

**North Lindsey College
The University Centre
Access Agreement
2018-19**

AGREEMENT WITH THE OFFICE FOR FAIR ACCESS (OFFA) 2018-19

Introduction

This agreement is prepared in anticipation of the approval by the Corporation Board of North Lindsey College of full time undergraduate tuition fees for 2018-2019.

Full time Bachelor degree fees for new entrants are proposed to be £7,000.

Students entering 2-year foundation degree programmes will pay fees of up to £7,000; HND students will pay £6,750 maximum. North Lindsey College commits significant resources towards supporting students on Higher National/Foundation programmes and maximising student success.

A consultation exercise has been implemented to seek the views of students, including the corporation student Governor, student programme representatives and student interns. Outcomes of this consultation will be communicated via the College website and virtual learning environment.

1. THE HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT

1.1 The College Mission, expressed in the Strategic Plan 2016-2020 is:

‘to deliver high quality education and training which enables and inspires individuals, employers and communities to develop their skills, unlock potential and realise their ambitions.’

1.2 **Higher Education values and strategic priorities:**

The key elements of the Higher Education provision at North Lindsey College are to facilitate:

- Entry: through engagement with local 6th form and FE feeders, community groups, business and non-commercial organisations. We aim to challenge the economic, social and technological barriers to HE.
- Progression and performance enhancement: through approaches to teaching, learning and support systems to reflect the diverse needs of our HE students
- Employability: through provision of routes for lifelong learning, career and skills development.

1.3 The Higher Education Strategy is predicated upon the 3 key themes of **Partnership, Quality and Diversity** based on:

- Developing a reputation as a quality provider of Higher Education learning opportunities which meet the aspirations of students within North Lincolnshire.
- Increasing the number and types of students from diverse backgrounds and new target groups.
- Ensuring a high quality human, physical and intellectual infrastructure.
- Enhancing the contribution of higher level education to local economic development and the strength of the community.
- Enhancing the management of responsibilities for academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and published information.

Fundamental principles of Widening Participation

1.4 The University Centre at North Lindsey College aims to challenge the social, cultural, dispositional and accessibility barriers which have restricted progression into higher education. The focus of the HE provision is one of raising aspirations of college leavers and returners to study within North Lincolnshire, including those from:

- low participation neighbourhoods
- lower socio-economic groups
- families where there is no tradition of higher education
- minority ethnic groups and EU migrants
- individuals with caring responsibilities for children/adult dependents
- adult returners, including work-based learners
- progression from vocational pathways such as Apprenticeships, and NVQ and work-based learning

1.5 **Student numbers, access and performance indicators:**

- Student numbers have grown each year, reaching approximately 1,000 per annum since 2015-16. By 2018-19, it is envisaged that around 1,490 students will be enrolled
- Overall retention rates for 2014-15 and 2015-16 were 87%.
- 33% of full time students come from widening participation target backgrounds, using the postal code indicator. This percentage has increased from 28% in 2014-15. A key WP priority is to continue to increase the number of young students from social classes 4-7 to a minimum of 37%.
- Traditionally, the higher education entry population to BA programmes is made up of 70-80% mature students. This profile is now changing as an increasing number of 18-21 year olds choose to study locally.

HE Participation by Priority Group 16/17		
Gender	Total	Percentage
Female	613	62%
Male	376	38%
Age Group	Total	Percentage
Full Time mature (25+)	441	45%
Full Time young (<25)	274	28%
Part Time mature (25+)	102	10%
Part Time young (<25)	172	17%
Ethnicity	Total	Percentage
BME	55	6%
White	934	94%
Learning Difficulty or Disability	Total	Percentage
Known disability	120	12%
No known disability	869	88%
POLAR3	Total	Percentage
Group 1	326	33%
Group 2-5 or unknown	663	67%

2. Fee levels and limits

Fees

- 2.1 From September 2018, North Lindsey College will charge an annual tuition fee of £7,000 for new entrants to BA programmes.
- 2.2 Full time 2018-19 fees for HND (HEI validated) programmes will be £6750. Full time fees for Pearson HND programmes will be £6500.
- 2.3 Full time 2018-2019 fees for foundation degrees designed to enhance employability skills while raising digital literacy, (FdSc Bioscience, FdSc Biochemistry, FdA Children, Learning and Development and FdSc Sport and Exercise) which include the provision of an iPad and access to an employability bursary will be £7000. Full time fees for all other foundation degrees will be £6750.
- 2.4 Fees will apply for the full duration of the programme subject to an annual inflationary increase and/or an agreed amount set by the Government.
- 2.5 In all cases fee levels are clearly published, using both electronic and paper based media at the point of application and again at enrolment.

2.6 Fee levels reflect the College’s widening participation mission, ensuring that:

- the costs of entering and succeeding in higher education do not pose a barrier.
- income from tuition fees is invested effectively towards supporting and enhancing the student learning experience.
- additional assistance would be targeted towards under represented and disadvantaged groups.

Students included in this agreement

2.7 This agreement covers both students entering full-time higher education in 2018-19 and continuing students at levels 5 and 6. It is applicable to all home and EU students. Programme fees presented in the table below are the upper limits students will be expected to pay.

Provision of information to prospective students

2.8 Clear and accessible information regarding tuition fees will continue to be kept up to date on the college website and in the published information documents. A range of ‘reader friendly’ leaflets are produced and distributed through the University Centre Advice and Information Office. Timely and accurate information will continue to be provided to UCAS and the Student Loans Company.

2.9 Fees for part-time programmes will not be linked to full time fees but rather differentially priced. It is recognised that many market segments are price sensitive. For part-time students, the table below indicates FTE fees. (120 credits).

Study mode	Programme	2018/19
FT	BA Programmes	£7,000
FT	HNC (HEI Validated)	£6,750
FT	HND (HEI Validated)	£6,750
FT	HNC (Pearson)	£6,500
FT	HND (Pearson)	£6,500
FT	FdA (FdSc Sport & Exercise, FdA Children, Learning & Development, FdSc Bioscience, FdSc Biochemistry)	£7,000
FT	FdA Programmes	£6,750
PT	BA Programmes	£7,000
PT	HNC (HEI Validated)	£6,750
PT	HND (HEI Validated)	£6,750
PT	HNC (Pearson)	£6,500
PT	HND (Pearson)	£6,500
PT	(FdSc Sport & Exercise, FdA Children, Learning & Development, FdSc Bioscience, FdSc Biochemistry)	£7,000
PT	FdA Programmes	£6,750

- Fees will apply for the full duration of the programme subject to an annual inflationary increase and/or an agreed amount set by the Government.

3. The University Centre infrastructure and physical learning environment

3.1 The University Centre provides high quality learning teaching and support facilities for students and conducive office space for staff, all within buildings dedicated to higher education. The HE Library and Lecture Suite building provides a further identity.

3.2 There are around 50 permanent staff, complemented by specialist part-timers, all of whom are focused on HE teaching; this has proved central in the evolution of an appropriate Higher Education ethos.

4. Access, student success and progression

4.1. The predicted student numbers identified in the resource allocation plan indicate that during 2018-2019, an amount of £93,000 would be spent on a range of activities and additional support mechanisms. This figure represents approximately 20% of the total planned additional tuition fee income. The table summarises how this would be disaggregated:

Of this figure, 15% is forecasted to be expended on access measures, 45% on student success and 15% on progression activities.

Activities	2018-19
Access	£13,950
Student success	£41,850
Progression	£13,950
Financial Support	£23,250
Total	£93,000

5. Targeted financial support

5.1 The remaining 25% of the total anticipated additional income above basic fees would be specifically directed towards financial support.

- During the 2018/19 academic year, 25 Bursary payments of £500 will be made available to new full time students from low income backgrounds who are progressing from vocational courses at level 3 within North Lindsey College and have a residual household income below £25,000 per annum.

- Priority will be given to eligible applicants who have enrolled on STEM related foundation degrees in Biosciences and Engineering.
- Where more than the anticipated number of applying eligible students meet the above criteria, an additional consideration will be made towards those students with no family history of HE or those from disadvantaged postcodes.

5.2 During 2018-19, an additional 6 bursaries of £500 will be made available to students identified as care leavers.

6. Outreach activity

6.1 Student interns have been appointed on an hourly paid basis since 2014. These students attend a range of community focused events and venues to promote the University Centre and benefits of Higher Education. The College places great value on presenting realistic perspectives from existing students, many of whom come from disadvantaged or non-traditional entry backgrounds, to attract potential students.

6.2 A full-time Outreach and Engagement Officer post was created in 2015 to organise the work of the interns and to develop relationships with schools and community organisations. This role is assumed by a former student.

6.3 The North Lincolnshire Children's University (CU), launched in 2016, has observed some immediate success in terms of registrations, issuing of passports, learning hours and school partnerships. Currently, 10 local schools are members of the North Lincolnshire Children's University and a target is in place for this number to rise to 20 schools by 2020-21.

Future evaluation and analysis of the Children’s University will consider the areas identified within the table below.

	2016 - 2017
Number of primary school partnerships	10
Number of passports activated	652
Number of graduation ceremonies	10
Number of graduating children	130

7. Complementarity between access agreement and the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP)

- 7.1. The College is an active partner in the University of Hull led NCOP. The activities which are funded through the NCOP augment the long standing work in relation to community and school engagement which have defined The University Centre’s widening participation mission.
- 7.2. The University Centre anticipates the appointment of additional staffing, funded through the National Collaborative Outreach Programme, to support the outreach activities with identified under represented wards in the local area. This staffing resource will work alongside the HE Outreach and Engagement Officers and Student Interns.

8. Expenditure on additional access measures and investment in increasing retention, completion and success rates

- 8.1 As detailed in the table included in para 1.5., there are a medium proportion of underrepresented students enrolled at the College. Polar 3 data confirms that 33% of students enrolling in 2016/17 come from postal code areas which attract uplift funding and 70-80% of students on the BA programmes are classed as mature. 45% of the additional fee income will be specifically targeted towards supporting and promoting successful completion. It is planned to increase completion rates incrementally over the three-year period to 90%.

- 8.2 Overall retention for during 2015-2016 was 92% for full time students and 89% for part time students. Despite overall retention exceeding 90% for full time students, there is a need to ensure consistent levels of performance across all programmes. Achievement indicators for full time programmes during 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 was 87%, which represented a 6% decrease from 2013-2014.
- 8.3 A key development area for the University Centre will be to track completion and achievement indicators on a monthly basis within cognate areas and reporting directly through to the HE Leadership Team meetings. In addition, the Quality, Standards and Performance Group (QSPG) will ensure performance targets are set based on specific cohort profiles at the start of the academic year. On-going analysis enables programmes to determine, at key points during the academic year, the proportion of students within each of the following categories:
- Completed / Achieved
 - Completed / Not Achieved
 - Not Completed / Not Achieved

Interventions and activities implemented to support success include:

- Academic Advocacy – A structured on-programme support mechanism to promote student performance within subject specialist areas. Each student receives tailored individual tutorials and support throughout the lifetime of their programme. Academic Advocates provide a consistent approach to monitoring the progress of students and providing personalised support where required.
- Disability Support - The University Centre works in partnership with Randstad Student Support, a specialist disability support partner, to ensure that students receive bespoke learning support. Initial disclosure of additional learning support is discussed at the enquiry and interview stage. This assists students with applications for the Disabled Students' Allowance. The Student Support and Inclusion Officer within the College 'Success Centre' provides an effective link between students, academic staff and Randstad.

- Higher Level Skills – Additional support sessions incorporated into programmes which do not include core modules focussing on academic skills development. During 2016-2017, additional employability workshops, tutorials and support was provided for students studying BA (Hons) programmes, where no formal personal development and/or employability modules were included as part of the formal curriculum.
- Drop-in Workshop series - this supports students from across all programmes with generic IT and digital literacy skills, presentation skills and report writing.
- Student Opportunity Fund - The Student Opportunity Fund is available to qualifying students who face financial hardship and difficulty. Applications to the non-repayable fund can be made at any time throughout the academic year. Following a standard assessment, students may qualify for a termly payment based upon their attendance.
- In the instance of unexpected large expense students may alternatively qualify for a short term repayable loan.

8.4. Despite the removal of the access element of the student opportunity allocation, a commitment remains to support students in hardship. The Student Opportunity Fund is overseen by the North Lindsey College's Head of Funding & Information and the Director of Higher Education. A protected budget has been approved by the Senior Leadership Team, supported by the Corporation Board.

8.5 In order to enable monitoring of achievement, Progression panels will be further developed to include explicit identification of:

- Widening Participation characteristics.
- Academic/Care leaver bursary.
- Receipt of student opportunity funds.
- Learning opportunities.

8.6 It is estimated that the figure to be allocated towards the identified student population will amount to a figure of £55,800 in 2018-19.

Additional investment to support all level 6 students will be in the form of:

- bridging programmes starting before the end of year 2 to increase completion rates.
- Summer Schools to provide transition from level 5 to level 6.
- an additional enhancement programme to take place during year level 6 to facilitate a discursive culture to promote academic success.

9 Outreach activities and progression pathways

9.1 'Bite-size' pre-entry courses are particularly targeted at non-traditional entrants to HE with the aim of increasing levels of confidence and preparedness for success. Applicants are made aware of these pre-entry programmes as part of the application and interview process, especially where individual are returning back into education after a significant absence.

9.2 This is consistently reflected in the excellent retention rates for higher education students. The College will continue to resource such pre-entry activities to reflect the WP agenda:

- Progression Pathways extend across most level 3 provision within the College. A series of taster events and challenges are organised by the Outreach and Engagement Officers throughout the academic year.
- The use of ESOL entry tests and on-programme support sees EU students graduating with foundation degrees and progressing into honours degrees
- The STEM Academy traditionally provided level 3 students with the opportunity to study for both vocational and A-level qualifications simultaneously. The University Centre has developed foundation degrees which articulate progression routes from Level 3 courses. This includes Bio Science, Health Studies and the suite of Integrated Engineering.
- Events and promotional activities arranged at the premises of large employers.

Working with Schools and Colleges

9.3 North Lindsey College continues to develop effective partnerships with local Schools and colleges through the following activities:

- Open days and taster days; visits to local 6th form colleges.
- Attendance at local Schools/Colleges and roadshows.
- Postcodes/NCOP - The College has recently participated in the HEFCE National Networks for Collaborative Outreach initiative as part of the University of Hull Federation of Colleges FORCE programme. Going forward, the College is committed to the National Collaborative Outreach programme which aims to increase the participation of young people in higher education by 2020.
- 6th Form College master classes which aim to compliment the students existing curriculum while enabling them to engage in a 'higher level' experience.
- Annual Science Fayre which is open to all local schools in North Lincolnshire.
- Children's University. The Children's University was launched in February 2016, the first project of its kind in North Lincolnshire. The Children's University facilitates exciting out-of-school activities in order to enable 5-14 year olds develop new interests, encourage aspiration and acquire new skills. The project runs in

conjunction with a number of local partners across the region, including North Lincolnshire Council and local primary schools. A target has been set to increase partner schools by 2 per year between 2018/19 and 2021/22 build more focused approach to tracking attainment.

- Building relationships with 3 local schools to ensure the monitoring and tracking of the attainment of pupil cohorts.
- Current success criteria includes:
 - Increased progression to HE
 - Increased knowledge and awareness of HE
 - Increased aspirations of learners
 - Increased attainment of learners

9.4. Participation and engagement will be monitored throughout the programme and resulting quantitative and qualitative data will be utilised when evaluating the impact of interventions.

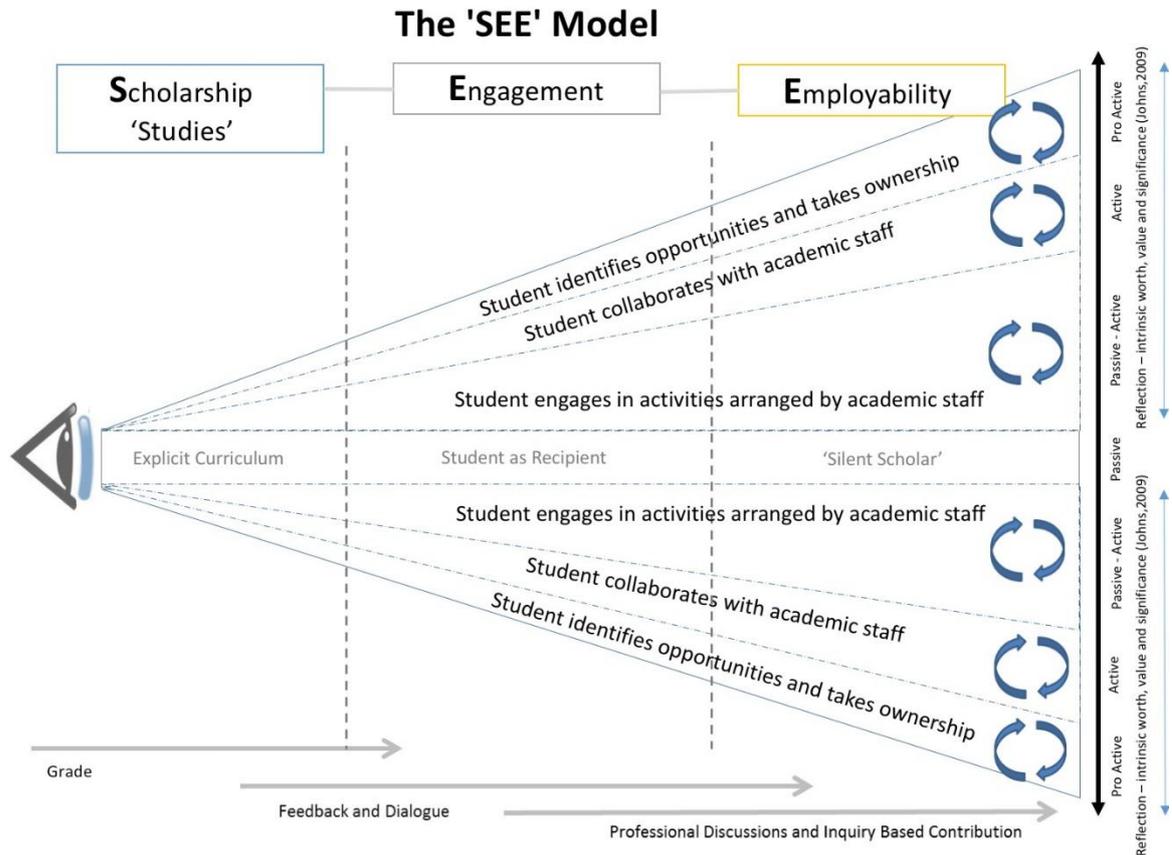
9.5 North Lindsey College will further develop outcome based targets for these interventions in its 2019-20 access agreement.

9.6 Following a strategic response to the recommendations of an area based review, North Lindsey College does not currently sponsor any local schools or colleges. This position will be reviewed as part of future access agreements.

10 Enhancement led initiatives

The Scholarship Engagement and Employability (SEE) guiding philosophy

10.1. The University Centre's innovative Scholarship, Engagement and Employability (SEE) model assumes the viewpoint of a student entering college-based higher education. It has evolved based on observations of practice and successes of students and academic staff. SEE encourages students to insert an 'aspirational lens' beyond the formal and explicit curriculum to identify opportunities to recursively craft and apply their skills and knowledge. Through subject based enhancement activities developed and supported by tutors, repeated engagement challenges students to take on a more active roles assuming more complex activities.



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10.2 The following examples form part of the University Centre's quality enhancement activities which benefit all higher education students.

- Guest Lecture Programme – visiting speakers delivering public lectures.
- Subject Scholarly Engagement Scheme – staff development subject research opportunities.
- Subject Enhancement Scheme – students as partners in learning; student conference papers.
- HE Teaching and Learning Symposium – further developing HE communities of learning and enhanced practice.
- Employability and career planning themes.
- A Sports Science Laboratory providing students with practical working experiences to support consultancy work.
- Volunteering and peer mentoring schemes.

11. Performance Measures

- 11.1 A range of documentation is produced to measure the impact of participation in higher education at the University Centre at North Lindsey College. Student numbers, entry profiles regarding age/background/eligibility for financial support, retention and achievement rates are regularly reviewed by the HE Board of Studies (HEBoS), the NLC Senior Leadership Team and the Corporation.
- Progress Panels, chaired by a senior member of the University Centre Leadership Team, are established across the University Centre. These panels provide effective support for the academic development of all students with the profile of each individual student being considered. These take place at the mid-point of the academic year, with the terms of reference not only formally recording achievement but also the support mechanisms necessary for groups and individuals. Identification of at risk students enables intervention strategies to be agreed, implemented and subsequently monitored through the Monthly Operations Meetings. End of year Progress Panels and post re-sit achievement data will determine the effectiveness of support mechanisms at key times throughout the academic year.
 - The Programmes Area Interim Review (PAIR) is a formal mid-year review of the cluster of programmes in the cognate area that considers in year recruitment and performance statistics, module evaluation results and contributions towards cross HE developments or initiatives. The PAIR enables programme teams to specifically link to agreed actions, report on progress made to date and detail any anticipated progress. This format is designed to enable focussed discussions to take place and specific progress to be captured. This will ensure that this report can be used for a variety of purposes such as informing Monthly Operations Meetings (MOMs), University Subject Boards and HE Board of Studies. Student representatives are also encouraged to contribute to sections of the report, providing the students with a voice in the review process. An overall PAIR summary report is presented by the Quality Assurance Coordinator at the Spring HEBoS meeting.
 - Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) Panels, chaired by the Director of Higher Education, were introduced in 2013-2014 to strengthen the University Centre's annual monitoring cycle. Whilst the AMR Panels ensure oversight of the processes associated with programme monitoring prior to being presented to the relevant university academic committee or awarding institution, they also aim to promote enhancement through wider dissemination of practice. Each Programme Leader is invited to present the programme report. Programme Leaders from other subject disciplines, along with the relevant Cognate Area Leader (CAL) attend with the objective being to promote peer collaboration and critique.
- 11.2 Employer feedback is gathered across Higher National and foundation degree programmes. Student feedback is gathered through internal HE survey data in addition to the National Student Survey. The NSS16 showed overall satisfaction of 88% compared to the 79% FEC sector average.

11.3 Specific measures, currently reported on include:

- Cohort analysis from point of entry profile to completion.
- Completion, Achievement and Retention performance indicators reported on a monthly basis.
- Progression from college FE into HE.
- Employer engagement – curricula development, co funded opportunities
- Student feedback review and action plans.
- The student voice and engaging students as partners in learning.

12. Institutional Monitoring and Evaluation

12.1 This Access Agreement will be monitored annually to ensure compliance and to enable the identification of progress against recorded targets and milestones. Responsibility for monitoring returns will sit with the Senior Leadership Team.

12.2 Financial support provided to eligible students will be continuously monitored as part of progression panels to enable evaluation of student engagement, the effectiveness of support provided and to additionally ensure that further interventions are considered where appropriate. Examples of evaluation will include: Levels of attendance, retention, completion and achievement in comparison with cohort averages.

12.3 Performance in relation to outreach, progression, student achievement and stakeholder satisfaction is reviewed regularly by the Higher Education Board of Studies and the Senior Leadership Team. The formal annual review, through to the Corporation takes place in December or January, along with the presentation of the HE Self Evaluation Report.

12.4 The annual Widening Participation Strategic Assessment monitoring return is completed in January of each academic year.

13. The Equality Act 2010

13.1 The College executes its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 through a range of formal mechanisms. All college policies are required to be accompanied by Equality Impact Assessments.

13.2 The Equality and Diversity Group reports directly to the Senior Leadership meetings.

13.3 The annual Single Equality, Equality and Diversity, Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) covers all aspects relating to each of the protected characteristics recognised by the Act. The QIP contains actions relating to: general management; recruitment and marketing; enrolment and admissions; learner services and student support and ongoing compulsory staff training programmes. The Single Equality Scheme QIP is monitored and received annually by the Corporation Board.

April 2017