

Institution:
Durham University

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Bursaries:
The Durham Grant Scheme
Maximum Grants = £2,570 (2008-09 academic year)
Grant scheme will recycle 29% of the income from additional tuition fees

Additional Access Measures:
Year 10 Summer School commences 2007
120 participants, total cost = £58,406 in 2008-09
**Additional staff to engage in outreach activities and disseminate student
financial support information**

Additional Expenditure from Tuition Fee Income:
**30% of additional tuition fee income to be spent on bursaries and access
(2008-09 academic year)**

DURHAM UNIVERSITY
Access Agreement

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – **Summary of Institutional Milestones**

Appendix 2 – **Summary of Expenditure from Additional Tuition Fee Income**

1. Tuition Fee Levels

- 1.1 The University will charge tuition fees at the maximum allowable rate (£3,070 per year in 2007/8) for all full-time home UK/EU students on full-time undergraduate programmes including the Foundation year.
- 1.2 The University will charge tuition fees at the maximum allowable rate (£3,070 per year in 2007/8) for all home UK/EU students on full-time PGCE programmes.
- 1.3 Tuition fees for students on a year abroad or placement year will be charged at half the normal fee (£1,535, in 2007/8) in accordance with the Statutory Instrument relating to tuition fee levels.
- 1.4 Undergraduate tuition fee levels will increase each year in line with inflation and as agreed by Parliament, in line with the provisions of the HE Act.

2. Bursaries and Other Financial Support for Students

- 2.1 The University will continue to operate its Durham Grant Scheme. The Durham Grant Scheme provides financial support that far exceeds the minimum requirement for statutory bursaries.
- 2.2 All UK-domiciled, home, full-time undergraduate students studying towards their first undergraduate degree, and PGCE students, will be eligible to receive a Durham Grant. The scheme will be available to all such students on the basis of the means testing carried out by their Local Authority or Student Finance Direct and passed to the University by the Student Loans Company.
- 2.3 Durham Grants will be paid to undergraduate students in three instalments on or around 1 November, 1 February and 1 May. Durham Grants will be paid to PGCE students in one instalment on or around 1 November. Entitlement to an award will be based on financial information provided by Local Authorities and Student Finance Direct through the Student Loans Company. Students' entitlement will be re-assessed at the start of each year of their programme of study.
- 2.4 Durham Grants will only be awarded up until the last day of the Easter term of any academic year. These dates are 20 June 2008 for the 2007/8 academic year, 26 June 2009 for the 2008/9 academic year and 25 June 2010 for the 2009/10 academic year. Any students who apply after that date will not be entitled to an award for that year. The application process that must be completed by this date includes a student consenting to share household income information collected by the Student Loans Company with the University.
- 2.5 Entitlement to Durham Grants in 2008-09 will follow the income bandings below. 'Enhanced' awards will be made to students with a NE domicile¹ postcode (postcode beginning with the letters DH, DL, NE, SR or TS), in support of the University's Strategic aim to "ensure that our positive impact is

¹ Domicile will be the home address as recorded in the UCAS or GTTR application. – HEBSS will filter on home address as provided to LA or SFD when student applies for statutory support.

maximised through a conscious and targeted programme of outreach and regional engagement” and in support of our commitment “to remaining at the heart of and contributing to improvements in the quality of life of the people in the North East of England”.²

Household Income	Durham Grant Value
UG Less than £18,500 + with a NE postcode domicile	£2,570
UG Less than £18,500 + not with a NE postcode domicile	£1,285
UG £18,500 - £28,725 + with a NE postcode domicile	£750
UG £18,500 - £28,725 + not with a NE postcode domicile	£525
PGCE Less than £25,000	£320

2.6 Students in receipt of the Durham Grant will also receive information and guidance in a variety of formats to ensure that they use their Durham Grant to make the most of their time at University.

2.7 Students who find themselves in unexpected need of financial support will be supported through the Access to Learning Fund. The Access to Learning Fund is integrated with and managed by staff in the Undergraduate Admissions Office (see section 4.1) and delivered by pastoral staff in the University’s colleges. This ensures that the distribution of money from the Access to Learning Fund is monitored and carefully controlled by clear central guidance, whilst being fully integrated within the University’s wider student support structure based within the colleges.

3. Outreach Activities Funded Through Additional Fee Income

3.1 We endorse fully the principles of widening participation and are committed to continuing our delivery of well-targeted and high quality outreach activities. We believe further that the activities organised by Durham University play an important role in extending educational opportunities to those from non-traditional backgrounds at a national as well as a local and regional level.

3.2 To further this objective, in recent years the University has developed and extended its relationships with key partners, which include:

- Local, regional and national staff in schools and colleges
- Gifted and Talented Co-ordinators in schools and colleges
- The National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth
- CfBT Educational Trust
- The Sutton Trust
- The Ogden Trust
- One North East Regional Development Agency
- The Tees Valley Partnership
- Universities for the North East
- Aimhigher Regional and Area Partnerships in the North-East and elsewhere

3.3 Policy in respect of widening participation is monitored and developed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Student Experience through the University Executive Committee, Senate, the Learning and Teaching Committee and staff in the Undergraduate Admissions Office (see section 7). The Undergraduate

² See Durham University Strategy 2005-10 (www.dur.ac.uk/about/mission/)

Admissions Office is responsible for the implementation and delivery of measures to promote access within the University. All of these activities are now integrated and form a coherent progression route to support students from year 9 into higher education. All new activities developed using funds made available by the additional tuition fee income will complement existing activities and be integrated into this overall structure.

- 3.4 Outreach activities will be enhanced in three important respects by employing additional tuition fee income: dissemination of financial information to applicants and prospective applicants (see section 4), a new residential summer school for students in year 10 about to enter year 11, and in continuing widening participation and outreach events including school and college visits.
- 3.5 The new Year 10 Summer School will run for the first time in summer 2007. The intention of the Year 10 Summer School is to help towards an increase in progression from study at level 2 to level 3. As detailed in the DfES publication *Widening Participation in Higher Education*: “nine out of ten students who get 2 or more A levels currently enter higher education, and ... this progression rate is fairly even over all social classes”³. Despite this fact, students from all social classes are not fairly represented in the HE sector and the single most important cause of the social class imbalance is differential attainment in schools and colleges: “only 19 per cent of those from manual backgrounds gain two or more A levels by the age of 18 compared to 43 per cent from non-manual backgrounds”⁴. Durham University will thus work towards helping achieve a greater take-up of HE by under-represented groups through supporting and enriching work to raise current levels of attainment and by directly seeking to improve aspirations, awareness and progression of students from non-traditional backgrounds from level 2 to level 3. This will also contribute to the Government’s target of making progress towards 50 per cent participation of 18-30 year-olds by 2010.
- 3.6 Durham University provides a range of other established activities to engage with students, schools and colleges, details of which can be found on the University’s website at www.dur.ac.uk/undergraduate/schools/. In addition many departments and colleges, as well as many individual members of staff, have developed schemes and maintain links with local and national schools that support the University’s strategic objectives of widening participation.
- 3.7 The University’s provision of post-entry support is both well developed and highly successful at enabling a wide range of students to complete their studies successfully. This can be seen clearly in the University’s very high completion rate of 95%. The University is very good at ensuring the progression of all students from entry through to graduation and by developing the Durham Grant Scheme and enhancing our outreach activities we will ensure that we continue to recruit students from a diversity of backgrounds and enable them to complete their studies successfully.

³ Widening Participation in Higher Education, §1, p10

⁴ *ibid.*, §4, p7

4. Provision of Financial Support Information

- 4.1 Responsibility for the provision of student financial support and information to prospective and current students of the University lies with the Director of the Undergraduate Admissions Office. This management structure allows for the close integration of schools liaison, widening participation and recruitment activities, the admissions process and student financial support.
- 4.2 The STARS programme, school and college visits, campus tours, open days and summer schools are the main events which disseminate student financial support information to all prospective applicants (including those who may not be thinking of applying to Durham). Information is also available through a dedicated section of the University web-site and in the prospectus. Financial information is disseminated to teachers and other key advisers (such as the Connexions service) through our Advisers' Conferences and the Teachers on Track conference.
- 4.3 Information is provided to applicants through the University's on-line Applicant Enquiries Service in addition to written details concerning the Durham Grant Scheme and other aspects of student finance being sent to each eligible candidate. Written details concerning the Durham Grant Scheme are sent with every letter acknowledging receipt of an application via UCAS.
- 4.4 Information on the cost of studying at Durham University, on the financial support available from the University and on money management is provided to prospective students and applicants to the University through the Undergraduate Admissions Office's schools liaison, access and recruitment activities, and by targeting applicants at relevant points in the admissions cycle.

5. Summary of Expenditure

- 5.1 Since the introduction of variable tuition fees the University's expenditure on outreach activities has been enhanced with an additional £0.2 million per year in addition to the expenditure on the Durham Grant Scheme. Appendix 2 provides further detail about expenditure.

6. Institutional Milestones

- 6.1 The University welcomes applications from all social and ethnic backgrounds and all genders, without reference to their political or religious beliefs. In this way the University is active in its support of equal opportunities.
- 6.2 The Senate of the University has affirmed that it is important for ethical and educational reasons that the University should be attractive and welcoming to all groups of potential applicants. The University does not favour one group compared with another, nor are there schemes of positive discrimination for any group.
- 6.3 The students of Durham University come from all regions of the UK, and from EU and other overseas countries. Although the majority of undergraduates come as school leavers, the University welcomes mature students and candidates with non-standard qualifications whose applications are carefully

considered on their experience as well as the whole range of their qualifications.

- 6.4 All applicants are judged primarily on the basis of their enthusiasm and ability to study, and also their motivation to benefit from the range of academic opportunities available within the University. Admissions selectors are interested in their breadth of interest and in the contribution that a student can make to University life, including the College community to which he or she belongs.
- 6.5 In the selection process, the various academic criteria of achievement in examinations, development of study skills, and independence of thought will be of paramount importance together with a satisfactory performance at interview (if held) and with all other evidence in the application form about the applicant's potential for further development during the period of study for a University qualification.
- 6.6 The University has made a commitment in its current Strategic Plan to Widening Participation (see www.dur.ac.uk/about/mission/students/). We plan to increase the diversity of the student body while maintaining high entry standards for all our students. We will continue to build upon our progress in widening participation in the new context of variable tuition fees.
- 6.7 As part of this work the University has set benchmarks and will continue to monitor progress against them. See Appendix 1 for details of these targets and our progress with achievement.
- 6.8 The University is undertaking a comprehensive review of its admissions policy during the 2007-08 academic year, which is expected to require subsequent changes to the Access Agreement. Therefore the University reserves the right to make changes to this Access Agreement to cover the years 2009-10 and 2010-11, which if needed will be submitted to OFFA in 2008.

7. Monitoring Compliance

- 7.1 The University's Learning and Teaching Committee, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Student Experience, is responsible for all matters concerning undergraduate admissions including widening participation and outreach activities. The Learning and Teaching Committee reports directly to the University Senate. In addition, the University Executive Committee takes a close interest in the University's widening participation strategy. The Director of the Undergraduate Admissions Office will report on an annual basis to both the University Executive Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee.