced by HEIs. These constraints extended the initial flexibility and focus of the scheme, with HEIs trying different approaches, themes and projects in order to make the scheme work. Indeed, without the significant flexibility allowed, the Pilot would inevitably have faced even greater recruitment constraints. However, in some cases the compromises that HEIs have made in order to recruit Fellows has affected the clarity of purpose of the scheme within an HEI and within individual projects and the lack of initial interest by schools/colleges meant that HEIs lead the scheme. Where Fellows have been released on the basis of staff development, schools/colleges have not necessarily been interested in project outcomes which has affected their interest and engagement.
- 4.7 The lack of quality assurance processes between DfES, HEFCE and HEIs meant that the relevance and contribution of projects to the original aims of the scheme could not be easily monitored, preventing early intervention where pragmatism or misinterpretation were shifting the focus of the scheme. At a local level a lack of quality assurance process has led to variable quality of project delivery and outputs.
- 4.8 At a local level only one of the HEIs has undertaken an evaluation of the EFA scheme, although evaluation in the form of learning from action research occurred as part of some projects.
- 4.9 Below we identify some improvements linked to clarity of purpose.

**Clarifying key Features of The Scheme : Suggested Scheme improvements**

- Clear communication of the core purpose of the scheme, its objectives at a strategic level and expected outcomes and impact; “Make it clearer who is leading this – DfES or HEFCE”.
- Core quality assurance and accountability procedures as a device to identify common expectations of projects and to monitor standards.
- Provision of a contact to run “nitty gritty” enquiries past.



- Retain flexibility for academic research and action research with support for stakeholders to decide which is most appropriate (e.g. academic research for identifying problems as a catalyst for further research; action research to test ideas and methods of embedding widening participation activities and as demonstration projects to underpin further funding).
- To provide briefing sessions for HEIs at the beginning to bring clarity of purpose and addressing issues.
- Disseminate good practice in management and support.

## **Administration and Management Resource**

4.10 The case study HEIs have generally provided significant levels of resource to support the EFAs initiative – most of which, though not all, is based in Widening Participation Departments:

- at the University of London – overall administration/finance is dealt with by the Widening Participation Officer and the mentor organises access to facilities;
- at Oxford University there are two staff supporting the co-ordination of EFAs at an operational and strategic level within the University. In addition, a Project Officer within the Admissions Team has responsibility for co-ordinating the day-to-day activities associated with the EFA including administration and liaison with the colleges. It is felt that in any given year, operating 9 – 12 Fellows is probably the optimum level for co-ordination (and funding) purposes representing 25% of one Project Officers time;
- at Manchester University EFAs are delivered from within the School of Education in the Department with responsibility for initial teacher training. Although the Widening Participation Officer has been involved, three lecturers within the department have driven the scheme and the research themes have been linked with the lecturers' other interests. Hence the staff involved are motivated to invest additional time in driving forward the scheme as it linked in with their own targets within the university (e.g. to undertake research, publish papers that all contribute to the RAE);<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Interesting mixed views were evidenced in relation to this issue – one lecturer felt that the EFA scheme was unlikely to contribute to the RAE as the research conducted was unlikely to be published in journals of a significant calibre to be counted within the RAE. However another lecturer expressed conversely that although the research undertaken was small scale, it could be linked to his other research activities and therefore was likely to be published and would contribute to the RAE.

- at Birmingham University, the scheme is managed overall by the Widening Participation department, involving 2½ Widening Participation Officers and the Head Teacher, with some administration support from the main facilities department. The mentor, located in the relevant school, organised facilities.

4.11 The level of resource input to management, administration and support is often significantly greater than the EFA funding provided. For example:

- Oxford University has used HEFCE Aspiration funding to supplement the EFA funding provided by DfES to support the nine full and mini Fellowships in the initial tranche. Three Fellowships were funded via DfES funding and the other six via HEFCE funding;
- Bristol University passed some of the administration funding to schools/colleges, which meant that the involvement of University staff to support and manage the initiative was reliant on “good will”;
- Birmingham University’s Widening Participation Unit is well resourced and they therefore could distribute the £5k funding to schools and colleges as a gesture for time taken for mentoring;
- at Greenwich university a working group was set up to develop and approve a work-plan and the project was led by the Director of Lifelong Learning;
- only one University felt that the funding for administration did not cover the level of support they provided, and may inhibit them from reapplying in the future.

4.12 It is generally felt that the funding provided for administration is not sufficient to cover costs, but that this is not a major barrier unless intensive support is needed for three or more Fellows. Had schools and colleges been more involved in the support and management of the Fellowships, the burden would not have been so great on the HEIs.

## **Methods of Support**

4.13 The support offered to EFAs varies considerably across the participating HEIs. Key features amongst those HEIs that were in a position to report (23) include:

- around half are basing Fellows within an Academic Department and half within the Widening Participation Team;
- in terms of facilities, at a minimum most have been allocated a desk and access to libraries etc, whilst some have been provided with IT and residential accommodation;
- in terms of professional and pastoral support, **nearly all Fellows have a named contact**;
- the **support offered to about half of the Fellows seems fairly formal in terms of regular supervision, mentoring and access to research expertise if needed**;
- several HEIs are encouraging the maintenance of an internal network for Fellows;
- the support provided during the implementation of the Awards is almost exclusively from the HEI, with little support being provided at the school/college end (probably linked to their lack of input into the selection of themes and greater priorities than the EFA project). This often has implications for the priority given to the Fellow to implement findings within the school/college.

4.14 The case study HEIs provide examples of some different approaches to support EFAs, as summarised in **Table 4.1** below.

<b>Table 4.1: Models of Support</b>
<b>University of Oxford – Supportive but allowing for Self-Direction</b>
<p>Each Fellow was allocated to a University College and provided with a support person. Fellows were given full access to University facilities and resources and the support people played a useful role in facilitating access to resources as and when these were required. The role of the support person included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• initial orientation;</li> <li>• being the main link within the University;</li> <li>• assisting with project development as required;</li> <li>• introducer – to other Fellows and student bodies to provide links with existing undergraduates;</li> <li>• facilitator – for example with the University’s computer service.</li> </ul> <p>It is clear that the role did not include academic supervision and in management terms was a ‘hands-off’ activity. In this sense the Fellowships were unstructured which worked because the Fellows were either experienced teachers or had the enthusiasm to be self-directed in their study.</p>

**Table 4.1: Models of Support**

**University of Birmingham – Involving HEI Schools**

The University organised a mentor in each relevant HEI school, which resulted in a good response – they offered £1k to each school for mentor time and facilities. However the relationship was very informal, which resulted in some lack of clarity of the role for the mentor and the Fellow. This is a similar model to that at University of London.

**UCLAN**

Fellow was provided with SPSS and questionnaire design support

**University of Manchester – Intense Support and Guidance**

Key factors in delivery included:

**Fellows involved on a part-time basis** – for pragmatic reasons within the schools and colleges. The Fellow visited spent 1.5 days per week on his EFA – one day of which was spent at the University with half a day's research activity at the college. The ability to undertake the award on a part-time basis was a major factor in the Fellow being able to take part as he could still contribute to his class teaching;

**Developing a structured plan of work** - each Fellow was required to develop a research plan and was provided with guidance notes on how to do this;

**Attendance at meetings** – regular attendance at meetings was included as a contractual obligation of the award. Fellows were required to attend wider meetings (x4) involving tutors and all Fellows (Fellows required to do short presentation of their research findings) and one-to-one meetings between the Fellow and supporting tutor (every 6 weeks);

**Clear dissemination strategies** – each Fellow was expected to document a precise dissemination strategy to be received by their tutor by a specified deadline. The approach also included dissemination activity to be undertaken by the HEI;

**Guidance on research methods and analysis of data;**

**Guidance and support for report writing** – tutors proof-read and commented on EFA reports and provided Fellows with guidance and an example of a draft report structure;

**Discussion with tutors about potential publication with an academic journal;**

**Links to MEd programme** – the University set up EFAs so that the Fellow could accrue points that could be counted towards gaining a MEd – one Fellow enrolled on the MEd programme;

**Fellows were given access to University facilities and resources** e.g. library, union, postgraduate research office. However, Fellows were not allocated specific space within the University and access to their own PC for example. Feedback suggested that this was never requested from the Fellows so never came up as an issue.

**Table 4.1: Models of Support**

**Greenwich University: Supporting and Developing Autonomous Learners**

Considerable time and thought was put into the management of the scheme by the Director of Lifelong Learning. A working group was set up at the university and included the Head of School Education and training and Widening participation staff. They supported the development of a specified and detailed workplan, which was used as the basis of monitoring progress and supervision. In addition the following support was provided:

- a formal induction to the HEI and facilities;
- contact details for relevant stakeholders within the HEI;
- access to the library;
- research and supervisory support through the Director, MA/Msc Programme Leader and Principal Lecturer in the School of Education and Training. This included support on research methods, research culture and peer support.

## Constraints

4.15 About a **third of HEIs** that had reached the set-up stage when contacted **reported no issues once the Fellow had secured release** from school/college. Factors contributing to this include:

- being flexible about the timing of the project;
- working with FE colleges rather than schools;
- being very experienced in running these type of projects.

4.16 Other HEIs **identified a variety of issues** that have affected the speed or ease of the support and set-up process, as summarised in **Table 4.2** below. The extent to which the HEIs experienced set-up problems appears to be related to their general level of resources for widening participation, their experience in delivering projects and their attempts to involve and thus gain ownerships of the project by key stakeholders at an early stage.

**Table 4.2: Issues/Constraints for Set-Up and Management**

- Changes in staff within Universities over the period of the scheme's operation have meant some inconsistencies in approach to support for Fellows.
- Lack of early involvement of relevant stakeholders (at set up) within the HEI, school and other organisations.
- Difficulties in working out how much cover would cost.
- Difficulties in negotiating the pattern of delivery with availability and the type of project.
- The agreement took time to work up – not all details are known in advance.

- Limited administration time and resource to sort out the processes and support.
- Limited space to offer.
- “We couldn’t offer any IT”.
- Gaining support from the Academic Department when there is no financial incentive.
- Time to set it up.
- Casual culture of academics – hard to get commitment and a lack of clarity of roles of mentors.
- Negotiation of resources and residential rates of HEI colleges.
- Distance for mentors to visit schools.
- Funding provided did not account for teacher at £20k salary level.
- Early identification of skills gaps of Fellows, for example questionnaire design and analysis
- Using temporary staff to support and run the Fellowship scheme within an HEI makes it more difficult to integrate it into current strategy and embed findings after the Awards are completed.
- No clear guidance on how Fellows should be supported.

## 5 IMPLEMENTATION OF AWARDS

### Introduction

5.1 In this Section, we use the case studies undertaken in Autumn 2003 and January to March 2004 to comment on:

- the activities being undertaken by Fellows;
- effective delivery;
- reporting and dissemination.

5.2 This Section does not provide a comprehensive outline of activities across the full range of awards being delivered, given that it is based on fifteen case study HEIs and nine reports.

### Activities

5.3 The activities being undertaken by Fellows vary depending on the specific theme that is being studied. However, the following list provides an overview of some of the key activities being undertaken:

- questionnaires with the 'target group', for example:
  - in the case of one Bristol Fellow, deaf students mainly from their own College;
  - in the case of one Oxford Fellow, a generic questionnaire distributed to year 10 students regarding their attitudes to HE;
- action research – for example, setting up a mentor scheme to raise awareness of life at HE;
- literature/research reviews;
- awareness raising talks by HEI staff to local colleges;
- development of websites, for example, one Oxford Fellow supported the development of a website aimed at supporting students who are considering applying to Oxford by raising their knowledge base of what studying at Oxford would be really like;

- interviews with University staff, student union representatives, undergraduates and college admission officers; in the case of Northumbria, a formal survey of admissions tutors;
- interviews with former students from the target group being studied;
- assessment of existing school and college practices, for example:
  - for one Oxford Fellow, in relation to Gifted and Talented students;
  - one Birmingham Fellow visited colleges in the area to find out the difficulties students have in succeeding in University applications;
- assessment of existing University-related widening participation activities, for example, one Birmingham Fellow sat in on selection interviews at the HEI to investigate the criteria used to select applicants;
- review of A level syllabus for Chemistry/Physics from different exam boards – a disparity was found in continuity which means that some students are at a disadvantage;
- development of teaching and learning materials, for example PC Technician modules, HNC/HND top-up content and mapping to e-learning level 6; advanced Physics modules for those studying A level;
- development of processes and school policies to address the specific theme, for example for one Oxford Fellow, to identify potential Gifted and Talented students;
- attendance at open days.

5.4 Some planned activities could not be implemented. In the main this was because of practical reasons or because stakeholders could not be engaged, for example particular HEI departments or Connexions. At one University, a Fellow experienced difficulties with accessing staff within the HEI for interview and was “shocked at how closed some of the admissions departments were”.



## Effective Delivery

- 5.5 All case study HEIs feel that most of their awards are worthwhile and that generally they constitute good value for money. Ultimately the dissemination and follow-on outcomes/impacts of the activities will be the real judge of the effectiveness of the awards (as discussed further below and in following sections). However, the way in which the award is delivered will have some impact and will contribute to these ultimate achievements.
- 5.6 The case studies have highlighted a mix of delivery issues, which are represented overleaf in **Tables 5.1 and 5.2** as success factors and constraints. We then focus particularly on the pattern and duration of Fellowships, as a number of strengths and weaknesses are reported in relation to both models of delivery.

**Table 5.1: Delivery - Success Factors**

- **Clear roles and responsibilities** within the HEI; clear expectations provided for the Fellow;
- **Mentor had background in subject area** of the research which made a difference as she was personally interested and knew some useful networks for dissemination;
- **Existing relationship** meant it was easy to be informal and made it easier to communicate when both were unclear what the mentor role was;
- **Fellow good practice and sharing event** (at Oxford University);
- **Scheme driven and support provided by key lecturers** with common interests in the award theme areas;
- **Delivery underpinned by a clear strategy** together with supporting documentation **and guidance** for the Fellow. At Manchester University, a set of guidance notes for the Fellows was produced outlining clearly the factors the Fellows should take into account when developing their research and dissemination plans. Fellows were provided with support and guidance on research methods to ensure that the research undertaken was rigorous and valid.
- Integrating the **£1,000 bonus payment for the Fellow with other things** for example, an additional responsibility point (Oxford). In another (Northumbria), the bonus was paid on completion of the report – a useful incentive to deliver the project on time.
- **Fellow has a role in the school or unique context that meant he did not have full-time** teaching commitments or could easily be released without being pulled back into school/college business;
- **Full-time, residential study** is regarded as being particularly important by the University (Oxford). There is an argument that a fixed block of time for research will be more effective than part-time study which can easily be crowded out by other activities;
- It is very important to **build on the Fellowship/residential phase with local activities** aimed at embedding and integrating the practical results of the theoretical research (Oxford). Ownership of the project by the Fellow's school/college has been integral to the success of the project; having physical space at the HEI helps to prevent Fellows being pulled back into school/college work.
- **Monitoring** the Fellow's project on a regular basis to check on issues and progress

**Table 5.2: Delivery - Constraints**

- **Effectiveness of HEI support** provided:
  - slow internal processes have impacted on the level of support provided to Fellows in the early stages - it took a while to identify a mentor, by which time the project had started;
  - changes in staff meant support was not constant;
  - in one case study expenses were not being paid effectively;
  - in one case the Fellow was made redundant part way though;
- **Lack of structure, communication and monitoring** from the HEI Widening Partnership Department – “no monitoring/progress reports demanded”;
- **Lack of clarity** in relation to:
  - project aims and objectives;
  - the audience;
  - how academic versus functional / how far to go with recommendations;
- **Lack of ownership** from some HEIs and relevant departments and occasionally among Fellows: In one case, limited involvement of the college and Fellow in the decision of theme had a negative effect on experience of the Fellow and therefore potential impact;
- **Lack of a clear role and ownership amongst mentors:**
  - “mentors were ‘told’ to do it”;
  - “no defined role”;
  - “lack of time”;
  - “most useful role is facilitating contacts”;
  - “Never seen his work – so can’t really help”;
- **Undertaking research: Difficulties in reaching target group and stakeholders:**
  - lack of interest from relevant HEI admissions departments;
  - HEIs are big institutions which makes it difficult to get contacts;
  - limits on the ability of the Fellow to put in dedicated time (and the resultant need for Fellows to be part-time in many instances);
  - teachers’ main jobs have to take priority;
- **Lack of management and support** from schools/college – “Schools/colleges didn’t manage the Fellows really; often they didn’t make too much time”; partly as a result of being too far from the widening participation agenda or having greater priorities, lack of direct relevance in the project focus and/or not integrating the Fellowship into CPD; This can have a major influence on the ability of the Fellow to disseminate or embed the project outcomes and the extent to which they are pulled back into school/college work; “it feels like a bolt on to responsibilities – teaching may be covered and responsibilities may be allocated, but Fellows get drawn back a bit to the main job”
- some Fellows found writing the report very difficult and had little time to set aside to write it;

**Table 5.2: Delivery - Constraints**

- **Limited support** to take research/dissemination further;
- **Fellows starting at different times** – meant less opportunities to get everyone together and to hold a final event;
- **Research skills and experience of teachers:**
  - in a minority of cases, undeveloped research skills affected survey response rates;
  - “Research is not lying around in teachers minds – they are not ready to go”;
  - “Research skills not always there – not very robust research”;
  - “Not feasible for HEI to provide time to help in the research”;
  - “Reports are fairly impressionistic/descriptive”.

### **Pattern and Duration of Fellowships**

- 5.7 There are a number of strengths and weaknesses of both full-time and part-time Fellowships. Where there is a choice of availability, the **most effective pattern and duration will depend on the type of project**. The strengths and weaknesses of full-time/part-time approach are summarised in **Table 5.3** below.
- 5.8 Recruitment difficulties and subsequent flexibility of duration and pattern of delivery has meant that Fellows attached to the same HEI have started their Fellowships at different times. It is felt that whilst pragmatism may dictate this situation, **greater benefits arise where Fellows are conducting their research simultaneously**. Fellows benefit from peer support and cross fertilisation of findings whilst the HEI benefits from easier project management and potential for joint dissemination.

<b>Table 5.3: Strengths and Weaknesses of Full Time and Part Time Fellowships</b>	
<b>FULL-TIME</b>	<b>PART-TIME</b>
Strengths	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Block concept gives a clear timescale</li> <li>• Can get fully immersed in the project More difficult to be pulled back into school/college</li> <li>• Summer term provides a good opportunity for many teachers</li> <li>• Continuity of supply teaching within school/college</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can timetable EFA around core subject teaching</li> <li>• Duration of project may support longer term embedding and sustainability</li> <li>• Project delivery can incorporate timescales of stakeholders who are very busy – project is not so time restricted</li> <li>• Can carry on with non-teaching responsibilities</li> </ul>
Weaknesses	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can't necessarily make the most of opportunities that arise at different stages though the school year participate in the wider activities of the HEI team where they are based</li> <li>• Cover need for both teaching and non-teaching responsibilities</li> <li>• May be a recruitment barrier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there is not a culture of release for a full term, although it is common practice to release for days for staff training etc.</li> <li>- local contextual issues such as teacher recruitment/retentions may prevent option of full-time release</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficult to ring-fence time/ getting pulled back into school/college work eats into time for Fellowship</li> <li>• Inefficiency arising from time taken to re-engage in project after being immersed in school/college for part of the week</li> <li>• Can be more difficult to build relationships within the HEI, because the Fellow may appear to be transient (and HEI staff may also be transient)</li> <li>• May lead to isolation as less easy to network with other Fellows</li> <li>• More difficult for HEI to support unless they have 'set' days</li> </ul>

## Reporting and Dissemination

### Reporting

5.9 The initial guidance for the EFA initiative was that a 5,000 word report would be produced at the end of the Fellowship for dissemination. At March 2004, only **nine reports have been completed**.<sup>16</sup>The reports that have been reviewed at this interim stage vary considerably in their style and theme:

- a student workbook and materials;
- five academic reports;
- three informal, narrative reports.

<sup>16</sup> Assuming that HEFCE has all the completed reports

5.10 Several reports are fairly descriptive, which is disappointing and their content and recommendations do not make a significant contribution to the scheme aims. Most reports have recommendations to some or all of the relevant stakeholders. The following summarises the focus of the main recommendations of the reports:

- three of the nine reports make recommendations to HEIs, two make specific recommendations to admissions departments;
- four make recommendations to schools/colleges;
- two make recommendations to central government or LEAs.

5.11 Case study research suggests that the **key issues affecting quality and type of reporting** are:

- **varying support by the HEI**, in the reporting process – some HEIs have provided extensive support whilst others have provided no or little support;
- the specified **report requirement<sup>17</sup> is inappropriate for action research** projects, which require a different kind of reporting than academic research;
- **Fellows run out of time** to complete the report within the timescale, for example due to poor planning/being pulled back into school/college or an under-estimation of time required;
- some Fellows have struggled with the **focus of their recommendations**, particularly in terms of who they should be aimed at if the report is to be published by the HEI.

5.12 Improvements to the reporting process could be achieved through:

- **early clarity** (ie. at set-up) about the style, size and type of output required (for some projects a 5,000 word report is not the most effective output);
- developing a **clear work-plan** for the project to ensure time is available for reporting;
- all Fellows having to produce a **two page summary** for dissemination nationally;
- **payment of bonus on completion** of report or other agreed output.

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<sup>17</sup> A 5000 word report was specified in HEFCE guidance to HEIs

## Dissemination

- 5.13 It was intended that *“Dissemination be well thought through from the outset and appropriate costs built into the budget for the award”*<sup>18</sup>. Evidence from the case studies supports the view highlighted through earlier mapping and telephone consultations that **dissemination activities have not been an early enough focus for many Fellowships**. Although the initial tri-partite agreement asks about dissemination, it does not request this in any detail and subsequently does not challenge stakeholders to formulate a detailed plan. Generally, dissemination planning is taking place at the end of the project or is an evolutionary or opportunistic process. This may contribute to the ‘squeezing’ of time for dissemination activities.
- 5.14 There are **two broad types of dissemination processes**, depending on the type of project undertaken. Where the project is an academic research project, planned dissemination tends to be distribution and presentation of the final report to a range of stakeholders, and in some cases encouraging stakeholders to take forward recommendations. Where the focus of the project is action research, the dissemination activity is embedding activity or improvements. There is some informal sharing of learning (with colleagues within a school/college) but less so than originally intended by the scheme.
- 5.15 Indications suggest that **action research projects may be more successful in achieving sustainable change from their projects** (but this is limited in scope due to lack of sharing of learning), whereas **academic research can be a catalyst for further research**, but barriers may be faced in actioning recommendations. This appears to be due to confusion of whose role it is to take them forward, or that relevant stakeholders are indifferent to them.
- 5.16 Examples of dissemination activities that have been undertaken by the Fellows and HEIs consulted during the case studies include:
- attendance at a conference and presentation of work to the recruitment field;
  - various presentations, for example at a seminar at the Institute of Education; to the Academic Literacy group; to the EiC, Sector Skills Council (SSC), College representatives; local business representatives, City and Guilds (C&G) representatives;

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<sup>18</sup> DfES guidance to schools and colleges (March 2002)

- training for staff (for example INSET training) on learning from the EFA projects;
- embedding improvements in widening participation activities, e.g. improving awareness sessions with parents;
- distributing reports to key stakeholders;
- involvement in open days;
- liaison with the Connexions Service.

5.17 Some good practice examples of effective dissemination are outlined in **Table 5.4**. **Table 5.5** goes on to identify some of the constraints that have perhaps limited the extent to which Fellows, HEIs, schools/colleges and partnerships have developed and implemented effective dissemination plans.

<b>Table 5.4: Good Practice Dissemination</b>
<b>Sheffield University</b>
<p>The Fellowship focused on developing curriculum materials to enable students with non-traditional backgrounds to study at HEIs. These materials formed the key output of the Fellowship and thus dissemination comprised embedding the new modules and publicising the improvements made to the course. This involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• awareness raising activities with the LSC, Aimhigher Partnership, Connexions;</li> <li>• they are looking to develop a web portal;</li> <li>• Fellow contacted SMEs and SSC with a letter and flyer publicising the new course content and promoting awareness of the foundation course;</li> <li>• contacting former HND/HNC students to inform them of the new developments;</li> <li>• delivered a short paper to the SSC representatives, local FE college and C&amp;G representatives;</li> <li>• Fellow arranged for the Aimhigher Partnership roadshow to visit the local FE college and through these links is hoping to roll the modules out nationally.</li> </ul>
<b>Manchester University</b>
<p>The delivery of the award was such that the University required Fellows to develop a dissemination plan with activities planned at four levels - Local; Regional; National; Academic.</p> <p>Documentary and qualitative evidence collected from the Fellow visited as part of this case study has demonstrated that the Fellow has undertaken or is planning a range of dissemination activities at all four levels. Activities are summarised in the table overleaf.</p>



**Table 5.4: Good Practice Dissemination**

The University of Manchester also undertook their own dissemination activities including:

- presentation of EFA Executive summaries to University Widening Participation Group with possible action points arising that may be included as examples within the Widening Participate Prospectus;
- including key findings on the education web page advertisement in the University's in-house publication 'This Week Next Week';
- at a sub-regional/regional level, the University is aiming to design a glossy leaflet that can be included within the Greater Manchester Aimhigher Partnership for Progression groups. Stakeholders from these groups will be invited to a half day conference (the University is exploring funding opportunities for these activities);
- local newspapers to be briefed.

**Table 5.4: Good Practice Dissemination**

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Level</b>
Raise awareness of the research.	Presentation to all staff at the 6 <sup>th</sup> Form college; Presentation to Governors; Summary distributed to all secondary Heads in the area; Presentation to the local Council; Summary distributed to Council of mosques.	Local
Strategic discussions with local stakeholders to further raise awareness and take forward and action findings.	Arranging a meeting with the LEA Chief Education Officer; Meeting with Widening Participation Officer at local Higher Education Institution to which students typically/likely to progress; Presentation to local Ethnic Minority Achievement Service working group; Contribution to corporation of local Racial Equality Council.	Local
Awareness raising to stakeholders in field of post 16.	Copy of the report and summary to be sent to local LSC; Report distributed to local colleges within other LEAs where target group prevalent (Pakistani males).	Regional
Raise awareness amongst National stakeholder organisations.	Distribution to Commission for Racial Equality.	National
Snowball findings to contacts made.	Distribution to other Fellows met at the DfES event with similar interests e.g. Bradford and Bristol University.	National
Embed the findings within academic circles.	Presentation of findings at an academic conference; Publication within a relevant journal.	Academic

**Table 5.5: Constraints associated with Dissemination**

- No clear plan - no dissemination plan from the outset and considered as an afterthought once report is being written;
- Time to do it but not thought through once the award is ended, so it is the Fellow's release time that affects the amount of time that can be input into dissemination;
- Money passed onto college and therefore University sees this as their responsibility;
- Limited time and resources to undertake dissemination within college – low on the list of priorities; difficulty of HEIs to disseminate to practitioners and teacher concern at presenting to strategic stakeholders.
- Extent of dissemination by college depends on relevance of theme to the College – which links back to involvement in deciding the theme;
- Nervousness of key stakeholders within the Education Authority to acknowledge the findings of the research. It has proved difficult to secure a meeting with the Chief Education Officer who is aware of the work but has concerns over the findings;
- If EFAs are to have an impact locally, then it should be acknowledged that this is likely to **take time and a concerted effort** for the research to be acknowledged by the relevant individuals (i.e. impact not likely to be evidenced until sometime after the EFA has finished);
- EFA research activities will need to be **credible to a wider audience**, it is therefore essential that the work is regarded as rigorous (the duration of the EFA inherently means the research is likely to be small-scale but nevertheless a degree of academic rigour is essential if the findings are to be translated into practice);
- Fellows should be given some **training/support in research methods and perhaps in report writing**. Confidential feedback suggests that in the early drafts of the EFA report, the Fellow was somewhat naïve in his interpretation of the findings and introduced an element of researcher bias, which has impacted the extent to which the findings are being accepted within the relevant circles.

5.18 Key factors that might support more effective dissemination in the future include:

- early planning:
  - clarify the minimum expected dissemination into the initial outline of the project and the agreement and allocate dissemination time within the duration of the Award;

- clarify the purpose, most appropriate type and scope of dissemination at an early stage. For example, delivering a staff training session may be more effective than sending the report to colleagues;
  - clarity over the purpose of dissemination – define the anticipated impact;
  - identify those individuals whose support is critical for dissemination, and try to involve them in shaping the project in its early stages.
- clarity of involvement and support to take forward recommendations or activity from:
  - the HEI;
  - the school/college;
  - EIC/EAZ partnerships.
- dissemination funding being ring-fenced;
- development of a web based national database of short summaries from each Fellowship for wider dissemination and learning.

## 6 PERCEIVED BENEFITS, OUTCOMES, IMPACT AND VALUE

6.1 This section presents the reported perceived benefits and outcomes, and provides an overview of the perceived value and impact of the scheme by stakeholders. The evidence supporting this section arises primarily from the EFA case studies.

6.2 Given the aims of the scheme, the most valuable outcomes are considered to be those that:

- **deepen teachers' understanding of HE and the benefits of studying HE, in order to improve learner aspiration;**
- **strengthen relationships between HE, FE and schools, with a likely impact on raising attainment at NVQ levels 2 and 3;**
- **increase widening participation activity or add value to other national/local widening participation initiatives, to impact on learner aspiration, participation, retention and achievement.**

6.3 It should be noted that the anticipated outcomes of most Fellowships were not well defined in the planning process, and therefore we evaluate success in terms of the extent of actual benefits, outcomes reported and the enthusiasm and value assigned to the project by stakeholders. In addition, some potential outcomes have not yet been realised because of dissemination issues. For example:

***"I produced a report with 22 recommendations, but it's not clear who is going to push them forward and whether anyone will take any notice. My Fellowship is finished and I'm not in a position to do it myself. However, there have been other, outcomes such as a better relationship with the HEI"***

6.4 **Table 6.1** below presents the key reported outcomes for each EFA case study area<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Table 6.1 does not include the seventh case study HEI, where no Fellows were recruited.

**Table 6.1: Perceived Outcomes and their Frequency across fourteen EFA Case Studies**

	Case Study Areas														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	% of case studies reporting
<b>Perceived Outcomes:</b>															
Personal motivation/prestige	F				F	F		F	F	F	F		F	F	60%
Teacher retention	FC		FC	FC				F	F						33%
Teacher development and/or improved interest in WP		FC	FC	FC		F	F	F		F	F		H		60%
Reflective teacher practice: teaching and learning			CL	F				F		F	FL		H SF		40%
Improved quality of advice to learners about applying to HEI		(L)		(L)	L	L		L		L	L			L	53%
Strengthened strategic links between HEI/schools/colleges	FC H	HC F		CH		HC						HC	P		40%
Strengthened operational links between schools/colleges and HEI admissions staff					LS	HC	HC					HC	HC	LC	40%
New links/ WP activities/ admissions support between institutions that directly affect learners (eg. mentoring, chat sites)		L <sup>20</sup>			LH							CLH	HL		27%
Clearer application support or procedures at /by HEI										SL					6%
Further research activity identified or funded		FCP	FCL	?			S			H				?	Up to 40%
Improved gifted and talented policy/activities in schools/colleges					LH S	C								LH S	20%

<sup>20</sup> Although this is indirect – whereby someone in the HEI heard about the award and has arranged a meeting to visit the college, but not the Fellows dep.

**Table 6.1: Perceived Outcomes and their Frequency across fourteen EFA Case Studies**

	Case Study Areas														% of case studies reporting
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Increased awareness of barriers/overcoming pre-conceptions of HEI	H	FCL		FL	FS			HC	H	H		HS		FS	60%
Potential for school/college to gain beacon status/support COVE status or application			C	C		C									20%
Improved learner esteem/aspiration			L				L	L				L			27%
Improved learner relationships								L					L		13%
Raised awareness of learner issues in the wider academic community/partnerships/consortia		P			P L										13%
Added value to existing initiatives		P			L		S		L?	H		S			40%
Increased HEI understanding of FE courses/curriculum						HC									
Increased progression rates for FE and greater participation in HE/ targeted courses						HLC									6%
Links with employers/SSCs						H									6%
Improved achievement							L								6%

**Key:** F = Fellow; P=Wider partnerships; L=learner; (L)= learner benefit from better advice, but that advice being not to apply to certain HEIs that have rigid admissions policies; C=college; S=school; H=HEI; ? – possible (ie. where the Fellow wants or hopes to embed research into their role but this is not yet agreed)

- 6.5 The table suggests that 21 different benefits and outcomes have arisen from the Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme. These are explored in more depth below.

### **Perceived Learner Outcomes**

- 6.6 Nearly all case studies have reported benefits and outcomes that involve the learner in some way. The learner outcomes were generally as a result of new widening participation activities (e.g talks, open days), gifted and talented policies within schools, reflective practice in teaching and through a better understanding of admissions policies and procedures by participating schools and colleges:

***“We have set up a website to support students interested in applying to Oxford, linked to the Leeds Schools Network”;***

***“We have developed a Gifted and Talented Policy and associated practices for the school, for example, we have involved the HEI in making a contribution to an outdoor pursuits trip for gifted and talented pupils”;***

***“we have set up a drop-in facility for parents and young people”.***

- 6.7 The extent and sustainability of learner outcomes varies enormously across the EFAs. In at least two of the case studies, the level and sustainability of benefit may not extend beyond the individuals involved in the EFA process, or those in contact with the Fellow. In addition, although learner esteem was raised as a result of the research process, there is a danger that if results are not taken forward, disillusionment may occur.

***“Students have expressed higher esteem as college is doing something that might benefit them”;***

***“I am better informed to advise the students that come to me about the application process [for local HEIs]”.***

### **Perceived Benefits to the Fellow**

- 6.8 All Fellows report developmental and/or motivational benefits as a result of participating in the Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme. This is likely to be as a result of the personal motivations of the Fellows involved, most of whom had a long-term desire to conduct research as an element of their professional role, or who needed a break from the classroom:



***“I have been trying to find funding for some research around this topic for a long time – when the EFA opportunity came along, it was the best of both worlds – not a personal commitment like an MEd, but an opportunity to research whilst working part-time. I have found it enormously motivational and have got further funding for another piece of research [loosely related]”;***

***“I was on the edge of leaving the teaching profession – this has enabled me to dip my toe into research and develop some skills whilst still working”;***

***“As a result of the EFA, I have been given a responsibility point to enable me to become the Gifted and talented Co-ordinator for the EAZ”;***

***“It made me feel more positive about my job and the college”.***

6.9 In addition, it is important to note that some schools and colleges are benefiting from the Fellow’s professional development through the sharing of the research internally. In several (but not all) of the case study Fellowships, the Fellows were formally sharing their learning with other colleagues, through training days or briefings.

6.10 The development of better research skills by some Fellows and/or the support of their school/college to allow further research activity may indicate that the scheme is building research capacity within schools and colleges. In several cases the EFA project could be used to contribute towards an MA. However, it is too early to provide evidence to demonstrate this; indeed this observation may be a symptom of the type of Fellows using the Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme who were already delivering action research or used the EFA to support a career move into research-based posts.

## **Strengthened Links**

6.11 Most Fellowship Awards were reported to have strengthened links between the HEI and the school or college. This has arisen as a result of both the process of undertaking the EFA and the activities arising from the EFA. A number of general improvements in relationships were reported:

***“Our relationship with the Widening Participation Team has improved – we can contact them less formally now” (college);***

***“We have new contacts in the departments now” (college);***

***“We have contacts with other HEI colleges now – some of these are more appropriate for our students than the one we were in contact with” (school);***

***“For us the EFA was all about strengthening relationships – we now have two contacts in a large local college” (HEI).***

6.12 However, it is likely that relationships are more embedded and sustainable where the relationship is active (ie. focused on delivering an activity). This was the case in about half the Excellence Fellowship Awards, where the following actions had been taken:

- **development of a website** linking local learners with the HEI;
- further **linking of the HEI to an existing e-mentoring scheme** in schools and into an outdoor pursuits trip for gifted and talented pupils;
- an existing relationship with the mentor for one Fellow will be sustained through **shared attendance of an academic research group**;
- the **HEI had paid a visit to the college** to talk to students (although this was not in the teaching area of the EFA);
- **students have visited the HEI** and attended the HEI open day.

#### **Case Study: Oxford University Sustainable Outcomes**

After the completion of the EFA, the following activities have taken place or planned:

(a) An e-Mentoring project started in March 04, with 10 year 10 pupils and 10 undergraduates

(b) 80 pupils will be involved in HEI visits to Oxford and the Galleries of Justice in Nottingham in the Summer term 2004;

(c) year 10 and year 11 pupils will be attending summer schools in Oxford in Summer 2004;

(d) The school is reviewing year 10 HEI activity to identify students who have not been involved in any Fellowship activity - they will be targeted for the next round of activity.

6.13 An interesting observation is that the focus of relationships are fairly one-way, with the school/college staff having visited HEIs and therefore made a number of contacts. The HEIs appear to have been less involved in visiting schools/colleges as a result of the Fellowship and may therefore have only strengthened their links with the school/college with one contact. **As a result the learning from the Fellowship awards has tended to be one-way.** This is not always the case, with four Fellowships demonstrating two-way relationships. One of these is outlined below.

#### **Liverpool University :Two-way Outcomes**

A recognised difficulty for both the participating school and HEI was involving parents and carers of young people. One teacher therefore focused Fellowship activity on engaging parents through a variety of widening participation events. The Fellowship has brought mutual benefits, with the HEI gaining access to parents that previously they couldn't access and the school benefiting from visits and advice from graduate advocates to young people and parents. For example:

- graduate advocates from the University attending a School Parents evening. The Graduate Advocates had an Aimhigher stand and were able to talk to parents whilst they were visiting the school;
- graduate advocates also came to share experiences and answer questions in a PSHCE class;
- on another occasion a representative from the university came to school to talk to parents about finance issues.

A key factor in the success of this project was that it brought the university staff to talk to parents and young people on their own territory.

### **Better Understanding of HEI**

6.14 The majority of awards reviewed during the case studies appear to have improved understanding of either HEI admission, teaching and learning barriers or HEI life, but not necessarily as a central focus.

***“We specifically included a residential stay in the delivery of the award so that teachers understood university life”***

***“The school has greater insight into the application and interview process at Durham. The Fellowship has helped to demystify why the application process is slower in a collegiate HEI and we have a much better understanding of the personal qualities that the HEI seeks. This helps us to prepare students for the interview process.***

6.15 Improved understanding of barriers and admissions issues has generally been of benefit to the Fellow and their school or college, where Fellows have reported they are better able to advise students and set up related widening participation activities as a result of their improved understanding. The actual research does not seem to have been of particular value to HEIs in understanding their own issues. However, this was not always the case:

***“There has been learning on both sides. The HEI is more aware of a potential pool of high ability students and we have challenged the misconception that widening participation equates to lowering standards”***

6.16 However, there has also been a negative reinforcement of some barriers and issues relating to HE. Of the 15 case studies, three (20%) reported that they found that their negative perceptions of HEI admission policies and understanding of participation issues were substantiated by their research. As a result, two Fellows reported that they are less likely to advise students to apply to those HEIs and one other found that the political situation in HEIs around widening participation was such that there was no expectation that the research would have any impact on its oversubscribed courses.

## **Further Research**

6.17 The Fellowships appear to have been fairly successful catalysts for more research. Two Fellows have secured further funding or an additional opportunity for research and three further Fellows are hoping to build research into their role. However it is not possible to comment on the nature of future research:

***“I have been given an extra responsibility point to continue the research within the college”;***

***“I am going to be the Director of Sixth Form next year – in this role I hope to undertake more research with Gifted and Talented students”;***

***“I have secured funding to carry out loosely related action research through Aimhigher”.***

## **Adding Value to EAZ/Aimhigher Partnerships**

- 6.18 This has been limited, largely due to their lack of involvement to date. However, in one case study, the EAZ co-ordinator was the Fellow, and she will be changing the focus of EAZ activities as a result of the research. However this isolated example was perhaps by luck rather than design. In another case study the Aimhigher Partnership Co-ordinator would like to use an EFA to research beneath some local statistics, although this approach is too late for this round of EFAs.
- 6.19 Potentially, through planned dissemination activities to partnerships, useful learning that can be incorporated into strategies may be shared, but there is little evidence of this at this stage.

## **Benefits and Outcomes: Issues**

- 6.20 Although there have clearly been many benefits and outcomes, it is important to note that the direct benefit to schools/colleges and learners is less than intended. In addition, the benefit to local partnerships has been limited, which affects the potential added-value and regional/local impact of the Fellowships. This is as a result of the lack of planned coherence with EiC or other partnership strategies in relation to the selected themes and delivery processes. However, as reported earlier, in many cases, these links are being formed for dissemination purposes and may lead to greater sharing and embedding of learning on a wider basis.
- 6.21 No Fellowship at the time of the research had reported a direct affect on admissions policies of the HEI. However, this may be because many of the HEIs did not expect the research to have this impact, or the individual HEI involved did not anticipate the type of students involved in the research would apply to their HEI, for example because they perceive that lower income learners will attend their most local HEI.
- 6.22 Manchester MET University did not manage to recruit any Fellows. However, the anticipated benefits of their participation were:
- professional development for teachers;
  - help to overcome identified problem areas;
  - develop strategic thinking across schools and colleges in the Aimhigher Partnership area.

## Impact

6.23 At this stage is not possible to measure or report the impact of the Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme on widening participation. This is largely because many of the **EFA activities have not been completed or because evidence of impact will only be demonstrated in the longer term**. In addition, because of the small scale and/or focus of the research, some HEIs and Fellows do not expect projects to be able to have a significant impact on quantitative measures of widening participation (and therefore will not be measuring impact). However, in two of the projects, there has been a perceived impact on learner participation and achievement:

- **at the University of Central Lancashire, workshops were held at primary schools to focus on progression issues. It is felt that these workshops contributed directly to the school achieving the best SATS results it has ever had;**
- **At Sheffield Hallam, the Fellowship focused on working with the HEI, Computing sector and the local FE College to develop additional NVQ level 2,3 and 4 materials for Computing. After a range of awareness raising dissemination activities, the college has trebled the numbers of students progressing to the foundation degree.**

6.24 In most cases, impact has yet to be realised. However, HEIs, schools, colleges and Fellows were asked what impact they expected the research to have. The responses were as follows:

- **“We hope that over time the activity generated from the EFA will result in a greater number of applications** from non-traditional institutions [comprehensives/geographical areas]“;
- **“We would like to see increased participation and progression of Pakistani males”;**
- **“Students asking advice about progression in the subject area researched will be advised to go to one HEI – this may impact on the number of applicants to that HEI”;** this is a displacement not a net effect;
- **“An HEI [not the one that was involved in the Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme] has taken interest in the research and may consider reviewing its admissions policy as a result”.**

6.25 The level of potential impact is therefore unclear at this stage and any impact is likely to be small and may not be measured by most HEIs. However, it appears that weak dissemination of the project reports may be a limiting factor in the realisation of potential impact.

## Value

6.26 Given the qualitative nature of the process, benefits and outcomes, the most appropriate measures of value are **(i) whether the Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme met expectations and, (ii) whether the scheme is perceived to offer value for money**. These two measures are considered below.

### Meeting Expectations

6.27 Strategically, the HEIs and schools/colleges generally felt that the **scheme met or exceeded expectations**, although there was some disappointment about the focus, report or dissemination in the case of at least four Fellowships. However, nearly all fifteen operational case studies were **positive about the scheme** and even the HEI that had had to pull out was still positive about the concept of the scheme. Any disappointment with reports is probably as a result of unclear aims, the 5,000 word stipulation and loose management of the award delivery, rather than flaws in the concept of the scheme.

### Value for Money

6.28 Most Fellows and colleges/schools and some HEIs felt that **the “scheme has been successful and constitutes good value for money”**. Specific comments include:

- “a useful mechanism for the University to pursue its widening participation agenda”;
- “...the process is useful but the practical outcomes are key”
- “the barriers that have been identified through the research to applying to Oxford are probably already well known (if not documented) but thinking of innovative ways of tackling them in a local context is what sets it apart”;
- “the Gifted and Talented Policy is an example of a local practical response to research into this area”

- “in my opinion the allocation of EFA's is a brilliant scheme that should be further extended and supported as a complementary activity to the widening participation, lifelong learning and partnership strategies and activities of the University, particularly in relation to Aimhigher, locally and regionally”

6.29 One HEI, however, thought that value for money could be greater:

***“The short-term nature of the activity meant that a limited amount could be achieved within the timescale. It was felt that the money would be better spent on longer-term activities with the option for progression for further work”***

6.30 The cost of the awards varied considerably but in each case the stakeholders felt that they had **generally got value for money**. Support for the scheme is further demonstrated through two HEIs using additional funding to increase the number of Fellowships they offered. However, this positive view is less apparent where considerable support and management have been provided. If intensive support and project management were expected from HEIs recruiting more than three EFAs, this may affect the perceived value for money of the Excellence Fellowship Awards Scheme.

6.31 **The value of money at a national level is considerably more limited** than the local perception. This is as a result of:

- strategy drift (primarily the failure of the scheme to focus on school/college understanding of HE life and admissions) and lack of dissemination;
- lower than anticipated recruitment and completion of Fellowships;
- lack of immediate claw-back of funding from those HEIs who failed to recruit three Fellows.

6.32 The combination of these factors would suggest that the improvements cited in this report should be taken on board to increase value for money at a strategic level.



## 7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 In this Section we present our conclusions about the scheme and set out some related improvements that could be made to increase the success of the scheme.
- 7.2 The Excellence Fellowship Awards Pilot Scheme **has gained momentum over the last 12 months, with 66 Fellows in place**. However, it has not reached the target of 100 Fellowships by March 2004. This is generally due to difficulties faced by schools and colleges in releasing staff and is influenced by the resource that HEIs can, or will, put in to recruitment for a small-scale scheme.
- 7.3 **A long lead-in time and flexibility have been essential to secure release of staff**, most of whom have been senior staff with non-teaching time. Staff are released either for professional development reasons or because the project is directly relevant to the school/college agenda. Individuals often have individual circumstances that make it easier for release. It has been harder to engage schools because these rationales apply less and subsequently only 1/3 Fellows are from schools.

### Local Effectiveness

- 7.4 The delivery model at a local level works reasonably well, with some HEIs demonstrating excellent practice. However, the local effectiveness of the scheme has been influenced significantly by a number of delivery issues, including:
- the lack of **early engagement of key stakeholders** including the Fellow's school/college, staff across the HEI and external organisations and partnerships. These stakeholders therefore had limited input into project planning, research activity or dissemination. This has resulted in the scheme being **HEI or Fellow driven** with limited ownership by key stakeholders and therefore limited value added to their agenda. Schools and colleges have not generally managed and monitored projects, as originally intended;
  - a lack of **clarity over roles and responsibilities**, particularly for dissemination;

- **variable support for Fellows** by HEIs and particularly their 'home' organisation, who may as a result have pulled staff back into school/college and/or shown indifference to project findings and dissemination;
- **a lack of focus on reporting and dissemination**, particularly by the Fellow to peers and learners within their school or college.

7.5 However, despite these implementation issues, case study HEIs and schools/colleges are **generally very positive about the scheme**, with most reporting that it has met expectations and represents good value for money.

7.6 A large number of perceived benefits and outcomes have been reported from case study Fellowships. These include:

- **general strengthening of links between HEI, schools and colleges;**
- **relationship building through involvement in specific widening participation activities;**
- **professional and motivational benefit for the Fellow, which may build awareness and research capacity internally within schools and colleges;**
- **development of new widening participation activities and improvement of existing projects;**
- **increased understanding by the Fellow, and in several instances their school or college and learners, of admissions to HE and/or the HE experience.**

#### Strategic Success

7.7 Despite positive feedback locally, and the reported outcomes, the extent to which the overall scheme has contributed to the policy agenda is limited. This is due to

- **strategy drift (and resulting relation of outcomes to scheme aims);**
- **the lack of dissemination and sustainability of outcomes;**
- **the overall level of activity in conjunction with the costs associated with the overall scheme.**

7.8 Strategy drift has occurred as a result of:

- subtle changes in communication of DfES objectives between and by DfES/HEFCE which may have reduced the focus on the lead role that schools and colleges were to play in the scheme;
- local interpretation of the scheme (in some cases) as academic research projects, presumably influenced by the title 'Fellowship' - many such projects were not necessarily linked (or of immediate benefit) to students at the Fellows' school or college;
- local pragmatism to recruit Fellows which may have diluted the extent to which projects directly related to the core aims of the scheme, specifically improving school and college understanding of HE life and admissions, with a view to sharing this with colleagues, parents, carers, guardians and learners.

7.9 As a result, although the reported outcomes are positive and they fit loosely with the anticipated aims of the scheme and many of the outcomes are indirectly related to the core aims.

7.10 In addition, the sustainability of these outcomes will depend on continued engagement, dissemination and further action by key stakeholders, which is not evident in all Excellence Fellowship Awards. Indeed, **dissemination activity (which may take the form of distributing a report or improving widening participation activity) has been hampered by a lack of early planning and ring-fenced funding**. This has resulted in a lack of time and confused responsibility for dissemination. In the case of action research, although the learning has been embedded locally to improve or increase widening participation activity, the lessons learnt have yet to be shared more widely.

7.11 These factors, combined with the cost of the scheme and the limited number of Fellows recruited, suggests that the strategic success is limited to date. However, as the pilot activities are still ongoing, it is too **early to be clear about the overall strategic impact** of the scheme. In addition, the projects are small in size, did not identify planned outcomes at the outset and are generally expected to have limited strategic impact by the stakeholders involved.

7.12 Where impact is anticipated on participation, retention, progression or achievement, most HEIs expect this to be demonstrated in the longer-term as a result of activity that has arisen from the EFA in conjunction with existing activities. However, in two cases a quantifiable impact has been reported in terms of increased participation in one case, and increased achievement in the other case.

## **Improvements**

7.13 The **current model is working reasonably well to bring local benefit**. However there are certain elements that should be improved in order to improve the effectiveness of delivery, outcomes and impact at both a national and local level. These are set out below.

### **Features of Awards**

- Flexibility is necessary to recruit Fellows and therefore part-time Fellowships should be encouraged where appropriate; however schools and colleges need to agree to ring-fence the time for the Fellow;
- Duration should be flexible depending on the project, with a maximum of a year. 'Mini-Fellowships' demonstrated that they are appropriate for narrowly focused projects;
- Action research and pure research are both appropriate, with action research offering more immediate outcomes, and pure research activity as a catalyst for further research or activity; The themes should have a three-way interest (school/college, HEI and Fellow) and preferably contribute to school/college and/or regional or local partnership widening participation priorities;
- The £1,000 incentive could be dropped or used as a tool to complete the report/outputs required; attractive alternative incentives could be used, for example, responsibility points, places on MEd, or building a research element within a permanent job role. This would enhance the research capacity in schools/colleges.

#### ***Implications:***

***Provision of clear guidelines on the scheme***

***Possible shift in allocation of funding.***

## Improved Project Planning, Management and Dissemination

7.14 There should be clearer expectations relating to project planning and management. These should involve:

- clearer project aims, objectives and specified expected outputs and outcomes;
- an agreed work-plan that is monitored by a 'lead body' – HEI/school/college, partnership; ensuring that school/colleges pay a greater part in driving the projects;
- strong project management, which includes early engagement of all relevant stakeholders, supervision, support and monitoring (by HEI or school/college);
- clearly distinguished roles for the HEI lead and the mentor, who should be more carefully matched to the Fellow, based on the project;
- a communication plan to raise awareness of the project profile internally within the HEI, school or college and externally as appropriate;
- clearer guidelines on reporting, to ensure that the output is appropriate to the nature of the project whether academic research or action research; a two-page summary should be produced for national dissemination;
- improved dissemination planning so that considerable dissemination time falls within the allocated duration of the EFA, with clear responsibilities for resourcing and delivering dissemination activities.

***Implications: This will involve greater project management input by a lead body – this does not need to be the HEI, but a supervisory and monitoring role will lead to more effective delivery. If the HEI continues to carry the responsibility, this may require more funding for administration where there are three or more Fellows.***

## Scheme Support and Guidance

7.15 In particular, at a national level this is required to align policy and practice more closely and enhance sharing of good practice.

- reiteration of strategic aims of the scheme and to provide clearer examples of how this might be put into practice;

- provision of a named contact at DfES or HEFCE for advice and clearer guidance;
- strategic and operational quality assurance processes need to be adopted to ensure that the initiative meets its purpose strategically and locally;
- production of Guidance for HEIs – advice on overcoming timetabling and teacher cover issues, including, the need to plan for reasonable set-up time (for example, target schools nine months ahead to avoid timetabling issues), making contacts, covering costs, management of funding, pattern and duration;
- consider providing a separate dissemination fund (held by DfES/HEFCE) or increase funding for dissemination;
- providing opportunities for HEIs to share approaches and practice and provision of briefing sessions for any new HEIs.

### **Scope of the Scheme**

7.16 The scheme could successfully be rolled out to all HEIs with a bidding process linked into Aimhigher Partnerships. However, the current focus on EiC/EAZ areas is an appropriate way to direct resource to areas where participation is low. If the aim of the scheme is to contribute to local widening participation strategies, there needs to be a more explicit involvement and linkage to these strategies. Potentially a local partnership could be the lead body instead of the HEI.

7.17 Overall the Excellence Fellowship Awards Pilot Scheme has been fairly successful at the local level in meeting stakeholder expectations, but less so at the strategic level. If a subsequent national scheme is rolled out then the suggestions in this report should be taken forward to ensure greater clarity of purpose, effectiveness and success of the scheme.

**ANNEX 1:  
MAPPING OF AGREEMENTS**

## ANNEX 1: Evaluation of Excellence Fellowship Awards Mapping of Agreements: March 2004

Please note that the following information is largely based on agreements. Categorisations are based on project summaries, as they appear on the Fellow Agreements. This may not fully represent the project.

HEI	No. Agreements in place	Term	Pattern of delivery	Fellow's School or College	Cost of Award	Theme of Fellowship	Categorised theme (see below for key to abbreviations)	Agreement received
Birmingham (with UCE)	4	Term 2&3 2003	PT	Dr David Taylor, Matthew Boulton College	11.7	FE-HE progression for health and science related students: comparison of skills of students with non traditional qualifications with AS/A2	C/B	Y
		Term 2 (Jan-April 2003)	FT	Mr P Coulson, Bishop Versey School	14.1	Survey of Physics depts in secondary schools to enable BU to support teachers in delivery of advanced questions about elements of the syllabus	R/C	Y
		Term 1 2004	FT	Mr Bob Pugh, Shenley Court Specialist Arts Centre & 6 <sup>th</sup> form college	15	Analyse student recruitment practices and policies of 5 HEIs with regard to widening participation (%state schools) and an analysis of aspirations of local students form the EC WP cohort. Address misconceptions and strengthen links.	P/asp	Y
		Term 4 – end Term 5 2004	PT	Joanne Cleaver, Swanhurst School	14	Investigate and analyse teaching and learning styles in schools at Level 3, colleges and HEI to ensure smooth progression to HEI	B	Y
Bolton Institute	3	May 03 – Feb 04	PT	Elaine Nagel, Mount St Joseph's School	18.3	Barriers to progression to HE at ages 10-13 and evaluate successful strategies for addressing barriers	B/R	Y



HEI	No. Agreements in place	Term	Pattern of delivery	Fellow's School or College	Cost of Award	Theme of Fellowship	Categorised theme (see below for key to abbreviations)	Agreement received
		May 03 – Feb 04	PT	Vincent Holland, Thornleigh Salesian College	18.3	Barriers to progression to HE at ages 10-13 and evaluate successful strategies for addressing barriers	B	Y
				Alan Hendry, Wigan and Leigh College	18.3	14-19 progression route– barriers and successful strategies. Map vocational routes from FE to HE including the route via MAs	B	
Bradford	2	September 03 – August 04	PT	Yamina Sheeran Keighley College	10	Tracking of non-traditional students:retention and progression from FE to HE	B	Y
		September 03 – August 04	PT	Caroline Rowntree Tong School	10	An evaluation of the impact of the Excellence Challenge	I	Y
Bristol	3	Term 3 2003	FT	(UWE) Sarah Jones, City of Bristol College	13.5	Collaboration with WE LSC and UWE to conduct quantitative analysis of barriers preventing local young people in lower socio ec gps from applying to university. Working closely with Felicity Harper on UWE scheme – helping support each other	B	Y
		1.5 days per week Jan-Jul 2004	PT	Betsy Bowerman, Bridgwater College	11	Focuses on mature learners – barriers to progression on academically focused Access pathways such as science/maths/social sciences – work on developing pathways as part of the common Access Framework	B	Y
		Term 3 2003		Keith Ripley	13.5	Improving accessibility for deaf applicants to HE	B	Y
Canterbury Christchurch	2	Term1-3 2003	PT	Catherine Barber, Cornwallis School	£19,025	Impact of cross phase liaison work on enhancing progression to the sciences	I (S)	Y

HEI	No. Agreements in place	Term	Pattern of delivery	Fellow's School or College	Cost of Award	Theme of Fellowship	Categorised theme (see below for key to abbreviations)	Agreement received
		Term 2-3 2003	PT	Karen Peel, Sandwich Tech College	£18,126	Impact of student focused mentoring on progression to sixth form and HE	I	Y
Durham	1	Term 3 2003		Carol Scott, Head of 6 <sup>th</sup> form, St Aidans school, Sunderland		Why are gifted and talented pupils from non-privileged backgrounds under represented at leading universities & how to address this.	B	
Gloucestershire	3	November 2002 – May 2003	PT	Julie Haines	15,525	Investigation of awareness of sport in HE, aspirations to study sport at HE, progression rates, develop products and processes and make recommendations	Asp/ AR	Y
		November 2003 – July 2004	PT	Karen Ronneback	12,525	Develop (in collaboration with WROCN) a sub-regional framework for Access to Higher Education, providing a model of Good Practice	M	Y
		November 2003 – July 2003	PT	Joy Greenwood Beaufort Community School	13	Progression to HE and retention of students who took vocational subjects compared to GCE A Level	AR	Y
Greenwich	3 (supposed to be 4)	Term 1-3 Sept 03-04	PT 1.5 days week	Denise Hyland, Eaglesfield school	11,850	Identifying critical factors in rapid school improvement: A case study	S	Y
		May 03- June 04	PT 2-3 wk blocks	Lyn Harrison, Greenacres School	18,334			Y
		June 03 – Jan 04	PT 17.5hours per wk	Sarah Gasquoine, Greenwich Community College	18,334	Why students do/do not choose to continue with Maths post GCSE and why/not they successfully complete Maths AS/A2	S	Y

HEI	No. Agreements in place	Term	Pattern of delivery	Fellow's School or College	Cost of Award	Theme of Fellowship	Categorised theme (see below for key to abbreviations)	Agreement received
Leeds	3	October 2002 – September 2003	PT	Cathy Dolan Park Lane College, Leeds	11.2	To investigate why some FE students, who are en route to obtain qualifications suitable for entry to HE, do not apply for FE	B	Y
		October 2002 – September 2003	PT	Gordon Brindle, Leeds College of Technology	11619		R	Y
		November 2003 – Sept 2004	PT	Dorothy King, Thomas Danby College	18,600	Developing more accessible archive, contribute to the teaching of new foundation degree, attend lectures re. digital technology	C	Y
Lincoln	1 (+1 anticipated summer 04)	April 2003 – July 2003	FT	Iona Sadler Wyke College	11,8	How EMA grants and changes to funding in HEIs may affect WP. Spatial and vocational/academic split.	RF	Y
Liverpool	3	Term1-3	PT	Sue Cookson, Wallsey School	12.9	Increasing parental involvement in building awareness uni education and the advantages of uni education	AR	Y
		1/8/03 – 30/9/04	PT	Gill Benton, Wirral Metropolitan College	15	Barriers to progression commencing Level 3 and the effectiveness of interventions to overcome these barriers.	AR//B	Y
		Sept 03 0aug 04	PT 2 days wk	Maria Daly, Knowsley Community College	14.5	Linking GSCE Engineering Y10 students through undergraduate mentoring scheme & other activities	A	Y
Liverpool Hope	3	Jan 03 for 1 academic year	PT 2 days per week	Pamela Glenys McDonough, Cardinal Heenan	18.33	Research into awareness, aspirations and barriers surrounding boys' aspirations for progression to HE.	B E Strategy dev	Y

HEI	No. Agreements in place	Term	Pattern of delivery	Fellow's School or College	Cost of Award	Theme of Fellowship	Categorised theme (see below for key to abbreviations)	Agreement received
		<i>Jan 03 – sep03</i>	<i>2 days per week for 2 terms and 1 day term 4</i>	Geoff Molyneux, Liverpool Community College	18	Explore and instigate formal procedures to enable students and encourage progression between HND fine arts and B Des/ BA combined studies.	P S	Y
Luton	2	1 July 03 – 31 June 04	PT	Rosie Rigg, Bedford College	18	Induction mentoring programme where teachers learn about issues from their ex-students attending the university and use this to enhance university induction programme	AR	Y
		1 July 03 – 31 June 04	PT	Patrick Moore and Liz Stokes, Luton Sixth Form College	18	Induction mentoring programme where teachers learn about issues from their ex-students attending the university and use this to enhance university induction programme	AR	Y
Manchester	4	Sept 2002 – July 2003	PT	Beverly Keenan, Whalley Range High School	11	Impact of a range of intervention strategies on progression (careers course, active citizenship, parental involvement, celebration of achievement); barriers to progression	I/B	Y
		Sept 2002 - July 2003	PT	Dr David Benson, Xaverian College	11	Effectiveness of support programmes, online learning, WP strategies and barrier of low HE history	I	Y
		Jan 2003- 29 Sept 03	PT	Rachel Powell, Burnage HS	11	Investigate pre-conceptions of 2 inner city, multi-racial schools Produce materials to address these	AR M	Y

HEI	No. Agreements in place	Term	Pattern of delivery	Fellow's School or College	Cost of Award	Theme of Fellowship	Categorised theme (see below for key to abbreviations)	Agreement received
		Sept 2002 – July 2003	PT	Bob Hindle, Bolton 6 <sup>th</sup> Form College	11	To explain why proportionately fewer male students of Pakistani origin studying at Bolton progress to university than from other ethnic/gender groups. To identify possible strategies that could redress this imbalance.	B	Y
Northumbria	2	Jan 03 – April 03		Terry Hareham – college lecturer South Tyneside College	20	Anticipated: improving student perceptions of HE; breaking down barriers; using new IT; developing online support.	R/AR	Y
		April 03 – July 03	FT	Kenneth Moffat Thomas Hepburn	20	What is it that motivates young people to progress to HE and how can we support them in reaching their goals- report on findings and recommendations.	R/B	Y
Oxford	7	April 03 – July 03	FT	Richard Knott, Kingswood school	10.9	Select a group of students capable of university and raise awareness and understanding of HE and ability to successfully apply to Oxford and other establishments	A/B	Y
	Mini	April, May, July, Oct Dec	PT	Haydn Evans, Sir John Cass's Foundation & Red Coat CofE secondary school	£3,460	Developing teaching and learning styles at A level that are appropriate for entry to HEIs like Ox/Cambridge	B/T/AR	Y
	Mini Fellowship	9-20 June 03	FT	Gerald Burn, Plymouth College of FE	£630	Barriers to applying to oxford and evaluation of Oxfords WP initiative	AR B	Y

HEI	No. Agreements in place	Term	Pattern of delivery	Fellow's School or College	Cost of Award	Theme of Fellowship	Categorised theme (see below for key to abbreviations)	Agreement received
	Mini Fellowship	26 Feb – 6 June 03	PT – 3 days week	Linda Richards, Garforth Community College	4.4	Compare perceptions of students with reality from perspective of Oxford students; set up database of mentors and website.	AR/A B	Y
	Mini Fellowship	29 Sept 03 – 17 Oct 03	FT	Michelle Keown, Kingsmead School	3.5	Perceptions of Oxford University among teachers, students and the Universities perception of pupils.	AR/S/B	Y
	Mini Fellowship	11 May 03 – 23 May 03	FT	John Hill, Paris Wood Technology College	1,060	Research into admissions and selection and how to promote them; academic life (classics) and college life in general – costs and finance	AR	Y
	Medium Fellowship	4 days week may – July	PT	Joan Cross, Alfreton Community y School	6,700	Barriers to choosing English as a degree subject; curriculum match and create a website on comparative elements of A level English and link to reading group in Oxford.	C/B	Y
Plymouth	1	Started Jan 03 – Dec 03 Diss 04	PT 2 days per week	Keith Ebdon, Plymouth CFE (also involving Tamarside College)	20,000	Exploring and comparing learning and teaching models in science (post 16 and HE) to enhance progression.	A/ B	Y
Queen Mary, London	2	Term 1-3	PT	Ian, Claussen, Sir George Monaux College, Walthamstow	10.6	Examination of factors involved in drop in interest for studying modern languages post 16 and progression to HE. Identify strategies for improvement.	Int/B	Yes
		Term 2		Jane Crozier, Tower Hamlets College	Not specified	Experience of mature students in applying and progressing to HE and mechanisms to improve.	B	Y part

HEI	No. Agreements in place	Term	Pattern of delivery	Fellow's School or College	Cost of Award	Theme of Fellowship	Categorised theme (see below for key to abbreviations)	Agreement received
Sheffield Hallam	4	Sept 03 – Dec 03	Full time	John Poynter, West Nottinghamshire College	17	Raise awareness and development opportunities to students from non traditional backgrounds; develop pathways to increase in course students	A/B	Y
		September 03 – June 04	PT	John Birks	14			Y
		September 2003 – December 2003	FT	Alexandra Sobiesinski	16400			Y
		1/9/04 – 30/6/04	PT 2days per week	Jeremy Agnew, Sheffield College	14.5	Develop vocationally focused pathways in education and social work.; to add level 4 accreditation to existing Access to HE provision in Social science/Humanities	AR C	Y
South Bank	1	Feb 2003 – Nov '03	PT 2 days per week	Claire Mayhew St Francis Xavier College	14	Investigate current and ex SFX students attitude to HE course in Media/English and identify ways in which students can be encouraged to continue and succeed in HE courses in these subject areas	B	
Sussex	1 (2)	Oct 2003 – July 2004	PT	Mary Berrisford & Hannah Lowe, City and Islington college	15.6	To investigate how inner city students perceive the university of Sussex, barriers to applying/successfully applying and curriculum issues. Focus on 6 <sup>th</sup> form, summer school and university provision.	B,C	Y

HEI	No. Agreements in place	Term	Pattern of delivery	Fellow's School or College	Cost of Award	Theme of Fellowship	Categorised theme (see below for key to abbreviations)	Agreement received
UCE	1 (3)	Sept 2003 – Dec 2003	FT + ½ day per week in school	Paul Griffin Moseley School	14.75	To map the emerging vocational curriculum in schools and existing progression opportunities to HE; to review curriculum match between schools and HEIs with particular attention to skills development and improving progression and attainment	C/B	
University of Central Lancashire	5	Jan 03 – Aug 04	PT	Alistair Wilcox, Preston College of FE	13	Perceptions of barriers to HE within local colleges	B	Y
		May 2003 – Feb 2004	PT 2 days week	Elaine Lane, Whitehaven School, Cumbria	8.9	Tracking the barriers of 50 identified students who have the ability to go to university but because of their background they may not. They will be offered a COMPACT university, which will also be evaluated.	AR/A/B	Y
		Sept 03 – July 04	PT 2 days week	Michael Gregson, Lakes FE College, Cumbria	15	Not specified in the agreement	A/B	Y
		April 2003 – July 2003	FT	Tracey Young St. Matthew's Primary School	11.9	Researching and motivating pupils to take up placements at FE/HE through links and visits; partnerships with pupils and their families and a mentoring scheme at KS1 and KS2.	A/AR	Y
		Sept 03 – April 04	FT	Elspeth Day, Whitehaven School		Follows on from Elaine Lane's Fellowship –same theme.	AR/S/A/B	Y



HEI	No. Agreements in place	Term	Pattern of delivery	Fellow's School or College	Cost of Award	Theme of Fellowship	Categorised theme (see below for key to abbreviations)	Agreement received
University College London	2	Term 2-3 2003	PT	Melissa Marsh, Islington College		Widening participation through language skills and academic achievement. Particularly focusing on individuals whose 1 <sup>st</sup> language isn't English	R	Y
		January 2004-April 2004	FT	Lynne Franklin La Sainte Union Convent School	18	Identify and Analyse reasons for under-achievement in sixth form and why students from all socio-economic groups may not make successful applications to UCL.. Recruitment practices at UCL will also be examined and links between school and Uni will be reviewed.	P/AR	Y
UWE	2	Term 3	FT	Felicity Harper, Weston College	13.5	Qualitative factors which affect progression to HE from Weston EAZ area	B	Y
		Sept 03 – July 04	PT	Rob Wright	£13			Y
Warwick	2	Term 1-3	PT	Ms Chris Matcham, Woodway Park School & community college	18.3	Establishing guidelines for identifying gifted students from low participation backgrounds in HE and establish a system for raising aspirations – including peer mentoring.	Asp/AR	Y
		Term 1-3	PT	Richard Laird, Cadbury College	18.3	Bringing together stakeholders with interest in WP in Physical science to give motivation and practical help to bright students from disadvantaged backgrounds, to increase numbers entering physics.	AR	Y

Categorisation Key: Main Theme of Fellowship Award

C= Curriculum support    R= Straight research  
B=Barriers to progression    AR= Action research  
M- Developing practical materials

Int= Interest in course    Asp= Aspirations  
P= Recruitment Policy    I= Impact or effectiveness  
F-Links between funding and WP

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